INFS4831

INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONSULTING

Course Outline
Semester 2, 2015

Part A: Course-Specific Information

Please consult Part B for key information on Business School policies (including those on plagiarism and special consideration), student responsibilities and student support services.
# Table of Contents

## PART A: COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1  STAFF CONTACT DETAILS  
2  COURSE DETAILS  
   2.1 Teaching Times and Locations  
   2.2 Units of Credit  
   2.3 Summary of Course  
   2.4 Course Aims and Relationship to Other Courses  
   2.5 Student Learning Outcomes  

## 3 LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

3.1 Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Course  
3.2 Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies  

## 4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Formal Requirements  
4.2 Assessment Details  
4.3 Assessment Format  
4.4 Assignment Submission Procedure  
4.5 Late Submission  

## 5 COURSE RESOURCES  

## 6 COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT  

## 7 COURSE SCHEDULE
PART A: COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1 STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Consultation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer In Charge (LIC)</td>
<td>Toomas Tamm</td>
<td>QUAD TBC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co Lecturer</td>
<td>Christine Van Toorn</td>
<td>QUAD 2092A</td>
<td>9385-5642</td>
<td><a href="mailto:c.vantoorn@unsw.edu.au">c.vantoorn@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Other consultation time/s by appointment only.

The best way to contact your Lecturer is via email or to see them during their consultation times. Please note that only your UNSW email account will be used for formal notices and correspondence regarding the course, all students and staff are expected to use email responsibly and respectfully. Moodle will to be used for all course communication i.e. notices, questions regarding assignments and course content.

If you need to contact the school urgently, please call 9385-5320 or email [istm@unsw.edu.au](mailto:istm@unsw.edu.au).

2 COURSE DETAILS

2.1 Teaching Times and Locations
Seminars start in Week 1 – Week 12. Seminars will are on Wednesday evenings, 6pm to 9pm, in Law Theatre G02 (K-F8-G02).

2.2 Units of Credit
The course is worth 6 units of credit.

This course is taught in parallel with INFS5831 Business Analysis and Consulting. The course materials are the same, but the assignments and the exam may differ as appropriate.

2.3 Summary of Course
This course aims to familiarise you with the key concepts, practices and issues relevant to engaging and providing IS consulting services from the perspectives of both the client and the consultant. The course applies relevant theories of change management, behavioural science and social psychology to illustrate how IS consultants engage with organisations and help them solve business problems. This course also examines challenges and opportunities in contemporary business environments brought about by technological advancements such as the emergence of social media, the prevalence of big data and the availability of crowdsourcing possibilities.
2.4 Course Aims and Relationship to Other Courses

Information Systems (IS) Consulting has become one of the fastest growing career fields. The aim of this course is to examine the value propositions provided by IS consultants to their clients. Through this course, you will able to differentiate and appreciate the contributions of IS consultants relative to those of consultants from other management fields. Based on the specific perspective adopted by IS consultants, you will be exposed to the relevant engagement styles and strategies commonly employed by these individuals.

You will explore the modern dilemma facing organisations in their attempt to satisfy the current needs of consumers while being mindful of their own potential demise due to their failure to embrace novel technologies that disrupt existing market structures. To address this dilemma, you will examine organisations’ practices and strategies in managing their technological innovations such as the establishment of open platforms and the perpetuation of pre-existing ecosystems.

This course will also scrutinise contemporary challenges facing organisations as they seek to carve out a sustainable competitive advantage through exploiting the latest technology-enabled trends. Through acquiring an in-depth appreciation of the fragmented social media landscape, the potential of crowdsourcing and the value of big data, you will be better equipped to advise firms in crafting sustaining competitive advantage through effective leveraging information technology.

The course also seeks to develop your skills in consulting and enhance your communication, presentation, problem solving and critical thinking skills through class work and assignments.

