Information Sciences and Technology Department

Course Syllabus

IT 342 Operating Systems Fundamentals

Section 001: Tuesday 7:20 to 10:00 Johnson Hall Room 246 (CRN 75252)
Section 002: Thursday 4:30 to 7:10 Johnson Hall Room 247 (CRN 75254)
Section 003: Thursday 7:20 to 10:00 Johnson Hall Room 246 (CRN 80195)

Johnson Hall aka Bull Run Hall

Catalog Description
Practices and procedures for installing and configuring modern operating systems, including user accounts, file, print, and terminal servers, mobile computing, and disaster recovery. Through practical lab sessions, students receive real-world experiences with multiple operating systems. 3 hours lecture per week, 0 hours labs per week.

Prerequisites
To be eligible to take IT342, students must have already completed, earning at least a grade of C in each, these courses:
- IT 101 Introduction to Information Technology and IT 212 Computer Hardware Fundamentals
- or
- IT 105 IT Architecture Fundamentals and either
- IT 106 Introduction to IT Problem Solving using Computer Programming or
- IT 109 Introduction to Computer Programming or
- IT 196 Review of IT Problem Solving Using Computer Programming or
- CS 112 Introduction to Computer Programming

If you do not understand the material from these courses, you will not master the material in this class.

Educational Objective
This course is designed to give students an understanding of the central concepts that make contemporary operating systems work and prepare the student for work in the Information Technology field. Knowing the how and why behind the Operating System (OS) will allow you to plan a better fit for system management and overall resource specification. It is not the intent of the course to provide details on what commands are used in a given OS to perform a particular function; rather, to give an understanding of the OS functions. Nor is it the intent of the course to train you as a System Administrator. The course presents these underlying OS concepts and illustrates many of them in class. Examples of Operating Systems may be sprinkled throughout the course.
By taking this course, students will:
- Understand the role of Operating Systems to the end business.
- Be able to assess Operating System choices in a given environment.
- Be able to discuss OS concepts and determine issues related to the proposed environment.
- Be able to think and communicate critically about the OS.

**Major Topics**

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to intelligently discuss and weigh options of the Operating System in:
- OS Fundamentals
- Input/output
- Files
- Memory
- Processes
- Coordination
- Scheduling
- Performance Measures
- Multiple Processors
- Embedded Systems

**Textbook**

Required  **Operating Systems, Principles & Practice** by Thomas Anderson and Michael Dahlin  Recursive Books 2014  ISBN: 978-0-9856735-2-9  (This is about $68 on amazon to buy, $15 to rent, and the kindle copy is about $8.)

Packback  
An AI-supported online discussion platform  
($29 for your first course environment)  
Registration is through their website, if you registered before August, you should have gotten an email from the company.

Optional  Please contact me if you would like an additional text or lab material to enhance your understanding. I can refer you to a variety of OS texts and the lab material we’ve used for the past few years.

**Instructor**

James F. Holdener, P.E.  
Phone: 703 244-7299 (I check this number daily during the week)  
Email: jholdene@gmu.edu  
Email is the best method to get hold of me. Put IT342-001 or IT342-002 or IT342-003 in the subject line to alert me.  
Office Hours: By Appointment

**Teaching Assistant**

Rohith Gadde  
Phone: 571 365-5333  
Email: rgadde@gmu.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment
Grading

Grades will be awarded per the GMU Grading System for undergraduate students. See the university catalog for policies: [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog).

The grading scale for this course is:

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 97%</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<td>93% - 97%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90% - 93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87% - 90%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83% - 87%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80% - 83%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77% - 80%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>70% - 77%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60% - 70%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>&lt; = 60%</td>
<td>F</td>
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A grade of “D” is considered a passing grade for undergraduate courses. However, a minimum grade of “C” is required in the IST program for any course that is a prerequisite for one or more other courses.

Students are responsible for checking the currency of their grades in blackboards. Grade discrepancies must be brought to the instructor’s attention within one week of posting.

Final grades will be determined based on the following components:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Graded Activity</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Checks (Quiz)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Exams will be administered on campus during scheduled days and times. You may be required to present a photo ID. Your Mason student ID is preferred, but a driver’s license will also be accepted. You may not be permitted to take an exam without your photo ID.

I will use my discretion to adjust the raw scores to calculate final grades in either direction.

