Introduction to Information Technology

Instructor: Heshan Sun

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

With the possible exception of the automobile, the digital computer has caused more extreme changes to our life than almost any other human artifact. The transistor, developed in the late 1940's, transformed radio, telephones, televisions, calculators, and other electronic devices into small, portable, inexpensive commodities. Integrated circuits were a quick leap from transistors, and the density and miniaturization they afforded made possible the wide proliferation of computers, culminating in the personal computer, first mass marketed in the early 1980s by IBM. By 1987 local area networks connected computers within an organization, and wide area networks connected the organization to the rest of the world. By 1997 the Internet, the World Wide Web, email, and cell phones were common, almost invisible elements of work and home life in developed countries. Although it seems that they’ve been with us forever, eBay, Amazon.com and other Internet companies have only existed for as long as it took some college freshmen to get through high school. the information age has arrived in a rush: Everyone in the U.S. has a computer or can go to the public library to use one. I can email, IM, or telephone my boss, my friends, and my family anytime I like from just a bout any point on the globe. I can snap photos with my cell phone and zap them to Mom or post them on my blog. I can buy groceries or a car or DVDs or even a house on the web using my credit card or PayPal. I can find a job or a spouse using social networking tools.

How does it all work? What do you need to know about all this technology in order to succeed in life? How is it possible to keep up with the rapid pace of innovation in information technology? You probably don’t want to be a programmer or engineer, so why do you need to know all this information technology? In IRLS571 we will explore all of these questions through a process of enhancing information technology literacy. Even if you know little or nothing about how computers, networks, and software work, take heart. This course will provide a grounding that will get you started on a path of lifelong learning about technology. IMHO, taking this path will serve you well regardless of whether you see your life and future career as being focused on information technology. Information technology will substantially affect your life
whether you like it or not and whether you pay attention to it or not. Either way, the goal is to have you reach the end of the semester knowing twice as much about information technology as you do now.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

*After completing this course, you will be able to:*

- Explain key terms and definitions related to common information technologies
- Describe at a basic or intermediate level the workings of the Internet, databases, and productivity applications
- Evaluate consumer- and business-focused information technology products and services
- Analyze and/or criticize the impact of information technology on contemporary life in the U.S. as well as in other countries, both developed and developing
- Discuss information ethics with respect to issues such as intellectual property, cyber-crime, privacy, and related issues

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:**


**NOTE:**

1. available at UA bookstore or online.
2. If you buy a used copy make sure to get the “complete” edition, not the “concise” or “introductory” edition. You do not need to have the CD that goes with the book to do well in the course.

- Additional materials will also be provided during the class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- This is an online course taught virtually at a distance using the Web. Desire-to-learn (d2l) is used as the instructional and course management environment. Students who enroll in the course will be given an account. They will be able to log in to their account via the Learning Technologies Center E-Learning Portal ([http://academic.d2l.ltc.arizona.edu/](http://academic.d2l.ltc.arizona.edu/)). d2l has facilities for internal email, and this will be one way to contact the Instructor or the teaching assistant.
- Students are expected to log on reasonably regularly, to read and study the lectures and references, to participate in the online discussions, to interact by email (and other means) with their fellow students for the group project, to write (or otherwise answer) the assignments, and to carry out various other activities. It is hard to anticipate accurately how much time all these course related activities will take in total (and such a figure would vary from student to student and from week to week), but seven hours a week is a rough order of magnitude estimate.
- We have a virtual class time: Tuesday Noon Every Week. Lectures and discussion topics around the lectures will be available at this time. It is also the due time for homework and discussions from previous weeks. You do not need to be online at that time though.
- We will have lectures, individual projects, a group project, online discussions, and a midterm exam (open book) and a final exam (open book). Specifically,
  
