



## BUS 304 Management Information Systems

### Course Syllabus Spring 2014

Instructor: Susan A. Vowels, MBA, CSCP

Office: Daly 102

Office Hours: Monday 11 a.m. – noon,  
Thursday 1 – 2 p.m. and by  
appointment

Open Labs: Daly 108 Sunday 4 – 7 p.m.  
and Wednesday 4-6 p.m.  
(Sunday labs begin Feb 16)

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The study of Management Information Systems (MIS) examines information creation, transformation, and dispersion within the context of modern commerce and through the use of information technology. In studying Management Information Systems, we are able to touch every facet of business management, from strategy to tactics, from service industries to manufacturing, from transaction data to business intelligence. Examining businesses through the lens of MIS provides valuable insights into business challenges as well as practical solutions. While the nature of the technology used to manage, control, and profit from information in organizations is continually evolving, you'll find that there are also enduring strategies for information use.

*"It is not possible to become a good thinker and be a poor questioner. Thinking is not driven by answers, but rather by questions."*

Richard Paul and Linda Elder  
*Critical Thinking*, 2001 (Kroenke, 2001)

You will read seminal as well as current articles, discuss theory and application, use production software, conduct literature research, and develop original deliverables. You'll also use online tutorials to supplement lectures and in-class activities. Software will be introduced in the classroom followed by lab sessions held outside of class time.

An integral component of Management Information Systems is the ethical use of information and the responsible deployment of technology. You'll use frameworks and your own analytical skills to learn to make informed, ethical decisions about information systems as used to achieve organizational goals, strategies and tactics.

Guest speakers will provide real-world background for the knowledge you are learning. A detailed schedule of speakers will be provided at a later date.

**As with all four-credit classes, you are expected to spend an average of three hours of work outside of class for every hour spent in class; in other words, 7 – 8 hours weekly on average.**

### Course Objectives

- ❖ Understand what the study of Management Information Systems comprises and why it is important to the fields of Business Management and Information Systems.
- ❖ Learn how theoretical tools such as environmental scanning, general systems theory, and socio-technical systems theory facilitate strategic utilization of information systems. Conduct research on leading edge information technologies. Integrate models and theories into plans of action in a team setting.
- ❖ Understand relational database concepts and business information integration. Learn about tools available for managers to support decision-making and modeling such as data warehouses and business intelligence.
- ❖ Develop an understanding of business processes, how they integrate functional areas such as Accounting, Finance, Marketing, and how these processes are supported by enterprise software. Learn to use listening, observing, interviewing, and documenting skills to map processes and identify opportunities for business process improvement. Learn how business processes extend beyond the enterprise.
- ❖ Develop an understanding of the ethical implications of the use of information and information technology, and how they relate to organizational codes of conduct. Learn that ethics needs to be built into processes and systems.
- ❖ Strengthen basic knowledge of the components of Management Information Systems, including hardware, software, and networks.
- ❖ Gain hands-on experience in the use of production software, including Microsoft Access, SAP ERP, and SAP HANA (online demo version)
- ❖ Learn about the management challenges of leading information systems units.

### **NEW FOR SPRING 2014**

**This semester I am providing excerpts from the unpublished manuscript of a textbook I am writing entitled “Management Information Systems for Organizations: Ethics-Infused.” My hope is that the chapters provided will amplify material that was previously shared only through PowerPoints. I am also encouraging you to search for additional material beyond what I provide, using a process called “binge discovery”. Your finds will be used to enrich class discussions and promote deep learning.**

## Honor Code

All work submitted is required to have the following pledge attached to it, with your signature (s):

*"I (we) pledge my (our) word of honor that I (we) have abided by the Washington College Honor Code while completing this assignment."*



This class relies highly upon collaboration in apprehending, challenging, and developing course content. In the workplace, working together makes the organization stronger and develops critical skills in each member of the organization, and this philosophy applies in this class. However, deliverables, i.e. exams and graded assignments, are to be your own individual effort, or the combined effort of members of your group.

