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Overview

This course introduces you to **information technology in business and society**. Broadly, here's what you'll learn from the course, and why this learning is important:

- First, as a future knowledge worker you will use personal systems in your work every day. You need to know how to publish information on the Internet, model and analyze decisions using a spreadsheet, and get information from relational databases. Over this course, your in-class conceptual learning of these topics will be complemented by a set of computer-based self-learning tools.
- Second, in the digital firm, you will be involved increasingly in decisions about information systems. You will therefore need to recognize the large-scale systems that run modern organizations, understand what drives the success of a company's IT investments, and learn how these investments facilitate effective business strategy and emerging business models.
- Third, you must know how to evaluate and analyze information-based products and services in the increasing number of industries that are being transformed by information technology. You will learn about the unique economics of information pricing, technological lock-in and network effects, so that you can perform informed business analysis and formulate effective strategy in the digital economy.

We will also discuss a set of special topics, which may include digital music, information privacy, data mining and digital piracy. Assignments, projects and case studies through the course will reinforce your learning of how to use information technology to solve business problems.

Course web site

Blackboard is a web-based application that houses online materials for enrolled students across NYU. You can access our course by logging into <http://sternclasses.nyu.edu> (using your Stern netID/password), and choosing the course titled **Computer-Based Systems for Management Support**. We will be using Blackboard extensively for this course, so make sure that you log in and get familiar with the course web site as soon as possible.

Communicating with us electronically

As far as is possible, rather than emailing us, you should post your questions on the relevant Blackboard **discussion forum**. This is far more efficient than individual back-and-forth email. There are two discussion forums currently active:

1. Administrative questions about the course
2. General questions and comments about what we cover in class

Before posting a question, make sure that you read through the course content on Blackboard, the frequently-asked-questions, and the questions other students have posted. Often, you will find the answer to your question here.

In the event that you feel the need to email us directly with a question, make sure you use C20 as the subject line, so that we recognize that it is from one of you, and so that our spam filters do not accidentally delete your message. Avoid sending email attachments.

Required textbooks and software

A required custom textbook titled 'Management Information Systems for the Information Age' is available in the main NYU bookstore (ISBN 0-07-326141-6, in aisle 5 downstairs). It contains the following material:

1. A complete copy of *Management Information Systems for the Information Age, 5th Edition*, by Stephen Haag, Maeve Cummings and Donald McCubbrey.
2. Chapters 2, 5 and 7 from *Information Rules*, by Carl Shapiro and Hal Varian.
3. The article "How Competitive Forces Shape Strategy" by Michael Porter.
4. The case "The iPremier Company: Denial of Service Attack".

A required computer-based learning software package *SimNet XPert Combined for Office XP* should be available separately in the same aisle (owing to a shipment delay by McGraw Hill, this may not arrive in the bookstore until late in the first week of classes).

These readings will be supplemented by selected online content, which you can access from the **Documents and Slides** section of Blackboard. Some links to information on installing and using SimNet XPert are available by clicking on the **External Links** button on Blackboard.

Deliverables, grading and class participation

During this course, you will be assigned no more than six individual assignments and three group projects. You will have one midterm examinations and one final examination. You are expected to participate in classroom and online discussions. The breakdown of points (out of a total of 500) for each of these:

Assignments, projects and quizzes	200 points
Class Participation	50 points
Midterm examination 1	70 points
Midterm examination 2	80 points
Final examination	100 points
Total	500 points

Each assignment and project will provide you with a set of instructions and guidelines. Expect to use Excel, Access and the Web extensively. Examinations are closed book/notes/computer/PDA/iPod (the idea should be clear). We will discuss their format in due course.

In general, homework will be due each Monday by midnight. Late submissions will be accepted and graded, but you will only be given credit for 50% of your score. And your carriage may turn into a pumpkin.

Group projects should be done in groups of 4 students. After you have posted your personal Blackboard page, your classmates will know you better, and this will help facilitate the group formation process. During the semester, your TA's will facilitate this process further, and we will give you a set of detailed guidelines about working in teams. You will also be asked to evaluate the contribution of each of your team members after each group project.

The classroom discussion presents a unique opportunity for you to develop and enhance your confidence and skills in articulating a personal position, sharing your knowledge, and reacting to new ideas. All of you

have personal experience with information technology that can enhance our understanding of the subject, and that we want to encourage you to share.

The grade we assign for your class participation is a careful, subjective assessment of the value of your input to classroom learning. We keep track of your contributions towards each class session, and these contributions can include (but are not restricted to) raising questions that make your classmates think, providing imaginative yet relevant analysis of a situation, contributing background or a perspective on a classroom topic that enhances its discussion, and simply answering questions raised in class. Emphasis is placed on the quality of your contribution, rather than merely on its frequency. A lack of preparation or negative classroom comments or improper behavior can lower this grade.

Syllabus

I may add or modify web-based readings from time to time. Make sure that you check the **Documents and Slides** section of Blackboard before every session – you will find a document for every classroom session, which will contain detailed information about pre-class readings, a copy of the class slides, information about assignments/projects, and pointers to how far you should have progressed on your SimNet Tutorial lessons.

Readings in *italics* are not required, but recommended.

Session	Topic	Readings
S1	Introduction to IT in business	HCM pp. 3-27
S2	IT, strategy and competitiveness I	HCM pp. 237-245, 675-682
S3	IT, strategy and competitiveness II	HCM pp. 675-682
S4	IT and business transformation	Compilation of short articles (web)
S5	How computers work	HCM pp. 39-64
S6	How the Internet works	HCM pp. 105-119
S7	Publishing on the Web	HCM pp. 476-489 Publishing on the Web at Stern (web) Designing successful web sites (web)
S8	Music to the masses	TBA
S9	Mid Term Exam 1	Readings from S1-S9
S10	Computer crime and security I	HCM pp. 369-377, 389-400
S11	Computer crime and security II	HCM pp. 685-695
S12	Databases I: Fundamentals	HCM pp. 126-134 HCM pp. 161-175
S13	Databases II: Getting information	HCM pp. 134-141
S14	Intelligent decision support	HCM pp. 189-205

S15	Data mining	HCM pp. 134-143
S16	Information privacy	HCM 353-367 <i>HCM 401-416</i>
S17	Midterm examination	Readings from S10-S16
S18	IT and business value	Paradox lost (web)
S19	IT infrastructure in organizations I	HCM pp. 71-94, 315-334 Student group notes
S20	IT infrastructure in organizations II	HCM pp. 71-94, 315-334 Student group notes
S21	IT infrastructure and business models	(to be announced)
S22	The economics of digital goods	HCM pp. 555-573
S23	Intellectual property and digital piracy	The digital dilemma (web) DRM and fair use (web)
S24	Digital pricing strategy	HCM pp. 573-587
S25	Technology lock-in	HCM pp. 589-609, 612-620
S26	Lock-in and network effects	HCM pp. 621-638, 654-673
S27	Strategy in network industries	HCM pp. 638-653, 675-682
S28	Review session	--
