



COURSE SYLLABUS  
IST195 – Introduction to Information Technology



### Course Overview:

**Semester:** Fall 2024

**Class Time/Location:** M/W 10:35 – 11:30 a.m.; Grant Auditorium

#### Instructor:

[Jeff Rubin](mailto:jhrubin@syr.edu); [@jhrubin](https://twitter.com/@jhrubin) (X); **Office hours** by Appointment in 327 Hinds

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**Recitation Location:** 010/013 Hinds Hall

#### Course Description:

State-of-the-art technologies in the field; Computer architectures, telecommunication networks, software design and application; Issues in information management and technology use.

#### Additional Course Description

The information age has arrived in a rush: Everyone in the U.S. has a computer or can use one at the public library. I can email, text, Tweet (X), Facebook message, Snapchat, Zoom, or even send a TikTok to my boss, friends, and family anytime I like from about any point on the globe. I can buy groceries, a car, or a house online using cryptocurrency. I can find a job or a spouse using social networking tools. I could (but did not) use Generative AI to write this syllabus!

How does it all work? What must you know about all this technology to succeed in life? How is it possible to keep up with the rapid pace of innovation in information technology? In IST195, we will explore all these questions by enhancing information technology literacy. Even if you know little about computers, networks, and software, this course will provide a foundation for lifelong learning about technology. This course will serve you well regardless of whether you see your life and future career as information technology-focused.

**Prerequisite:** None

**Audience:** This course is open to all undergraduate students at Syracuse University. No prior information technology knowledge is required.

**Credits:** 3

**Learning Objectives:**

- Recall key terms and definitions related to standard information technologies.
- Describe the workings of the Internet, databases, security, and productivity applications at a basic or intermediate level.
- Evaluate consumer and business-focused information technology products and services.
- Analyze and criticize the impact of information technology on contemporary life.
- Demonstrate information ethics concerning intellectual property, cybercrime, privacy, or related matters.
- Explain how various forms of information technology will intersect with their career, industry of interest, and personal lives.

**Shared Competencies:**

In IST195, our class projects, labs, and exams ensure that our students meet the expectations of one of the university-shared competencies: Information Literacy and Technological Agility, defined as the Identification, collection, evaluation, and responsible use of information. Effective, ethical, and critical application of various technologies and media in academic, creative, personal, and professional endeavors.

**Required Texts:**

Computing Essentials 2025: Making IT Work For You  
Authors: Timothy O'Leary, Linda O'Leary, Daniel O'Leary  
Publisher: McGraw-Hill

This eBook is available through Orange Inclusive Access (OIA). **You are automatically enrolled**, and the book is available via Blackboard. \$45.88 will be charged to your SU Bursar account unless you opt-out by September 9, 2024. If you opt-out, you are still responsible for obtaining the materials elsewhere.

**Course Requirements and Expectations:**

**Exams: (33% of grade)**

The course will have two mid-semester exams, each drawing on the lecture material. No make-up exams will be offered. A comprehensive final exam will be held during the final exam slot for this course: **December 12, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.** Please note the date and time of your exam and make your travel plans accordingly. University rules mandate that I cannot give an early final or change the exam date or time. You may have other exams that day. Study guides will also be available on Blackboard as the exams approach. Individuals who miss their exam due to a medical or family emergency need to provide a verified excuse from the University's Division of Student Affairs.

**Labs: (20% of grade)**

There is one lab for each week of the course. All but three labs are considered homework, with the remaining three completed in recitation. Labs will be available on Blackboard on Monday mornings and are due Sunday evening. If you don't have the software to complete the lab, you can use <http://rds.syr.edu>.

Labs must be submitted in the format indicated in each lab (i.e., PDF, .xlsx, etc.). Submitting an assignment in an incorrect format will result in a deduction of 1 point. Any student who submits more than two assignments in the incorrect file format will receive a zero on the subsequent assignments. Students are responsible for ensuring that the file they submit is readable and in

**1. Homework Labs:**

There are eleven homework labs throughout the semester. Labs are designed so students with little or no experience in the topic area can follow the instructions and complete the lab. **Your two lowest scores will be dropped from your final grade.**

**2. Recitation Labs:**

There are three more challenging labs to be completed during recitation. All scores count towards your final grade (no drops)

**Quizzes: (15% of grade)**

**1. Online Quizzes:**

For the first 13 weeks of the semester, a short quiz with ten questions will be available on Blackboard. The questions will pertain to the chapter you read before the lecture. The quizzes will be available on Monday and must be completed by 11:59 PM Sunday. In addition, a pre-lab LINUX quiz will count as part of your overall quiz grade. **Your two lowest scores will be dropped from your final grade.**

**2. Recitation Quizzes:**

Six short quizzes will be administered during recitation. These quizzes will be given at the beginning of class, so you must be on time. You will not be allowed to take the quiz if you are late. All scores count towards your final grade (no drops).