Each assignment is to be prepared and submitted as specified by the instructor. Late submissions may not be accepted for any graded activity, unless there are truly compelling, severe circumstances supported by appropriate documentation. If an exception is made, a penalty may be applied. Acceptance of late assignments and application of penalties will be at the sole discretion of the instructor. All assignments are due Monday by 11:59 PM on the date due. You are strongly encouraged to complete all assignments so that you can check your understanding of the material. And fair warning now, completion of material is one criterion I use at the end of the semester to adjust grades.

Students have one week to request re-grading of an assignment. All requests for the re-grading of an assignment must be requested to the instructor, in writing (email), within one week of the date grader feedback was posted. In the email request, the student must write a clear explanation of why they believe they should earn more points than were previously earned. The entire assignment may be re-graded. It is possible that the resulting assignment grade will be higher due to errors in grading, or lower if it is discovered that a sufficient number of points was not subtracted the first time. Please carefully consider this before making a request. No requests for re-grading will be considered one week after the date grader feedback was posted and the grade will be considered final.

Final grades will be posted to Patriot Web about 2 days after the last final examination. I will give you the opportunity to see your grade in blackboard before this and to correct any errors. Once it is posted to Patriot Web, no changes will be made.
**I do not expect any extra credit opportunities.** Students may not do any additional work for extra credit nor resubmit any graded activity to raise a final grade.

All work must be submitted as one integrated document ready to be opened and printed. Work submitted in multiple pieces will not be accepted and will be treated as no submission. I will be accepting work via Blackboard for everything except discussion. The discussion will be through Packback. Read the assignments carefully to understand how to submit them. **Please be sure to put your name on the assignment** even if submitted electronically. No name = no credit. For file names use the convention Last Name, First Name, Assignment – example is HoldenerJamesAssignment1. Spaces, dashes, and underscores are optional. If a particular assignment cannot be turned in via blackboard because of its format, please contact me.

As a three-credit class, an average student will need to spend about 10 hours each week. My activity weights are based on what I expect it will take you on average. So, I am expecting weekly effort of 1 ½ hour for homework, 1 hour for discussion, and the rest of the time in lecture (about 2 ½ hours), reading and studying (5 hours). Budget your time accordingly to complete the reading, assignments, studying, and discussion.

**Course Schedule**

This is the tentative schedule for the lectures. It may change during the semester based on coverage and questions. I recommend that you print out the slides for each lecture and bring them with you to class as there will not be time to duplicate this material by hand. Then you can add additional notes during the class. I recommend against using laptop computers during class. Although some people prefer taking notes on a laptop instead of by hand, educational studies have shown that students using laptops tend to learn less effectively than those without laptops: There are too many distractions available on an open computer and the act of typing is mechanical whereas the act of handwriting accesses parts of the brain the stimulates retention1. Recommended readings are listed in this table. I recommend you read before class then reread after the class to gain the fullest understanding.

**In-Class Format:** Admin of about 10 minutes, 1-hour Lecture, 15-minute Break, 1-hour Lecture, 10-minute Discussion with Questions and Answer period.

I will attempt to record the audio on these and post them following the lecture to the Course Content Section for the week.

Per the universities’ expectations on faculty, this class will be taught in the in-person modality and will continue that way unless the university makes a change. If you are not comfortable with that modality then you should register for a course offering a different modality through the established drop/add process.

If you become ill during the semester or receive a yellow or red response on your health check that prevents you from attending class in person, I expect you to contact me and make arrangements for making up the missing work.

**Covid-19 Precautions**

Each of the sections is in person. We are in classroom with up to 27 students.

- You must complete your daily screening and have your green email with you to come to class.
- You must wear a face covering during class and while indoors. If you forgot yours there are vending machines on campus.
- Practice social distancing when you enter the classroom and fill the seats from the front.
- Be advised that I am also wearing a mask. The front of the room will be easier to hear me.

