

Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)

 Edit



School of STEM

Computer Information Technology

CIT4081: IT Research Project

1 Unit

Spring 2026 - Online

Time and Place: Online and anytime

Instructor: Mike Leih, Ph.D. (619) 349-3008

mleih@pointloma.edu (<mailto:mleih@pointloma.edu>)

office: RS 240

Final Exam: The final report and presentation will be considered the final exam and will be submitted on April 7, 2026, and presented on April. 11, 2026

Office Hours:

Students are welcome to contact me via email and schedule an appointment at any time, as I am available. Appointments can be conducted face-to-face in my office, by phone, or via video conference call.

Text: No text required.

Needed Supplies:

Students will need access to a computer and a high-speed internet connection, MS Word, MS PowerPoint, and other required software and hardware to complete their research.

Course Description:

The CIT4081 course is a study of a selected problem or topic in Information Technology under the direction of a faculty adviser. The faculty adviser and student propose the research topic and course deliverables. Approval by the program director or department chair is required. The course may be repeated for a total of two units. The course is graded Credit/No Credit only.

Philosophy and Approach:

Research in learning theory shows that students who learn technology effectively must be actively involved in the process, not just passive listeners/observers. In particular, to really learn and understand technological ideas and concepts, one must become deeply involved in activities such as exploring, discussing, analyzing, explaining, testing, and evaluating. To do this, you need good problems to solve, interaction with others on solutions, and opportunities to write your conclusions and present ideas.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to apply their technical knowledge to research a problem or topic.
2. Students will be able to speak about their work with precision, clarity, and organization.
3. Students will be able to write about their work with precision, clarity, and organization.
4. Students will be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and cite information for the task at hand.
5. Students will be able to gather relevant information, examine information, and form a conclusion based on that information.
6. Students will be able to understand and create arguments supported by quantitative evidence, and they can clearly communicate those arguments in various formats.

Program Learning Outcomes:

Graduates will have a coherent and broad-based knowledge of the discipline of Computer Information Technology.

1. Students will be able to identify and evaluate information technology infrastructure necessary to meet an organization's business needs.
2. Students will be able to develop, plan, and evaluate appropriate processes for managing information systems and information technology projects.
3. Students will be able to design, develop, and evaluate software solutions to meet an organization's business needs.
4. Students will be able to apply their technical knowledge to solve problems.
5. Students will be able to speak about their work with precision, clarity, and organization (Oral Communication).
6. Students will be able to write about their work with precision, clarity, and organization (Written Communication).
7. Students will collaborate effectively in teams.
8. Students will be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and cite information for the task at hand (Information Literacy).

9. Students will be able to gather relevant information, examine information, and form a conclusion based on that information (Critical Thinking).
10. Students will be able to understand and create arguments supported by quantitative evidence, and they can clearly communicate those arguments in various formats (Quantitative Reasoning).
11. Students will understand the professional, ethical, legal, security, and social issues and responsibilities with the implementation and use of information technology.
12. Computer Information Technology graduates will be adequately prepared for entry into graduate school or jobs in the computing profession.

Program Learning Outcomes Assessed in this Course:

Outcome: Students will be able to speak about their work with precision, clarity, and organization (Oral Communication).

Assessment Tool: Paper presentation

Outcome: Students will be able to write about their work with precision, clarity, and organization (Written Communication).

Assessment Tool: Final paper

Outcome: Students will be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and cite information for the task at hand (Information Literacy).

Assessment Tool: Final paper

Required Assignments and Deliverables:

This course has 10 assignments and deliverables that must **all** be completed and accepted to pass this course.

1. Posting your research topic and explanation in the online discussion forum.
2. Respond to at least two of your classmates' research topic postings.
3. Perspective Topic document.
4. Initial Literature Review document.
5. Outline Draft
6. First Draft
7. Paper Review by Tutor.com.
8. Final Paper Document (2500+ words).
9. Final Paper Research Presentation Document (7 to 11 slides).
10. Final Paper Presentation and Presentation Day attendance.

