

University of Alabama
College of Communication and Information Sciences
School of Library and Information Studies

LS 560 – Information Technology

Spring 2009
Mondays 6:00 – 8:45 PM
Online
Course Website
<http://elearning.ua.edu>



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Office Hours
- **by appointment via:**
-Internet chat
-phone

Welcome

Welcome to LS 560 – Information Technology. This document is the central managing document for the course. Background information on the course, course policies, and supporting university policies are presented here. The document also houses the course calendar where you will find information about readings from the text, links to online readings and support materials, as well as guides to activities and assignment due dates. If at any time the material is not clear, I encourage questions as well as suggestions to make the document friendlier for student use. My goal is to make the course structure and management of course activities as user-friendly as possible so as to allow the focus to be on learning of course content. We have a lot to cover to fuel you toward being fluent with information technologies for libraries. If you are a bit tech-phobic, put your mind at ease. The nature of the course is a focus on learning in a collaborative and fun environment. Read on to learn more about LS 560 and what we will be doing over the course of the semester.

Course Description

Technology is not the center of the library. However, it plays a key role in information access. Information technology (IT) is a tool that allows for the creation and dissemination of information in global environments. This course addresses the automation of library environments through various information technologies and systems. Students will examine the place of online systems in the current practice of acquiring, organizing, housing, maintaining, conserving, and circulating collections. Students will investigate and evaluate systems available and in development, and examine their use and functions. Investigations in the library of the future are also addressed through the learning of ubiquitous and new technologies. In the process of becoming fluent with IT, students are encouraged to investigate non-traditional technologies for applications in library and information access and provision. Creativity knows no limits!

Entry Requirements

N/A

The professor approaches the course with the assumption that students have no previous knowledge or experience with HTML, database programming, or IT training. However, students are encouraged to assist their colleagues if they hold prior experiences with topics covered in class as peer-learning is highly encouraged in this course. Peer-learning decreases stress and promotes learning, particularly for students who are nervous about IT.

Prerequisite To

CIS 661 Digital Libraries (Prerequisite/Corequisite)

CIS 662 Knowledge Management (Prerequisite/Corequisite)

Goals and Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. create and maintain a complete website on a server (including attractive Web pages, user interfaces to databases, and scripts for searching and database access);
2. understand the importance of automation for libraries, including both system-wide infrastructure using networked systems to independent personal computing devices connected to the library system;
3. analyze and evaluate websites and assess the effectiveness of user interfaces;
4. prepare an RFP (Request for Proposal), selecting vendors, evaluating systems and software, and then implementing a system once a decision has been made;
5. identify the major elements of project management for technology projects;
6. recognize and describe the challenges of change management including the importance of effective user training;
7. understand the place of the local integrated system in a global information society;
8. engage independently in continuous professional learning for technology application in libraries;
9. assume leadership roles in change management as it relates to automation and new technologies in libraries & information organizations centered on user satisfaction.

Course Material

Much of the material that we will cover in this course will be derived from both traditional texts as well as Web-based materials:

Required text:

- Wilson, K. (2006), *Computers in Libraries*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press. ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-2150-2 (Hardbound)
<http://www.haworthpress.com/store/product.asp?sku=5549>
(Paperback is acceptable)

Recommended text:

- Lemay, L. and Colburn, R (2003), *Sams Teach Yourself Web Publishing with HTML and CSS in 1 Hour a Day, 5th Edition*. Indianapolis: Sams Publishing. ISBN-10: 0672328860. Find it at
<http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0672328860>
- Williams and Tollett (2000), *Non-Designers Web Book, 2nd ed.* (paperback). Berkeley: Peachpit Press.
Find it at:
<http://www.amazon.com/Non-Designers-Web-Book-2nd/dp/0201710382>

Websites:

- World Wide Web Consortium website .
<http://www.w3.org>
(We will be using modules that are available for free on the website).

Additional resources found online are listed as active links in the course calendar.

IT interfaces and Devices to Support Learning

Hands-on experience through in-class laboratory exercises and practice between class sessions will build knowledge and confidence as we work toward becoming fluent with information technology (FIT). These activities require both software and hardware to support learning. Most of the software is free and we will work together the first day of class on acquiring these programs to assure we are all on the same level as we address course topics throughout the term.

Software:

A basic text editor such as Notepad (MSWord or any other robust word processor is **not acceptable** as it inadvertently edits HTML code). In addition you will need a Web browser (Internet Explorer version 6.0 or higher and Mozilla Firefox version 3). If you are using a non-standard browser, it must support frames and HTML 4.0 or higher. You will also need a copy of FTP software for transfer of files to the web. Concepts of FTP are covered in class. Secure Shell (SSH) will be demonstrated in the classroom. You may select any FTP program you wish, however you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with your selected FTP client. In addition, you may want a WYSIWYG editor such as Macromedia Dreamweaver CS3. Dreamweaver is the most popular software for professional web development. You can get a trial version by going to <http://www.adobe.com/products/dreamweaver/?promoid=BPDEC> and selecting "Download free trial." Adobe requires you to sign up for an account which is free. Once you do this you can acquire trial products for download.