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1 There are many studies and readings out there on this subject. For an example see: May, C. “A Learning Secret: Don’t Take Notes with a Laptop”, *Scientific American*, June 5, 2014, accessed January 15, 2021.
Class dates are listed as Tuesday (section 001) then Thursday (sections 002 & 003). Due dates are the same for all sections. For each chapter, the chapters introductory material is included for the first reference to the chapter. Readings indicated with an “S” means to scan or lightly read the section. Some parts will be applicable, others are beyond the scope of this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Blackboard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8/24</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Due 8/30</td>
<td>Due 8/30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8/26</td>
<td>Computer System Overview (Prerequisite</td>
<td>Introduction in discussion forum</td>
<td>Demographics Survey</td>
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<td>Course Review)</td>
<td>Head Gasket Discussion</td>
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<td>8/30</td>
<td><strong>Add Date</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/31</td>
<td>Lecture 1 Introduction</td>
<td>Notes Chapter 1</td>
<td>Due 9/6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9/2</td>
<td>Lecture 2 Hardware Overview</td>
<td>Notes Chapter 2 Optional Text</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
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<td>Chapter 9 (9.1 to 9.3.1)</td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Lecture 3 Microprocessor Overview</td>
<td>Notes Chapter 3</td>
<td>Due 9/13</td>
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<td>9/9</td>
<td>Lecture 4 Operating System Overview</td>
<td>Notes Chapter 4 Optional Text</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
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<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Lecture 5 I/O Device Manager</td>
<td>Notes Chapter 5 Optional Text</td>
<td>Due 9/20</td>
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<td>9/16</td>
<td>Lecture 6 Secondary Memory</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (3.2, 3.5)</td>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
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<td>Notes Chapter 6 Optional Text</td>
<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<td>Chapter 12 (all)</td>
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<td>Chapter 14 (14.2.2)</td>
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<td>9/21</td>
<td>Lecture 7 File System</td>
<td>Text Chapter 11 (all)</td>
<td>Due 9/27</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9/23</td>
<td>Exam 1 (L1 to 4)</td>
<td>Chapter 13 (all)</td>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
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<td>Chapter 14 (all)</td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9/28</td>
<td>Lecture 8 Memory</td>
<td>Text Chapter 8 (8.1 to 8.3, 8.5)</td>
<td>Due Oct 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9/30</td>
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<td>Chapter 9 (9.5 to 9.8)</td>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
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<td>Quiz 5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Lecture 8 (continues)</td>
<td>Due Oct 11</td>
<td>Due Oct 11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10/7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Question 2 Responses 65% Curiosity</td>
<td>Assignment 6</td>
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<td>Quiz 6</td>
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<td>10/12</td>
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<td>Class</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
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| 8     | 10/19  | Lecture 9 Processes         | **Text** Chapter 2 (2.1 to 2.4, 2.7, 2.9, & 2.11)  
Chapter 3 (3.1, 3.4, & 3.6)  
Chapter 4 (4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.7 (S), 4.10 (S))  
For a more detailed discussion, advanced students may want to also read 2.5 on x86. | Due Oct 25  
1 Question  
2 Responses 65% Curiosity | Due Oct 25  
Assignment 7 Quiz 7 |
| 8     | 10/14  |                             |                              |                           |                  |
| 9     | 10/26  | Lecture 10 Coordination     | **Text** Chapter 5 (5.1, 5.2 (S), 5.3, 5.4-5.5 (S), 5.9  
Chapter 6 (6.5, 6.7) | Due Nov 1  
1 Question  
2 Responses 65% Curiosity | Due Nov 1  
Assignment 8 Quiz 8 |
| 10    | 11/2   | Lecture 10 (continues)      |                              | Due Nov 8  
1 Question  
2 Responses 65% Curiosity | Due Nov 8  
Assignment 9 Quiz 9 |
| 10    | 10/28  | Exam 2 (L5 to 9)            |                              |                           |                  |
| 11    | 11/9   | Lecture 11 Scheduling       | **Text** Chapter 7 (7.1 to 7.3, 7.6 to 7.8 (S)) | Due Nov 15  
1 Question  
2 Responses 85% Curiosity | Due Nov 15  
Assignment 10 Quiz 10 |
| 11    | 11/4   |                             |                              |                           |                  |
| 12    | 11/16  | Lecture 11 (continues)      |                              | Due Nov 22  
1 Question  
2 Responses 85% Curiosity | Due Nov 22  
Assignment 11 Quiz 11 |
| 11    | 11/11  | Lecture 12 Multiple Processors | Notes Chapter 13  
None |                           |                  |
| 13    | 11/23  | Lecture 13 Real Time        | **Text** Chapter 7 (7.4)     | Due Nov 29  
1 Question  
2 Responses 85% Curiosity | Due Nov 29  
Assignment 12 Quiz 12 |
| 13    | 11/18  | Lecture 14 Embedded Systems |                              |                           |                  |
|       |        | Lecture 15 Distributed Systems |                              |                           |                  |
|       | 11/25  | Thanksgiving Break          | No Thursday Class            |                           |                  |
| 14    | 11/30  | Lecture 16 Virtual Systems  | None                         | Due Dec 6  
1 Question  
2 Responses 85% Curiosity | Due Dec 6  
Assignment 13 Quiz 13 |
| 14    | 12/2   | Lecture 17 Mobile Systems   |                              |                           |                  |
|       |        | Future                      |                              |                           |                  |