1. Lectures: Lectures usually as PowerPoint files will be available every Tuesday. You are supposed to read it carefully together with the textbook. The lectures may include content in addition to the textbook.
2. Individual projects. You will have two individual projects throughout this semester. You should finish them individually.
3. Group project. You will be in a group of four or five people in general. Groups will be formed within the first three weeks. Every group will find and complete a project. You will submit a research proposal around the mid-term time and then a final report due in the end of this semester.
(4). Discussions and exercises: Participation in discussions is critical for online courses and is thus required. All students should participate in discussions / exercises as much as possible. Discussion/exercise topics will be posted every week. Your class participation grade will be judged based on the quality and the quantity of your discussions/exercises. Students are expected to share their knowledge and relate what they are learning to their particular interests. While there is no need to participate every day, and no need to comment on every topic, a sustained, insightful continuing series of contributions will be appreciated. In particular, try to (politely) build on each other’s contributions so there is more of a feeling of dialogue rather than a lot of isolated monologues.

(5). Exams. We have a midterm exam and final exam.

COURSE, SCHOOL, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Code of Integrity

Students are expected to abide by The University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity. 'The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own.' If you have any questions regarding what is acceptable practice under this Code, please ask an Instructor.

Accommodating Disabilities

The University has a Disability Resource Center. If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me, the Instructor, official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Assignment Policies

For individual assignments and group project, you should post them on your own wiki (an instruction for how to do this will be available in class). Exams will be conducted in D2L. Unanticipated lateness resulting from poor planning or procrastination is highly undesirable. 5% of the credits of the assignment will be deducted for each day late (e.g., if the assignment was due on Tuesday noon and you submit it on Wednesday, you lose 5% of the credits. If you submit it Thursday, you lose another 5%). More details will be available in each assignment.

Assignment Policies

- Late Policy: All deliverables should be single spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. Unanticipated lateness resulting from poor planning or procrastination is highly undesirable. 5% of the credits of the assignment will be deducted for each day late (e.g., if the assignment was due on Tuesday 11pm and you submit it on Wednesday, you lose 5% of the credits. If you submit it Thursday, you lose another 5%). More details will be available in each assignment.

Incompletes

The current Catalog reads

The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The grade of I is not to be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course; in such a case, a grade other than I must be assigned. Students should make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade before the end of the term ...

If the incomplete is not removed by the instructor within one year the I grade will revert to a failing grade.
GRADING:

Students are judged on (1) the quality, originality, completion and progress that their individual and group work demonstrates; (2) participation in class and group/team discussions. Timely completion of assignments affects the grades.

The final grade will be:

-- Individual assignments: 30%
-- Projects (two projects, 15% each)
-- Group Project: 25%
-- Exam: 30%
-- Mid-Term Exam: (15%)
-- Final Exam: (15%)
-- Class participation 15%

Total: 100%

INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:

Instructor: Heshan Sun

Phone: (520) 626-0658 (office)

Availability: d2l (preferred), email (hsun [at] email [dot] arizona [dot] edu or office (appointment only)

Office Time: Wednesday 2pm-4pm
Fall 09
- IRLS506-001 Research Methods (On Campus Higgins)
- IRLS506-010 Research Methods (Virtual Atkinson)
- IRLS506-011 Research Methods (Virtual Seavey)
- IRLS515-001 Organization of Information (On Campus Frické)
- IRLS515-010 Organization of Information (Virtual Cui)
- IRLS515-011 Organization of Information (Virtual Frické)
- IRLS520-001 Ethics for Library and Information Professionals (On Campus Mathiesen)
- IRLS520-010 Ethics for Library and Information Professionals (Virtual Fallis)
- IRLS524 Information Resources and Services
- IRLS532-001 Online Searching
- IRLS553 Issues in Culture & Information Technology
- IRLS561 Academic Libraries Practice and Administration
- IRLS570 Database Development and Management
- IRLS571-010 Introduction to Information Technology
- IRLS571-011 Introduction to Information Technology (Smith)
- IRLS572-010 Government Information
- IRLS574 Digital Libraries
- IRLS575 User Interface and Web Site Design
- IRLS588-011 History of the Book
- IRLS608 Planning and Evaluation of Libraries and Information Centers
- IRLS617-010 Social Epistemology and Information Science
- IRLS671 Introduction to Digital Collections
- IRLS675 Advanced Digital Collections
- IRLS696E Human Rights to Information

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