

# **INFS5831**

## **Business Analysis & Consulting**

### **Course Outline**

### **Semester 2, 2017**

### **Course-Specific Information**

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline. You must also be familiar with the Course Outlines Policies webpage which contains key information on:

- Program Learning Goals and Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Student Support and Resources

This webpage can be found on the Business School website:

<https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/degrees-courses/course-outlines/policies>

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# COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

## 1 STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Position	Name	Email	Room	Phone
Lecturer-in-charge	Alan Thorogood	alant@unsw.edu.au	Quad 2117	9385 4414
Lecturer	Toomas Tamm	toomas.tamm@unsw.edu.au	Quad 2111	9385 4417

Consultation is Wednesdays 4:30-5:30pm or by appointment.

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 be used for all course communication i.e. notices, questions regarding assignments and course content.

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

## 2 COURSE DETAILS

### 2.1 Teaching Times and Locations

Seminars will run Wednesdays 6–9pm, Week 1 to Week 12, in Mathews 310.

For latest information about class times and locations see:  
<http://timetable.unsw.edu.au/current/subjectSearch.html>.

### 2.2 Units of Credit

The course is worth 6 units of credit.

### 2.3 Summary of Course

This course focuses on 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 examines how IS consultants engage with organisations and help them solve business problems, as well as the opportunities and challenges in contemporary business environments brought about by technological advancements that IT consultants are often called to advise on (e.g., data analytics and cybersecurity).

### 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 be 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.

The course also seeks to familiarise you with the consulting process, common consulting frameworks (including the benefits and limitations related to their use in analysing a business), and to develop general skills important in consulting including communication, presentation, problem solving and critical thinking.

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 contemporary issues, you will be better equipped to advise firms in making more effective use of IT.

## 2.5 Student Learning Outcomes

After studying this course you will be able to:

1. Analyse the value proposition of IS consulting and explain how it can aid organisations in dynamic market environments.
2. Analyse latest technological trends and evaluate their impact on organisations' competitive and innovative capabilities.
3. Recommend to an organisation a coherent and sustainable strategy that draws on latest advances in technologies and counters disruptive market forces.
4. Deploy appropriate and ethical IS consulting strategies and processes when engaging with internal and external stakeholders.

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 postgraduate coursework students in the 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 Program Learning Goals and Outcomes, see the School's Course Outlines Policies webpage available at <https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/degrees-courses/course-outlines/policies>.

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):

Program Learning Goals and Outcomes	Course Learning Outcomes	Course Assessment Item
<i>This course helps you to achieve the following learning goals for all UNSW Business School undergraduate coursework students:</i>	<i>On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:</i>	<i>This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items:</i>

1	Knowledge	Analyse the value proposition of IS consulting and explain how it can aid organisations in dynamic market environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• Final Examination</li> </ul>
2	Critical thinking and problem solving	<p>Analyse latest technological trends and evaluate their impact on organisations' competitive and innovative capabilities.</p> <p>Recommend to an organisation a coherent and sustainable strategy that draws on latest advances in technologies and counters disruptive market forces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Assignment</li> <li>• Group Assignment</li> <li>• Final Examination</li> </ul>
3a	Written communication	Communicate an argument effectively in written form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Assignment</li> <li>• Group Assignment</li> <li>• Final Examination</li> </ul>
3b	Oral communication	Communicate an argument effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Presentation</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>
4	Teamwork	Work collaboratively to complete a task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Assignment</li> <li>• Group Presentation</li> </ul>
5a	Ethical, environmental and sustainability responsibility	Deploy appropriate and ethical IS consulting strategies and processes when engaging with internal and external stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Assignment</li> <li>• Group Assignment</li> </ul>
5b	Social and cultural awareness	Not specifically addressed in this course.	

### 3 LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1 Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Course

Every week, there will be a class of three hours duration devoted to a particular topic which will be explored through a combination of essential readings and class activities. Components of each seminar may vary but they typically involve a mixture of lectures and class activities such as discussions, ad-hoc exercises, and group presentations.

You are expected to have done the designated preparation for each week in order to participate actively and effectively during the seminar. Critical thinking, constructive critique, originality, and respectful dialogue are expected and encouraged.

