Turing School of Software & Design
Student Handbook

Updated: November 2022

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Introduction

Welcome!

We are excited to have you join Turing School of Software & Design! We are building an inclusive community to help us realize our vision of a world powered by technology where the people building it represent the people using it. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize you with the way our school operates and how our community engages with one another.

Each student is responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with this handbook. Our goal is to provide you with an environment that is constructive and supports both personal and professional growth.

We anticipate changes will be made to this handbook in the future and reserve the right to amend, revise and/or withdraw the provisions set forth in the handbook, and you will be notified any time changes are made.

Program Overview, Mission, & Vision

The Turing School of Software & Design offers top-quality training for students who want to become professional software developers and designers. The school is a 501(c)3 non-profit operating in the state of Colorado under the direction of Jeff Casimir, Executive Director.

Board of Directors:
Bree Thomas, Chair of the Board
Neal Sales-Griffin, Vice Chair of the Board
Erin Bassity, Secretary
Kareem Grant, Treasurer
Gordon Bronson
Samantha Holloway
Rosalyn Lemioux
Tyler Willis

Mission

Turing's mission is to unlock human potential by training a diverse, inclusive student body to succeed in high-fulfillment technical careers.

Vision Statement

Our vision is a world powered by technology where the people building it represent the people using it. We're here to build a movement.

Program Overview

Turing offers two different programs for our students: the [Back-End Engineering IDL (BEE) program](#) and the [Front-End Engineering (FEE) IDL program](#). Both programs consist of four 6-week modules, spanning a total of 7 months for continuously enrolled students. The BEE program focuses on object-oriented programming through Ruby on Rails and JavaScript while the FEE program focuses on UX/UI principles through HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Refer to the Course Catalog for more information.

In order to advance our mission and vision, our curriculum transcends technical training. Turing also offers opportunities for students to grow as individuals, members of a team, and members of a community through [professional development](#) and career transition support.

Faculty & Staff

Turing is united as one staff, but within our responsibilities, we operate in different specializations based on the needs of the organization. We have the Operations Side of the house which includes the Recruitment and Admissions team, the Student Services Team and the Employment Team. The Instructional Side of the house includes the Back-End Instructional Team and the Front-End Instructional Team. All profiles of team members are available at turing.edu/team.

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Turing Norms & Processes

Facilities

Turing operates in a fully remote capacity utilizing Zoom Education as a platform for our interactive distance learning format.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule will be posted before class time each morning of a module on the prospective program's site:

- BEE daily outlines: backend.turing.edu
- FEE daily outlines: frontend.turing.edu

These outlines are subject to change, and your instructors will notify you if that happens. Morning classes run from 9am-12pm with an hour break for lunch and afternoon classes picking back up at 1pm-4pm. Besides the #announcements Slack channel, this is where you'll receive most of your important announcements.

Attendance Policies

As described in the Course Catalog (sent to you as a PDF in your welcome packet email and provided for you in your welcome packet folder), students are expected to be in classes

Monday through Friday. Failure to attend classes will likely impact student performance, and instructors will review attendance when making decisions regarding student promotion.

Instructors may request that a student withdraw from a course or program if absences exceed 20% at any point during a course. Students who are unable to continue any course for medical reasons or severe personal problems will be required to take a leave of absence until they are able to return to the program and attend in a full time capacity. Proper documentation will be required to substantiate a student's withdrawal. If a student drops below 80% attendance for the cumulative module the student will be required to repeat in order to meet quantitative progress benchmarks.

If a student will miss class or be tardy, they should notify their module instructors as soon as they know they will be absent or late. Students arriving late for any reason may be denied entry to that day's class at the instructor's discretion.

Calendars

There are several Google Calendars that students can access to find out module and community schedules:

- Turing Community Calendar: check this for information on when student groups meet, upcoming meet-ups, and any Turing-wide community events.
- Module-specific calendars: check these for information on what is scheduled for your entire module. Note: these are subject to change; your daily outline will have the most up-to-date information.
    - BEE M1
    - FEE M1
    - BEE M2
    - FEE M2
    - BEE M3
    - FEE M3
    - BEE M4
    - FEE M4

each module.

