Building a Case for IT Investments in the Public Sector

Information Technology Innovation in the Public Sector

Instructor: Donna S. Canestraro, MS PMP
Office Hours: By Appointment
Email: dcanestr@ctg.albany.edu
Phone: 339-3221

Course Purpose and Overview
This course introduces students to the complexities of public sector information technology decision making and to a set of analytical tools and techniques for identifying and managing those complexities. The course provides an overview of the management, policy and technology challenges faced by organizations engaging in information technology innovation and it introduces a formal methodology for making IT investment decisions. The methodology includes tools and techniques for problem definition, stakeholder analysis, process analysis, best and current practices research, technology awareness, and business case development. Students will also be exposed to current relevant digital government research. Students will engage in a field project with a government partner and produce a business analysis of a selected information or information technology problem.

Course Organization
Classroom sessions will initially focus on the complexities of information technology decision making in the public sector. The format of these sessions will include lectures, exercises and case discussions about strategies for managing IT decision making in government. A number of guest lecturers will provide overviews of specific tools as well as provide other perspectives about information technology in government.

Class assignments and readings will generally be posted on the class Blackboard site. A number of short assignments will be given to orient students to the various discussions in both the academic and practitioner publications related to information technology investment decision making.

The primary assignment for the course is the semester long field project. The project is introduced during the early weeks of class. Interim reports of activity on the project, group presentations, a final written report and a team final paper will be required during the semester.

Student Evaluation and Grading – See attached Rubric
Grading will be based on the course components as follows:

- Class preparation and participation in class 20%
- Various short assignments 30%
- All activities related to project and the final report and presentation 50%

Time commitment for this course
This is a four-credit graduate course. Therefore you should plan on spending four hours per week in addition to the time in class for class work and project work assignments. In the beginning you may find that you spend less than four hours per week but as time progresses in your project work you will find additional time required. You will need to be the manager of your time and schedule to meet the demands of this class.
Building a Case for IT Investments in the Public Sector (4)
Information Technology Innovation in the Public Sector

Course Policies
Teamwork is essential to the success of the semester project. A successful project depends on each member of the team being responsible to their teammates and available for team activities and on each member of the team assuming their “fair share” of the work and responsibility. Each team must work to identify what that means given their particular project and their mix of interests and skill sets. The instructor is available for advice in this regard.

All teams experience some conflict. In this course conflict tends to come from differences in understanding of the problem, the environment, how tools can be employed, and the best way to present findings. Some conflict also emerges when individual team members do not carry their weight. It also sometimes occurs when team members assume too much responsibility and authority. Any team finding that a member is erring in either direction unwilling to assume an appropriate and equitable amount of responsibility or assuming too much should let the instructor know as soon as possible. Success depends on the ability to commit as individuals to the development of the highest quality team product. Students will be graded on their teamwork, on the various interim products and on the final products related to the semester team project. We will be using a Team Evaluation process as part of this evaluation. Please review that folder on MyAlbany Blackboard so you are aware of your responsibilities as a team member and an evaluator.

Plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for the whole course. In addition, as instructor, I will pursue further disciplinary action at the University level. For the purposes of this course, the following are taken as evidence of plagiarism or cheating:

- Material reproduced from another source without any or adequate citation.
- Evidence of collaboration between students on an in-class or take-home assignment that was intended to reflect individual effort.

Your work may be subject to computerized analysis to discover whether materials have been taken from on-line sources or to determine statistically whether answers are more similar than random chance would allow.

This is an important ethical issue that I take very seriously. If you have any questions about this course policy, you should ask me for any clarification that you need.

Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, smart phones and laptops, in class is permitted ONLY for educational purposes.
You can use cell phones, smart phones, or laptops during class ONLY for educational purposes, such as taking a note and using it to search a particular item for in-class activities. If I find it distracting, I will ask you to put it away. If you carry a portable electronic device to class, please make sure that it is turned off or silent. If you need to make a phone call, text a message, check your e-mail, etc., please leave the class to do this so that you will not disturb others in the class. Please see me if you have any questions about this policy.
Building a Case for IT Investments in the Public Sector (4)
Information Technology Innovation in the Public Sector

Required Reading – in addition to the readings listed with each module in MyAlbany Blackboard
- Making Smart IT Choices http://www.ctg.albany.edu/publications/guides/smartit2

Additional readings will be assigned as the course progresses.