

BOSTON COLLEGE CARROLL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
SYLLABUS FOR MI 703 COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS - SPRING 2007

Professor: Rob Fichman
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Class Time: Wednesday, 7:00-9:30pm
Class Location: Fulton 415
Class Website: <http://www2.bc.edu/~fichman/MI703Main.html>
Office Hours: In person: Wednesday 5:00-6:30pm and by appointment. Guaranteed 24 hour or less weekday turn-around on e-mail.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Information technology (IT) permeates the strategy, structure and operations of modern enterprises. Today, IT forms a key foundation of most business innovations, including new products and new processes. In fact, IT projects account for half of all capital spending. At the firm level, IT has become a major generator of business value, especially for organizations that have the right set of resources and capabilities to exploit it. At the macro level, the marked acceleration in worker productivity in the US over the past decade can be attributed to the cumulative effects of heavy IT investments begun in the 1980s. IT is transforming the way we live and work, how companies are organized, and the structure of entire industries. Thus, it is increasingly essential that managers become fluent with IT, both to become more astute individual observers and users of the technology, and to become more effective leaders of innovative initiatives that are increasingly IT enabled.

In this course, students will obtain a broad overview of IT fundamentals, key emerging technologies, and IT managerial frameworks. Through a combination of readings, case studies, lectures and team projects, students will gain an appreciation for the transformative effects of IT on businesses, industries and society, and will develop the ability to identify new opportunities presented by IT, and to manage the challenges associated with conceiving, justifying and implementing IT-based initiatives. Organizations that effectively manage these challenges will find that IT constitutes a major source of competitive advantage.

READINGS:

- MI 703 readings coursepack (BC bookstore).
- Web-based articles

GRADE COMPONENTS:

The percentage breakdown of your final grade will be as follows:

20% Class participation
20% Team Case Presentation
25% Midterm Exam
35% Final Exam

100%

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:

Attendance. Class attendance is essential. If you need to miss a class let me know in advance (if possible) or as soon as you can. Missing classes will adversely affect your participation grade.

Class participation grades will be based on both quality and frequency of contributions. Given the number of students in class, it is important to get to your point quickly, which is not to say that a comment overall has to be brief. Well-developed comments are appreciated, but try not to meander.

Commitment to Participate: You are expected to come to every class with a commitment to participate to the best of your ability. The commitment to participate is important for several reasons. First, when each of you has a commitment to participate, this improves the quality of the discussions. Your knowledge and insights are a critical resource in this course, and discussions are the means by which this knowledge and insight is shared. Second, this commitment puts you in an active, rather than a passive, frame of mind. It encourages you to be closely attending to, and evaluating what is said. Do you understand or misunderstand the point being made? Do you agree or disagree? Is the point complete or incomplete? Throughout class your mind should be engaged in an active process of analyzing what is said, and how you might contribute in a valuable way. Third, the ability to communicate your ideas clearly and concisely in front of groups is a critical skill for managers, and becomes even more so as you advance in your career. Public speaking is a skill, and all skills improve with practice. The classroom is an ideal setting for those of you that may need practice speaking in front of groups.

The best contributions usually involve one of the following:

- Developing an insightful argument or observation related to the assigned case or readings
- Drawing linkages between the assigned case and other readings assigned for that day
- Significantly expanding on another student's analysis, or (tactfully) taking issue with the student's analysis
- Bringing in ideas and examples from your own work experience that bear on the issue at hand

For most classes the bulk of the discussion will revolve around a managerial case. You should be prepared to discuss the assigned case and possibly other readings, answer questions, and contribute your knowledge, insights and experiences to the class discussions. For each class I will provide a set of study questions and other preparation guidance. (These will be posted on The MI 703 website). One good way to prepare for class is to write down a brief outline containing your thoughts on these specific questions.

Your overall class participation grade will be based on frequency and especially the quality of comments. Frequency of comments will only take you so far. You can participate every week and still get a B+ if your comments tend to be minor. Here is a picture of what different grade levels tend to look like (assuming you have no attendance problems).

- A (93+) Among the very top contributors in class. Regularly makes especially insightful comments. Often takes leading role in class.
- A- (91-92) Very strong contributor. Memorable comments in several classes. Occasionally takes a leading role.
- A-/B+ (89.5-90.5) In the top 40% of the class for overall contribution to the quality of discussions. Above average in both frequency and quality.
- B+ (88-89): Consistent contributor. Comments in most or all classes. Comments of good quality.
- B (84-87): Several contributions over the semester. Comments tend to be minor.
- B- (80-83): Participation is infrequent or non-existent. Comments tend to be minor.

TEAM CASE STUDY PRESENTATION:

The class will be divided into nine teams of 5 students, each of which will be assigned to one of the managerial cases to be discussed over the course of the semester. Teams will develop a presentation to last no more than 20 minutes that provides an analysis of the case.. For each case, I will provide preparation questions that will help guide your analysis. Further guidance on this project will be distributed separately.

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS:

The mid term will be a 90 minute exam with a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay.

The final exam will have a similar format and will be 2 hours. It will be “semi cumulative”, i.e., about 75% will concern material since the mid-term and 25% on material from the first half of the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Expectations Regarding the Readings: It is important that you read all the required material before every session. The table starting on the next page gives a summary of the assigned readings and other schedule information. However, in preparing for class you should rely on the Preparation Sheets (see below), not this table.

