MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam Quick Start Guide

Here are "quick start" instructions for starting the MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam (DS Exam). If you are having trouble getting to the exam (e.g., logging in to PrairieLearn, not finding the DS Exam), you should make sure you have properly gone through all the steps listed here. (Note that these steps may vary slightly if you already have an account on PrairieLearn.)

These instructions have mainly been condensed from the more complete instruction video located here:

https://mediaspace.illinois.edu/media/t/1_98sr4m91

(This video also contains some helpful tips on how to use the exam interface.)

These instructions have been updated to reflect changes on PrairieLearn as of 01/26/2023.

The following page also contains some information on the exam, e.g., how to sign up for it and schedule it:

https://cs.illinois.edu/admissions/graduate/applications-process-requirements/data-structures-proficiency-exam

1. Log in to PrairieLearn

   a. Go to https://us.prairielearn.com/

   b. Click on the "Log in" button

   Note that on this login page, there are two "Sign in" buttons:

      Sign in with Google
      Sign in with Microsoft

   There may also be two or more "Institution sign in" buttons, including one for "University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)".

   You should click on the one that matches the email address you're going to log in with; e.g., if you have an @gmail.com email address, you should use the "Sign in with Google" button (typically, you should not use one of the Institution sign in buttons, unless you have an account/email address from that institution).

2. Click on "Add or remove courses"

3. Find the line with the course name:

   MCS DS Exam: MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam, MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam

   and click on the "Add course" button to the right of the line

(Note: The name of the course may change slightly; it likely will still include "MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam".)

Confirm adding the course

4. Click on the PrairieLearn logo near the top left of the page to go back to the PrairieLearn home page

5. Click on the course listed (i.e., the name that it was in step 3)

6. You will see a list of assessments (with perhaps only one in the list); click on the assessment "MCS Data Structures Proficiency Exam"
   (Note: The name of the assessment may change slightly.)

7. Have the proctor enter the password and click on the "Submit" button

8. You will be shown an honor pledge page. After being instructed by the proctor, read the page, check the box next to the text "I certify and pledge the above." and click on "Start assessment"