2.5 Student Learning Outcomes

After studying this course you will be able to:

1. Explain the value propositions of IS consulting and how it can aid organisations to stay relevant in dynamic market environments characterised by rapid progress in technological advancements.
2. Explain the tenuous state of organisations’ competitive position due to the Innovator’s Dilemma.
3. Analyse latest technological trends and evaluate their impact on organisations’ competitive and innovative capabilities.
4. Analyse the different strategies organisations could adopt to insulate their competitive positions and technological innovations from disruptive market forces.
5. Assess the ability of organisations in developing a coherent and sustainable technological innovation strategy to counter the emergence of disruptive technologies.
6. Assist organisations in developing a coherent and sustainable technological innovation strategy that draws on latest advances in technologies.
7. Deploy appropriate IS consulting strategies and processes when engaging with internal and external stakeholders.
8. Evaluate and deploy principles of ethical and professional standards during IS consulting.

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 Learning Outcomes in this course also help you to achieve some of the overall Program Learning Goals and Outcomes for all undergraduate coursework students in the UNSW Business School. Program Learning Goals are what we want you to BE or HAVE by the time you successfully complete your degree (e.g. ‘be an effective team player’). You demonstrate this by achieving specific Program Learning Outcomes – what you are able to DO by the end of your degree (e.g. ‘participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams’).

For more information on the Undergraduate Coursework Program Learning Goals and Outcomes, see Part B of the course outline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Undergraduate Program Learning Goals and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Knowledge: Our graduates will have in-depth disciplinary knowledge applicable in local and global contexts. You should be able to select and apply disciplinary knowledge to business situations in a local and global environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Critical thinking and problem solving: Our graduates will be critical thinkers and effective problem solvers. You should be able to identify and research issues in business situations, analyse the issues, and propose appropriate and well-justified solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication: Our graduates will be effective professional communicators. You should be able to: a. Prepare written documents that are clear and concise, using appropriate style and presentation for the intended audience, purpose and context, and b. Prepare and deliver oral presentations that are clear, focused, well-structured, and delivered in a professional manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teamwork: Our graduates will be effective team participants. You should be able to participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams, and reflect on your own teamwork, and on the team’s processes and ability to achieve outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ethical, social and environmental responsibility: Our graduates will have a sound awareness of the ethical, social, cultural and environmental implications of business practice. You should be able to: a. Identify and assess ethical, environmental and/or sustainability considerations in business decision-making and practice, and b. Identify social and cultural implications of business situations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table shows how your Course Learning Outcomes relate to the overall Program Learning Goals and Outcomes, and indicates where these are assessed (they may also be developed in tutorials and other activities):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Learning Goals and Outcomes</th>
<th>Course Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Course Assessment Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This course helps you to achieve the following learning goals for all UNSW Business School undergraduate coursework students:</td>
<td>On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:</td>
<td>This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Knowledge</td>
<td>Explain the value propositions of IS consulting and how it can aid organisations to stay relevant in dynamic market environments characterised by rapid</td>
<td>• Class Discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 | Critical thinking and problem solving | Analyse latest technological trends and evaluate their impact on organisations' competitive and innovative capabilities.  
   Analyse the different strategies organisations could adopt to insulate their competitive positions and technological innovations from disruptive market forces.  
   Explain how organisations could use IS and to assist with the managerial decision-making processes.  
   Illustrate how organisations could use IS and IT to help improve organisational and managerial efficiency and effectiveness.  
   Propose how an organisation could use (IS/IT) to compete in a global marketplace.  
   Evaluate and use appropriate information seeking tools and technologies. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>Communicate an argument effectively in written form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3b | Oral communication | Deploy appropriate IS consulting strategies and processes when engaging with internal and external stakeholders.  
   Communicate an argument effectively. |
| 4 | Teamwork | Assist organisations in developing a coherent and sustainable technological innovation strategy that draw on latest advances in technologies. |
| 5a | Ethical, environmental and sustainability responsibility | Evaluate principles of ethical and professional standards during IS consulting. |
| 5b | Social and cultural awareness | Evaluate the range of social and cultural issues facing individuals and organisations as a result of IS/IT.  
   Deploy principles of ethical and professional standards during IS consulting. |
3 LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

3.1 Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Course
Every week, there will be a Lecture of three hours duration which will take the form of an interactive seminar. You are expected to have read the designated articles for each week in order to be well-prepared and to participate actively during the seminar. Critical thinking, constructive critique and originality are the order of the day. Hostility and open demonstration of contempt for your fellow seminar participants will not be tolerated.