Grading:

This class is graded pass/fail as determined by the requirements described in this syllabus and on the class schedule. You will have several intermediate assignments that you must complete and submit via Canvas. To earn

a passing grade in the course, all assignments must be completed, submitted on time, and considered acceptable by the instructor. **Note that there are eight ways to fail: 1) not participating in the online discussion (initial post and responses to fellow students), 2) being more than a week late on a course deliverable, 3) being late or submitting unacceptable work on three or more items, 4) not submitting the final report by the due date, 5) not presenting the final report, 6) scoring “low satisfaction” or below on two or more items on the written report rubric, 7) submitting a final paper that is less than minimum word count (including any additional word count penalties due to late work), 8) submitting work that contains work plagiarized from another source, including a significant amount of work generated by an AI.**

Late Work Policy

The only late work accepted will be for the Research Idea Discussion, Discussion Response, Perspective Topic, Initial Literature Review, Outline Draft, First Draft, and Writing Lab Review assignments. Late work will not be accepted for the Final Paper Document, Research Presentation Document, and Presentation Day assignments (unless, of course, there is an obvious emergency). If any allowable assignment is submitted late or is submitted on time but is in an unacceptable state, the word count of the final research paper will be increased by 500 words. Being late on three or more items will result in failing the course. Late submission for the Final Paper Document, Research Presentation Document, or arriving late to the Presentation day will result in a failing grade in the course. Having a submission not accepted due to poor work is also considered as being submitted late.

Credit Hour:

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated course learning outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 1-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that you will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour in your course. The estimated time expectations for this course are shown below:

Topic selection and discussion	5
Topic Research	15
Writing drafts	10
Writing final paper and presentation	8
TOTAL	38

Final Research Paper and Presentation

The final research paper and presentation document must be submitted 5 days before the presentation. Students must attend the presentation day, present their research, and attend the presentation of their fellow students.

University Mission:

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Department Mission:

The Mathematical, Information, and Computer Sciences department at Point Loma Nazarene University is committed to maintaining a curriculum that provides its students with the tools to be productive, the passion to continue learning, and Christian perspectives to provide a basis for making sound value judgments.

Academic Accommodations:

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu (<mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu>) or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to ensure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy:

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas and limited content, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate more content than indicated

on a specific assignment (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor. Some assignments will permit limited AI content to be used. Students are expected to stay within the AI content percentage indicated in the assignment.

E-mail and Messages:

It is expected that students regularly use email. The instructor will periodically send you information and updates via e-mail and/or via Canvas. In the first week of class, you must activate your PLNU e-mail account if you are not currently using it. Please send questions about specific problems or course details to the instructor by posting them in Canvas so that all members of the class can see the response.

Assignments-at-a-Glance

The course summary below lists our assignments and their due dates. Click on any assignment to review it.

Additional Syllabus Information

Additional PLNU policies and practices that apply to this course can be found [HERE](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kWXiOwPBL5ErYmtZr3xIYH0T-ULM9Bs3kfv-axsWJH8/edit?usp=sharing) 
(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kWXiOwPBL5ErYmtZr3xIYH0T-ULM9Bs3kfv-axsWJH8/edit?usp=sharing>)

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Sun Jan 18, 2026	 Research Idea Discussion (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262944) 	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jan 25, 2026	 Discussion Response (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262945) 	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 1, 2026	 Research Topic Proposal VAI (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262951) 	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 8, 2026	 Expanded Resource List Summary VAI (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262946) 	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 22, 2026	 Thesis Statement Draft and Outline - VAI	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	  First Draft - VAI (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262952) 	
Sun Mar 8, 2026	  First Draft - VAI (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262948) 	due by 11:59pm
Sun Mar 22, 2026	  Tutor.com Paper Review (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262953) 	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 7, 2026	  Final Paper Document (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262947) 	due by 11:59pm
	  Research Presentation Document (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262950) 	due by 11:59pm
Sat Apr 11, 2026	  Presentation Day (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/85556/assignments/1262949) 	due by 9:30am