COMP6250
Data Communications
Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2024
School of Computing

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor/Lecturer
Tao Gu
tao.gu@mq.edu.au
Contact via email
Room 267, 4 Research Park Drive
Tuesday 2-5pm

Lecturer
Frances Louise
frances.louise@mq.edu.au
Contact via email
By appointment only (booking available on iLearn)

Credit points
10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status
Unit description
This unit introduces basic data communication concepts, theory and practice within the context of the use of communication networks in organisations.

Topics include:

- protocols and standards, including the OSI model
- in-depth understanding of key protocols of the TCP/IP protocol suite
- network switching and routing, including both intra-domain and inter-domain routing protocols
- LAN and WAN topologies
- wireless networking
- network hardware, such as routers, modems, repeaters, switches and hubs
- public telecommunication-based data services
- the effect of telecommunications on society
- the role of telecommunications within organisations
- introduction to security and network management
- organisational management of telecommunications
- introduction to network design
- regulatory frameworks

Practical work includes basic network configuration and protocol performance using specialised software.

This unit does not presume any knowledge of programming nor is there any programming work in the unit.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Explain the importance and the role of network protocols including why they are organised into protocol stacks and how protocol stacks function.

ULO2: Demonstrate an understanding of network addressing, routing of traffic between networks and the mechanisms that allow applications to co-exist and interact.

ULO3: Differentiate among LAN components, describe addressing schemes at various layers and how they interact, techniques to resolve them, and in particular instances
calculate addresses.

**ULO4:** Critically reflect on different major network technologies including wireless, backbone, wide area networks, and the Internet and, being aware of their properties, be able to evaluate different network designs.

**ULO5:** Demonstrate technical networking proficiency including demonstrated ability to configure, construct, and document, and in simple cases, design networks, as well as the ability to perform traffic analysis on local area networks.

**ULO6:** Demonstrate an understanding of, and have an ability to develop plans for dealing with, issues regarding network security and management.

### General Assessment Information

#### Requirements to Pass this Unit

To pass this unit, you must:

- Achieve a total mark equal to or greater than 50%

#### Late Assessment Submission

Late assessments are **not accepted** in this unit unless a **Special Consideration** has been submitted and approved.

#### Special Considerations

The **Special Consideration Policy** aims to support students who have been impacted by short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, and which may affect their performance in assessment. If you experience circumstances or events that affect your ability to complete the assessments in this unit on time, please inform the convenor and submit a Special Consideration request through [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

### Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mid-session break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Workshops</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 2 onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>During final exam period - TBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assignment 1

Assessment Type¹: Report
The first assignment tests students understanding of network stacks, layering, and addressing techniques.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Explain the importance and the role of network protocols including why they are organised into protocol stacks and how protocol stacks function.
• Demonstrate an understanding of network addressing, routing of traffic between networks and the mechanisms that allow applications to co-exist and interact.
• Differentiate among LAN components, describe addressing schemes at various layers and how they interact, techniques to resolve them, and in particular instances calculate addresses.

Assignment 2

Assessment Type: Report
Indicative Time on Task: 20 hours
Due: Week 12
Weighting: 20%

The second assignment tests students understanding of selected networking technologies.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Demonstrate an understanding of network addressing, routing of traffic between networks and the mechanisms that allow applications to co-exist and interact.
• Differentiate among LAN components, describe addressing schemes at various layers and how they interact, techniques to resolve them, and in particular instances calculate addresses.
• Critically reflect on different major network technologies including wireless, backbone, wide area networks, and the Internet and, being aware of their properties, be able to evaluate different network designs.
• Demonstrate an understanding of, and have an ability to develop plans for dealing with,
issues regarding network security and management.

**Practical Workshops**

Assessment Type: 1. Demonstration  
Indicative Time on Task: 2. 0 hours  
Due: **Week 2 onwards**  
Weighting: **20%**

To receive marks students must attend the practical section and demonstrate completion of the section to their practical supervisor.