Assessment

Assessment

One element of teaching is measuring what is learned. In that SLIS is a professional program, learning involves theoretical and conceptual approaches as well as understanding and mastering of tasks, particularly when it involves technology. Performance in this course will be evaluated through a range of assessments. First, students will develop a personal webpage (hand tagged) as an individual assignment. Students will update their personal website through in-class and out-of-class lab exercises during the course of the academic term. Assignments 2-4 will be added to the student website either as a link, by download, or as additional HTML pages as part of the website presentation. Second, students will select an IT device and offer a critical analysis and recommendation for update/redesign (group assignment). Third, students will work in a group to develop a database that is applicable to website incorporation. Fourth, as a final term project students (in teams of 2-3) will collaborate to prepare and test an IT training module.

Assignment instructions are posted on the supplemental course website under the assignments tab. All assignments are expected to be submitted in electronic format as a link from the student's personal website (building on the one developed as a result of the first assignment). Using the E-learning Assignment Dropbox feature, students will submit the URL for their personal webpage directly pointing to the relevant assignment that is due. Electronic feedback and grades will be distributed through the course website. I cannot return a grade if there is no submission in the supplemental course website dropbox. As graduate students you are expected to dedicate time to produce quality assignment submissions. Attention to grading deserves equal quality and thus grades for assignments may take up to two weeks but will normally be within that time period. **All assignments are due by Tuesday at midnight of the week designated in the course calendar** with the exception of the final project. As professionals you will be expected to perform your work in a timely manner to support organizational goals and objectives. That practice starts with the learning process. Thus, late assignments are subject to penalty of a lower grade. Assignments submitted 24-hours past the due date will result in an automatic failure of the assignment.

The contribution of each assignment to the overall grade is as follows:

Component	Points
Personal Website (Individual)	75
Usability Project (Group)	100
Database Assignment (Group)	100
IT Training Module (Team of 2-3)	150
Class Participation/Class and Group Exercises	75
Total	500

Letter grades will be determined using a standard percentage point evaluation as outlined below.

500 - 471	A
470 - 371	B
370 - 271	C
270 - 200	D
Below 200	F

Course Policies

The following policies will be used throughout the course:

- 1. Attendance & Participation:** Attendance will be monitored during the term. Attendance is highly encouraged in that we will cover new material each class period. Much of the knowledge needed to complete assignments is based on information gained from class sessions so it is to your benefit to attend class. Class participation through activities and group exercises account for a portion of the final grade. Missing class negatively impacts the ability to attain full points for participation. Absences in excess of 2 during the term will result in a **one letter grade reduction in your final course grade**. If you need to miss class please alert the professor through the course e-mail tool.
- 2. Assignments:** Assignments due dates are indicated in the course syllabus. I am interested in you maximizing your learning experience; please do not cheat yourself by merely copying someone else's work or failing to contribute as a team member in group-based projects. Group assignments are intended to benefit each group member through peer

learning. IT issues involve high-levels of problem-solving and several minds are more beneficial to the process than one single mind. Each member is expected to be a full contributor to the group. Let's work together!

- 3. Academic Dishonesty:** Projects and papers are expected to reference resources that support knowledge gained in order to complete the assignment. You are expected to consult more than one resource for written assignments. Resources should derive from a combination of both traditional texts and electronic formats. Students are expected to use proper citation style to credit referenced resources. Failure to do so is considered a violation of the Academic Code of Conduct. The School of Library and Information Studies diligently prosecutes all cases of academic dishonesty. Academic misconduct as defined by the student handbook includes representing the work of others, as one's own or cheating by any means. Academic misconduct also includes aiding, abetting, concealing or attempting such activity. The usual penalty is an 'F' in the course, and possible suspension from the university. Students guilty of cheating on a test, program, paper, or homework will be given a zero for that project. Depending on the severity of the occurrence, the penalty could be an F for the course or expulsion from the university. For more information on academic policy see the UA online Student Handbook at <http://www.sa.ua.edu/campusactivities/studenthandbook.pdf>

The APA style manual is the citation style guide students will be expected to follow for written assignments. For additional information on citation style resources please see the APA website at: <http://apastyle.apa.org/>. You may also wish to consult a librarian in the University Libraries for more detailed information.

- 4. Special Needs:** In accordance with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special accommodations, please contact me immediately. For more information see the student handbook at <http://www.sa.ua.edu/campusactivities/studenthandbook.pdf>. I am interested in working with you to maximize learning within your best abilities.
- 5. Classroom Etiquette:** As a courtesy to others, please refrain from idle chat during class as it may distract others. Disruptive behavior and disorderly conduct during class will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken for violations (refer to the student handbook).

Incompletes will be given for extraordinary non-academic reasons consistent with University of Alabama policies.

Communication

Effective learning involves questions. When asking course related questions outside of formal class hours, please post to the appropriate course website discussion area. Several others may have the same question. Answering the question once simplifies the communication process assuring each student is receiving the same information and instruction. I will also communicate important class information via the course site and all students are responsible for checking the site regularly for such information. Timely information will be accompanied by a pop-up announcement to assure you are informed.

