MIS 555: Management of Information Technology

Syllabus

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Course Objectives

• Explore and debate critical issues related to managing and administering the information technology (IT) function.
• Investigate the overall information needs of an organization and the role of IT in providing them.
• Examine alternative ways to match the IT function to the structure and culture of the organization.
• Consider some of the ethical and societal, as well as organizational implications and effects of IT.

Behavioral Objectives

Upon completing this course the students should
1. be prepared to manage IT in their areas of responsibility;
2. be prepared to cope with technology-driven change;
3. be able to identify ways to use IT in their areas of responsibility;
4. be able to guide the development or purchase of information systems;
5. be able to choose among different ways to procure an information system;
6. be able to identify potential strategic application of IT;
7. be prepared to contribute to the development of a strategic plan for IT;
8. understand the need for an organizational IT infrastructure;
9. be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the information systems organization and to use this organization effectively;
10. have a vision of the future impact of IT on managers, organizations, economy, and society; and
11. be aware of some of the ethical and societal considerations in the development and use of IT.

Course Approach

Learning by discussion is both an effective and exciting pedagogical experience. This process requires active involvement of all participants, in this case students and instructor, although the instructor’s function is primarily that of a catalyst, facilitator and evaluator in a collaborative learning experience. It is therefore essential that everyone participate as fully as possible. The framework for this participation will include case analyses, textbook assignments, and presentations, all designed to help convey the main body of knowledge and to stimulate the desired critical thinking. The most effective learning will result from your involvement in critical thinking through class presentation and discussion as well as through your homework assignments.

Materials

  Flat World offers students a variety of low-cost digital and print choices, starting at just $19.95. Choose what fits your wallet, lifestyle, and learning style:
  • Study Pass, $19.95 (Online book plus study and note-taking features)
  • All Access Pass, starting at $34.95 (Study Pass plus a variety of other digital formats, including printable pdfs and files for e-readers/tablets).
- VIP Pass, starting at $49.95 (All Access Pass plus a print b/w textbook).
- Print textbook, starting at $39.95 (b/w and color)

The All Access Pass can be purchased at our campus bookstore. All of the formats can be purchased at students.flatworldknowledge.com, where you can also find more detailed explanations of each format.

- A selection of Business Case Studies (required). Ten cases are available online at Harvard Business Publishing for $39.50 (click on the link on the left and register as a student for discounted pricing). The remaining case is posted on d2l.

### Letter Grade Determination

The following table will be used in converting numeric grades into an official letter grade for the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Scale</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 89.99%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79.99%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69.99%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 59.99%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades within two points from the grade thresholds will be adjusted with - or +.

### Study Habits

Careful and timely reading and study is critical to the success in this course. Text and case readings will precede coverage of the material in class to facilitate your active participation in class discussions.

In class, the instructor will highlight specific areas only, answer your questions on the covered material, and then ask you questions. This will stimulate discussion. Do not expect full-coverage lectures. Make notes while reading the assignments. You can then highlight material as appropriate during the class coverage.

You will find it difficult to complete the assignments effectively the night before class. Space the readings over the whole week. Work ahead and make sure to prepare for classes ahead of time and take quizzes before the start of each class.

### Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Any student found cheating will receive a grade of "F" for the course and will be subject to disciplinary action under DePaul University regulations. Please review the Academic Integrity Policy.

I thought this reminder was unnecessary, but have recently stumbled on several cases of plagiarism. Please be aware that any written work submitted in this course may be verified using Turn-It-In technology in order to ensure that the work is the student's own creation and not in violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Submission of work in this course constitutes a pledge that the work is original and consent to have the work submitted to verify that fact.

