Objective. Operations Research (OR) is a branch of mathematics and engineering that is dedicated to solving practical decision-making problems. The process consists in two steps: First, formulate an accurate mathematical model of the problem. Then, choose an appropriate algorithm out of the optimization toolbox to provide good (if possible optimal) solutions. CO 370 covers both aspects: (1a) we will learn how to model real problems, (1b) given numerical data, we will see how to encode our models into a machine-readable form that can be fed to a solver, and (2) we will study the algorithms that are implemented in solvers. The objective is that, after taking this course, you are able to recognize, understand, model and solve OR problems on your own computer.

Prerequisites. Knowledge of linear programming at the level of CO 250 or higher.

Textbook. There is no required textbook.

Course website. [math.uwaterloo.ca/~lpoirrier/co370](http://math.uwaterloo.ca/~lpoirrier/co370)

We will also use UWaterloo’s LEARN website ([learn.uwaterloo.ca](http://learn.uwaterloo.ca)) as an on-line gradebook so you can keep track of all of your grades in the course.

Lectures. AL 113, Tue-Thu 10:00 – 11:20

Instructor. Laurent Poirrier
- office: MC 6318
- phone: x35295
- email: lpoirrier (at uwaterloo)
- office hours: Tue 1pm

TAs
- Shima Bab Hadiashar office: QNC 3117
- email: shima.bab.hadiashar
- office hours: Wed 1:30pm
- Daniel Oliveira office: MC 6311
- email: ddolivei
- office hours: Tue 11:30am
- Natig Tofigzade office: MC 5481
- email: natig.tofigzade
- office hours: Fri 3pm
- Ishan Bansal office: MC 5462
- email: ibansal
- office hours: Mon 11am
- Zouhaier Ferchiou office: MC 5023-B
- email: zouhaier.ferchiou
- office hours: Thu 1pm

Assignments and exams. There will be 4 assignments. The questions and due date will be communicated at least a week in advance. No late submissions will be accepted, regardless of circumstances. Some of the assignments will involve numerical data. We will use the domain-specific language [JuMP](http://jump-dev.org) to encode our models. JuMP is based on the [Julia](http://julialang.org) language, which is popular with data-science applications. No prior knowledge of Julia is expected, but you will be asked to learn the basics for the assignments. An introduction will be covered in class.
There will be one midterm and one final exam. Both are closed-book, no calculators. The first midterm will be held Tuesday, October 29th at 10am. The final exam will be comprehensive. Missed exams will count as 0 unless suitable medical documentation is provided. There will not be any make-up exams.

The final grade will be homeworks 20%, midterm 30%, final 50%.

Course contents.

I. Linear optimization
   • Definition and simple models
   • Example 1: $NH_3$ and $NH_4Cl$
   • Example 2: Blending problem
   • Example 3: Multiperiod investment problem
   • Max $s-t$ flow problem
     – Refresher: directed graphs
     – Max $s-t$ flow problem statement and formulation
     – Integer solutions property
     – Bipartite matchings
   • Min-cost flow problem
     – Min-cost flow problem statement and formulation
     – Application example: transshipment problem
     – Integer solutions property
     – Application example: Bus scheduling

II. Integer optimization
   • Example 1: knapsack problem
   • Example 2: bin packing problem
   • Discrete-valued variables
   • Piecewise-linear functions
   • Union of polyhedra

III. Decision-making under uncertainty: Stochastic and robust optimization

IV. Large scale optimization: Solutions methods
Discipline, appeals, accessibility

Academic Integrity. In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. For more information, check http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity

Grievance. A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline. A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm

Appeals. A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

Students with disabilities. The AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with them at the beginning of each academic term.