**Final Exams (L10 to 17)**
Section 001: 12/14: 7:30 to 10:15  
Section 002: 12/9: 4:30 to 7:15  
Section 003: 12/9: 7:30 to 10:15
Activity Descriptions

Discussion (due on Mondays)
Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. This activity will help hone your critical questioning skills and provide a forum for deeper understanding of the course material. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications. I will provide an area of interest for each week’s discussion. Each week you should submit the following:

- 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score, worth 1/3 of weekly discussion grade
- 2 Responses to your classmates’ questions per week with a minimum Curiosity Score, each worth 1/3 of weekly discussion grade

- No credit will be provided for questions or responses not completed.
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.
- Full credit will be provided for questions and responses that meet the minimum curiosity score.
- The curiosity score starts at 50. After the first exam it increases to 65. After the second exam it increases to 85.²

Technical Support: If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Assignments (due on Mondays)
Assignments will be due on each Monday during the class and may consist of Exercise questions, Problem Set activities, Lab work, and Research. The amount of work on the assignment will be adjusted for the weeks of exams are scheduled. I anticipate these should take you on average about 1 ½ hours each week though some may be longer. I expect electronic submission of the work. They are not equally weighted. I will total them up for the final assignment grade. You are responsible for examining the posted solutions as the TA has been directed to not deviate from the solutions but to grade liberally. This means he will give you the benefit of the doubt in your answers.

Each assignment will consist of one or more of the following components.

Exercise Component

These are meant to enhance your understanding of one or more points made by the book or myself. A perfect score on your exercises only means your work was accepted by the grader. It may not mean that you have mastered the specific material. Ensure that you look at the answer key and ask questions at the next lecture. Be sure to understand why your response differs from the posted solutions regardless of your score.

Problem Set Component

There are meant to increase your understanding of the material and require more work than the exercises. A perfect score on your exercises only means your work was accepted by the grader. It may not mean that you have mastered

² Due to technical limitations of the tool, when the curiosity score is increased your prior work may show as not meeting the score. Be assured I will capture your performance prior to making the change.
the specific material. Ensure that you look at the answer key and ask questions at the next lecture. Be sure to understand why your response differs from the posted solutions regardless of your score.

Lab Component

Lab work may be completed on your own system, or you may choose to set up a virtual environment and use another Operating System. The general task is specified in the Lab assignment. As long as you do the lab and complete it on time you will do well here.

Research Component

This assignment is about establishing a habit and following directions. You will need to spend some time looking at trade rags, peer-reviewed journals, and other periodicals. I have posted examples of typical articles on blackboard. Your submission will be an annotated bibliographic entry. It will be checked for format, source uniqueness (within your set) and content. I am not looking for 12-page articles here. One to two pages is enough. In your submission, use complete sentences and do not write in bullet, list, or outline format. You cannot use any contractions, slang, improper grammar, and the like.

There is a library information guide at http://infoguides.gmu.edu/c.php?g=375427&p=2540429.

Understanding Checks (Quiz) (due Mondays)

Each week there will be a short Understanding Check in the form of a Quiz on the material presented that week (and maybe a question for the past just to keep you on your toes). They will test your recall of material and provide me quick feedback of the classes understanding. They are simply testing recall of the material. That’s the first level I expect you to achieve. I’ve set the number of attempts at two. You may use the second attempt to improve your performance and to cement the ideas. The highest weekly grade will be used. If you run into network problems and cannot complete the second attempt, contact me and I’ll set up another attempt for you (I do check that you don’t do three).

Exams

There will be three exams in this course. The exams will test your understanding, ability to reason and to apply what you’ve learned in the course. Recall the quizzes only test recall – here you must recall and use the material. It will consist of short answer, calculations, and essay questions. The exams will not be cumulative across the entire course but may include material from earlier exams that, as a class, was shown to be weak. In this profession you will always have access to additional material, so the exams will be open book and open notes. I recommend a reference sheet as looking through the book and notes often will preclude you from finishing the exam.

You should also have a standalone, non-graphing, non-programmable calculator.

