Information & Knowledge Management (MIS 381N.7)
Spring 2012 Course Syllabus

Unique number: 03750
Meeting time: 2:00-3:30 pm
Meeting location: GSB 3.104

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Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with some of the organizational and management issues surrounding the emergence of information and knowledge as key factors in developing and maintaining a competitive advantage for firms. The course is organized around two ideas, 1) knowledge as a manageable asset, and 2) why people in organizations sometimes don't use what they know. A basic assumption of the class is that organizations are complex adaptive systems operating in highly competitive, information and knowledge rich environments. This course will also use perspectives from Positive Organizational Scholarship as a possible framework for understanding how to get people in an organization to use what they know.

A short summary of the first part of the course might be, “How do I get people who work for me to talk to each other around the water fountain about things of benefit to me and to the firm?” While the talk might be quite sophisticated and it might be technology enabled, the problem is still the same. The second part of the course might be summarized as, “How is it that I have so many smart people working for me but they often seem not to be doing what I know they know how to do?” The reasons are sometimes simple and sometimes not, but the problem must be solved for you to be a successful knowledge manager.

Required Course Materials
You are expected to have the readings done before the class for which they are assigned. The reading load is not evenly distributed across all of the course sessions. Therefore, students should look ahead and plan to manage their reading efforts carefully.


5. Course packet available from the University Duplicating Service in GSB Distribution Center.

**Student Deliverables**

The problem with exams is that they only show that you can answer someone else’s question. However, the most important thing for you to learn to do is to ask new questions because it’s the new questions that lead to advances in knowledge and understanding (This idea is adopted from Epstein’s essay, “Why Model?”). Therefore student deliverables in this course are designed to take you, and your classmates, beyond where we have all already been. You are being asked to provide advances for all of us.

You are required to write two papers in this class, one for each section of the course. Each paper should be a research paper that identifies and discusses in depth a topic related to the section of the course but that was not included in the course materials and lectures. You may certainly use your own experiences as material for the paper. However, the paper is to be a research paper grounded in the research literature around the topic. Be sure to indicate how the topic relates to the course section and why it should have been included in the course materials and lectures. Commenting on the usefulness of understanding the topic for dealing with the issues discussed in the course section will probably be helpful to you. While there is no specified length requirement for the paper, it should probably be between 15 & 20 pages.

Based on your paper, prepare a 5-7 minute in-class presentation. Do not read the paper to the class. Rather, your presentation should identify the topic, state why you think it should have been included in the course section, and discuss two or three major points about the topic that might motivate your classmates to want to know even more about it.

- First paper on a topic should answer the question “How do you get people in a firm to talk to each other around the water cooler about things that are of benefit to the firm?” (30% of final grade) due Wednesday, February 29th.
- Short presentation of first paper (10% of final grade).
- Second paper on a topic should answer the question: “How do you get people to do what they already know how to do?” (30% of final grade) due Wednesday, May 2nd.
- Short presentation of second paper (10% of final grade).

This is an advanced graduate business class, and as such, you are expected to approach each class as you would a day at work. You are expected to participate in the growth and development of the class as a whole. You are expected to attend all classes and to have
read the assigned material before class. **Class participation is an important part of your responsibility and will count 20% of your final grade.**

### COURSE SCHEDULE

**Part I: Knowledge as a Manageable Asset - Managing People and Organizations that Think for a Living**

**Wednesday, January 18, 2012**

Course overview; introduction to knowledge management

Reading:

**Monday, January 23, 2012**

Organizations as complex adaptive systems; dealing with complexity

Readings:

**Wednesday, January 25, 2012**

Distinguishing data, information, and knowledge in the context of managing people who think for a living; what is a knowledge worker?

Readings:
- Boisot, Max H., MacMillan, Ian C. & Seok Han, Kyeong. (2007). Chapter 1, Sections 1.2 and 1.3

**Monday, January 30, 2012**

What do we mean when we talk about knowledge codification, knowledge abstraction and knowledge diffusion?
Readings:
- Boisot, Max H., MacMillan, Ian C. & Seok Han, Kyeong. (2007). Chapters 3 & 5

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

Organizational versus Market knowledge and the role of codification, abstraction, and diffusion in these contexts

Readings:
- Boisot, Max H., MacMillan, Ian C. & Seok Han, Kyeong. (2007). Chapter 4

Monday, February 6, 2012

Understanding knowledge generation in organizations; managing tacit and explicit knowledge

Readings:

Wednesday, February 8, 2012

Communities of practice and knowledge creation

Readings:

Monday, February 13, 2012

Knowledge work processes; technology and communication in knowledge networks

Readings:
- Davenport, Thomas H. (2005). Chapter 4

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

Information technology and knowledge management

Readings:


**Monday, February 20, 2012**

The practice of managing knowledge workers; managing dynamic knowledge networks

*Readings:*


**Wednesday, February 22, 2012**

Knowledge management in action; evidence based management

*Readings:*


**Monday, February 27, 2012**

*Guest Lecture: Professor Huseyin Tanriverdi, Department of Information, Risk, and Operations Management, McCombs School of Business.*

***Topic and any assigned reading(s) will be provided during the semester.***
Part II: The Knowing-Doing Gap

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

*First Paper Due*

Introduction to Positive Organizational Scholarship – new knowledge creation and positively deviant performance

Readings:
- Cameron, Kim. (2008). Chapter 1

Monday, March 5, 2012 (Plus week)

Getting the most out of the knowledge in organizations

Readings:

Wednesday, March 7, 2012 (Plus week)

The reasons people talk to each other might not be the reasons we suspect

Readings:

Spring Break March 12 – March 16
**Monday, March 19, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Wednesday, March 21, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Monday, March 26, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Wednesday, March 28, 2012**

Positive Climate, Positive Relationships, and Positive Communication

*Readings:*
- Cameron, Kim. (2008). Chapters 2, 3, & 4

**Monday, April 2, 2012**

Positive Meaning and strategies for fostering Positive Leadership and Positive Identity

*Readings:*
- Cameron, Kim. (2008). Chapters 5, 6, & 7

**Wednesday, April 4, 2012**

The Knowing-Doing Gap

*Reading:*
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2000). Chapter 1

**Monday, April 9, 2012**

When talk substitutes for action, when memory substitutes for thinking, when fear prevents acting on knowledge

*Reading:*
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2000). Chapters 2, 3 & 4
**Wednesday, April 11, 2012**

When measurement obstructs good judgment, when internal competition turns friends into enemies

*Readings:*

**Monday, April 16, 2012**

Firms that surmount the knowing-doing gap

*Readings:*

**Wednesday, April 18, 2012**

Turning knowledge into action

*Readings:*
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2000). Chapter 8

**Monday, April 23, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Wednesday, April 25, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Monday, April 30, 2012**

*Paper Presentations*

**Wednesday, May 2, 2012**

*Second Paper Due*

Knowing-doing gap review / Information and Knowledge Management Review