

Algorithms and Data Structures

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Instructor(s):

Judit Csima
Máté Vizer

Short Description of the Course:

After introducing the basic notions necessary to speak about running time of algorithms, the course first focuses on several well-known algorithmic problems where efficient solutions exist. Sorting algorithms, graph traversals, shortest path algorithms and minimum spanning tree algorithms are discussed in details. Besides the concrete algorithms, general designing techniques (e.g. divide-and-conquer, greedy, dynamic programming) are shown as well: the algorithms discussed in the course are grouped together according to the strategy they use, so that the students can see the general patterns behind them.

During this part of the course several useful data-structures are also covered (heap, red-black trees, hashing) so that the algorithms could be coded efficiently.

In the second part of the course NP-completeness is discussed: after introducing the basic definitions, several NP complete problems are shown. The last classes are dedicated to those techniques with which we can handle NP-complete problems (e.g. branch-and-bound, pseudo-polynomiality, and approximation algorithms).

Aim of the Course:

The aim of the course is to teach how to distinguish between easy and difficult algorithmic problems and how to solve them.

The course first covers those building blocks, data structures and general designing techniques with which efficient algorithms can be designed, then intractable problems are discussed so that students could recognize those problems in practice where it is hopeless to find a general, fast algorithm.

In this course students learn how to convert concrete algorithmic problems into abstract ones and how to solve them. Besides algorithm design, a great emphasis is placed on how to prove correctness of an algorithm and how to analyse its efficiency.

Prerequisites:

Basic mathematical maturity (ability to follow simple proofs) and basic programming knowledge.

Detailed Program and Class Schedule:

1. Introduction to algorithms
Recurrences
Analyzing algorithms
2. Divide-and-conquer algorithms: binary search, mergesort, quicksort, closest pair of points
Lower bound for comparison-based sorting algorithms
Bucket-sort, radix-sort
3. Graph representations: adjacency matrix and adjacency list
BFS, shortest path problem in the unweighted case
DFS, topological ordering, DAG
4. Longest and shortest paths in a DAG
Dynamic programming, the idea
Maximum subarray problem, maximum weighted independent set on a path

5. Knapsack problem, subset-sum problem, longest common subword
Bellman-Ford algorithm
6. Floyd-Warshall algorithm
Data structures, the concept
Array, list
Binary trees, tree traversals (pre-, in-, and post-order)

Midterm test

7. Binary search trees
Red-black trees
AVL-trees (not in full details)
8. Heap, heapsort
How to design a data-structure?
Amortized analysis (basic methods and examples), part 1
9. Amortized analysis, part 2
Hash
Greedy algorithms: interval scheduling
10. More greedy algorithms: Dijkstra's algorithm, implementation with heaps
Minimum spanning tree problem, Prim's algorithm
11. Kruskal's algorithms
Union-Find data structure
12. P, NP, coNP, introduction
Polynomial-time reductions
13. NP-completeness
NP-complete problems: 3-COLOR, INDEPENDENT SET
More NP-complete problems: KNAPSACK, SUBSET-SUM, PARTITION, HAM, HAM-PATH
14. Pseudo-polynomiality
Branch-and-bound
Approximation algorithms

Final exam

Method of instruction:

Lectures and problem solving. In the first part of each class some new theory is introduced, while in the second part students solve problems on their own (with hints and help of the instructor). (Sample problem sets for [big-O notation](#), [Dijkstra's algorithm](#), and [NP completeness](#).)

Students are given 3 or 4 problems at the end of each class as homework, i. e. 6 or 7 problems per week. Besides the regular problems, optional (more challenging) problems are also set for extra credit. ([Sample weekly homework set for graph traversals](#). More homework sets are available on request.)

Grading:

Final grade is based on four components: 20% for class participation and class work, 20% for homework, 30% for the midterm test, and 30% for the final exam.

A high grade in the class participation part is achieved by active participation in the common work in class. Besides that, missed classes or late arrivals (without a legitimate reason) result in a loss from this component.

Midterm test consists entirely of problem solving, while the final exam has two parts: in the theoretical part students have to recall some definitions and proofs, while in the problem solving part (focusing mainly on the second part of the course) students have to solve problems similar but not identical to those ones they solved in class.

Both midterm and final exam are closed book, in-class and contain two challenging optional problems for extra credit. ([Sample midterm](#) and [final exam](#).)

Cutoffs for letter grades will be at 90%, 80%, etc., plus and minus grades given at the top and bottom 3% of the intervals.

Textbook:

Jon Kleinberg- Éva Tardos: *Algorithm Design*, Pearson, 2006

T.H. Cormen, C.E. Leiserson, R.L. Rivest, C. Stein: *Introduction to Algorithms*, MIT Press, 2009

Instructors' bio:

Judit Csima (born 1972) is an associate professor of the Department of Computer Science and Information Theory, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Informatics, Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME). She graduated from Eötvös Loránd University as a mathematician in 1997, and received her Ph.D. in computer science in 2003.

She started to teach at BME in 1998; in the next year she was awarded as "Excellent Teacher of the Department", based on student feedback surveys. She has been teaching Theory of Algorithms at BME for several years.

Máté Vizer (born 1982) is a research fellow at Alfréd Rényi Institute of Mathematics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He graduated from Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) as a mathematician and got his PhD at Central European University (CEU) in 2013. As a high school student he participated at the International Mathematical Olympiad, and received a silver medal. At the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) he teaches introductory courses in Computer Science and Theory of Algorithms. His fields of research are combinatorics of graphs and hypergraphs and combinatorial search theory.