

SIS537: The Information Industry

FALL 2005

Th 9:40 a.m. - 12:25 p.m. COM264

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will explore the information industry with a focus on pertinent issues and trends particularly in the areas of electronic publishing and entrepreneurial opportunities. Standards, enabling technologies, and choice of distribution media will be addressed. We will survey the current situation and investigate future directions of information products and services including product development. Legal, ethical, and quality concerns will also be studied.

PREREQUISITES

Completion of the core courses, IS 510 (or 490), IS520, and IS530, is highly recommended.

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the current state of the information industry in the U.S. and the world.
2. To investigate the range of information products and services.
3. To develop skills in recognizing entrepreneurial possibilities and potentially valuable products and services.
4. To recognize the value-added process and how it contributes to overall product development, staffing, and production.
5. To learn how the information industry interacts with libraries and librarians.
6. To understand the legal and ethical concerns facing the information industry.

ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is characterized by stimulating challenges in a collaborative learning atmosphere. This doesn't mean it will be easy; I expect you to demonstrate critical thinking skills as well as commitment and involvement with our discussions and your projects in class and on-line.

How much you gain from this course depends largely on you, and your classmates. Together we can make the class as interesting, relevant and exciting as we like. I have structured the course to make it a rewarding learning experience that will have meaning for you as an information professional or as a professional from another field interacting with information. The rest is up to you.

This course assumes you have already have introductory knowledge of information products or services through prior IS courses (such as the core) or from work experience. The assignments in this course are designed to help you master the material and provide you with experience that will benefit your professional goals after completion of the degree.

CONTACTING ME

I'm here to help – so always feel free to ask questions or share ideas! You are encouraged to drop in during my office hours, or we can talk after class or we can set up an appointment at another time that is more convenient for you. E-mail is a sure-fire way to contact me. I believe e-mail is an excellent communication tool, and I check mine on a very regular basis. What I like about e-mail is that it is 24/7; that means you can ask a question when it's fresh on your mind – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I've set

my mail to sort incoming messages; so to assure a quicker response from me always start your message subject line with SIS537. I'll usually answer within 48 hours, but I'll often get back to you even faster!

DISABILITIES

Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library at 865.974.6087 if you need course adaptations or accommodations. They will work with you to arrive at the appropriate program and register you for services. Also contact me so we can talk about solutions.

READINGS

Required

Texts:

Bates, ME. (2003). Building and running a successful research business: A guide for the independent information professional. Information Today.

Evans, P. & Wurster, T.S. (2000). Blown to bits: How the new economics of information transforms strategy. Harvard Business School.

Articles:

There are required readings for each class meeting. These readings are available through on-line through databases at the UT libraries or from web sites or they may be made available on our BB site. A number of additional articles will be added in response to our class direction.

Recommended

It is also recommended that you purchase a book on how to write a business plan. You may choose any book you like, however two possible titles are:

Abrams, R. (2003). The successful business plan: Secrets and strategies. 4th ed. Planning Shop.

Gumpert, D.E. (2003). How to really create a successful business plan: Step-by-step guide. 4th ed. Lauson Publishing.

Class lecture notes will often include hot links to further reading or other source material. These are not required readings but it is recommended that you explore these additional resources.

Assignments (due dates on class schedule)

Discussion Guides (2)	= 30% of your total grade (2 @ 15%)
Information Product/Service Project	= 30%
Presentation of Business Plan	= 10%
Final Assignment	= 20%
Class Participation	= 10%
TOTAL	= 100%

Discussion Guides (2): As a professional you will often be called on to update team members about emerging issues. To gain experience with these skills, during the semester, you will co-lead (with the professor) two class discussions on two information industry related topics. A list of suggested topics follows the class calendar in this syllabus. You will create a discussion guide (2 page maximum) that summarizes the topic and includes 3-5 citations for related materials at web sites or easily accessible articles that you feel are recommended resources. You will distribute this discussion guide to all class members. Then you will help lead and encourage class discussion. Your grade is based on the written

discussion guide and your participation in leading the discussion. Each discussion guide/discussion is worth 15% of your grade, and the two represent 30% of your grade.

Information Product/Service Project: This project features the planning and feasibility phases of creating an information product. This is project you will work on throughout the semester and will culminate in the creation of a comprehensive written business plan. The business plan will include product design, market analysis, costs, staffing, marketing, and the other decisions needed for creating will work in teams of no more than 3 students and one grade is assigned to all team members. This is worth 30% of your grade.

Presentation of Business Plan: Each team will present their business plan to the class as if the class were a group of potential funders. The contribution of each team member must be evident. Presentations should be 20-25 minutes and team members should be prepared to answer questions from “funders” for an additional 10-15 minutes. Individual team members may be assigned different grades. This is worth 10% of your grade.

Final Assignment: The final assignment will be handed out in the next to last session of class and you will have two weeks to complete it (since Thanksgiving falls in between!). The final assignment will demonstrate your knowledge of the topics we have discussed through essays and short answers to questions about principles and issues we explored during the semester. This is worth 20% of your grade.

Class Participation: In a professional environment you would be conversing with your colleagues and I expect a similar effort in our class, both during our synchronous meetings and in any of our online interactions on Blackboard. Also because our topic is in a dynamic environment, students are expected to be aware of current news, and to bring this information to class for discussion and to post it on the class blackboard site.

