

## **INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

### **PADM 5331.060**

Instructor: **Adjunct Prof. Coby Pewitt, Ph.D.**  
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Office Hours: **By Appointment Only**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course examines the role of information systems in shaping strategy, operations, and decision-making within public and nonprofit organizations. Students will be introduced to the major components of information systems, including people, processes, data, and technology, and will study how these elements work together to improve organizational effectiveness and accountability. The course emphasizes practical applications of information systems in public service, covering topics such as databases, digital presence, business intelligence, knowledge management, and systems development. Special attention will be given to ethical issues, privacy, security, and the challenges of project management and strategic planning.

By the end of the course, students will gain the ability to critically evaluate, design, and manage information systems that advance the goals of transparency, efficiency, and innovation in public administration.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the relationship between information systems, people, and organizational strategy in public and nonprofit settings.
2. Identify and assess the components of enterprise architecture, including databases, networks, and communication technologies.
3. Evaluate the role of business intelligence, data analytics, and knowledge management in supporting evidence-based decision-making.
4. Analyze the use of digital tools—including websites, social media, and mobile applications—to enhance public engagement and service delivery.
5. Assess key issues of ethics, privacy, cybersecurity, and equity in the design and use of information systems.
6. Compare approaches to systems development and procurement, with attention to risk, cost, and implementation challenges in the public sector.
7. Apply project management and strategic planning principles to the selection, adoption, and oversight of information systems initiatives.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS**

- *Introduction to Information Systems (5<sup>th</sup> Ed)(2024)*. By Patricia Wallace, Publisher: Pearson; ISBN: 9780137918430
- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Assoc (7<sup>th</sup> Ed)(2020)*; ISBN: 9781433832161
- In addition to the textbook, I will provide Open Educational Resources (OER) on Canvas. You are expected to review these materials, as they will reinforce the topics covered in class and may serve as references or citations for assignments. Engaging with these resources will support your learning and help you succeed in the course.

## **COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS**

The best way to contact me is through Canvas messaging or your UT Tyler email. I check both regularly and will typically respond typically within 24-48 hours. While I am happy to meet by appointment, email or Canvas messages are the preferred method for routine questions and clarifications.

## COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Active participation is essential in this course. You are expected to engage fully in group assignments, discussion boards, and other class activities. If you have concerns about participation or classroom dynamics, please speak with me, the department chair, or an academic advisor.

Our discussions are intended to be honest, enlightening, and respectful. All students must maintain professional decorum: respect differing opinions, communicate in a non-judgmental and courteous manner, and challenge ideas thoughtfully and scholarly. Disrespectful or offensive comments will not be tolerated.

Your preparation for readings, weekly discussions, and assessments should reflect your academic commitment. As this is an online course, your written work serves as the primary measure of your performance. Clear, professional writing is an important part of graduate-level work, so please proofread submissions carefully and use proper grammar and style..

Finally, I encourage you to print the syllabus and review it thoroughly to familiarize yourself with all course policies and expectations.

## MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be a total of five major assignment types in this course:

- Application Exercises (10%)
- Discussion Boards (20%)
- Midterm Exam (20%)
- Final Exam (20%)
- Research Paper (30%)

## COURSE MILESTONES

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Discussion & Application Exercises  
Always due on Sundays by 11:59 PM

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Sunday, 10/12/2025  
Midterm Exam due by 11:59 PM

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Sunday, 12/07/2025  
Research Paper due by 11:59 PM

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Saturday, 12/13/2025  
Final Exam due by 11:59 PM

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## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- **Application Exercises** – Each week, students will complete a practical exercise based on lecture material. These assignments are designed to assess your ability to apply course concepts and demonstrate performance in a real-world context.
- **Discussion Boards** – Each week, students will respond to discussion question(s) drawn from the lecture material and assigned readings. Responses should demonstrate critical thinking, integrate course concepts, and include at least one scholarly or professional source in APA format. You must academically engage with at least two classmates.
- **Midterm and Final Examinations** – Exams may include multiple-choice, multiple/multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and essay (including short-answer) questions. The Midterm Exam will cover material from Weeks 1–6. The Final Exam will cover material from Weeks 7–13. Exams will be taken on Canvas and must be completed independently without outside assistance.
- **Research Paper** – As this is a graduate-level course, students are expected to synthesize course material and produce a well-researched, analytical paper. The paper should demonstrate critical thinking and propose solutions to a public administration issue, supported by scholarly sources.

## COURSE POLICIES

- **Attendance** - Regular engagement is required for success in this online course. Attendance is measured by participation in discussion boards, completion of assignments on time, and consistent interaction with course materials. Log in to Canvas frequently to stay current with readings, announcements, and discussions. Late participation or missed assignments will affect your grade. If you anticipate an extended absence or difficulty meeting deadlines, contact me promptly to discuss accommodations. Consistent engagement demonstrates your professional responsibility and ensures you fully benefit from the course.
- **Late Work and Make Up Exam Expectations** - Students are expected to submit assignments on time. I understand that life can be unpredictable, so late work may be accepted if you communicate with me in advance, explaining the reason and providing an expected submission date. Assignments submitted late may receive a minimum 10% deduction, with additional points deducted for longer delays. Professionalism and timely communication are key to maintaining fairness for all students. If you are unable to take

an exam at the scheduled time due to a valid reason, you must notify me as soon as possible. Make-up exams will be arranged at my discretion and may have adjusted formats or timing to ensure academic integrity.