I have posted practice exams and solutions which are compilation of the prerequisite courses’ mid-term and final exams from prior semesters. These will help you gauge your readiness for the course and show you what I am looking for. If you have trouble with these exams, then you’ll need to review the past material.

The dates are in the schedule portion of this syllabus. No make-up for any activity will be allowed unless arranged in advance. Only in special cases, such as medical problems and family emergency, make-ups and late assignments may be allowed with verifiable proof. Arrive promptly to exams. Late students may not be admitted.

If there is something else I can be doing to help you out, please let me know.
Religious Holidays and Sports

A list of religious holidays is available on the University Life Calendar page. Any student whose religious observance conflicts with a scheduled course activity must contact me at least 2 weeks in advance of the conflict to make alternative arrangements.

There are many religious holidays that the university recognizes and many more that they may not be familiar with. Some of you may have obligations to one or more of Mason’s sports teams or to an employer as well. I will try to accommodate reasonable requests for conflicts of these types. It is your responsibility to bring it to my attention and to help craft a solution to the conflict.

Attendance Policy

Although attendance will not be recorded, it is assumed that you will attend every class. It is imperative that you do so as material can be presented in class that is not offered in the textbook, labs, or any supplementary notes that may be provided. **If you miss a class, you will miss important material.** It is your responsibility to find out what happened in the class and obtain the information. I will respond to questions about the material but NOT about what was presented. It is your responsibility to find out what was covered. I recommend having one or more buddies in the class to share what was presented. There may be an occasion where you are not allowed to come to class or I may not be allowed to come to class. Use the asynchronous material for these times. If I cannot make it, I will send out an announcement as soon as I am aware of the situation.

Assignments and/or reading assignments can be expected for most classes. Remember to put your name on your work. I encourage you to use the method of study you find best for yourself. I have found that active reading, outlining, and taking notes by hand continue to help me in my studies. You should take a lot of notes. The syllabus is a guide for the lectures and topics discussion. We may drift from it in a given week. Figure out how you will take the notes and organize them, so you can keep track of the material. Discussion and participation can also enhance your overall understanding of the material (and as a side effect, your grade). I may post topics on the discussion board for your use and further discussion. They are meant to be informative and helpful. It is not meant to be degrading or condescending. You must come to class prepared to participate in discussion of the lecture material.

CELL PHONES, SMART PHONES, BLACKBERRIES, etc. Please turn off your communication devices during class. If it goes off, I will take it. You can have it after class. If you are an emergency responder or have a possibly critical situation, please let me know.

Students are expected to attend each class, to complete any required preparatory work (including assigned reading) and to participate actively in lectures, discussions, and exercises. As members of the academic community, all students are expected to contribute regardless of their proficiency with the subject matter. **Final grades may be adjusted (upward or downward) by the instructor based on student participation, or lack thereof, during lecture.** Students that fail to attend lecture are unable to participate. Any student that expects to miss more than one class is strongly advised to drop the course and take it in a later semester when he or she can attend every class.

Departmental policy requires students to take exams at the scheduled time and place, unless there are truly compelling, severe circumstances supported by appropriate documentation. Except in such circumstance, failure to arrive to the exam on time for a scheduled exam will result in a score of zero (0) for that exam, in accordance with Mason policy on final exams. Students should not make travel plans or other discretionary arrangement that conflict with scheduled classes or exams. If the University is closed due to weather or other unforeseen conditions, final exams may be rescheduled – students are strongly advised not to make plans that would prevent them from attending exams that may be rescheduled during the entire exam period.

If you text or even so much as look at your cell phone, email, text, etc. during an exam or a quiz, you will be asked to turn in your work in and it will not be graded. I prefer NOT to have laptops in the classroom but recognize most

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3 See Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren’s *How to Read a Book*
of you use them for notes (see my notes above about this). They are a distraction rather than an aid in this sort of learning environment. If this is an issue with you then come speak with me. Remember your brain works in a linear manner. Like Operating Systems, multi-tasking in your brain is handled by switching contexts. Each time this happens there is a delay were “no work” is happening and you miss material as well as use precious glucose to make the chemically driven synaptic switch.

**Classroom Conduct**

While students are encouraged to discuss solutions to problems, *students must submit their own, original, work*. All students are expected to abide by the George Mason University Honor System and Code (http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm) (which contains a definition of plagiarism, amongst other things). Further related information is available from IEEE (http://www.ieee.org/portal/pages/iportals/aboutus/ethics/code.html) and ACM (http://www.acm.org/about/code-of-ethics). I reserve the right to submit student work for automated testing against other submitted work to confirm a submission’s originality.

