Syllabus for Fundamentals of Information Systems
Spring 2006

Vital Statistics:
- **When:** MWF 10:30 – 11:35 AM
- **Where:** 221 Technology Center
- **Who:** Prof. Amanda Holland-Minkley
  ahollandminkley@washjeff.edu
  228 Technology Center
  724-503-1001 ext. 3400
  Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:00, R 11:00-12:00 (or by appointment)

Important Dates:
- First Day of Class: Wednesday, February 1st
- Last Day to Add/Drop: Tuesday, February 7th, 5:00 PM
- First Exam: Monday, March 6th
- Last Day for S/U or Withdrawal: Monday, March 27th
- Second Exam: Monday, April 17th
- Last Day of Class: Tuesday, May 9th
- Final Exam: Thursday May 11th, 8:00 – 10:30 AM

Catalog Course Description:
An introduction to information systems and their foundational technologies. Topics include surveys of hardware, operating systems, database and networked computing concepts, as well as special topics in information systems including computation for the internet and world wide web, distributed computing, electronic commerce systems, artificial intelligence, decision support systems, security technologies, and information systems design. Themes common to each of these topics include security and privacy issues, ethics, and cost/benefit analyses.

Course Objectives:
By the end of the semester, you should be able to:
- Describe the role of information systems in an organization,
- Understand and evaluate the components of an information system,
- Describe the role of databases and data warehouses in an organization,
- Understand the principles of networking underlying modern information systems,
- Identify appropriate technologies to support electronic commerce, decision making, and other organizational activities,
- Analyze organizational structures and information flow in an organization,

Required Text:

There will also be supplemental readings beyond the textbook, such as articles or web pages, which will be assigned throughout the semester.

Assignments, Evaluation and Grading:
There will be three primary forms of evaluation in this class: homework assignments, in-class activities, and exams.
There will be a total of six homework assignments, together worth 40% of the final grade. They will take a variety of forms, including but not limited to computer work, written reports, and problem-solving exercises. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are to be done independently by each student; if you are in doubt as to whether you may collaborate on an assignment, ask me!

Another 15% of the final grade will be based on in-class activities. These computer-based exercises will be done in the classroom during class time; for some exercises you may be given extra time, allowing the activities to be completed at home.

Finally, the remaining 45% of the final grade will be based on two exams during the semester and a comprehensive final exam, each worth 15% of the final grade. The two midterm exams will be held in class on Monday, March 6th and Monday, April 17th. The final exam for the course will be held Thursday May 11th from 8:00 – 10:30 AM.

Late Policy:
All assignments must be turned in promptly. Late assignments will be accepted, but at a 5% reduction in grade for each day that they are late (defined as each 24-hour time period after the original due date). All assignments, unless otherwise noted, will be submitted through Moodle, in a MSWord compatible format. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignment has been submitted correctly and in a timely fashion.

Academic Honesty Policy:
It is assumed that you have read and are familiar with the college’s Academic Honest Policy. Applying the policy to this course, it is expected that all work submitted will be yours alone, unless you are explicitly permitted to work with others on that specific assignment. Be aware that plagiarism in this course would include not only using another’s words, but another’s specific mathematical or logical calculations. Assignments must be done independently and without reference to another student’s work. Any outside sources used in completing an assignment, including internet references, must be fully cited on any homework assignment or exercise. All cases of academic misconduct will be pursued per the procedures laid out in the academic honesty policy and may result in failure of the class and reporting to the Office of Academic Affairs.

General Course Mechanics and Classroom Expectations:
This will be a classroom lecture-style course without lab sections. There will be significant in-class discussion and activities. In order to get the most out of class, it will be important that you do all of the readings promptly as assigned, as lectures will assume you have done so. I expect all students to participate in class discussions.

You are expected to attend class regularly, and you are fully responsible for any readings or assignments given in class, in-class activities, and for content covered in class which is not in the course text. Experience shows that students who do not come to class have difficulties with later homework assignments and exams. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what material you missed and make up any in-class activities. Note that W&J does not recognize “excused absences”. However, we do acknowledge that attendance is sometimes impossible due to emergency or other extenuating circumstances. These situations can only be accommodated if you make arrangements with the instructor, in advance if possible, or at the earliest possible time after the missed class (do not wait until the next class meeting). In the case of an emergency that causes you to miss meetings of multiple courses, you should contact the Dean of Academic Affairs or Dean of Student Life; they will be able to contact your instructors and help you make any necessary arrangements.
We will be making use of the Moodle course management system instead of Blackboard in this class, available at http://www.washjeff.edu/moodle/; be sure that you can log in and access the course pages through it and contact me if you have any problems. You are responsible for checking the system regularly for updates about assignments or class meetings, particularly if you miss class. You should also check your e-mail on a regular basis; I will assume that all students in the class are reachable through their W&J e-mail account.

**Topics:**
The following is a rough calendar of the topics that will be covered in class. Interspersed with all of these topics will be discussions of ethical and social issues related to information systems and working with information systems technology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2/1, 2/3</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2/6, 2/8, 2/10</td>
<td>Hardware &amp; Architecture</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/13, 2/15, 2/17</td>
<td>Software and Operating Systems</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/20, 2/22, 2/24</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Database Applications and DBMS</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3/6, 3/8, 3/10</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3/13, 3/15, 3/17</td>
<td>Networking and the Internet</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3/27, 3/29, 3/31</td>
<td>Internet and the Web</td>
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<td>4/3, 4/5, 4/7</td>
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<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>5/8</td>
<td>Systems Development</td>
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Guide to Classroom Responsibilities

Students’ Responsibilities
- Come to class, on time and prepared.
- Submit all work in a timely fashion, in the format required.
- Abide by the college’s Academic Honesty Policy.
- Be attentive and participate in class discussions.
- Do not be distracting or disruptive to others in the class.
- Read all course documents and messages from the instructor carefully.

Most importantly, be aware of what you do and do not understand. Start assignments early; look at returned assignments and solution sets promptly and follow up on any problems. Ask questions often and early – if you are confused about something, odds are other people are too. Go to office hours – that’s what they are for – or make an appointment for an alternate time. However, please do bring your notes, assignment, text or whatever material for which you have questions along with you. Communicate with me – I am here to help you learn the material, but you have to speak up if there is a problem.

Take an active role in your learning!

Instructor’s Responsibilities:
- Be on time and prepared for class.
- Grade and return all work in a timely fashion, giving clear feedback.
- Enforce the college’s Academic Honesty Policy consistently.
- Attempt to find effective ways to communicate course content to all students in the class.
- Be open to student questions during class and encourage participation.
- Ensure that all students have a comfortable environment in which to learn.
- Communicate all expectations and requirements to students clearly and in a timely fashion.
- Treat all students respectfully and equitably.

My responsibility is to give every student the best possible opportunity to master course material and meet the stated course objectives. Understanding that every student comes to a class with different interests and motivations, and that these needs must be balanced within the classroom, it is my goal to create a classroom experience in which all students are supported as well as challenged.

It is my responsibility to create an environment in which you can actively learn.

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