

---

## Notes on Exam 1

---

---

The following notes pertain to your **first exam** in this course. As you will see, an effort has been made to afford you a carefully crafted, directed opportunity to prepare for this exam. I am hoping that you will all take advantage of the opportunity like you mean it!

1. **Your first exam will be administered on Wednesday, March 9th, 2022.** Notes on the administration of your first exam:
  - (a) The exam will be given in the room where our class regularly meets, 170 Shineman, during the time when the class regularly meets, 11:30 am.
  - (b) You will be given 60 minutes to write the exam.
  - (c) No cognitive artifacts will be permitted for use on the exam – no books or notebooks or papers of any kind, beyond the examination itself; no phones or computers or other electronic resources.
  - (d) Please come a few minutes early in order to settle into a proper frame of mind to take the exam.
2. **You are being presented with a practice exam one week prior to the actual exam in order to give you an opportunity to methodically prepare in a focused manner for the actual exam.** Notes on this practice exam:
  - (a) **The one inviolable ground rule for this practice exam is that no one may ask the professor of the course anything at all relating to the practice exam!** This rule is not adopted in the spirit of being difficult. Rather, my experience suggests that the adoption of this simple rule does wonders to motivate students to engage in course content with a relentless intensity that is far beyond that which occurs when I agree to go over the practice exam, or even to answer isolated questions about it. The practice exam, compliments of the professor, is intended to serve you as a potentially powerful study aid, one which you can do anything you like with, so long as you respect this rule about not approaching the professor with questions about the exam or your engagement with it.
  - (b) **It is recommended that you take the practice exam as soon as possible under conditions that resemble the conditions under which you will sit for the real exam - except for location.** Please do not succumb to the temptation to use resources that you find on your machine, or anywhere else, to help you with the practice exam. It will benefit you to adopt strict testing conditions when you take the practice exam.
  - (c) Once you have taken the exam, you should probably:
    - i. **Reflect upon the experience.** Ask yourself these questions: How ready are you for the real exam? How much time do you think you will need to spend to get ready for the real exam? What will be your process of engagement with respect to studying for the real exam.
    - ii. **Work hard to determine correct answers to the questions.** How might you do this? For programs, type them into the machine and see what happens. For BNF grammars, draw representative parse trees. For S-expression conversions, ask yourself questions involving `car` and `cdr`. Generally speaking, find parts of the lessons that pertain to the question of interest, and reason accordingly.
    - iii. **Form a small study group.** The right study group can be an invaluable forum within which to discuss the practice exam questions, answers to the questions, approaches to tackling the questions, and other things pertaining to course content.
  - (d) **Please don't delay, once you have taken the practice exam, in commencing your studies in earnest for the actual exam.** You will benefit by studying in a methodical way for the real exam, grounding your study process in the practice exam and your experience in taking it. This generally takes some time, which is why you do not want to wait until the night before the real exam to begin your

focused study.