Your participation in the seminars will enrich the learning experience for everybody involved, including that of the lecturers. The seminars are an opportunity 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 challenge commonly held assumptions about existing theoretical concepts and pragmatic business practices. Your learning experience will also be facilitated by in-class activities, case studies, spontaneous student-led discussions as well as individual and group assignments.

### 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. 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 included in the original weekly plan.

The learning objectives and other relevant information will be provided in advance on a weekly basis. You are also encouraged to bring to the seminars any questions or contemporary issues that could be of interest to the class. No question is too small or too simple.

## 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.

### 4.2 Assessment Details

Assessment Task	Weighting	Length	Due Date
Participation	10%	N/A	Ongoing
Individual Assignment	20%	2,500 words	Week 6
Group Assignment and Presentation	30%	See below	Week 12
Final Examination	40%	2 hours	University Examination Period
Total	100%		

#### 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, including your level of preparation.

#### Individual Assignment (20%)

For this assignment you will work individually on a report of up to 2,500 words that is due in Week 6.

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 and Presentation (30%)**

In this assignment you will work in a group of 4 to 5 members on a report of up to 5,000 words that is due in Week 12. The reports will be evaluated based on the logical flow of arguments, the comprehensiveness of independent research and the quality of recommendations.

Group members are expected 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 expectations and constraints of other members. A mandatory confidential peer assessment will be applied to this group assignment.

Your group will also make a 20 minutes presentation in Week 11 or Week 12 (it is mandatory for all group members to present). For this component of your assessment, 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.

Full details of this assessment component as well as a detailed breakdown of the evaluation criteria will be made available via Moodle.

### **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 exam will be closed book and 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 <https://my.unsw.edu.au>.

## **4.3 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 professional 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.

## **4.4 Special Consideration, Late Submission and Penalties**

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 course co-ordinator by email.

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. Please note that work commitments and computer failures are usually considered insufficient grounds for an extension.

For further information on Special Consideration please refer to the Business School's [Course Outlines Policies webpage](#).

#### **4.5 Viewing of Exam Scripts**

The School of Information Systems and Technology Management (ISTM) has set a protocol under which students may view their final exam script. ISTM exam script viewing day is usually a day after the official release of results. Details will be posted on both the school website and on your course Moodle.

##### **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 open access or available from the library electronic databases. You are expected to learn how to use these databases and find these articles on your own.

The course website is hosted on the UNSW Moodle facility, accessible via [my.unsw.edu.au](http://my.unsw.edu.au). All students enrolled in the course will have access to the course website. The website 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.

## **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 myExperience survey is one of the ways in which student evaluative feedback is gathered. In this course, we will seek your feedback through end of semester myExperience responses. You are also encouraged and very welcome to provide feedback and suggestions you might have about the course directly to the lecturers at any time throughout the semester.

## 7 COURSE SCHEDULE

Seminars start in Week 1 and finish in Week 12.

COURSE SCHEDULE			
Week	Topic	Readings	Events
<b>Theme 1: IT Consulting Process</b> <i>(the "how"?)</i>			
Week 1 24 Jul	An Introduction to IT Consulting	Refer to Moodle	Refer to Moodle
Week 2 31 Jul	The Client Perspective		
Week 3 7 Aug	Consulting Engagement Process		
Week 4 14 Aug	Stakeholder Management		
Week 5 21 Aug	Analysing a Business		
Week 6 28 Aug	Managing IT Consulting & Careers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Assignment due</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 2: IT Consulting Content</b> <i>(the "what"?)</i>			
Week 7 4 Sep	Types of Consulting Engagements	Refer to Moodle	Refer to Moodle
Week 8 11 Sep	Trends in IT Consulting		
Week 9 18 Sep	Analytics, Big Data and AI		
Mid-semester break: 23 September – 2 October inclusive (2 Oct = Labour Day Public Holiday)			
Week 10 3 Oct	IT Strategy Engagements	Refer to Moodle	Refer to Moodle
Week 11 9 Oct	IT Security Engagements		
Week 12 16 Oct	NO LECTURE	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group presentations</li> <li>• Group Assignment due</li> </ul>