How to do well in This Course

Do the labs.

This is where the real learning in the course takes place.

Do the labs on time.

The course is relentless. 11 labs in 14 weeks. Each lab builds on the previous lab and on what we have done in class the previous week. You can't afford to fall behind.

You will probably find that each lab takes 6 to 8 hours, including the time you spend in the assigned lab session. That is probably less time per week than you would spend doing the readings for a serious literature course.

Come to class.

One of the major purposes of the class is to make the labs easier.

SLOW THE #@$%!!! DOWN.

Rushing through code is a sure way to make it not work. Coding is all about organization and logical thinking. If you take your time and proceed methodically, you will complete the labs much faster (and much happier) than if you rush. The actual typing time of any of the labs is about 15 minutes.

As Alice (in Wonderland) said: "The hurrier I go, the behinder I get."

Come to the lab sessions.

In a lab session you have an instructor and several student helpers. We have lab sessions in 150 just to help you get the labs done faster. Make use of them.

Talk to your neighbors in the lab.

Programming is a social activity. If you can explain a problem to someone you can code it so practice explaining what you are doing.

Ask Questions

One of the things you should be learning is how to talk about code. Don't be shy about asking for help with your code; that is part of the learning process.

Practice Writing Code on Paper

Don't be a monkey-coder. One of the goals of the course is to help you think about code apart from computers. A program is just a precise algorithm for solving a problem. That is valuable, even if you never run the program on a computer. On exams you will need to write code on paper, so practice doing that.