**Recitation Assignments: (15% of grade)**

Most weeks during recitation, you will be given a group assignment to work on during class and occasionally outside. You will work on an individual lab assignment during three weeks of recitation. **Your two lowest scores will be dropped from your final grade.**

**Projects: (12% of grade)**

This course has three projects. The first involves researching and writing about ethics related to information technology. The second involves developing an entrepreneurial idea and strategizing how technology can enhance it. For the third project, you teach someone something they want to learn about information technology.

**Attendance: (5% of grade)**

Unless approved to be remote by the Professor, you are expected to be in class and recitation on time. You are encouraged to ask questions. Attendance will be taken. **The lecture content is the subject of all exams** throughout the semester.

**Course Schedule:**

All information below is tentative and subject to change. Please consult Blackboard for any changes to this schedule.

**Week 1:**

**Date:** August 26, 28, 30  
**Topic:** Class Introduction/ IT & Your Career || History of Computing  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 1 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 1, File Management Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Assignment

**Week 2**

**Date:** Sep 2 (no class), 4, 6  
**Topic:** Social Media  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 2 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 2, LinkedIn Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Week 3**

**Date:** Sep 9, 11, 13  
**Topic:** Microsoft Excel || Data Analytics || Introduce Project 1  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 3 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 3, Excel Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Week 4**

**Date:** Sep 16, 18, 20  
**Topic:** Operating Systems || Linux Operating System  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 4 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 4, Linux Pre-lab Quiz, **Project 1 – Part 1 Due**  
**Recitation Work:** Linux Lab

**Week 5**

**Date:** Sep 23, 25, 27  
**Topic:** Computing Hardware || Bits Bytes || RFID || Review for Exam  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 5 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 5, Hardware Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Week 6**

**Date:** Sep 30, Oct 2, 4  
**Topic:** **Exam 1**|| Internet of Things  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 6 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 6, Tableau Lab, **Project 1 – Part 2 Due**  
**Recitation Work:** In-Class Presentations

**Week 7**

**Date:** Oct 7, 9, 11  
**Topic:** Cloud Computing || Networks || Introduce Project 2  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 7 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 7  
**Recitation Work:** Cloud Computing Lab

**Week 8**

**Date:** Oct 14 (no class), 16, 18  
**Topic:** Artificial Intelligence  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 8 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 8, Networking Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Week 9**

**Date:** Oct 21, 23, 25  
**Topic:** Security || Privacy & Ethics  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 9 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 9, Security Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and In-Class Presentations

**Week 10**

**Date:** Oct 28, 30, Nov 1  
**Topic:** Blockchain || Tech Economy || Review for Exam || **Project 2 – Video & Comments Due**  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 10 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 10  
**Recitation Work:** Machine Learning Lab

**Week 11**

**Date:** Nov 4, 6, 8  
**Topic:** **Exam 2**|| Databases  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 11 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 11, Database Lab, **Project 2 – Paper Due**  
**Recitation Work:** Machine Learning Lab Part II

**Week 12**

**Date:** Nov 11, 13, 15  
**Topic:** Product/Project Management || Web Development || Introduce Project 3  
**Readings:** Read Chapter 12 of the Book  
**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 12, Project Management Lab  
**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Week 13**

**Date:** Nov 18,20,22

**Topic:** Web Development || Web Accessibility

**Readings:** Read Chapter 13 of the Book

**Homework:** Blackboard Quiz 13, Web Development Lab

**Recitation Work:** Recitation Quiz and Recitation Assignment

**Thanksgiving Break:**

Nov 24 – December 1 – Thanksgiving Break

**Week 14**

**Date:** Dec 2, 4, 6

**Topic:** Careers in IT || Review for the Final || **Project 3 –Due**

**Homework:** IT Careers Lab

**Recitation Work:** Review for the Final

**Week 15**

**Date:** Dec 9

**Topic:** Review for the Final

**Final Exam:**

December 12, 3:00 - 5:00 PM