Earning the marks will require not only successful completion of the exercises, but presentation of appropriate documentation, as outlined in the questions.

You must complete the practical session in the week it is allocated.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the importance and the role of network protocols including why they are organised into protocol stacks and how protocol stacks function.
- Demonstrate an understanding of network addressing, routing of traffic between networks and the mechanisms that allow applications to co-exist and interact.
- Differentiate among LAN components, describe addressing schemes at various layers and how they interact, techniques to resolve them, and in particular instances calculate addresses.
- Demonstrate technical networking proficiency including demonstrated ability to configure, construct, and document, and in simple cases, design networks, as well as the ability to perform traffic analysis on local area networks.

**Final Exam**

Assessment Type: 1. Examination  
Indicative Time on Task: 2. 10 hours  
Due: **During final exam period - TBA**  
Weighting: **40%**

The final exam asks students to apply the knowledge they have gained through the semester to one or more given network scenarios. Tasks to be completed may include elements of network design, troubleshooting, and the appropriate application of security controls.
On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the importance and the role of network protocols including why they are organised into protocol stacks and how protocol stacks function.
- Demonstrate an understanding of network addressing, routing of traffic between networks and the mechanisms that allow applications to co-exist and interact.
- Differentiate among LAN components, describe addressing schemes at various layers and how they interact, techniques to resolve them, and in particular instances calculate addresses.
- Critically reflect on different major network technologies including wireless, backbone, wide area networks, and the Internet and, being aware of their properties, be able to evaluate different network designs.
- Demonstrate technical networking proficiency including demonstrated ability to configure, construct, and document, and in simple cases, design networks, as well as the ability to perform traffic analysis on local area networks.
- Demonstrate an understanding of, and have an ability to develop plans for dealing with, issues regarding network security and management.

1 If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

2 Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

**Delivery and Resources**

**Classes**

Each week, you have a two-hour lecture and a two-hour practical workshop. For details of scheduled classes, consult the timetables webpage.

Note that **lectures start in week 1**, while the practical workshops (lab sessions) commence in **week 2**. The week-by-week details of the practical (lab) classes will be available from iLearn.

**You must attend the practical that you are enrolled in.**
Methods of Communication

We will communicate with you via your university email and through announcements on iLearn. Queries to convenors can be sent to the unit convenor via the contact email on iLearn.

Unit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Practical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Ch 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Week 1, No Labs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>LANs</td>
<td>Ch 7</td>
<td>Weekly Practicals</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Wireshark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Week 2 onwards)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Network Layer</td>
<td>Ch 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IP Headers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Application Layer, Transport Layer - UDP</td>
<td>Ch 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Subnetting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transport Layer - TCP</td>
<td>Ch’s 5 &amp; 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PacketTracer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Data-Link Layer</td>
<td>Ch 4</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>TCP and FTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Physical Layer</td>
<td>Ch 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DNS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wireless Networks</td>
<td>Ch 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Switches, MAC, and ARP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-semester Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Network Security I</td>
<td>Ch 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WiFi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Network Security II</td>
<td>Ch 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Backbone Networks</td>
<td>Ch 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>VLANs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>MAN and WAN</td>
<td>Ch 9</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>RIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Internet</td>
<td>Ch 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single Area OSPF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>During final exam period - TBA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam (120 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policy.mq.edu.au).
Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

**Results**

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

**Academic Integrity**

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

**The Writing Centre**

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.
Student Services and Support

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University’s IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Changes from Previous Offering

We value student feedback to be able to continually improve the way we offer our units. As such, we encourage students to provide constructive feedback via student surveys, to the teaching staff directly, or via the FSE Student Experience & Feedback link on the iLearn page.

Student feedback from the previous offering of this unit was very positive overall, with students pleased with the clarity around assessment requirements and the level of support from the teaching staff. As such, no change to the delivery of the unit is planned. However, we will
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continue to strive to improve the level of support and the level of student engagement.

Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the Handbook