# Transcript: C952 Overview with DeNece Meyer and Sidney Rubey

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

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Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

Hi, this is the DeNece Meyer and welcome to the podcast for C952 computer architecture. I'm here today with an amazing instructor, Sydney Rubey, and I've got a few questions that my students are constantly asking me that I would like to ask Sydney and share with you. Sydney, are you there?

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

Yeah, hi DeNece.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

Hi, and thank you for doing the podcast with this to really help our students understand a little bit more about this course and how to really get a good start and work through this course. I have a lot of students who asked me, how is computer architecture relevant to the BSES degree?

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

The C952 course, it's about computers, central processing units, or the CPUs and CPU performance, which relates to how fast the CPU is working for us. The CPU's, they're the engines of the computer. Students may have heard that. Why is it relevant? Well, to make an analogy, not having a computer architecture course in the program would be like getting a degree in automotive engineering and not studying internal combustion engines. Unless the student has studied this or studied something like a CompTIA, a Plus Certification. It can be a completely new topic for them. But once you get into it, you recognize some familiar concepts. An example is most people have purchased a computer at some point in time. They want to know what makes a good computer. Is this a good purchase? You start talking about the parameters that they market for these, like CPU speeds, like a four gigahertz. What's the memory size? That's RAM, like eight gigabytes and hard drives and hard drive size and they disk or solid state and those sizes. The course introduces all of these concepts and goes into a little more detail in the history and the different considerations of their makeup.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

Great that is some great information on this course. Thank you so much and really helps me to get an overview. Especially with my students when they're talking about it. The learning resources for this particular course, a lot of students, there's a lot of learning resources in here. I've told them before. They're using an analogy, GMHC, Toby, There's a lot of rabbit holes. The students asked mound time, do I need to go through all the learning resources before I take the pre-assessment?

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

Yeah, that's a good question. It's a mixed answer. One, at WGU, a student can take the pre-assessment whenever they want. That's one answer. Two and a lot of mentors advocate this. There's research that demonstrates there's a real learning value to taking a final exam before they've ever studied any of the course material. However, counter-intuitive, that may sound. If a student wants to find a good time to take the pre-assessment and they give it their best shot. They haven't studied anything like this before. They can still get some learning benefit from taking that approach. That's why the student will take the pre-assessment, the first thing when they start a course. It can be a little difficult to understand without some background on why we tell students to do that. Three, and this is the more expected approaches the students can complete the required reading and then take the pre-assessment and see where they are in the course, where they have strong knowledge and where they need to study a little bit more. Though the downside to taking lots of attempts at the pre-assessment as a student will usually improve in the assessment just for me having seen the questions before. That gives them a false sense of security for the final objective assessment.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

That's good information, That's really good. I know now that we've have added those course planning tools, I really tried to push my students more into that one when they're asking the question. I think that's a good approach to use it exactly like you're saying this, see what you know in advance. But I love the pre-assessments for some of my more seasoned students. They've used that for some courses and that's a really good explanation of the difference. This course can be considered very challenging to students. I know there's a lot of information out there on different social media that talks a little bit about this course and have some students feel it's challenging. What's a good pace or a timeframe that you see as an instructor that students can complete this course.

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

To start out with, this is a challenging course and I've seen students that are super accelerators and they're completing lots of courses. They can still need 2-3 weeks to complete this course. If you're listening to this podcast and that's you, you're not doing anything wrong. It's just a big course. There is a very realistic pacing plan in the course homepage. It essentially covers the seven chapters in five weeks. It has a review and a pre-assessment and taking the objective assessment in the sixth week. There's always going to be students that complete the course more quickly and those that need more time. That's fine. But with a consistent study plan. Spending quality study time with the course many days a week. This is a good study plan. I always imagined students get sick of hearing their mentors. Say, what's your study goal for the week? You've got to set goals. But really it is the best approach for most students. The best approach is to set your weekly goals, which can align with the study plan mentioned above. Then just do it. Tell yourself, I'm going to finish studying these three sections tonight, period. That's how you set goals and get it done.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

Great information, great. In the process of all of these courses, this question is asked all the time by students, when is the best time for a student to make that appointment with the course instructor. What are your recommendations for this course?

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

A couple of things. I always advocate to students to make just a 15-minute appointment with their instructor. Every time they start a new course. It's just a much more efficient communication. I've been a mentor and an instructor, and I still think that's the wisest approach. Students can ask questions directly as they come to mind in the conversation. The instructor can learn a little bit more about where the student is starting in the course. If they have a background, some work experience, or previous education other than that, the second thing, if you find yourself as a student spending an hour trying to figure out one question, that's when you make an appointment. Don't do that. It's just frustrating to spend that amount of time on one problem and not make any progress. Just make an appointment with your instructor and move on to new material. The purpose of the course is not to make you frustrated and miserable.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

That is a great point. I'm always telling students that they're really the conversations with you can actually help them out over the concepts that they may get hung up on. Really you're the subject matter expert and reaching out to you when is vital. I know there's a lot of different recommendations that they may see elsewhere. But as an instructor or do you feel like there's any additional resources besides the zyBooks learning resource that the student could use or needs to use.

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

Most WGU courses, I find the best resource is the resource that's provided. The questions for the objective assessment are usually taken right from that resource. That's one way to start with it. The only other resource that might have to do with vocabulary, because this is a big vocabulary course. We've got a link to a quizlet vocabulary course in 952. The link to that is in the course homepage. You can find that by clicking the course search button in the bottom right corner of the course page. Other than that, the zyBooks course, webinars, the videos, and the pre-assessment are all that the student needs to be successful in the course. On the course homepage at the bottom of the page. This is the C1952 course homepage resources that you can access through the course search. There's a link to Intel corporations video series, that's an excellent series. It's very current. It came out or like in spring of 2021. I thought that could be a very motivating series for some students who can find the subject a little dry, it's not a substitute for the zyBooks course. The students need the types of questions that they find in the pre-assessment and the zyBooks course to really get good practice for the objective assessment. The one other resource that I encourage students to look at is the course Cheddar. Here, students are going to find students that have passed the course tell you in their own words that the course really is a very doable course. What they did to prepare for and pass the objective assessment. Don't be intimidated by your computer architecture course. You can do it.

Speaker #2 (DeNece Meyer):

Thank you so much for all this great information today, Sydney, and thank you for joining me with this podcast. I really appreciate your time and I will definitely have my students listen to the podcast and reach out to you as often as need be. Thank you for your time.

Speaker #3 (Sidney Rubey):

My pleasure, DeNece, we're always here for the students whenever we can help.

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

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