Treat the seminars as opportunities to learn from one another and to express your thoughts and opinions. It is recognised that students are individuals with diverse experiences and interests. Through interactive dialogue and discourse, the course is designed to celebrate diversity where commonly held assumptions about existing theoretical concepts and pragmatic business practices are challenged and refined, culminating in knowledge creation. Your learning experience will also be facilitated by in-class activities, case studies, spontaneous student-led discussions as well as individual and group assignments. Your participation in the seminars will enrich the learning experience for everybody involved, including that of the Lecturers.

3.2 Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies
Each week will be devoted to a particular topic which will be explored through a combination of essential readings and class activities. The weekly plan will be adjusted to match your needs at the beginning of the course and if there are interesting developments in the world that are relevant to our course as we move along the semester, we may explore additional topics that were not covered in the original plan.

The learning objectives and other relevant information will be provided in advance on a weekly basis. Each seminar is three hours long. Components of each seminar may vary but they typically involve a mixture of didactic lectures and class activities such as discussions, ad-hoc exercises, and group presentations.

You are also encouraged to bring to the seminars any questions or contemporary issues that could be interest to the class. Remember: no question is too small or too simple. Every bit counts.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Formal Requirements
To receive a pass grade in this course, you must meet ALL of the following criteria:
- Attain an overall mark of at least 50%.
- Attend at least 80% of all scheduled classes.
- Attain a satisfactory performance in each component of the course. A mark of 45% or higher is normally regarded as satisfactory.
- Attain a mark of at least 45% in the Final Examination.
- In the case of peer-assessed group work, the mark assigned to each member of the group may be scaled according to peer assessment of each member's contribution to the task.

The School reserves the right to scale final marks to a mean of 60%.
We expect group members to work in a harmonious and professional fashion. It is the responsibility of groups to self-manage non-performing members. During group formation, you are encouraged to pay careful attention to the constraints and limitations of other members.

4.2 Assessment Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Max Length</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3,000 words</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Assignment</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6,500 words</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Examination Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Assessment Format

Participation (10%)
Your participation in the seminars is encouraged and will be assessed over the length of the course. The mark you receive will reflect the extent to which you have contributed to class discussions and exercises.

In addition, you are expected to contribute at least three (3) personal reflections throughout the 12 Week session – these will be moderated via Moodle. Interesting and insightful blog posts might be randomly chosen for class discussion if time permits.

Individual Assignment (20%)
For this assignment you will work individually on a 3,000 word report that is due in Week 7.

The individual assignment will be evaluated based on the logical flow of arguments, the comprehensiveness of independent research and the quality of inferences drawn. Full details of this assessment component as well as a detailed breakdown of the evaluation criteria will be made available via Moodle.

Group Assignment (20%)
For this assignment you will work in a group of 4 to 5 members on a report that is due in Week 12.

A mandatory confidential peer assessment will be administered at the end of this group assignment. The reports will be evaluated based on the logical flow of arguments, the comprehensiveness of independent research and the quality of recommendations.

Full details of this assessment component as well as a detailed breakdown of the evaluation criteria will be made available via Moodle.
Group Presentation (10%)
Your group will also make a 20 minutes presentation in either Week 11 or Week 12 (it is mandatory for all group members to present). For this component of your grade evaluation, we are interested in your style and composure in communicating to an audience of your peers. You will be evaluated based on the rapport among members of the group, professionalism, creativity and persuasiveness of your proposal. This is an essential skill required of all IS consultants and it could often be a critical component that makes the difference between acceptance and rejection of the plan you have worked so hard on.

