Objective
The objective of this course is to introduce you to current issues and concerns in the field of information systems. It is becoming more and more difficult to fully understand an organization without understanding the technology and systems that support and enable its operations. As future managers, it is necessary to introduce you to the world of information and technology of which your organizations are a part. It is hoped that a better understanding of the technology and its potential uses will render you, as a manager, more able to use technology to your advantage in an increasingly competitive and dynamic business environment.

The focus of this course is primarily managerial, although some technical material will be covered. While no prior knowledge of computing is required, it is assumed that you already possess, or will acquire independently, basic computer skills required to use a word processor, a spreadsheet and a database.

Pedagogy
This course relies on a diversity of teaching media. To this effect, a mixture of lectures, class discussions, presentations and videotapes will be used. You will be asked to work individually, and in groups (approximately 3-4 students per group).

In-class discussions and exercises represent a major pedagogical dimension of this course. As such, quality class participation is expected from each student and you are expected to have read assigned materials before class. Attendance is a necessary, but insufficient prerequisite to quality participation.

Grading
Individual Assignments (2)  20%  Group Assignment   25%
Term Paper                45%  Class Participation 10%

All individual assignments and the term paper will be graded by the instructor. The grade for group assignments will be determined by the other groups in the class and the instructor. Only letter grades will be assigned, in accordance with the faculty's 9 point grading scale.
Textbook and Course Materials
There is no textbook required for this class. Readings for the course will be distributed at the first class. Copies of overhead slides used during class can be found on the FAS server Sirius, in the directory: SIRIUS/USER:HOME/SHARE/STUDENT/MGTS5110/SEC_T.

Week 1: Introduction (April 26)
Course Introduction
Why Study Information Systems (IS) in an MBA Program?
Key Issues in IS in the 1990's and Beyond
Computers and Society
Historical Overview of the Development of Computing

Reading


Week 2: Operational Level Information Systems (May 3)
Transaction Processing Systems
Systems Theory Concepts
Systems Integration, Complexity and Redundancy
Development Methodologies for Large-Scale Systems

Readings


Week 3: Tactical Level Information Systems (May 10)
From Transaction Processing to Management Information Systems (MIS)
Life Cycle Model and Failure of Classical MIS
End-User Computing
Decision Support Systems and Expert Systems
Readings

Week 4: Strategic Level Information Systems (May 17)
Strategic Information Systems: Traditional Perspective
Strategic Information Systems: Alternative Perspective
Sustainability of Technologically-Based Competitive Advantage
Executive Support Systems and Executive Information Systems
Prototyping as a System Development Methodology

Readings
Stevenson, M. “He Sees All, He Knows All”, Canadian Business, Spring 1994, Technology.

Reference Readings

Week 5: Telecommunications, Networks and New Communication Technologies (May 24)
Telecommunications in Business
Information Networks
Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Business Applications
New Communication Technologies (e-mail, Internet, WWW)
Cyberspace, Telecommuting and the Information Highway

Readings
Gotleib, L. “Achieving Benefits from Information Technology, or Where’s the ROI?”, CMA Magazine, IT Supplement.
Week 6: Key Information Systems Issues (May 31)

Globalization
Computer Security and Fraud
Computer Ethics and Privacy
Ergonomic Issues: Workstation, Keyboard and User Interface Design

Readings

Assignments
You are required to submit two (2) individual assignments. You may choose the assignments you wish to submit. Only the first two assignments you hand in will be graded. All assignments are weighted equally (10% each).

Individual Assignment #1 (10%) Due: May 3
Information technology and information systems are changing the way professionals do business. Select a managerial profession or organization and prepare a 2 page (double-spaced, 250 words per page) report discussing how this profession or organization has changed as a result of the introduction of information technology and/or information systems.

Individual Assignment #2 (10%) Due: May 10
Using examples from the IS literature, or drawn from your own experience, discuss the differences between Decision Support Systems (DSS) and Expert Systems (ES). Your report should be a maximum of 4 pages (double-spaced, 250 words per page).

Individual Assignment #3 (10%) Due: May 17
Is investment in information technology worthwhile? Discuss whether the adoption of information technology and systems provides a positive payoff, using examples to support your argument. Your report should be a maximum of 4 pages (double-spaced, 250 words per page).
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Individual Assignment #4 (10%) Due: May 24
Using newspapers, magazines or the Internet as your sources, find several articles on the Information Highway. Are there really benefits to be had in doing business on the Internet, or is the Internet just a heavily hyped fad? In a maximum of 4 pages (double-spaced, 250 words per page), discuss this question.

Individual Assignment #5 (10%)
What are the challenges and pitfalls involved in implementing a global information network? In a maximum of 4 pages (double-spaced, 250 words per page), discuss this question.

Group Assignment (25%)
Students will form groups of 3-4 members. Each group will be required to pick a topic from the list below, and present a case study on that topic to the class. A 5 page written report summarizing the presentation is also required.

Group presentations will be a maximum of 15 minutes in length (no additional time will be allowed). Groups will be assessed on their ability to find current business examples relating to their topic, and to present those examples to the class. The presentations must include a description of the information system application or issue, a discussion of the managerial issues that arise from the field study and an assessment of the effectiveness and the appropriateness of the information system in its context.

Presenters should attempt to involve their audience in their presentations. Part of the presentation grade will be determined by the other groups in the class. (Groups will be given forms for recording their comments, feedback and grade for each presentation.) The objective of the presentation is to deliver your material to your peers in a clear, informative and interesting format.

The written report is worth 10% of your final grade, the presentation is worth 15% (10% determined by the class, 5% determined by the instructor).

Topics:

Week 3
• Decision Support Systems
• Expert Systems

Week 4
• Reengineering for Strategic Advantage
• Executive Support Systems/Executive Information Systems

Week 5
• Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)
• Groupware

Week 6
• Computer Ethics
• Computer Security Issues
Term Paper (45%)

Due Date: The term paper is due on June 5, 1995. An electronic version of the paper must be uploaded to the shared volume on Sirius no later than 5:00 p.m., June 9, 1995. (The final grade for your paper will be reduced by one grade point if you fail to upload your paper on time.)

Length: Your paper should be between 10 and 15 double-spaced pages in length (250 words per page).

Sample Topics: Choose a key IS issue and discuss its implications for managers.
Describe the applications and managerial implications of a specific IS technology.
Describe an existing IS problem. How was it resolved? How would you resolve it?

Your topic must be approved by the instructor by the end of week 4 (i.e. May 17). Topics can be submitted on paper, by fax or by e-mail.

Procedure: Your paper must be clearly documented and referenced.

Your paper will be electronically archived and made available to all students, for reference only, for a period of one full year.

Your paper must be original.

Late papers or assignments will not be accepted.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism (from the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty)

“Plagiarism is the representation of another person’s ideas or writing as one’s own. The most obvious form of this kind of dishonesty is the presentation of all or part of another person’s published work as something one has written. However, paraphrasing another’s writing without proper acknowledgment may also be considered plagiarism. It is also a violation of academic honesty to represent another’s artistic or technical work or creation as one’s own.”

Sanctions for Academic Misconduct:

“When verified, a violation of academic honesty may lead to one or more of the following penalties:
a) oral or written disciplinary warning or reprimand;
b) a make-up assignment or examination;
c) lower grade or failure on the assignment or examination;
d) failure in the course;
e) suspension from the University for a definite period;
f) notation on transcript;
g) withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate.”