Information Systems Management
GBAT9106

Course Overview
Summer Term 2015
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### Summer Term 2015 course schedule

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<th>24 November</th>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Introduction and issues</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Organisations and information systems</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>1 December</td>
<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>Information systems planning</td>
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<td>Unit 4</td>
<td>Managing Information and supporting decision makers</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>8 December</td>
<td>Unit 5</td>
<td>Enterprise architecture</td>
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<td>Unit 6</td>
<td>Information systems development</td>
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**Mid-term recess: Saturday 13 December – Sunday 4 January**

| Week 4   | 5 January  | Unit 7 | Software packages including enterprise systems  |
|          |            | Unit 8 | Outsourcing  |
| Week 5   | 12 January | Unit 9 | Business continuity planning  |
|          |            | Unit 10| Managing operations, services and security  |
| Week 6   | 19 January | Unit 11| IS function, leadership and governance  |
|          |            | Unit 12| Emerging IS/IT issues  |
| Week 7   | 26 January*| Independent reflective learning and review  |
| Week 8   | 2 February | Examination week  |

*Monday 26 January is a Public Holiday*
Course staff

Course Coordinator

Each course has a Course Coordinator who is responsible for the academic leadership and overall academic integrity of the course. The Course Coordinator selects content and sets assessment tasks, and takes responsibility for specific academic and administrative issues related to the course when it is being offered. Course Coordinators oversee Class Facilitators and ensure that the ongoing standard of facilitation in the course is consistent with the quality requirements of the program.

The Course Coordinator is:
Emeritus Professor Graham Low
BE (Chem) Qld PhD Qld FACS
email: g.low@unsw.edu.au

Graham is an Emeritus Professor of Information Systems in the Australian School of Business. Prior to becoming an academic in 1987, Graham had 12 years’ industrial IS experience. Previous positions include MIS Technical Manager for the Sugar Division of CSR and Head of the User Services Unit at UNSW.

Graham’s research program pursued over the last 30 years has focused on the implementation and adoption of new technologies by the IS/IT industry. This can take the form of:

- new/modified approaches/techniques for information-systems development, such as methodological approaches to agent-oriented information-systems design
- management of the IS design and implementation process, such as IS innovation implementation and IS acceptance.

An active research team comprising PhD, Masters and undergraduate honours students is currently working under his supervision. The research has been published in leading international journals including *IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering, MISQ, Information and Management, Information Systems Journal* and *Journal of Information Technology*. 
Class Facilitator

The role of your Class Facilitator is to support the learning process by encouraging interaction among participants, providing direction in understanding the course content, assessing participant progress through the course and providing feedback on work submitted. MBT Class Facilitators comprise both academics and industry practitioners with relevant backgrounds.

You will be notified of your Class Facilitator’s name and contact details in your class confirmation email sent by MBT Student Services. Details will also be available in the gallery section of your online class for both face-to-face and distance classes.

Course authors

The Course Coordinator, Professor Graham Low, most recently reviewed and updated this course.

Dr Bob Edmundson

Bob was the previous Course Coordinator and main author of earlier versions of this course. Bob was formerly the Head of School of Information Systems, Technology and Management and was also a former Associate Dean in the Faculty of Commerce and Economics. Bob has a PhD in Information Systems from UNSW and before joining UNSW had extensive managerial experience in the electronics industry and consulting.

Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Dr Geoff Dick and Peter Edmundson, who contributed to earlier versions of this course.
Aims

This course addresses current management issues in the deployment of Information Systems and Information Technology. It deals with the relationship between the organisation and its Information Systems, strategic and tactical planning for Information Systems and the management of the development and acquisition of systems and technology. Attention is paid to issues such as outsourcing, business continuity planning and the provision of information for decision makers.

This course aims to:

- provide managers with frameworks to understand and value the role of Information Systems in the organisation
- promote an understanding of the issues faced by Information Systems management and the responsibilities of those managers
- develop your knowledge of the business issues involved in strategies for acquisition of Information Systems services such as outsourcing and the adoption of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems
- provide an awareness of the importance of securing Information Systems and the necessity for adequate business continuity planning
- provide an awareness of the governance requirements of the IS function.