## Grading Components

Exam I	15%
Exam II (held Finals Week)	20%
Binge Discovery Journals	10%
Binge Discovery Presentation	5%
Group Database Project	15%
Group Capstone Project	20%
Individual Hands-on Exercises	10%
Quizzes	5%

## Exams

Two paper exams will be given over the course of the semester. The last exam will take place during finals week. Exams will cover terms, key concepts and applications of both. An exam study guide will be provided before each exam specifying material to be covered. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false questions as well as diagrams to be completed. The final exam will also contain one reflective essay question covering the entire year; all other material on the final exam will be non-cumulative.

## Binge Discovery Journals and Presentation

Binge discovery consists of using textbook materials as a launching pad for exploring a particular topic in depth by finding new information (primarily online). Chapter excerpts will contain sections suggesting starting points for binge discovery but you can elect to deeply explore any related topic of your choice. This discovery process should be a weekly exercise, and your Binge Discovery Journal is the mechanism for keeping track of the additional material you've discovered. This journal can contain links to online resources, your meditations on what you've found and excerpts that you find to be particularly compelling. The objective of conducting

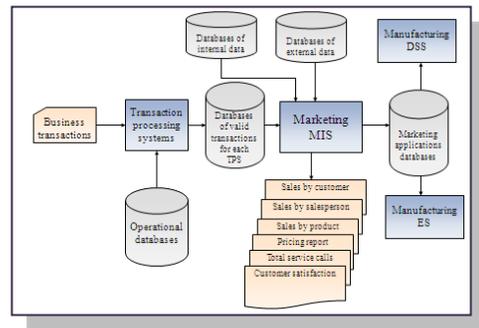
binge discovery as we proceed through the course material and capturing it using your journal is so that you can contribute new knowledge to small group discussions in class. You will choose one topic in particular as the subject of a PowerPoint presentation made in class. These presentations are to be 5-10 minutes in length.

### Group Relational Database Project

Access, a relational database program that is part of Microsoft Office, is frequently used for small, local projects in the workplace. We will use Access to illustrate basic database concepts that apply to other products used in larger contexts, such as Oracle and DB/2. Working in groups of three or four, you will design and implement an Access project reflecting your understanding of introductory database concepts, design and applications. Free Access tutorials supplement in-class lectures and exercises and can be found at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access-help/CH010372755.aspx>. Tutorials can be accessed online, and can also be downloaded for use offline.

### Group Capstone Project

In groups of three or four, you will apply MIS concepts to a problem provided by the instructor. This project will call on you to integrate and apply MIS concepts in a group setting that will strengthen your ability to listen and collaborate effectively with each other in order to create a best outcome. A detailed project description will be provided separately.



### Individual Hands-On Exercises

We will use SAP software to learn how Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems work, in particular, the procurement and order fulfillment processes, and how information pertaining to transactions flow into the accounting system, ultimately providing the scorecard for the organization's success or failure. SAP is the market leader for ERP software, and the software you will use are identical to those used by Fortune 500 companies around the world. You will also complete hands-on exercises using other types of software.

### Quizzes

Quizzes will be given periodically to assess your preparation for class. In some cases quizzes will be given in class; in other cases, you will take them outside of class through Canvas.

### Technology Requirements

You'll use Microsoft Access to learn relational database concepts. Microsoft Access is a component of the Microsoft Office Professional Academic version and runs only on the Windows operating system so it will work on PCs and on dual-boot Macs but not on Macs that run only iOS. Washington College computers are loaded with Access 2010 which can read databases created using earlier versions of Access. If you have a Mac and are interested in obtaining Access, you will need to purchase the Windows operating system as well as Microsoft

Access. The Help Desk can help you obtain these at student rates and install them on your laptop.

You'll also use SAP software hosted by the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. I'll provide instructions for accessing it on Washington College library and lab PCs. You can obtain a copy of the SAP GUI free of charge from the Washington College Help Desk. A Mac-friendly version is also available.

