

NCSS DAILY

JANUARY 2011: EDITION 1.2 BROUGHT TO YOU BY  **freelancer!**

Day 3: project beginning

Following a similar structure as yesterday, students had an early breakfast (and from what we hear, morning games also took place) and then headed off to the Physics and IT buildings for lectures and tutorials.

PYTHON GROUP

Two lectures in the morning covered website design (taught by Will) and then further Python skills. The students worked through the NCSS Challenge site in the morning to build on their Python knowledge, and then were introduced to the templates they'll use in their project during the afternoon. Each group will create a social website, with each module assigned to different students. At the end they will have a working social network!

EMBEDDED GROUP

The robots rolled out today for the embedded group, who used the Arduino environment to load demos onto their robots and watch as they traced out loops on the floor. There were quite a few exclamations of how cute the robot was. In the afternoon, the students learnt to send commands from their boards to the robots, which will be pivotal for their project goals.

Treasure hunt results



1.	Team Cheat	875 pts
2.	Team Android	865 pts
3.	Team Grow Up Mushroom	855 pts
4.	Team Poop	845 pts
5.	Team Pink Yoshi	840 pts
6.	Team Tux	835 pts
7.	Team Domo-kun	-180 pts
8.	Team Hepatitis	800 pts
9.	Team I-Up	795 pts
10.	Team Zombie	785 pts
11.	Team Crab	735 pts
12.	Team Blue Yoshi	675 pts
13.	Team Cube	640 pts



MAKING WEBSITES Will introduces the Python students to basic HTML structure, which they will use in conjunction with Python to create their social network.



CIRCLING ROBOTS Mike demonstrates one of the vacuum robots in action, and everyone watches as it traces out a figure-eight on the lecture room floor.



READY SET... Tara and James mentally prepare for their annual guest appearance in the treasure hunt, as Dominick announces the rules.



TUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Name: Steven Sommer
Age: 35 (non-linear)
School: University of Sydney, University of NSW, Macquarie University

What do you do?

I'm an adjunct lecturer and executive consultant. I have led R&D, consulting and support groups at places like Oracle and Cisco.

Why NCSS?

For the games! All of them. I really like the fun of teaching students. Did I mention the games?

Future plans?

Keep lecturing and whatever I feel like - as well as continuing my semi-retirement.

Philosophy of 7.5:

It was the score I gave Group 3 for their excellent limerick, and after that I felt I couldn't give a higher score to other teams!

Favourite lecture topic?

Negotiation (an IT sub-course at USyd) - in the first lecture students played the roles of buyers and sellers, negotiating the value of their marks.

You lived in Japan?

Yes, near Yokohama. It was the start of the train line, and so we had a shot at getting a seat.

Fave Japanese phrase?

初めましてよろしくおねがいします。

(Hajimemashite yoroshiku onegaishimasu) - great for showing off some Japanese!

Tip to students?

Make sure you have fun!

AROUND CAMPUS



✱ Joel and other students play the piano in the dining room while a group of students gather around and listen



Today the students encountered their robots for the first time, and learnt to control their movements!

Challenges for a treasure hunter

...

We spoke to Dominick about the scavenger hunt, and followed groups around as the treasure hunt went down. Each challenge was scattered around the campus, with a bit of clustering near the main quad of the university - seven main challenges in total!

...

Hokey Pokey in the quad

Teams perform the Hokey Pokey in the main quadrangle of Sydney uni, on the front lawns. The challenge was that the song was not allowed to match the action which required group coordination. Quite entertaining to watch groups complete this, and we know cameraman Eddie got some good footage!

Substitute

Teams sing the contents of a non-fiction book to the tune of a well-known song. This may

have been one of the more difficult challenges! We heard all about James and his soulful Java source code songs, but sadly did not witness it. Apparently there is a video...!

Tile crossing

Teams have to get their tutor across a series of red tiles near the Chemistry building. The trick is that the tutor is in the middle of a line of students and blindfolded. We saw half of Group 3 do well at this by using their arms to lead their tutor Lisa in the right direction.

Chalk mascots

Teams must draw a satisfactory chalk drawing of their mascots. Judges Katie and Alan decide whether the drawing is up to standard. There were some awesome pictures here! We quite liked the cartoon of Domo-kun. Team Zombie innovatively drew their zombie mascot in pieces...

Digits of e

Teams work together to memorise several of the digits of e and then recite it. James and Tara had a rough time with

this challenge but we saw teams complete it quickly and quite efficiently. We left the challenge to the distant echoes of Steve and Ben's e-reciting insanity...

Wheelbarrowing

Teams work together in a line to transport balls over and under themselves with their eyes closed, until they reach the edge of the field. Most teams had done this by the time we got there but we saw two teams speedily complete the challenge - up the hill as well!

Logic puzzle

Without reproducing it here, teams had to find the heaviest bag of jellybeans given a set of circumstances. We were super impressed with how quickly we saw teams do this!

Replica photos

Teams have to track down locations on campus from photos taken by the tutors, and replicate the photo in them. Being a University of Sydney student would certainly help with this! Apparently one team got 33 photos of the university sport sign.

TREASURE HUNT!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Name: Joel Stankiewicz
Age: 17
School: UN Essential (NSW)

What do you do?

I'm in Year 12 doing my HSC this year. Some of my subjects are music, PDHPE, multimedia, D&T. Unfortunately computing is not offered!

Why NCSS?

I am interested in programming and games, and also video editing. My multimedia project is creating a music video to a song by Breaking Benjamin.

Future plans?

Hopefully programming and website design, using Python.

You're still "alive"?

Sure am! I'm playing it cool, you know, just waiting for the right opportunity. I also happen to know who my killer is...

Treasure hunt strategy:

No idea, we'll find out!

Best bit of NCSS so far?

The people. And the food is pretty good too.

FROM THE EDITORS

Re: Free Day photos

Hi everyone! Hope you have been enjoying the newsletter so far :) This is mainly directed at the students - tomorrow you guys have a lecture free time to do some sightseeing, so if you take any nice photos and would like to see them appear in the newsletter, please send them to:

ncssmedia@gmail.com

You might see them here!

What's been happening at NCSS?



Yesterday's events in a nutshell and what to expect for today

Students have now reached the end of the non-project part of the school, having learnt the basics they'll need to program their robots and create social networks.

The Python group has learnt Python skills through the NCSS challenge website and the embedded group has picked up the C skills they will use to code in the Arduino

environment and send commands to their robots.

The treasure hunt was great fun for all and well-organised with cool challenges and lots of running around campus. We enjoyed watching source-code tunes and the Hokey Pokey as well as looking out for NCSS balloons missed by students!

WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT?

Today the students will visit sponsor Altium in the morning, returning later for a series of Masterclasses that take the place of normal lectures and tutorials. After lunch is the allocated city free time, where students can take a break and explore Sydney city.

The next newsletter will come out on Friday, summing up Wednesday and Thursday.

Tuesday's schedule (04.01)

Morning
Lecture/tutorial

Afternoon
Lunch at Women's College
Lecture/tutorial

Evening
Dinner at Women's College
Treasure hunt around campus

Today's schedule (05.01)

Morning
Altium visit
Masterclasses

Afternoon
Lunch at Women's College
City free time

Evening
Dinner at Women's College

EDITION 1.2 BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Thank you to our awesome sponsors!



ATLASSIAN

Altium



freelancer



MACQUARIE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



Industry &
Investment

CargoWise

Google



ESA
Embedded Systems Australia



NEWSLETTER CREDITS

Editor: Vanessa Moss

Layout: Vanessa Moss/Thomas Kanold

Photography: Thomas Kanold