CS 101 Special Project

The objectives of this course are to:

1. Give students an in-depth understanding of how computers work and how they play an important role in today’s networked environment
2. Prepare students to use up-to-date application software that will be valuable to them in the workplace or post-graduate studies once they leave college
3. Familiarize students with strategies that will help them effectively search online databases
4. Familiarize students with current topics involving computer-based technology
5. Enable students to learn on their own about modern computer-based technology

The lectures and assigned reading are aimed at accomplishing the first objective. The hands-on lessons are designed to achieve the second and third. The special project is designed to give you experiences involving the last two objectives.

Research Topics: I have chosen seven topics that have been in the news, for example in the NY Times, in the past few months:

- Big Data
- Robotics
- Online Privacy
- Artificial Intelligence
- The Internet of Things
- Future Computers
- Virtual Reality

These seven topics are described in more detail on a separate handout, “CS 101: List of Projects.”

Research: I have divided the class into seven groups of three students. Each group will be responsible for one of the above topics, which will be assigned randomly. Their goal will be to research their assigned topic using reliable online resources: the Library databases, online articles from well-known newspapers and magazines (e.g., NY Times, Wall St. Journal, Washington Post, Time, Newsweek), and reliable web sites.

Presentations: During the last week of classes, each group will be responsible for giving a 15 – 17 minute presentation on their topic. This presentation should include either a PowerPoint or a Prezi, which will be posted on the course Moodle page. All students will be responsible for material from these presentations on the final exam.

All three students in the group should take part in the presentation. On Friday April 13, Linda Powers, who specializes in Communications Studies, will lecture to the class on “Making a Presentation.” It is important for you to attend this lecture because, among other things, Ms. Powers will discuss how members of a group can best participate in a presentation.
**Progress Reviews:** Students in each group can decide how they want to do the research. It is important for the research to be done promptly and not at the last minute. It also is important for each member of the group to contribute significantly to the research. In order to ensure that both of these take place, we will not hold class on April 16, 23, and 30. On these days or the next, I will meet with each group for a 15-minute progress review. The first five minutes or so of a review will be devoted to a summary report of what the group has accomplished at this point. There will be three progress reviews and a different student will be responsible for giving the summary report each time. After the summary report, I will briefly discuss with each member of the group how he or she has contributed to the group’s work. I also will help with the research if necessary.

**Sharing Information:** All students should sign up for a Dropbox account if they do not already have one.
- One student in each group should set up a folder in his or her Dropbox account and share it with the other members of the group and me (whisnantdm@wofford.edu).
  - I will monitor the shared folder to make sure that research is being done.
- **All information** you obtain from your research and planning for the presentation should be stored in this shared folder.
  - Everything should be in this folder.
  - URLs for web sites can be listed on one or more Word or Excel documents
  - The PowerPoint (or link to a Prezi) should be stored in the folder.
- You may organize the information in the folder as you desire.
  - Subfolders might be useful if you accumulate a lot.

Our meetings do not need to be limited to the progress reviews. Groups can feel free to discuss their research with me any time.

**Grading:** The project is worth 100 points. Each student’s grade will depend on several things:
- The quality of the presentation
- The quality of the research
- The quality of each progress review
- The quality of their own contribution to the research and the presentation. I will base my judgment of each student’s contribution to the research primarily from the progress reviews