■ **Grading** - The final grade will be assigned as follows:

- A (90% or above)
  - B (80-89.9%)
  - C (70-79.9%)
  - D (60-69.9%)
  - F (below 60%)
- All written work will be graded on accuracy, content, sophistication, proper usage of common English, and overall communications effectiveness and whether directions were followed. The following will be the basis for all assignments:

TRAITS	STRONG	WEAK
1) Focus & Details	One clear, well-focused topic – supported by detailed info – terms and concepts used appropriately	The topic and main ideas are not clear - terms and concepts misused or no usage
2) Organization	Information is relevant and presented in a logical order	There is no clear introduction, structure, or conclusion
3) Clarity	Expression is succinct, clear and appropriate	Expression is vague and imprecise
4) Word Choice	Uses vivid word and phrases – seems accurate and natural	Uses limited vocabulary, jargon, or clichés – distracting
5) Grammar	Sentences well structured – no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling	Sentences are awkward or distracting. – Errors in grammar, mechanics, or spelling

## CALENDAR OF TOPICS, READINGS, AND DUE DATES

Week of:	Topic	Assigned Reading	Assignments
#1 – Aug 25	Information Systems and People	Chapter 1	Introductions, Discussion and Application Questions
#2 – Sept 1	Information Systems and Strategy	Chapter 2	Discussion and Application Questions
#3 – Sept 8	Information and Communications Technologies: The Enterprise Architecture	Chapter 3	Discussion and Application Questions
#4 – Sept 15	Database and Data Warehouses	Chapter 4	Discussion and Application Questions, Submit Proposal
#5 – Sept 22	Information Systems for the Enterprise	Chapter 5	Discussion and Application Questions
#6 – Sept 29	Developing a Digital Presence: Websites, Social Media, and Mobile Apps	Chapter 6	Discussion and Application Questions
#7 – Oct 6	Midterm Examination	N/A	Midterm Examination
#8 – Oct 13	Business Intelligence and Analytics	Chapter 7	Discussion and Application Questions, <b>Outline Due</b>
#9 – Oct 20	Collaborating with Technology	Chapter 8	Discussion and Application Questions
#10 – Oct 27	Knowledge Management and E-Learning	Chapter 9	Discussion and Application Questions
#11 – Nov 3	Ethics, Privacy and Security	Chapter 10	Discussion and Application Questions
#12 – Nov 10	Systems Development and Procurement	Chapter 11	Discussion and Application Questions, <b>Rough Draft Due</b>
#13 – Nov 17	Information Systems Project Management and Strategic Planning	Chapter 12	Discussion and Application Questions
#14 – Nov 24	Thanksgiving Holiday	N/A	N/A
#15 – Dec 1	Research Paper	N/A	<b>Research Paper Due</b>
#16 – Dec 8	Final Examination	N/A	<b>Final Examination</b>

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND INFORMATION

- **Withdrawing from Class** - Students are allowed to withdraw (drop) from a course through the University's Withdrawal Portal. Texas law prohibits students who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. The number includes courses dropped at other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Make sure to consider the impact withdrawing from any course has on your academic progress as well as the financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and financial aid for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean students receive a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule. CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms.
- **Final Exam Policy:** Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members are required to maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.
- **Incomplete Grade Policy:** If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete course requirements by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average for a student. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to complete the work for the course within the time limit, the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has not been assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F or to NC, if the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis.
- **Grade Appeal Policy:** - UT Tyler's Grade Appeal policy requires the completion of a Grade Appeal form for this action to take place. The grade appeal begins with the instructor of the course. If a student does not agree with the decision of the instructor, the student may then move the appeal to the department chair/school director for that course. If the student is still dissatisfied with the decision of the chair/director, the appeal moves to the Dean of the College offering that course, who has the final decision. Grade appeals must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade. The Grade Appeal form is found on the Registrar's Form Library.
- **Disability/Accessibility Services:** In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), The University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If a student has a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, the student is encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact the student when the application has been submitted and schedule an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.
- **Military Affiliated Students:** UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. Campus resources for military-affiliated students are in the Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC). The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@uttyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@uttyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.
- **Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct:** The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

- **FERPA** - UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3. The course instructor will follow all requirements in protecting your confidential information.
- **Recording of Class Sessions:** Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in the course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in the course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.
- **Absence for Official University Events or Activities:** All courses follow the practices related to approved absences as noted by the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Sec. 1 -501).
- **Absence for Religious Holidays:** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious holiday are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the semester.
- **Campus Carry:** We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in all courses. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.