Slack

Slack is Turing's main communication medium, and all students are expected to be checking Slack regularly and responding to messages in a timely manner. Slack works like an ongoing chat room but divided into specific channels and with the ability to alert specific people to your messages.

Please watch this first video to get started using Slack.

Notifying Others

You'll use the @ sign to notify others to certain messages:

- You can use it for individuals (i.e., @allison_reu_singer)
- Use @here to notify everyone in a specific channel who is currently online *(This is NOT be to be used in #on-campus or #watercooler)*
- Use @channel to notify everyone in a specific channel, online or not *(This is NOT to be used in #on-campus or #watercooler)*
- You can also notify just students from a particular cohort by using @____-[program]-students, such as @1611-backend-students

Direct Messages (DMs)

You can send messages directly to 1 person or create a private dialogue with up to 7 people. DMs are effective for messages that only pertain to 1 (or a few) specific person in order to keep the communication streamlined.

Slack Threads

A newer feature of Slack, threads allow people to respond to messages without cluttering a channel. That reply will only be seen by the original poster unless you check the box to alert the entire channel. In order to reply to a message in a thread, hover over the message and click on the speech bubble icon in the list of icons on the right hand side.

Slack Channels

#announcements

This channel is where staff post announcements for the current Turing community. These announcements pertain to facilities, whole-school schedule, or whole-school activities. **Only staff members are to post in this channel**, and students are expected to check this channel regularly for important announcements.

#on-campus

This channel is for all current students and staff to discuss topics or issues that are pertinent to to the Turing students and staff physically on campus in Denver. For example: "There are bagels in the kitchen. Enjoy!"

#broadcast

This channel includes all staff, current students, alumni, and mentors -- 500+ people. This channel is for community-wide announcements, and **only staff members are to post in this channel**. If you have an announcement, please send it to a staff member to have it posted. For example: "Sunday the 16th I'm holding a Kids Who Code event and need 3 volunteers. Anyone available?"

Channels for each cohort (#1606-backend, for example)
These channels are for cohort-specific news from staff and for students to ask for help from students and instructors in their cohort. **Students are expected to be checking their own cohort channel frequently.**

Directory of channels
A more comprehensive directory of channels can be found here.

Notifications in Slack
When you are mentioned in any way in Slack, you will receive notifications. To effectively manage your notifications to keep up with important announcements but not be distracted throughout the day, please watch this video on how Slack notifications work. We recommend that you only get Direct Message notifications sent to your phone.

Slack Code of Conduct
As in our overall community, Turing aims to create an inclusive environment in our Slack community. We expect all members to fulfill that principle in their communication. All participants are welcome and should be respected. We welcome healthy debate and dialogue in which disagreements happen and should be handled from a position of respect and a desire to learn from others' perspectives.

Aim to have the pace of conversation inversely proportional to the number of people involved. If you're discussing an important topic in #watercooler, for instance, understand that most of the potential audience is not currently staring at their Slack. Slow it down. Leave space for others to jump in. If you're posting >10 messages in an hour, then you're not inviting more people into the conversation - you're having a loud debate with a subset of other users.

"Trolling" or "playing devil's advocate" is strongly discouraged and will result in a suspension of your Slack account.

All harassment policies outlined in the Turing Course Catalog apply to any communications on Slack. We do not tolerate harassment in any form, which includes but is not limited to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images, deliberate intimidation, stalking, sustained disruption of discussions or other events, and unwelcome sexual attention. If a member of the community engages in behavior that violates this code of conduct, Turing staff may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender or expulsion from Slack.

If you experience any type of harassment on Slack, please reach out to Rachel Martinez or any other staff member you feel comfortable talking with. Please take screenshots of the conversation.

Student Feedback

Students should be able to give instructors feedback about their experience at Turing in a variety of ways. At any point during the program, students are also welcome to share feedback directly with instructors and Directors through Slack or an in person conversation. End of Program surveys will be analyzed each inning.