### Miscellaneous

You are encouraged to be "entrepreneurial" in your approach to the class presentation and interactions. Your observations or experiences, and how they might relate to the subject at hand, have the potential to enhance the class sessions. Please share those of value so that you may be a resource to all participants, including the instructor. You are also encouraged to employ the systems perspective and wear the "manager's hat" in relating to the issues so that you will be able to think about them critically from multiple dimensions.
Homework Assignments

Assignments, all due before the start of sessions, will consist of:

1. Readings from the text and the selection of cases (see Course Schedule on d2l).
2. Quizzes covering the readings.
3. Written assignments:
   a. d2l Discussion Board postings of at least two Critical Questions and responses to at least two Critical Questions from the previous class, and
   b. d2l Dropbox postings of New Development in Information Technology every other week.

All of these assignments are further explained below. Please note that quizzes cover both readings from the textbook and business cases, while Critical Questions relate to the content of the textbook only.

Evaluation of Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Class Discussion</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Impact Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses to Critical Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Developments in IT</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will be no midterm or final examination.

Participation in Class Discussion

Throughout the term, each student’s participation will be continuously evaluated and, if requested, suggestions of how to improve it will be offered. Of course, this will be on an individual basis.

Class participation is a subjective evaluation of each student’s contribution to the unstructured discussion of the reading assignments, questions and business cases. The evaluation will consider both the quality of contributions and the frequency of participation. Completion of reading assignments and preparation of the cases is essential for full participation. The grade will be prorated as follows:

4 Asks good questions, makes valuable observations, and answers questions effectively on an ongoing basis.
3 A frequent participant, but all questions, answers, or observations are not always effective, or not on an ongoing basis, or tends to discourage effectiveness.
2 Only participates infrequently, or questions/answers do not reflect adequate preparation, or late to class.
1 Very rare participation, or questions/answers reflect little or no preparation, or very late to class.
0 Displays no sign of life, or absent for entire class.

As can be seen, you are expected to attend classes and participate. Not attending a class will have an influence on this portion of your grade since you cannot participate if you are not in class. More than two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

Quizzes

The quizzes will be available online on d2l and should be taken before the start of each class starting in the second week. They will be based on the readings assigned for each individual class and will be in true/false and multiple choice formats. The quizzes will cover both the content from the textbook chapters (including imbedded mini-cases) and the case study assigned for each particular class. They will be timed and you will have 9 minutes plus a one-minute grace period for a total of 10 minutes to respond to 12 multiple-choice or true/false questions. When the “Time Left” display changes from “1 minute” to “<1 minute,” you are within the last 60 seconds of the allowed time and should submit the responses quickly because of possible delays on the Internet and – more likely – on the servers. Each correct answer is
scored as one point. Each one-minute delay will result in two-point deduction. Please note that the quiz will not be automatically submitted when the 10 minutes expire; you need to click on the “Go To Submit Quiz” button in the bottom right corner after saving your responses and then submit it.

Critical Questions and Responses to Critical Questions

Each student should post at least two Critical Questions before each class (starting with the second week) and respond to at least two Critical Questions after the class and before the next class. For example, before the third class, each student should post two Critical Questions inspired by reading Chapters 2 and 3 in the d2l Discussion Forum “Critical Questions and Responses, ” Topic “Week 3: Chapters 2 & 3.” Each student should also respond to at least two Critical Questions posted for week 2 (regarding Chapter 1).

The second and the last week are exceptions. Students are only expected to post at least two Critical Questions related to Chapter 1 and no responses before the second class. Students are also expected to post responses to Critical Questions for the last week within four days after the last class.

A critical question is defined as a written, open-ended query that emanates from the assigned textbook (not the case study) and, when asked in class, causes a spontaneous critical thinking discussion.

These qualifying criteria define an effective critical question:
1. It draws upon the existing knowledge and experience of other students (and instructor) about the textual material.
2. It is always written with an emanation (reference) point in the textual material appropriately noted (and announced when asked).
3. It can be discussed (or answered) without the need to refer to some second source unavailable at the time of discussion.
4. It is clear, concise, and not confusing as written; that is, it does not require paraphrasing to be understood.
5. It is well focused to avoid vague generalizations or rampant speculation during discussion.
6. It cannot be answered with a simple yes or no.

