Course Objectives
To embark on a self-directed course of study in a specific area of computer science, under the guidance of the instructor. The student selects the topic and assists in identifying source material. In addition to learning more about the specific topic, the student will learn how to organize, execute, and document an intensive, individualized semester of self-study. Additional objectives depend on the selected subject matter.

Course Requirements
Dependent on the topic.

Materials and Texts
To be selected by the student under the guidance of the instructor.

Course Work and Grading
Graded coursework consists of 1 study journal in the form of a blog (20%), 1 final study report (40%), and 1 programming project (40%). Letter grades are determined as follows: ≥ 90% gets an A– or better; ≥ 80% gets a B– or better; ≥ 70% gets a C– or better. The instructor may curve your grade upward based on qualitative considerations such as degree of difficulty, effort, time constraints, and overall attitude throughout the course. Grades are never curved downward.

Study Journal
You will maintain a Web log (blog) of your study progress. No particular blog service, server, or software is required; you may select whatever is most available or convenient at the time. Your blog serves as an on-going account of your study. Blogging gives you an opportunity to express yourself while ideas or events are still fresh, at the same time providing structure and persistence that gives it lasting value.
ough and well-described? Is the summary or survey complete and substantive? How well-documented is the programming project?

2. Organization (30%): Is the text structured well? Are its ideas and flow easy to follow? Are distinct sections or topics clearly identified?

3. Writing (20%): Are statements clear and easy to follow? Is the language precise and grammatically correct? Is the paper’s tone appropriate?

4. Polish (10%): Is the content properly proofread? Are there any misspellings, typos, or other formatting faux pas?

The final study report is due at the end of finals week, May 4.

Programming Project

You will apply what you learn in the form of a programming project based on your studies. Project details vary according to the topic; these will be set early in the semester.

The project will be graded along these criteria:

1. Design (30%): How good is the overall structure of the code? Is it clear, flexible, and easy to maintain? Is it elegant or innovative? How well does it apply the principles of “separation of concerns” and “one change, one place?”

2. Functionality (30%): How well does the code work? Does it fulfill requirements? Are its results accurate or correct? How well do unit tests validate the code?

3. Naming (20%): Are program entities — classes, subroutines, variables, etc. — clearly and consistently named? Do their names correspond to their functions and roles?

4. Comments (15%): Are comments provided where appropriate? Are they clear and well-written? Does the code take advantage of any special support for comments provided by the project language or platform (e.g., JavaDoc)?

5. Version control (5%): Is the code committed at reasonable intervals? Are milestones appropriately tagged? Are adequate descriptions of provided in the commit logs?

The programming project is due at the end of finals week, May 4.

Attendance

Meeting and session schedules are determined individually, and may vary according to the specific subject matter and/or course work. Remember that the university add/drop with 100% refund deadline is January 12. The deadline for withdrawal or credit/no-credit status is March 16.

University Policy on Academic Honesty

Loyola Marymount University expects high standards of honesty and integrity from all members of its community. Applied to the arena of academic performance, these standards preclude all acts of cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarism, forgery of signatures or falsification of data, unauthorized access to University computer accounts or files, and removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials belonging to the University Library.

Course Schedule

Dependent on the specific subject matter.