- Weekly Instructional Surveys
- End of Inning Survey
- End of Program Survey

If students want to report a situation, they can also use this reporting form at any point in the program.

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Academics

In order to help you fully become a software developer, Turing aims to create programming that provides both understanding of both the technical skills and culture of the technology industry. Our curriculum is designed for students to embark on a full career transition through opportunities to grow as individuals, members of a team, and members of the Turing and overall technology community.

Technical Skills

In addition to the curriculum outlined in the Course Catalog, technical skills taught by module instructors include code review best practices, technical check-ins, pairing, and other agile practices. Mondays through Thursdays are filled with classes (both technical and professional development-oriented, see below), project work time, and check-ins with instructors. Turing refers to these as the "how" days for instructing students how to complete different tasks.

Career Development

Turing's career development curriculum is created directly out of this mission with a focus on unlocking students' potential in modules one and two through cultivating self-awareness and empathy. In modules three and four, curriculum focuses on providing strategies to empower students to succeed in high-fulfillment technical careers by creating connections within the technology industry, building competencies for industry leadership, and securing a fulfilling career -- and not just another job.

The touchstones of this curriculum include these mindsets:

- Agency: Taking initiative and ownership over your learning and work
- Empathy: Understanding and sharing others' emotions in order to relate to them

- Engagement: Active participation in community
- Grit: A combination of perseverance and passion
- Growth: A belief that your abilities can be developed through dedication, hard work, and resiliency

Through this development, upon graduation, students will be able to communicate who they are and what they know, collaborate with teams, adapt to changing situations, execute their ideas, and solve problems as junior software developers.

For more details on the entire career development track at Turing, check out this [repo](#).

Gear Up

Gear Up sessions take place on Friday afternoons. Taking part in discussions that are challenging to your worldview or notion of your mindsets is an opportunity for growth as both a programmer and as a person. Students are expected to contribute fully and respectfully to these conversations. As they can be challenging and sometimes sensitive, remembering to practice empathy and seeking to first understand rather than be understood is a good way to engage in this learning.

Over the course of Gear Up, we focus on building knowledge, understanding, and skill.

Knowledge:
- Sessions will focus on the intersections of identity and bias, along with data and vocabulary connecting those topics to software development.

Understanding:
- Students will be asked to engage in critical self-reflection in order to be able to identify their individual identity and privileges and how their actions can impact the larger community.

Skills:
- Navigate critical conversations
- Approach their community with empathy and vulnerability
- Practice humility as they enter the tech industry

Reasonable Accommodations Request

Students with documented learning, physical, sensory, health, or psychiatric disabilities may request reasonable accommodations to ensure access to education at Turing. Reasonable accommodations are those that do not fundamentally alter the nature of a course or the school's policies.

Students who wish to request reasonable accommodations are expected to self-disclose by completing the Reasonable Accommodations Request form located on the programs curriculum site. and providing current documentation of their disability. Turing reserves the right to deny a request if the accommodation sought is not supported by the data in the assessment or documentation. We recommend that this form is submitted at least 2-3 weeks prior to your start date so that we can ensure accommodations are in place by your first day.

Repeating a Module
While at Turing, you may find that you need to repeat a module. This ability to repeat a mod is an important part of how our program is structured, and it is a positive opportunity to strengthen understanding and gain confidence in the topics covered so you can move forward from a place of strength rather than one of uncertainty.

General Expectations
To that end, we have found that students who demonstrate the following patterns of behavior and work ethic gain the most from and find the most success in their repeated module. Our guidelines for repeating a module have come from our experiences working with many repeating students, and seeing what works, what doesn't, what is a signal of success, and what is a signal of struggle.