Online communication is an essential part of the professional and academic environment. Here are some ideas of how you can jump start online conversation:

- You can post questions to the discussion board based on what we have read, or on related topics that you observe in the profession.
- You can continue conversation that we have had in class.
- You can outline controversies surrounding theories or media clips and encourage others to assess the different perspectives.

Your participation grade will be based on your *efforts to join* the conversations both in class and online, and your ability to demonstrate knowledge of the material we are studying in the readings and lectures. It's quality not quantity that counts.

HOW TO COMPUTE YOUR GRADE

All assignments will receive a letter grade ranging from A+ to E-. The number of points you can earn on a particular assignment can be calculated by multiplying the number of points for a particular grade (see table below) by the weighting for the assignment.

Letter Grade	Points	Letter Grade	Points
A +	140	C-	60
A	130	D+	50
A -	120	D	40
B+	110	D-	30
B	100	E+	20
B-	90	E	10

C+	80	E-	0
C	70		

For example, if you receive a "B" on the final assignment (worth 20% of your grade), you have earned 20 points ($100 \times .20 = 20$). Here's how it works for the course grade: to earn an "A" you must earn at least 120 points; for a "B" you need at least 90 points; for a "C" you need at least 60 points, and for a "D" you must have at least 30 points. You will receive an "E" if you have less than 30 points.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is highly encouraged because class discussions are an important part of mastering the material. If you have more than two absences it will affect your class participation grade. Attendance for final project presentations is mandatory.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

When you write for this class or when you are making a presentation, remember that any sources you use should be credited and that materials on the web should be cited too. Use Chicago style for your citations. If you use someone's words or ideas without attribution - that's plagiarism. Remember cheating and plagiarism are violations of scholarly and professional ethics and University policy; don't do it! **If you cheat or plagiarize, you will fail the course**; and could face further actions. Further information is available in Hill Topics, the UTK student handbook.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

****PLEASE NOTE FOR READINGS:** These items should be READ BEFORE our class meeting

****PLEASE NOTE FOR ASSIGNMENTS:** These items are DUE BEFORE THE START of our class meeting.

Understanding the Reading Assignments --- Example: BtB: Chap 1, p 40-44 means *Blown to Bits* Chapter 1 and pages 40-44, SRB is *Successful Business Research*

WK	Class dates	Topics	Reading	Topics for Student-Led Discussion	Assignment Due
1	8/25	Introduction to the course, instructor and requirements. Overview of the Information Industry, information products & enabling technologies	None required for class meeting Highly recommended: • Crawford, W. & Gorman, M. (1995) <i>Future libraries: Dreams, Madness, & Reality</i> . Chicago: ALA. Chaps 2 & 4 netLibrary		
2	9/1	Information products, electronic publishing, information services	• Lancaster, F.W. (1995). <i>The evolution of electronic publishing</i> , Library Trends, 43. • Hickey, T.B. (1995). <i>Present and future capabilities of the online journal</i> , Library Trends, 43. • Tenopir, C. , Baker, G., & Robinson, W. (2005). <i>Shopping for Information</i> , Library Journal, 130(9). • Reid, C. (2005). <i>E-books Go to School</i> , Publishers Weekly, 252(22) • Hane, P.J. (2005). <i>In the Beginning, There Was Content</i> , Information Today, 22(5)	• E-books • Serials Crisis	
3	9/8	Information entrepreneurship, introduction to business plans, decide groups	SRB: Chaps 1-5, 7	• Dot-coms & Entrepreneurs • Successful Information Entrepreneurs	
4	9/15	Adding value to products & services, idea generation	BtB: Chap 1-3, p 39-44 SRB: Chap 34	• Survey of Information Businesses • Relevance of human	

				indexing & abstracting • The Value of Information	
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Wk	Class dates	Topics	Reading	Topics for Student-Led Discussion	Assignment
5	9/22	Information entrepreneurs	Guest Speaker (in the works)		
6	9/29	Pricing, marketing and funding	SRB: Chap 11-14, 18, 24 Scott, D.M. (2005) <i>Content Business Models: Free to Be You and Me</i> , EContent, 28(4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venture capitalists • Advertising information products • Marketing library services 	
7	10/6	Employees and Staff	BtB: Chap 10, 11 Schwarzwalder, R. (2000). <i>Manifesto: Seizing the initiative in the information economy</i> , EContent, 1525-2531, 23(1) Tenopir, C. (2005). <i>Working for a vendor</i> , Library Journal, 130(12).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs in the industry • The MLIS/MLS in industry 	
8	10/13	FALL BREAK NO CLASS			
9	10/20	Legal issues	Chap 6, 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcing copyright laws 	
10	10/27	Standards	Review several standards organizations—details on BB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards & the information industry 	
11	11/3	Quality and ethical issues	Hane, P.J., & Peek, R. (1998). <i>Privacy, publishing, and self regulation</i> . Information Today, 15(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currency & accuracy • Ethics, Information, & industry • Industry & archives 	
12	11/10	Government's role, international issues, the future	<i>What's Ahead for 2004?</i> , Information Today, 8755-6286, January 1, 2004, Vol. 21, Issue 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information industry in international perspective • Federal statutes 	
13	11/17	Presentations			BUSINESS PLANS due
14	11/24	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	HAVE A GREAT TIME!		
15	12/1	Presentations	Last classmeeting		Final assignment due (handed out 11/17)

Happy Holiday Break!