Information & Knowledge Management (MIS 381N.7)
Spring 2013 Course Syllabus

Unique number: 04060
Meeting time: 2:00-3:30 pm
Meeting location: GSB 3.104

Professor: Reuben R. McDaniel, Jr.
Office: CBA 6.454
Office phone: 512.471.9451
Home phone: 512.345.0006
Office Fax: 512.471.0587
Email: reuben.mcdaniel@mccombs.utexas.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00 – 12:00 noon
TA: Shannon M. Provost, MBA, PhD Student
Email: smprovost@gmail.com

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 Monday, February 25th**.
- 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 1st**.
- 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

Monday, January 14, 2013

Course overview; introduction to knowledge management

Reading:

Wednesday, January 16, 2013

Organizations as complex adaptive systems; dealing with complexity

Readings:

Monday, January 21, 2013

Martin Luther King Jr. Day – no class

Wednesday, January 23, 2013

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 28, 2013

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, January 30, 2013

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 4, 2013

Understanding knowledge generation in organizations; managing tacit and explicit knowledge

Readings:

Wednesday, February 6, 2013

Communities of practice and knowledge creation

Readings:

Monday, February 11, 2013

Knowledge work processes; technology and communication in knowledge networks

Readings:
- Davenport, Thomas H. (2005). Chapter 4
Wednesday, February 13, 2013

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.

Monday, February 18, 2013

Information technology and knowledge management

Readings:

Wednesday, February 20, 2013

The practice of managing knowledge workers; managing dynamic knowledge networks

Readings:

Part II: The Knowing-Doing Gap

Monday, February 25, 2013

*First Paper Due*

Knowledge management in action; evidence based management

Readings:

**Wednesday, February 27, 2013**

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

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

**Monday, March 4, 2013 (Plus Week)**

Getting the most out of the knowledge in organizations

*Readings:*

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013 (Plus Week)**

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

*Readings:*

**Spring Break March 11 – March 15**
Monday, March 18, 2013

Paper Presentations

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Paper Presentations

Monday, March 25, 2013

Paper Presentations

Wednesday, March 27, 2013

How does an organization learn?

Reading:

Monday, April 1, 2013

Positive Climate, Positive Relationships, and Positive Communication

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

Wednesday, April 3, 2013

Positive Meaning and strategies for fostering Positive Leadership and Positive Identity

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

Monday, April 8, 2013

The Knowing-Doing Gap

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

**Wednesday, April 10, 2013**

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

*Readings:*
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2000). Chapters 2, 3 & 4

**Monday, April 15, 2013**

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

*Readings:*

**Wednesday, April 17, 2013**

Firms that surmount the knowing-doing gap

*Readings:*

**Monday, April 22, 2013**

Turning knowledge into action

*Readings:*
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2000). Chapter 8
**Wednesday, April 24, 2013**

*Paper Presentations*

**Monday, April 29, 2013**

*Paper Presentations*

**Wednesday, May 1, 2013**

*Second Paper Due*

Review: The Knowing-Doing Gap and Information & Knowledge Management