All students repeating a module are expected to meet the following requirements:

- You should be proficient in all learning goals for the inning
- You should clearly demonstrate by week 3 that you are on track to pass the module (example: mid-module mock assessment should be a solid "PASS")
- Study habits and work patterns should be well established and effective, and if they are not, you are expected to be actively and strategically working to improve them.
- You should demonstrate consistent improvement around using best practices for writing and speaking about code
- You will be required to develop a plan for all Professional Development sessions. You will meet with Allison during week 1 of the module to create your custom plan.
- You should be able to reflect on your first pass at the module and identify the specific challenges that prevented you from being successful.

Repeating a module should be seen as an opportunity to strengthen your skills, not as a failure. It is vital that you commit to staying engaged and focused during the entirety of your repeated module, even in lessons that feel "easy" the second time around. The team at Turing wholeheartedly supports repeating students, and we view this as a chance to make the most of your time here and one of the best ways of making sure you are strongly set up for success beyond your time with us Turing.

Conditions

1) You may only start any given module two times. This means that you may only fail a module one time and must be successful in that module on your second attempt in order to continue on in the Turing Program.

2) Any Student enrolled in Turing may only start a maximum of 6 modules.

Community Involvement & Student Life

As members of the Turing community, students receive programming on community-building and have a plethora of opportunities to get involved with the Turing community and the greater technology industry.

Turing Blog

Turing's blog is housed on https://writing.turing.edu/ and any student can contribute posts regarding any topic revolving around programming and the technology industry in general. Please reach out to Lindsey Lucero (Brand and Marketing Coordinator) if you'd like to contribute a blog post. Every student has a different perspective on issues in the tech. industry and on their experience at Turing, and we value those different opinions and want to share them. Plus, blog posts are a great way to contribute to your online presence for career networking.

Code Fair & Demo Competition

Each inning, Turing hosts a Code Fair in which Mod 3 and Mod 4 students showcase apps they have made during their time at Turing. Instructors and directors rate these projects and vote on finalists from Modules 3 and 4 to demo their projects for judges and employers in a Demo Competition during the following inning. All Turing events will be announced ahead of time and posted on the Turing Community Google Calendar.

Graduation Celebration

During the last week of Module Four, Turing celebrates the finishing cohort's accomplishments through a graduation ceremony and final group retrospective on the past 7 months of hard work. We host this celebration via zoom and families and friends are welcome to attend to enjoy the celebration of this accomplishment with you. It's important to take the time to celebrate your accomplishments, and finishing your education at Turing is one big accomplishment!

Group Retros

Cohorts meet for Group Retrospectives to discuss what went well over the week, what didn't go well, and how they'd like to improve the following week. Cohorts work together to solve

problems as a team. Students are equal partners in the education and community at Turing, and Group Retros are the perfect place to voice your concerns and feedback about both the academics and culture at Turing as well as problem-solve with your cohort to foster change. Each cohort has up to four Student Leadership Committee members who lead group retros.

Job Shadowing
When students are in Module 3, they have the opportunity to participate in a job shadowing day. Company visits are organized in order to give students an opportunity to learn about specific jobs in the software industry and see how different companies approach software development. This is also a great opportunity for students to network with other developers.

Mentors
Turing has a mentorship program available to all students through our student House communities. The majority of mentors are alumni but also include other developers in the technology community-at-large who volunteer their time to advise our students. Mentors provide time to support students with both technical skills and professional development. Check out your House Slack channel and House directory to find out more information about your mentors.

Circles
Students in every module and alumni have the option to join Circles. Circles are student and alumni-led groups that are wide ranging in subject matter - from hobbies, to affinity groups, to professional development opportunities. Circles are a great opportunity to engage with like-minded students across programs and modules and also to interact with Turing alumni who share your interests.

Student Leadership Committee
The Student Leadership Committee (SLC) is a discussion group intended to analyze successes and struggles among the student body and create actionable change to improve student life at Turing. The board is made up of up to four students from each cohort. Board meetings take place each week and are supported by staff members. SLC members gather feedback from their cohorts each week and strategize on how to solve community-focused problems. They also work to foster a supportive and inclusive community by planning student events.

Student Groups
There are many student groups that students can join if they choose to help them foster community and feel supported during their time at Turing. Listed below are active student groups, but students are also encouraged to start new groups if they would like.

