AGSM MBA Programs 2015

INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT
Semester 2, 2015

Course Overview

AGSM @ UNSW Business School

5/5/2015
Important Notice

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We welcome ideas to improve these course materials. Please email suggestions to coursematerials@agsm.edu.au
# Course schedule

## Semester 2, 2015

### Information Systems Management

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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Assessment** (weighting)</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>27 July</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Participation is assessed throughout the semester (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 August</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10 August</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17 August</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24 August</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31 August</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Assignment 1 due on Tuesday 1 September by 9.30am Sydney time – report (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 September</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14 September</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>21 September</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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Mid-term recess: Saturday 26 September – Monday 5 October*

| 10      | 6 October*  | 10   |                          |
| 11      | 12 October  | 11   | Assignment 2 due on Tuesday 13 October by 9.30am Sydney time – report (30%) |
| 12      | 19 October  | 12   |                          |
| 13      | 26 October  | Independent reflective learning and review | |

| 14      | 2 November  | Examination week | Examination** – Monday 2 November – 10am if sitting on campus (40%) |

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* Monday 5 October is a public holiday in NSW  
** Examination is 2 hours, open book
Course information

Course-level aims and learning outcomes

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 on the technology itself.

There are no pre-requisites for this course.

The course 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 degree program.

Course learning outcomes

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

1. apply appropriate theories and models to issues involving the business and competitive effects of Information Systems strategies
2. apply the knowledge gained throughout the course to assess different IS/IT leadership styles
3. 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
4. analyse and discuss key information systems issues such as security, Business Continuity Planning, ITIL and GDSS
5. discuss and evaluate key IS/IT governance issues and recommend appropriate IS management action
6. propose and evaluate appropriate IS management approaches based on an analysis of the IS/IT issues
7. understand the various green IS/IT options available to management
8. understand the impact of cultural issues on managing IS/IT
9. write reports that can critically analyse one or more IS/IT management issues in a business context.

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 back sourcing.

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.
A number of international standards are embedded in the program to ensure the courses you study are high quality. At present this includes specific design to meet AACSB accreditation standards (through measurement of students’ program-level learning outcomes), and the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (UNPRME). EQUIS accreditation is also held by UNSW Business School.

Program-level learning goals and outcomes assessed for AACSB accreditation

The Course Learning Outcomes are what you should be able to do by the end of this course if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

The Course Learning Outcomes will also help you to achieve at least some of the overall Program Learning Goals that are set for all postgraduate coursework students in AGSM programs.

However, course-level learning outcomes are not sufficient to fully describe a student’s skills as they complete the qualification, and so we add an additional set of Program Learning Goals. These specify what we want you to have achieved by the time you successfully complete your degree. As an example, for the Teamwork learning goal we specify: ‘Our graduates will be effective team participants’.

You demonstrate that you have met these Program Learning Goals by achieving specific Program Learning Outcomes that are directly related to each goal. These indicate what you are able to do by the end of your degree.

In the case of the Teamwork goal, the related outcome includes: ‘participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams’. Note that the ability to meet these program-level learning goals and outcomes will be measured in each capstone course for your degree program.

The Program Learning Goals (and related outcomes) used at the AGSM for the MBAX and MBT programs are as follows.

1. Knowledge:
   
   Our graduates will have current disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge applicable in local and global contexts.

   Learning outcome: Students should be able to identify and apply current knowledge disciplinary or interdisciplinary theory and professional practice to business in local and global environments.

2. Critical thinking and problem-solving:
   
   Our graduates will have critical thinking and problem-solving skills applicable to business and management practice or issues.

   Learning outcome: Students should be able to identify, research and analyse complex issues and problems in business and/or management, and propose appropriate and well-justified solutions.
3. Communication:
Our graduates will be effective communicators in professional contexts.
Learning outcome for 3a – Written Communication: Students should be able to produce written documents that communicate complex disciplinary ideas and information effectively for the intended audience and purpose.
Learning outcome for 3b – Oral Communication: Students should be able to produce oral presentations that communicate complex disciplinary ideas and information effectively for the intended audience and purpose.

4. Teamwork:
Our graduates will be effective team participants.
Learning outcome: Students should be able to participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams, and to reflect on their own teamwork, and on the team’s processes and ability to achieve outcomes.

5. Ethical, social and environmental responsibility:
Our graduates will be aware of ethical, social, cultural and environmental implications of business issues and practice.
Learning outcome for 5a – Ethical, social and environmental responsibility: Students should be able to identify and assess ethical, environmental and/or sustainability considerations in business decision-making and practice.
Learning outcome for 5b – Social and cultural awareness: Students should be able to consider social and cultural implications of business.

6. Leadership:
Our graduates will have an understanding of effective leadership.
Learning outcome: Students should be able to reflect upon their own personal leadership style and on the leadership needs of business and of team.