Getting the Readings: All required readings are online or in the coursepack. Articles on the public web are designated as “Web”, while those that I have placed behind the BC firewall in my personal MyFiles space are designated as “MyFiles”. The latter articles are copyrighted materials that only MI 703 should have access to.

A series of Preparation Sheets, one for each session of the course, will be posted to the course website. Each Preparation Sheet provides details about the readings, preparation questions, and a reminder about any assignments that are due for that session. The Preparation Sheets will also have embedded “hot links” to online readings (if any).

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Session	Readings
Session #1: Wed Jan 17	Course Introduction and Overview 1. It's a Flat World After All, Thomas L. Friedman, New York Times, 2005 (MyFiles)
Session #2: Wed Jan 24 Due: Seating assignments	IT as a Value Driver 1. Lecture Note: Five Distinctive IT Characteristics: Implications for Value Creation, Fichman (Coursepack <u>and</u> MyFiles) 2. Rise of the Instant Company, <i>Business 2.0</i> , Malik, 2003 (MyFiles) 3. IT Tutorials: Hardware Technologies (Web) 4. Wikipedia: Digital Photography (Web)
Session #3: Wed Jan 31 Due: Team A Case Opener	IT-Enabled Business Models 1. Case Study: NetFlix Inc. (Coursepack) 2. High Tech Achiever, Fast Company, Oct. 2005 (Web) 3. IT Tutorials: Internet and Enterprise Systems (Web)
Session #4: Wed Feb 7 Due: Team B Case Opener	IT for Competitive Advantage 1. Case Study: Dell: The Power of Virtual Integration: An Interview with Dell Computer's Michael Dell, Magretta, <i>HBR</i> , 1998 (Coursepack) 2. How Information Gives You Competitive Advantage, Porter and Millar, <i>Harvard Business Review</i> . (Coursepack) 3. Strategy and Technology: A Primer, John Gallaughier, BC Carroll School of Management, 2006 (Coursepack) 4. Dark Days at Dell, Business Week, August 2006 (Web) 5. Dell in the Penalty Box, Fortune, Sept. 5, 2006 (Web)
Session #5: Wed Feb 14 Due: Team C Case Opener	IT and Industry Transformation 1. Case Study: Apple Computer 2006 (Coursepack) 2. Digital Right's Management (DRM): Media Companies' Next Flop?, Managing Technology @ Wharton, 2006 (Web) 3. IT Tutorials: Mobile Technologies (Web)

Session	Readings
Session #6: Wed Feb 21 Due: Team D Case Opener	IT and Organizational Transformation 1. Case Study: Harrah's Entertainment Inc. (Coursepack) 2. From Data to Knowledge to Results: Building an Analytic Capability, Davenport et al., <i>CMR</i> , 2001 (Coursepack) 3. IT Tutorials: Database (Web)
Session #7: Wed Feb 28	Mid-Term Examination
Wed March 7th	Spring Break – No class
Session #8: Wed Mar 14 Due: Team E Case Opener	Evaluating and Justifying IT Investments 1. Case Study: Moore Medical Corporation (Coursepack) 2. Understanding the Business Value of Information Systems, Laudon and Laudon, Chp 13 excerpt from <i>Management Information Systems</i> , 2004 (Coursepack) 3. Lecture Note: IT Business Value: An Overview, Fichman (MyFiles)
Session #9: Wed Mar 21 (No Case Opener)	IT Delivery Strategies and Tools/The Social Web 1. Turning Around the Project From Hell, <i>ComputerWorld</i> , 1999 (Web) 2. IT Tutorials: Software Development and Delivery (Web) 3. The Power of Us, <i>Business Week</i> , June 2005 (Web) 4. Blogs Will Change Your Business, <i>Business Week</i> , May 2005 (Web) 5. The MySpace Generation, <i>Business Week</i> , December 2005 (Web)
Session #10: Wed Mar 28 Guest Speaker: Jackie Fenn, Gartner Research	Adoption, Diffusion and Implementation of Emerging IT - Concepts 1. Lecture Note: Adoption and Diffusion of Emerging IT, Fichman, (Coursepack) 2. Lecture Note: IT Implementation and Assimilation, Fichman (MyFiles)
Wed April 4th	Easter Break – No class
Session #11: Wed Apr 11 Due: Team F Case Opener Team G Case Opener	Adoption, Diffusion and Implementation of Emerging IT – Case Studies 1. Case Study: Wikis at Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein (A) (Coursepack) 2. Case Study: Cisco Systems, Inc.: Implementing ERP (Coursepack)
Session #12: Wed Apr 18 Guest Instructor: Prof Paul Tallon Team H Case Opener	Optimizing IT Infrastructure Operations 1. Case Study: Postgirot Bank and Provment AB, HBS Case (Coursepack) 2. A Virtual Revolution, <i>Business Week</i> , 2005 (MyFiles) (Web) 3. Server Consolidation Delivers, <i>Information Week</i> , 2005 4. Building a Model Infrastructure, <i>Computerworld</i> , 2004 (Web) 5. The Chargeback Conundrum, <i>Computerworld</i> , 2005 (Web) 6. Server Consolidation: Less is More, <i>Information Week</i> , 1999 (Web) 7. Determining the Cost of IT Services, <i>CACM</i> , 2002 (MyFiles)
Session #13: Wed Apr 25 Team I Case Opener	Course Wrap-Up 1. IT Doesn't Matter, Nicholas Carr, <i>HBR</i> , 2003 (Coursepack)
Wed May 2nd	Final Exam