Final Examination (40%)
The final examination will be a 2 hour written paper held in the formal examination period. The examination is worth 40% of your overall assessment. The decision of whether the exam will be open book or closed book will be announced later in the course. The exam will cover ALL TOPICS in this course.

All tests are conducted in accordance with the UNSW Rules for the Conduct of Examinations and it is your responsibility to be familiar with these rules. Information about exams is available from my.unsw.edu.au.

4.4 Assignment Submission Procedure
All assignments must be submitted online via UNSW Moodle. Physical copies of the group reports may also be requested for Lecturers to evaluate the report’s level of profession appeal and the way the report is formatted. Ease of access of the information within a report is an important factor in the field of IS consulting. You should keep a copy of all work submitted for assessment and retain marked assignments that have been returned.

4.5 Late Submission
The late submission of Assignments carries a penalty of 10% of the available marks for that assignment per day of lateness, unless an extension of time has been granted.

An extension of time to complete an assignment will only be granted in cases of misadventure or illness. Applications for an extension of time should be made to the LIC by email or in person.

You will be required to substantiate your application with appropriate documentary evidence (such as medical certificates, accident reports etc.) of the grounds on which you are making your application further details. Please note that work commitments and computer failures are usually consider insufficient grounds for an extension.

Quality Assurance
The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential.
5 COURSE RESOURCES
There is no mandatory text for this course. Course readings will be selected from articles that are available from the library electronic databases. You are expected to learn how to use these databases and find these articles on your own.

The website for the course will be used to provide access to the seminar slides, the weekly study guides, announcements and other materials as required. The website will also be used to distribute assessment component materials.

The website for this course is on UNSW Moodle: https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php

All students enrolled in the course will have access to the course website.

6 COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT
Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the School and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) Process (http://www.unsw.edu.au/learning/pve/catei.html) is one of the ways in which student evaluative feedback is gathered. The School also solicits feedback from students during the session. Significant changes to courses and programs within the School are communicated to subsequent cohorts of students.

Improvements for this session (based on student feedback and other sources of information) include an increase in the number of guest lecturers to assist students in understanding “real world” relevance and application of course materials. Please feel free to communicate your views/suggestions to the course coordinator.
# 7 COURSE SCHEDULE

Lectures start in Week 1 and finish in Week 12. Please note: Some variations may occur – always check Moodle Announcements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Designated Readings</th>
<th>Other Activities / Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1     | Introduction – Beyond the Ivory Tower: What is IS Consulting?                 | N/A                                                                                 | Guide to Reading Articles  
Group Formation                                                                 |
| 27 July    |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
[http://www.fastcodesign.com/187176/why-apple-is-losing-its-aura]                                                                 |
| 3 August   |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
TBC                                                                 |                                                                                      |
| 10 August  |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
| Week 4     | Style & Communication – IS Consulting Process (I): What are the roles, responsibilities and ethical practices of an IS consultant? (II): Engaging Internal and External Stakeholders | Guest Lecture  
Industry Speaker – Mark Sercombe (?)  
[http://www.wired.com/2012/04/can-an-algorithm-write-a-better-news-story-than-a-human-reporter/]                                         |
| 17 August  |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
[http://www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2013/01/30/and-the-winner-is-netflix]                                                                 |
| 24 August  |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
Progress Update on Group Assignment                                                                 |                                                                                      |
| 31 August  |                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
Individual Assignment Due  
Case Studies: MindMixer [http://www.mindmixer.com]                                                                 |
| 7 September|                                                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |

COURSE SCHEDULE

business.unsw.edu.au
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Key Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Semester break: Saturday 26 September – Monday 5 October inclusive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 12 | 19 October | NO LECTURES |  Group Presentations  
Group Assignment Report Due  
Peer Evaluation Due  

business.unsw.edu.au  
CRICOS Code 00098G  
INFS4381 – Information Systems Consulting S2 2015