

General Advice about CS 2340

When you look at CS 2340 as a class, it's easy to think that the class will be a piece of cake. It has a high GPA, especially with Professor Waters – 3.48 currently. Don't let that fool you! This class is a lot of work. This semester is my second time around taking the class. I had to drop it before drop day during the fall because I had too much work to do. The worst part was having to abandon my group. It sucked.

What I'm trying to say is, if you put the effort to get that A, this could be one of the most time-consuming classes you'll have to take. The good news is that the class is in java! Don't let me scare you about this class. You aren't alone; you have a group working with you the whole way. Random assignment can be scary but typically you will get a good group of people to work with.

1. Don't fall behind your group. This is a big deal. Even if you currently aren't doing a large portion of the work, make sure you know all that is going on. All the milestones are connected, so if one of the milestones doesn't require work from you, be aware of the details of it. It becomes harder to get on track the longer you wait to do it. Also, if you have group evaluations you could get screwed.
2. Have group evaluations. You'll want these, even if you end up giving everyone the full score at the end, anyway. I would suggest that you have only one or two evaluations. My group had individual ones to submit to Prof. Waters at the end of the semester, as well as a verbal one during a group meeting halfway through. It helps when your group lets you know where you stand.
3. Get to know your group members. This is a great opportunity to get to know some really awesome people that you may not have met before. Both semesters, I have really enjoyed getting to know the people in my group. This is also good for group ethic. The better you know each other, the easier it is to communicate where you want the project to go. Also, the better you know each other, the easier it is to get everyone to do their portion of the work.
4. Actually prepare for the final! Ah, the group final. Sounds easy, right? Prof. Waters releases the problem in advance. Take the time to read over it and brainstorm or make actual preparations for this group final. It will really pay

off in the end because it will probably take you longer to take the test than you're expecting. A little bit of effort before will go a long way on the last day.

CS 2340 may be a lot of work, but it is beneficial. It teaches you a lot that you won't get in your regular coding class. Group work can end up being fun, even, if you let it. The design process is something you might even use in the real world after this anyway. You'll get out of this class exactly what you put in. In the end, it is definitely worth it to put the effort.