Associated governing bodies

AACSBE: [http://www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)
EQUIS: [https://www.efmd.org/accreditation-main/equis](https://www.efmd.org/accreditation-main/equis)
UNPRME: [http://www.unprme.org](http://www.unprme.org)
Resources

Learning resources
You have four major resources to help you learn:

1. The course materials, comprising the weekly study units with readings, references, insights and commentary. You will do much of your learning outside the classroom by working through the course materials, and by completing the exercises as they arise.

2. Your online or face-to-face classes with your facilitator. The facilitator’s job is to guide your learning by conducting class discussion, answering questions that might arise after you have done the week’s work, providing insights from his or her practical experience and understanding of theory, providing you with feedback on your assignments, and directing discussions and debates that will occur between you and your co-participants in the classroom.

3. Your co-participants. Your colleagues in the classroom are an invaluable potential source of learning for you. Their work and life, and their willingness to question and argue with the course materials, the facilitator and your views, represent a great learning opportunity. They bring much valuable insight to the learning experience.

4. In addition to course-based resources, please also refer to the AGSM Learning Guide (available in Moodle) for tutorials and guides that will help you learn more about effective study practices and techniques.

Course materials
The course materials comprise this Course Overview, the Assessment Details and 12 Units. Each Unit has a number of associated readings.

Readings
Specific readings are prescribed throughout the Units and are available via active hyperlinks or URLs. Please note that you may be required to enter your UNSW zID and zPass in order to access these hyperlinked readings.

If you experience any problems in accessing the readings, please try the following:

- Search directly for the article on the UNSW Library home page (https://library.unsw.edu.au/) by placing the name of the article in the Search box.
- Search directly for the book excerpt on the UNSW Library home page (https://library.unsw.edu.au/) by placing your course code into the Search box. When you do this all the course readings that are excerpts from books will appear.
**Prescribed textbook**


ISBN 9781292080260 (print); ISBN 9781292080277 (VitalSource eText)

**Recommended reading**


**eLearning**

To access Moodle, go to: https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/agsm/students/mbt-students/online-classes and select Login to Moodle.

Login with your student zID (username) and zPass (password).
**Moodle eLearning support**

Should you have any difficulties accessing your course online, please contact the eLearning support below:

For **login** issues:

**UNSW IT Service Centre**

Hours: Monday to Friday: 8am – 8pm  
Saturday and Sunday: 11am – 2pm  
Email: ITServiceCentre@unsw.edu.au  
Phone: Internal: x51333  
External: 02 9385 1333  
International: +61 2 9385 1333

For help with technical issues and problems:

**External TELT Support**

Hours: Monday to Friday: 7.30am – 9.30pm  
Saturdays and Sundays: 8.30am – 4.30pm  
Email: externalteltsuppport@unsw.edu.au  
Phone: Internal: x53331  
External: 02 9385 3331  
International: +61 2 9385 3331

**Administrative and eLearning support**

**Student Experience**

If you have administrative queries, they should be addressed to Student Experience.

Student Experience  
AGSM MBA Programs  
UNSW Business School  
SYDNEY NSW 2052  
Phone: +61 2 9931 9400  
Email: studentexperience@agsm.edu.au
Additional student resources and support

The University and the UNSW Business School provide a wide range of support services for students, including:

- **Business School Education Development Unit (EDU)**
  [https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/learning-support](https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/learning-support)
  
  The EDU provides academic writing, study skills and maths support specifically for Business students. Services include workshops, online resources, and individual consultations.
  
  EDU Office: Level 1, Room 1033, Quadrangle Building.
  Phone: +61 2 9385 5584; Email: edu@unsw.edu.au

- **UNSW Learning Centre**
  [www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)
  
  Provides academic skills support services, including workshops and resources, for all UNSW students. See website for details.

- **Library training and search support services**
  [http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html)

- **UNSW Counselling and Psychological Services**
  
  Provides support and services if you need help with your personal life, getting your academic life back on track or just want to know how to stay safe, including free, confidential counselling.
  
  Office: Level 2, East Wing, Quadrangle Building;
  Phone: +61 2 9385 5418.

- **Student Equity & Disabilities Unit**
  [http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au](http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au)
  
  Provides advice regarding equity and diversity issues, and support for students who have a disability or disadvantage that interferes with their learning.
  
  Office: Ground Floor, John Goodsell Building;
  Phone: +61 2 9385 4734; Email: seadu@unsw.edu.au
Continual course improvement

Our 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 AGSM 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 program in general. This student feedback is taken into account in all course revisions.

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.
- More Australian examples where possible.

Coordinator’s response

The course has been updated for the 3rd edition of the textbook. The course notes continue to provide Australian examples where practical. [Note. The Moodle discussions also focus on participants’ experiences in their own organisations.] The number of associated readings has been rationalised.
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 UNSW Business School. 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. 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 AGSM Student Experience. 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.

Acknowledgements

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