Please note that the focus is on management, not the technology itself.

Structure

Unit 1, Introduction and issues. In this Unit, you will consider the effect of history and the current business environment on the mission of Information Systems. The major issues in Information Systems Management are presented, and their implications for the organisational role of senior Information Systems executives are considered. The issues identified in this Unit are dealt with throughout the course.

Unit 2, Organisations and information systems, provides a number of theories and frames of reference based on various models for considering the broader organisational and social context of Information Systems. The theories canvassed include economic and behavioural theories. The characteristics of organisations that may impact on the interaction between organisations and Information Systems are considered.

Unit 3, Information systems planning, addresses the issues associated with Information Systems planning. In recent years, the pace of change in information technology and in the business environment generally has made prescriptive long-term planning highly questionable. This requires
the establishment of an accepted strategic vision and a flexible infrastructure and architecture that allows for faster responses to environmental stimuli. The Unit also canvasses some tools and techniques for strategic planning.

Unit 4, Managing information and supporting decision makers, examines the management of organisational information. After a brief examination of what is understood by the terms data, information and knowledge, issues associated with the storage and management of structured, record-based data are examined. The foci are on obtaining consistent data definitions across the organisation and understanding the main difficulties of distributing data. The Unit then examines the management of unstructured data, and electronic document management. The final part of the Unit considers: the problems and opportunities of data warehousing; and ability of Information Technology to assist in the decision-making process by enabling managers to compare alternatives against a series of weighted factors and to modify those weights (and perhaps the subsequent decision) in the light of changing or doubtful circumstances.

Unit 5, Enterprise architecture, discusses Enterprise IS Architecture, IT Architecture and the resulting IT Infrastructure for an organisation that has the potential to create competitive value in terms of responsiveness, innovativeness and economies of scale. The Unit considers a number of approaches such as client/server computing and Service-Oriented Computing that impact both the infrastructure architecture (e.g. hardware platforms, networking) required to support them, as well as the application architecture that is implemented.

Unit 6, Information systems development, examines the management of Information Systems development, and control mechanisms for systems development and for the Information Systems division as a whole. Various development methodologies are considered. The drive to substitute technology for human resources in systems development is discussed.

Unit 7, Software packages including enterprise systems, deals with software packages, their selection and implementation. The Unit first looks at the factors influencing the ‘buy versus build’ decision. It then looks at a methodology for package selection and implementation, before looking at three specific examples: ERP, SaaS and open-source software. As most Enterprise Systems can be considered as innovations when first implemented in the organisation, the Unit then looks at some of the issues in managing innovation.

Unit 8, Outsourcing, can be described as some or all of the IS functions being contracted to an outside vendor. This could include computer operations, networks, applications, maintenance or other functions. Recent developments in outsourcing arrangements for strategic and complex systems are considered. The Unit emphasises the need for close management of the relationship to avoid dysfunctional effects of uncertainty in the relationship. The Unit then concentrates on two new trends in outsourcing: offshoring and backsourcing.
Unit 9, *Business continuity planning*. This Unit begins with a consideration of Disaster Recovery and contingency plans that have become commonplace as professional Information Systems managers seek to mitigate the problems of the loss or failure of technology. It continues to widen the scope of such planning a further step to Business Continuity Planning. The objective of this is to try to protect business operations from a wider range of threats and to try to ensure that business can re-start, not just the technology.

Unit 10, *Managing operations, services and security*. In this Unit, the functions of the operations section within the Information Systems division are considered, including the relationships with, and facilities provided to, users. In particular, this Unit examines the issues that should be considered when developing the operations management plan, information centres, service management and security management.

