



IDIS 110

Foundations of Information Technology

Send them an email before class starts and then ask them to make sure they received it. If they didn't, they aren't on the class email list.

REMINDERS:

- Tell the students why you are doing what you are doing: calling on them, fostering discussion, etc.



All Course Material

- Find everything on Moodle
 - <http://moodle.calvin.edu>

The **nature of the course**:

- FIT covers the fluencies required for college-level work (e.g., research, communication, analysis, etc.).
- It focuses on fluency with information technology (for research, etc.).

Course **logistics**:

- Go through the syllabus and schedule



*Nothing is more terrible than activity
without insight.*

- attributed to Thomas Carlyle

When you adopt a technology, it constrains what you can do, and, if you're not careful, what you think as well.

Basic theme - technology giveth and it taketh away:

- count the cost as well as the benefit of technology
- don't "just use it"

Two types of reactions to this class, both saying it will be useless:

- I'm a computer person (already)
 - You will learn something (I certainly did when I prepared the class)
 - I've structured the class in a modular, hands-off sort of way
- I'm not a computer person (and never will be)
 - You can learn IT.
 - Get help

You'll see evidence of these things in the syllabus/schedule.



Why FIT?

- Critically assessing technology
- *Pervasiveness* of information technologies
- *Fluency* in information technologies
- Learn to use tools better
 - Like learning to use a paintbrush or a chainsaw better.
 - You can express yourself better.

Q: how do you feel about IT? Scale of 0 to 9.

What technological devices do you love, hate?

Hardware: Cell phones, ipods, computers, laptops, netbooks, smart phones (e.g., iphones, blackberries, etc),

Software: Microsoft Word, email, google, facebook, twitter, IRC, IM, Excel, PowerPoint, Windows, Mac OS X, Linux...



Critically Assessing Technology

- Vinton Cerf: “Truth and the Internet”
 - <http://www.isoc.org/internet/conduct/truth.shtml>
 - Read this!
- What is *the* tool we have to analyze what we see, hear, and use?



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Reformed Views of Technology

- Information technology is part of God's creation and its use is redeemable.
- Doing this requires that we:
 - Understand the issue.
 - Determine if an IT-based solution is possible.
 - Identify the strengths/weaknesses of the solution
 - Work to achieve the strengths and address the weaknesses
- What other positions could you take?

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Find 1 or 2 really good illustrative exercises/examples for critically assessing technology:

internet and search – good or bad? Weak for research because it accesses only 10% of on-line information, and none of the print-only information.

email – good or bad? Strong for administration, weak for personal contact.

Critically assess technology, don't "just use it"

IT assumes, controls, collects info, assimilates (cyborg)

There's still value in physical (vs virtual) contact

In the first 10 minutes of class next week, we'll review each lab exercise and ask the big questions – What did technology give, and what did it take away?



What Information Technology Do You Use?

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?
 - How do you decide what is a strength or weakness, and how do you decide when a weakness is “too high a price to pay”?

Impact on your behavior

Impact on others around you:

o your community

o



What is possible?

- Q: how could the devices we have (or the devices we can imagine) be used to promote the kingdom of God?
 - Preach the Gospel
 - Provide mercy
 - Promote justice
 - Serve the poor
- We might all be able to have better ideas if we were more *fluent*.