Despite the Internet, I cannot be everywhere 24/7. However, I am dedicated to your learning within reasonable efforts. My policy is to check the website once per day between 2-3 PM. Postings made after 3 PM may not elicit a response until the following day. However, as time permits, I will attempt to check the postings more often to facilitate progress. Sometimes life happens! The e-mail communication used for this course is the Elearning e-mail available in the course website which should be used to communicate with me directly regarding any personal concerns you may have.

This syllabus is a guide and subject to change as we progress during the term. Changes will be minor and always evaluated in the best interest of the class and usually occur based on circumstances we cannot predict. Information technologies are quick changing and challenging, and often involve self-directed and peer learning to keep up to date. This course is reflective of that. This term I expect we will work together diligently to attain the course objectives yet have fun along the road to learning and becoming FIT!

Course Calendar

The following is a tentative course schedule. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule due to unforeseen events.

Week 1	January 12
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions/Course Overview • Technology Check • The Disciplines
In-class Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download course syllabus - Elearning course website 2. Download required software – See folder in Elearning course website
Independent Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Step through “Getting Started with HTML” Tutorial (See Readings in E-learning – Week 3) ➤ Consideration case study assignment

Week 2	January 19 – No Class MLK Holiday
Topics	N/A
In-class Activity	None
Independent Activity	Work on Basic HTML Tutorials

Week 3	January 26
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Fluency - <i>PowerPoint</i> • HCI - <i>PowerPoint</i> • Basic HTML Hand-tagging • FTP
Readings	See Readings – Week 3 (E-learning)
Independent Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hand-tag simple web page (lab activity)

Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interview user (Director, Dept. Head, Staff, or Client) regarding IT failures and trepidations (Prepare a one page overview for Week 3 class discussion and ongoing class contribution. This is for in-class use only and is not to be submitted as a formal assignment) ➤ Conduct a self-assessment based on ITF (Reflective Practice) ➤ Step through Intermediate HTML and Intro to XHTML Tutorials (See Readings in E-learning – Week 3)
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Week 4	February 2
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Architecture • Web Design and Multimedia • Intermediate HTML (links, mailto, Download links, lists, horizontal rule) • XHTML
Readings	See Readings – Week 4 (E-learning)
Independent Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Add elements to simple webpage or personal page ➤ Assess case study for ITF (Reflective Practice)

Week 5	February 9
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation • Metatags • CSS • Site Search Capability
Readings	See Readings – Week 5 (E-learning)
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a simple CSS for supporting your simple website ➤ Validate your HTML/CSS page (see Tools folder on course website)

Week 6	February 16
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usability (Web, software, and hardware)
Readings	See Readings – Week 6 (E-learning)
In-class Activity	1. Perform usability analysis on personal website (partner activity)
Activity	*** Assignment 1 Due – February 17 midnight***

Week 7	February 23
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research – IRB - <i>PowerPoint</i> • Usability (cont.) • Group Work Strategies - <i>PowerPoint</i>

Readings	See Readings – Week 7 (E-learning)
In-class Activity	➤ Perform usability study (team activity)

Week 8	March 2
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Networks and systems • Library Management Systems (LMS)
Readings	See Readings – Week 8 (E-learning)
Activity	➤ Check your simple website for accessibility (see Tools folder on course website)

Week 9	March 9
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Databases (Introduction, Access, SQL)
Readings	See Readings – Week 9 (E-learning)
In-class Activity	➤ Group database development activity

Week 10	March 16 – No Class Spring Break
Topics	N/A
Readings	None
Activity	HAVE FUN!!!!

Week 11	March 23
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Databases (relational, statements, reports) LMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisitions • Cataloging • Circulation Resource Sharing
Readings	See Readings – Week 11 (E-learning)
Activity	Develop simple SQL statements for database reports (Group)

Week 12	March 30
Topics	LMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serials • OPAC
Readings	See Readings – Week 12 (E-learning)
Activity	***Assignment 2 Due – March 31 midnight***

Week 13	April 6
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captivate • Learning Theory (Multiple Intelligences/Generational Identity) • Goals/Objectives – (<i>PowerPoint presentation</i>)
Readings	See Readings – Week 13 (E-learning)
In-class Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form teams of 3 to prepare for Assignment 4 ➤ Select Topic

Week 14	April 13
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and Communication Technologies • Ubiquitous Computing (Portability/Podcasting)
Readings	See Readings – Week 14 (E-learning)
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lab – podcasting <p>***Assignment 3 Due – In-class Presentation***</p>

Week 15	April 20
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Management (Diffusion of Innovation) - <i>PowerPoint</i> • Futures • Continuous learning
Readings	See Readings – Week 15 (E-learning)
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lab – podcasting (continued) ➤ Re-evaluate self for ITF ➤ Recommendation to case study subject to increase ITF ability

Week 16	April 27
Topics/Activity	Work on Final project (Team Activity)

Week 17	May 4
Topics/Activity	Usability Test Final Projects

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