I've reserved Daly 108 on Sundays from 4 – 7 and Wednesdays from 4 – 6 throughout the semester, and I will also hold office hours at the same time. When you are assigned the Access and SAP projects, I'll set up additional labs during the week if it seems necessary; ultimately, however, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to complete the assignments.

### Attendance Policy

You need to come to class. The material in each class builds a foundation for subsequent material; therefore, missing a class means that you will not only miss material for that day, but you will also jeopardize later assignments that incorporate learning from the day you missed. As important, this class depends heavily on your active participation and interaction with your fellow students.

You are allowed to miss class twice over the course of the semester regardless of reason. If you miss class more than two times, you will lose one percentage point of your final grade for each class missed, regardless of the reason for the absence. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to complete assignments, get notes from other students, and get handouts from me (they will generally be available on Blackboard).

Students on academic probation must attend all classes without exception. The Academic Dean as well as the student's course advisor may be informed of absences.

### Learning Differences and Study Skills

Anyone in need of special accommodations because of a documented learning disability or physical disability should visit the Office of Academic Skills. The office is located on the second floor of the Miller Library. During library renovations, it will be located on the first floor of the Foster House, 409 Washington Avenue. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. ~ 4:30 p.m. Once approved, the accommodation plan will be developed. It is your responsibility to share the accommodation plan with me well before the due date for assignments.

The Office of Academic Skills also provides valuable help in developing efficient study skills for all students. You are encouraged to visit its webpage at <http://offices.washcoll.edu/academicskills/> as well as the office itself.

### Communications/Changes in Syllabus/Help from Your Instructor

Check email and Canvas regularly for updates, particularly while working on assignments. If I am made aware of a significant ambiguity in an assignment, I will share the clarification with the entire class electronically. I will post most grades on Canvas, as well as most of the documents

that we use in class. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to be sure that you pay attention to announcements made in class and electronically, and that you arrange with a fellow student to get notes on any class you miss.

Because I am using a new textbook, I've provided a broad schedule. It might become necessary for me to modify the schedule or content of this class. If this happens, I will notify you in class of the changes. For every class meeting, I will supply you with a class plan that clearly identifies expectations for the next class meeting, and where I see that you will need extended time to prepare I will include expectations for a longer time horizon.

Individual assistance is available during my office hours. I'm also more than happy to arrange meetings at other times by appointment if my office hours conflict with your other commitments. Please allow me ample notice if you need to see me outside of my office hours.

#### Information Systems Minor

If you are thinking of pursuing a career related to the use of Information Technology, consider adding the Information Systems minor. This minor can easily be added for Business Management and Computer Science majors. Please see me if you would like to explore this option. More information about the Information Systems minor can be found at <http://academics.washcoll.edu/informationssystemsf/>.

#### Assigned readings

Readings will be provided to you via email or Canvas.

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**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – Dates Subject to Change**  
**Detailed class plans will be distributed throughout the semester**

January 21 and 23	Chapter One: Introduction to Management Information Systems
January 28, 30 and Feb 4	Chapter Two: Ethics and MIS
February 6 and 11	Chapter Three: Strategies for Competitive Advantage
February 13 and 18	Chapter Four: Information Systems and Business Processes
February 20 and 25	Chapter Five: Understanding Transactional Systems
February 27 and March 4	SAP Hands On
March 6	<b>Exam I</b>
Week of March 10	SPRING BREAK
March 18 and 20	Chapter Six: Cutting the Wire – Cloud Computing and Mobile Computing
March 25, 27 and April 1, 3	Chapter Seven: Data
April 8 and 10	Chapter Eight: Business Intelligence
April 15 and 17	Chapter Nine: Organizational Knowledge <b>Guest Lecturer: Aaron Krochmal – April 17th</b>
April 22 and 24	Chapter Ten: Management of Information Systems
April 29 and May 1	Chapter Eleven: Now It's Your Turn!
Finals week	<b>Final Exam</b>