Unit 11, *IS function, leadership and governance*, examines the management of the IS function, beginning with the organisational structure (centralised, devolved) adopted and how it is funded (allocated or unallocated cost centre, profit centre). Next, it looks at a way of assessing the role of IS/IT in the organisation to provide guidance on the way IS could be managed, as well as the required attributes of the IS leader. It then looks at governance of IS/IT and some of its components.

Unit 12, *Emerging IS/IT issues*, examines three challenges for Information Systems managers: electronic business, mobile computing (including BYOD), and green IS/IT. E-business is presented as a broader concept than E-commerce; it includes servicing customers, collaborating with business partners and conducting electronic transactions within the company. In the case of mobile computing, we will consider some key factors assisting the growth of mobile computing, plus two of its applications: BYOD and mobile commerce. The Unit then looks at how organisations can respond to the challenge of sustainability via green IS/IT.
Learning outcomes

When you have completed this course, you should be able to:

• apply appropriate theories and models to issues involving the business and competitive effects of Information Systems strategies
• describe and justify the roles of Information Systems managers in setting the strategic direction of an organisation
• analyse and discuss the issues involved with the deployment and use of an organisation’s Information Systems resources, such as data, application systems and hardware
• analyse and discuss key information systems issues such as security, Business Continuity Planning, ITIL and GDSS
• discuss key IS/IT governance issues and recommend appropriate IS management action
• propose and evaluate appropriate IS management approaches based on an analysis of the IS/IT issues.

Skills you will need

There are no pre-requisites for this course.
Please refer to the AGSM Learning Guide (available in Moodle) for information you will find very useful in pursuing your studies.

Resources

Prescribed textbook

The prescribed textbook for the course is:

ISBN 9781292039787

Recommended reading


Relationship to other courses in the MBT program

This course deals with the relationship between the organisation and its information systems, strategic and tactical planning for information systems and the management of the development and acquisition of systems and technology.

GBAT9117 E-Business: Strategy and Management focuses more particularly on the issues a business must address when venturing into e-business, e.g. infrastructure, security, marketing.

This course is at the heart of managing business and technology. The focus on strategy and tactics blends managerial and technological knowledge and skills. Given the integrative nature of this course, it is probably not ideal as an early course in your MBT program.
Assessment

There are two assignments and an examination for GBAT9106 *Information Systems Management*. Note that assignments must be received by 9.30am Sydney time on the due dates.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Throughout the term</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Thursday 11 December 2014 (Week 3)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Thursday 22 January 2015 (Week 6)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examination*</td>
<td>Wednesday 4 February 2015 (10am if sitting on campus)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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*Examination is 2 hours; open book

Extensions to assignment deadlines will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and where adequate supporting documentation can be provided. Please note that work commitments do not constitute grounds for an extension. Your Class Facilitator may approve an extension of up to two days, after which requests must be made through the special consideration process. For details about this process, see: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration](https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration)

In the case of late lodgement without an approved extension, 10% of the assignment weighting will be deducted for each day late.

Please note the examination date and mark it in your diary. If you will not be available to sit the exam on the specified date then you must choose another course. Supplementary exams will only be permitted in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, and after submission of the requisite documentation for special consideration, see: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration](https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration)
Continual course improvement

MBT courses are revised each time they run, with updated course overviews and assessment tasks. All courses are reviewed and revised every three years and significant course updates are carried out in line with industry developments, and also when new editions of prescribed textbooks are published.

The MBT surveys students via the UNSW CATEI system each time a course is offered. The data collected provides anonymous feedback from students on the quality of course content and materials, class facilitation, student support services and the MBT Program in general. This student feedback is taken into account in all course revisions.

The UNSW Business School also monitors the quality of students’ learning experiences in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality-assurance purposes. This information will be aggregated and used:

• to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved for accreditation purposes
• to improve the quality of UNSW Business School programs.

All material used will be treated as confidential and these processes will have no bearing on course grades.

Student evaluations from the last presentation of the course

• Update of textbook and course notes for emerging areas of IS.
• High level of class interaction appreciated.

Coordinator’s response

The course has been updated for 2014 with a new textbook and revised course notes.