Please note that in the context of the above definition, “critical” does not mean “most important.” It connotes instead the image of a student acting in the role of a “critic” relating to the subject matter at hand. Generating critical questions should become a natural result of reviewing the subject matter with a critical eye. Each student will be required to prepare at least two critical questions in written form, submit them to the Discussion Board section of our D2l Web site before each class, and bring a copy to the class, so they can be presented for discussion when called.

The questions will serve as a basis for in-depth discussion of the subject matter scheduled for a class session. During class, a student will be selected on a random basis to ask the class a critical question and to guide the related discussion. After a short discussion period (approximately five minutes), another student will be selected to ask a critical question, and so forth until the instructor terminates the discussion period. At least two critical questions will be discussed at most class sessions.

Each question should be posted separately as a new message anchoring a thread. A separate Topic (folder) will be available for each class in the Discussions. To post a question, click on that Topic and select Compose. Try to find a meaningful name (or Subject) for the question. It should indicate what is the focus of the question, what the question is all about. The Critical Questions are sometimes repetitious. One reason for this is inexpressive naming of Critical Questions. Instead of using names such as “ERP,” “Middleware,” “EIS,” “Smart tags,” etc., try using names that tell what in particular about ERP, middleware, EIS, smart tags, etc. the question focuses on, for example “ERP Vendor Selection,” “Middleware – Who Develops it?” “EIS – Should Access be Universal?” and “Are Smart Tags Unethical?”

Following are a few examples of appropriate critical questions related to the content of Chapter 1:
- What are the reasons for the United States being a laggard in broadband home access? [p. 7]
- Why are corporations like IBM, HP, Oracle, and others developing open source software to give it away for free? [p. 7]
Do you know any case where company's reputation suffered because of inadequate privacy protection? [p. 8]

Why do the technology entrepreneurs peak around the age of 25? [p. 9]

After each class and up to the time the next class meets, the students are expected to reply to at least two of the posted Critical Questions and thus extend the discussions beyond the class meetings. To use this virtual classroom, “open” the chosen question and use the Reply button to expand the thread.

When responding to Critical Questions, formulate a short, concise answer, comment, or reaction. Everybody will appreciate crisp responses straight to the point. Critical Questions and responses will be scored using the scale for Class Participation described above. The instructor will provide an explanation via email whenever less than the perfect score will be granted.

**New Developments in Information Technology**

Information technology, its applications, impact and related public policy is fast moving and ever changing. In order to keep up to date, it is necessary to follow technology news as reported on a day-to-day basis. There are many excellent sources of current news about technology and technology issues. They include, but are not limited to, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Business Week*, *CIO*, *Information Week*, and *Computerworld*, all widely available in the libraries and on the Internet. Alternatively, you may select an article from a journal, which covers technology and technology issues, such as *Sloan Management Review*, *MIS Quarterly* etc. and certainly from any of the other relevant journals, magazines, and respected blogs.

During the course, you are expected to read or scan one or more of these publications and every other week select an article about something that in your opinion is a particularly significant event or announcement of a new development in IT. You should write two separate sections subtitled **Summary** and **Analysis**, together not exceeding 600 words in length. As the name suggests, the first should summarize the source. The second should describe both its potential business impact and why you consider it so significant. You must post it as an attached file inside the appropriate folder in the Dropbox. You should also provide a complete reference to the source or a hyperlink when the source is available on the Web. You should be prepared to present your choice in class (visual aids not required) and lead a discussion of it. The grade will be based on the quality of analysis, on the significance, and on the potential impact of the chosen news item. Good and complete write-ups will be scored with a grade of good (3). To be recognized as excellent (4), they should reflect a research effort based on more than just the selected source. In other words, excellent submissions should relate the summarized source to other similar treatments of the topic, personal experiences, or the textbook in substance and not just by a reference.

As a general rule, students with even student numbers should post their write-ups for weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10. Students with odd student numbers should post their work for weeks 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11.

