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Subject: IDL Programming Course Announcement  
Posted by [davidf](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 1997 07:00:00 GMT  
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Hi Folks,

Many of you have asked me about IDL programming courses and in particular where and when I teach them. Most of the courses I teach are on-site courses and are closed to the public.

But I wanted to let you know about a four-day public course I will be teaching in Columbia, Maryland from November 18th to 21st. This will be an IDL Programming Course and I will be introducing the participants to some new ideas I have about writing structured IDL programs. You can obtain more information about the course or register for it by visiting my web page at:

<http://www.dfanning.com/>

In the nearly six years that I have been teaching people to write IDL programs, I have noticed that many of us do not have a very good idea of what constitutes a "good" IDL program. Many of our programs work, but they are not elegant, and making changes to them (as we inevitably must) can be difficult and painful.

So I have been thinking about rules of thumb or heuristics for writing "good" IDL programs. To me this means a program that works the same on 8-bit or 24-bit displays, can be displayed in a resizable graphics window, comes with a graphical user interface, but can also be used at the IDL command line, can be easily made into GIF, TIFF, JPEG, and PostScript files, and can be easily maintained and extended.

In fact, well written programs should constitute a library of programs that can be used together in various combinations to produce ever more sophisticated applications. Those of you who have been good enough to download and use many of the programs on my web page have seen me working out these ideas over the course of the past six months or so.

This object-oriented or modular approach to programming will have you writing better programs that can be shared more easily with your colleagues. I have been testing this new material the past month on courses in Australia and England and I am VERY excited by the results.

Please let me know if you or one of your colleagues is interested in attending this course. (If you know of someone who might be interested in this course, please pass the information along to them or let me know and I will contact them with more information.) The course is strictly limited to 14 people, with each person having their own PC running Windows 95.

Please come join me for a few coyote stories and some outstanding IDL programming information.

Best Regards,

David

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