I am very straightforward about how I deal with plagiarists. NO MERCY. I will fail you. I will ask for your expulsion. Do not find yourself in this situation.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to learning, as directed by the instructor. Any student who negatively impacts the opportunity for other students to learn will be warned – if disruptive behavior continues, the student will be removed from the course.

**Videotaping or Audio recording any lecture or classroom activity is prohibited.** If I suspect that you have participated in one of these activities, I will investigate it. If I catch you, I will ask you to leave and invite you to drop the class.

**Communications**

Registered students will be given access to a section of the Blackboard Learning System for this course. Blackboard will be used as the primary mechanism (outside of lectures) to disseminate course information, including announcements, lecture slides, assignments, and grades.

Communication with the instructor on issues relating to the individual student should be conducted using GMU email, telephone, or in person. Do not use a public forum for these communications. GMU Mail is the preferred method – for urgent messages, you should also attempt to contact myself via telephone. Federal privacy law and GMU policy require that any communication with a student related in any way to a student’s status be conducted using secure GMU systems – if you use email to communicate with the instructor you **MUST** send messages from your GMU email account.

When sending an e-mail to the Instructor or Teaching Assistant, please include the following:

- Course Number
- Section Number
- Your full name

Do not carbon copy other students in your correspondence, use Blind Carbon Copy for this and note in the text which students you want to include. Virginia Law has been amended and I am obligated to protect your emails. All course material is published on Blackboard in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) or in a format for which a free reader is available. This allows users of most computing platforms to view and print these files. Microsoft Word (or a compatible word processing application) is required for preparing assignments – it is available on computers in the Mason open labs.
**Privacy**

Instructors respect and protect the privacy of information related to individual students. As described above, issues relating to an individual student will be discussed via email, telephone, or in person. I will not discuss issues relating to an individual student with other students (or anyone without a need to know) without prior permission of the student.

Graded work other than exams will be returned to individual students directly by the instructor. Under no circumstances will a student’s graded work be returned to another student.

**Disability Accommodations**

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with disabled students to arrange for appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to university services. Any student with a disability of any kind is strongly encouraged to register with ODS as soon as possible and take advantage of the services offered.

Accommodations for disabled students must be made in advance – ODS cannot assist students retroactively, and at least one week’s notice is required for special accommodations related to exams. Any student who needs accommodation should contact the instructor during the first week of the semester, so that sufficient time is allowed to make arrangements.

**Honor Code**

All members of the Mason community are expected to uphold the principles of scholarly ethics. Similarly, graduating students are bound by the ethical requirements of the professional communities they join. On admission to Mason, students agree to comply with the requirements of the GMU Honor System and code (www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies). The Honor Code will be strictly enforced in this course. Honor Code cases are heard by a panel consisting of students – students who meet the requirements are encouraged to nominate themselves to serve on the Honor Committee. Any use of the words or ideas of another person, without explicit attribution that clearly identifies the material used and its source in an appropriate manner, is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. There is a mandated “zero tolerance” policy for plagiarism. I reserve the right to use all manual or automated means (including, but not limited to such services as Safe Assign and MOSS – Measure of Software Similarity) to detect plagiarism in any work submitted by students for this course. For this course, the following requirements are germane:

- All work that is to be submitted for a grade must be prepared by the individual student. Students are expressly prohibited from sharing any graded work for this course in any manner with anyone other than the instructor and teaching assistant assigned to this course.
- All work must be newly created by the individual student for this course for this semester. Any usage of work developed for another course, or for this course in a prior semester, is strictly prohibited without prior approval from the instructor.
- Posting or sharing course content using any non-electronica or electronic medium constitutes copyright infringement and is strictly prohibited without prior approval from the instructor.

Students may, and are encouraged to, seek assistance from others for content assistance only that is not related to any graded work. Peer advisors may not assist a student with the completion of graded work.
**Campus Services:**

Several services are available to students, and you are encouraged to make use of them as you may need:

**Writing Center**
A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; http://writingcenter.gmu.edu

**Office of Disability Services:**
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me, and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. http://ods.gmu.edu and be arranged before any accommodation is needed.

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):**
(703) 993-2380; http://caps.gmu.edu
University Policy: The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.