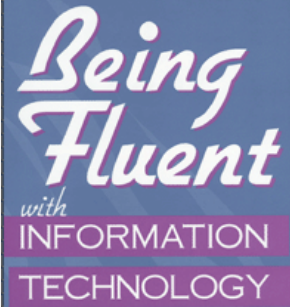


Information Technology

PIA 2100 ~ CRN# 15334
Thursdays, 3:00 – 5:50 pm
Room 3800 WWPH

	<p>Dr. Stuart Shulman 121 University Place, Room #313 Office Hours: Thursdays 12:00-2:00pm (and by appointment) http://shulman.ucsur.pitt.edu/ (home page) Shulman@pitt.edu (e-mail)</p>
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Overview: The central organizing principle of this class on “Information Technology” is to build on the National Research Council’s notion of “Fluency with Information Technology” in the context of public information systems. Fluency with information technology (colloquially known as “FITness”) is a model of lifelong learning designed to acquaint students with the skills, concepts, and capabilities that help them to “navigate independently in the ever-changing worlds of information and technology” (Snyder, 2006). The fluency model replaces earlier standards for computer literacy, which often delivered only mastery of one or more Microsoft’s standard office applications and perhaps advanced knowledge of queries via Internet search engines. Students in this class will become increasingly FIT as they design and engage in a wide variety of lab exercises throughout the semester.

The second primary text focuses on issues related to the use of information technology in the public sector. Each week, the class will be divided into a three parts. The first part each week will be a hands-on, student-designed lab exercise focusing on the technical skills featured that week in the Snyder text. The second part will be a lecture on the weekly reading in Garson focusing on the issues related to public uses of IT. The final third of class will be a discussion-based review of the confluence of IT and public information policies.

**"the information society
will be what the
cyber-citizen makes it"**

Books: There are two required books. Assigned readings should be completed prior to the class meeting. The books are:

G. David Garson (2006) *Public Information Technology & E-Governance: Managing the Virtual State*
Lawrence Snyder (2006) *Fluency with Information Technology: Skills, Concepts and Capabilities* (2nd Ed.)

Assignments: There are several smaller assignments and one major assignment for this class. The smaller assignments must be done individually and count collectively for half the course grade. The major assignment must be completed in small groups of 3-4 students.

A) Smaller Individual Assignments

1. Reading response “**discussion papers**” (2 papers, 3-5 double-spaced pages) focus on the week’s assigned reading from the Garson text. These must be submitted electronically at least 36 hours before class. These papers will be posted to the web and used as fodder for discussion. *Sign up for two chapters during the first class meeting.*
2. Weekly “**digital governance nuggets**” (local, regional, national, or global) are pointers with commentary that each student will post to their class web log (blog). These nuggets can point either to news items, web sites, or other examples of how public information governance is changing because of digital technologies. We’ll look at a sample of the weekly nuggets at the start of the in-class discussion each week.
3. Blackboard-based **threaded discussions** will offer an asynchronous opportunity to reflect and expand upon the central theoretical and practical issues raised in class and the readings.
4. “**Fluency milestones**” are weekly posts in your own fluency blog, which will be set up to archive and share with others the path to fluency best suited to your needs and aspirations.

B) Major Group Assignment

The major assignment is to form and sustain a Fluency Lab Assignment Group (FLAG) with either 3 or 4 members. Each FLAG will be responsible for designing and teaching **two** computer lab exercises that engage the class with one or more of the skills, concepts, and capabilities described in the Snyder text that week. FLAG members will prepare and distribute the necessary materials to guide the lab and they will run the first part of class each week. The bases for the grade will be the **level of effectiveness, clarity, cohesion, and creativity** of the lab design as well as the attainment of at least one **clearly stated learning objective**. FLAGs must plan to meet with me outside of class as early as possible as they are preparing their exercise. Exactly what constitutes a lab is quite flexible. It should be a **hands-on computer exercise** leading to greater fluency with information technology.



Reading Schedule

Week One (August 31) Overview

- Introductions and overview
- EPIC 2015 (<http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/epic>)
- Lab Number One: “Setting up Your Fluency Blog”

Week Two (September 7) Brave New World of Networks

- Chapter 1 (Snyder) “Terms of Endearment: Defining Information Technology”
- Chapter 3 (Snyder) “Making the Connection: The Basics of Networking”
- Chapter 1 (Garson) “The Vision of E-Governance”

Week Three (September 14) Human Computer Interaction: The Digital Landscape

- Chapter 2 (Snyder) “What the Digerati Know: Exploring the Human-Computer Interface”
- Chapter 12 (Snyder) “Computers in Polite Society: Social Implications of IT”
- Chapter 2 (Garson) “A Brief History of Public Sector Information Technology”

Week Four (September 21) HTML: Writing Code and Coding Democracy

- Chapter 4 (Snyder) “Marking Up with HTML: A Hypertext Markup Language Primer”
- Chapter 3 (Garson) “E-Democracy”

Week Five (September 28) Information: Truth and Access to It via IT

- Chapter 5 (Snyder) “Searching for Truth: Locating Information on the WWW”
- Chapter 4 (Garson) “Information Equality and the Digital Divide”

Week Six (October 5) Research: Transparency and Access Revisited

- Chapter 6 (Snyder) “Searching for Guinea Pig: Case Study in Online Research”
- Chapter 5 (Garson) “Information Access and Governmental Transparency”

Week Seven (October 12) Security & Privacy

- Chapter 17 (Snyder) “Shhh, It’s a Secret”: Privacy and Digital Security”
- Chapter 6 (Garson) “Information Technology & Privacy”
- Chapter 7 (Garson) “Security Policy”

Week Eight (October 19) Spreadsheets, Regulation & Taxation

- Chapter 13 (Snyder) “Fill-In-the-Blank Computing: The Basics of Spreadsheets”
- Chapter 8 (Garson) “Regulation & Taxation”

Week Nine (October 26) Databases I & E-Gov Business Models

- Chapter 14 (Snyder) “Getting to First Base: Introduction to Database Concepts”
- Chapter 9 (Garson) “The E-Government Business Model”

Week Ten (November 2) Databases II & Outsourcing and Procurement

- Chapter 15 (Snyder) “A Table with a View: Database Queries”
- Chapter 10 (Garson) “Partnering, Outsourcing Contracting, and Procurement”

Week Eleven (November 9) Databases III & Planning Public Information Systems

- Chapter 16 (Snyder) “Hai! Adventure Database: Case Study in Database Design”
- Chapter 11 (Garson) “Planning for Public Information Systems”

Week Twelve (November 16) Computers & Everything: Implementation

- Chapter 23 (Snyder) “Computers Can Do Almost {◊ Everything, ◊ Nothing}”
- Chapter 12 (Garson) “Needs Assessment and Project Management”

Thanksgiving Break

Week Thirteen (November 30) Debugging and Implementation

- Chapter 7 (Snyder) “To Err is Human: An Introduction to Debugging”
- Chapter 13 (Garson) “Implementation Success Factors”

Week Fourteen (December 7) Digital Information & Evaluation

- Chapter 8 (Snyder) “Bits and the ‘Why’ of Bytes: Representing Information Digitally”
- Chapter 14 (Garson) “Evaluation of Public Information Systems”

Week Fifteen (December 14) Light, Sound & Other Magic: Going Multimedia

- Chapter 11 (Snyder) “Light, Sound, Magic: Representing Multimedia Digitally”
- Chapter 15 (Garson) “Organization Behavior and Organization Theory”



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