**Technology Impact Presentation**

It is assumed that you have read the assigned materials from the textbook. A lecture or presentation covering the same material would therefore be superfluous. What is important and interesting is how these concepts relate to your work environment, i.e., what "impact" they might have on your professional occupation. In a group such as this, a wide variety of organizational types and job functions are inevitably represented. Therefore, we can assume the existence of a variety of experiences and observations, which have the potential to enhance our knowledge and understanding. Although you are encouraged to contribute your observations whenever appropriate during class discussion, it is important to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to describe in some detail how the concepts covered in class might relate to a work environment.

Therefore, each week several students will be assigned to present to the class experiences of their own or of which they know relating to the application of the concepts covered in the course. If you have no relevant work experience, you may research ways in which the concepts have been implemented either in the literature or by interviewing someone in your own or another organization.
This presentation should not reiterate what is in the assigned material, but should be designed to add value by expanding the horizon. For instance, Chapter 9 discusses system development tools and methodologies. If your organization implemented an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, for example, a description of why it was decided to do so, how it was implemented, and what were the results would add significantly to our understanding of the applicability of such technology.

Textbooks are time-sensitive, especially in the field of IT. Some aspects are already out of date when the book is published. We must depend on literature, both popular and technical, to update the material. Therefore, part of your presentation might indicate any recent developments of which you are aware. If you feel that the new developments are significant enough to warrant devoting your entire presentation to them, please see or email the instructor for approval.

Your presentation will be limited to ten minutes and you must employ visual support (e.g., PowerPoint presentation). Any other audio-visual material, which may be appropriate, may also be utilized. You should be prepared to conduct a class discussion after you present, which is limited to five minutes.

Notes:
- The presentation must be done in a professional manner as if you were making a presentation to top management (but you are not expected to dress up for the occasion).
- You must employ "professional" visuals. The PowerPoint presentation technology and Internet access will be available in class.

Feedback

After your presentation, you will receive written feedback and a grade on the form shown on the last page. Students with experience in business presentations have an advantage and normally do better, because of their improved communication skills. Even so, it has been my experience that two communication skills – the eye contact and the use of hands – are often a challenge. Please try to refer to the monitor or screen very sparingly by memorizing the presentation. This way, you will be able to keep a virtually continuous eye contact with the audience. You will also not need to hold notes, which will free your hands, so you can use them to stress important points. Please do not lean on the lectern, lock your hands in front of you, or stuff them into pockets. Just release them straight down when you do not use them to enhance your message.

Most frequent suggestions for improvement:
1. You did not include any personal commentary or analysis to your story.
2. Try to memorize the presentation, so you do not need to read from the screen, monitor, or notes. This would enable you to keep a virtually continuous eye contact with the audience.
3. You spent too much time talking while turned toward the screen, which prevented you to keep the eye contact with the audience.
4. Not holding notes would improve your use of hands.
5. Avoid locking your hands in front or resting them on your hips. Just release them straight down when not used to stress important points.
6. Do not stuff your hands into pockets.
7. Do not keep anything in your hands, unless necessary. Playing with objects like a pen or just your fingers may be distractive.
8. Assume a comfortable stand and keep it throughout the presentation. Walking around for no particular reason may be distractive.
9. The slides with bullet points were rather dry. Try to enhance the message by imbedding some graphics.
10. The slides were visible, but some were too busy and could not be fully explored in the available time.
Student Name ____________________________________________ Date _____________

Subject of Presentation _______________________________________________________

Content
  Clear explanation of the main message or focus (2 points max.):
  Topic related to concepts in text (2):
  Presented a message (2):
  Added value (2):

Visual aids
  Visible to audience (1):
  Reinforced messages (1):
  Overall effectiveness (2):

Communication skills
  Vocal energy, volume, inflection (1):
  Eye contact (1):
  Body energy, stance, and use of hands (1):
  Enthusiasm (1):

Handling of Q & A (2):

Control of time (2):

Suggestions for improvement:

Grade __________