Turing Joan Clarke Society

Students and alumni of Turing who identify as non-male have created a network of underrepresented gender programmers within our community through the Turing Joan Clarke Society. Members usually meet throughout the module to hear from speakers or have whole group discussions on issues that affect underrepresented genders in tech. Any students who identify as non-male can message Emma Byers (@Emma Byers) or another underrepresented gender staff member to join the channel.

Mezcla
There is a private Slack channel open to anyone who identifies as Latinx/Hispanic/Chicanx. Send a direct message to Sal Espinosa (@s-espinosa) for access. The aim is to connect Latinos with one another and have a safe place to share ideas, thoughts, or socialize.

QueerQoders
This group is for any students who identify as LGBTQIA+. Members have multiple gatherings such as lunches and happy hours, for students who identify as queer. Contact Emma Byers (@Emma Byers) to join that channel.

Parent Groups
There are quite a lot of students (and staff) who are parents are Turing, and we want to make sure that parents find support within our larger community. #parenturing and #turingmoms are open Slack channels that you can join to access these communities more fully.

TAPIDA (Turing Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans)
Started by Turing alumni, this group was started to create a supportive community within Turing for Asian American/Pacific Islander/Desi students. If you are Asian American/Pacific Islander/Desi, this group provides you the ability to connect with others who share similar backgrounds and cultural experiences within Turing and as programmers. Contact Joanne Liu (@joanneliu) to join this channel.

Black @ Turing
This group was started to create a supportive community within Turing for Black students. If you are Black, this group provides you the ability to connect with others who share similar backgrounds and experiences within Turing and as programmers. Contact Alex Robinson (@robinsonalex) to join this channel.

Veterans
In addition to accepting the GI Bill, Turing aims to create a supportive community for military veterans looking for a new career. This group provides the ability to connect with other veterans for questions, advice, and camaraderie. Join #turing-veterans on Slack.

Shades of Turing

Shades of Turing is a group focusing on professional development, community building, and support for students who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). This group includes get togethers with alumni to support current students as the navigate the technology industry as a BIPOC and an active Slack channel for connecting with people who share similar experiences.

Academic Integrity

At Turing, we teach our students to take agency of their learning as well as collaboration with others. We expect integrity from our students, and as such, presenting someone else's work as one's own will not be tolerated. If staff suspects that a student may have cheated on an assignment or project, a disciplinary meeting will be held to determine the validity of the cheating claim. If a student is found to have cheated, they will face disciplinary action which may include immediate dismissal from Turing.

While cheating can be hard to define in the world of coding. For a basic definition this is what we have settled on as a team.

- Cheating = Using any line of code that you do not understand in any project or assessment.
- Cheating = **Giving** information you have learned about an assessment to another student before they have taken the assessment. This includes Taking screenshots OR viewing screenshots of a Turing assessment.
- Cheating = **Using** information you have learned about an assessment from another student before you have taken the assessment.

The above is not an exhaustive list.   The spirit of academic integrity is presenting your own work and being ready to learn from the mistakes that may be in there. You will not always have the right answers, and that is okay. Turing is a place to learn, not a place to come with all the answers.

Student Behavior Violations

When a student violates Turing's Code of Conduct, academic or other expectations from the Course Catalog, or behaves in any other way that is not aligned with Turing's mission, students may receive the following:
- **Warning Document:** isolated incidents that are relatively minor behavior concerns
- **Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs):** repeated pattern of concerning behaviors; This document helps a student by serving as an accountability tool to improve the student's behavior(s). However, if a student does not meet the expectations of the PIP, the student may be asked to leave the program.

- **Turing Expulsion:** egregious behavior that violates our Code of Conduct, harassment policies, and/or academic dishonesty policies
- **Slack Suspension (see [Slack Code of Conduct](#)):** reports of harassment or "trolling." Depending on the severity, the account in question might be temporarily suspended with access taken away for 30 days and then reinstated. However, if there is very severe misconduct or a repeated pattern of misconduct, the account may be permanently suspended.

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