MONASH University

FIT1020
Fundamentals of information systems

Unit guide

Semester 2, 2008

Table of Contents

FIT1020 Fundamentals of information systems - Semester 2 , 2008

Unit leader :

Martin Atchison

Lecturer(s) :

Caulfield

- Martin Atchison

Malaysia

- Boon Yeap

Tutors(s) :

Caulfield

- Jessica Pereira

Introduction

FIT1020 is the first unit in the Information Systems major in the BITS at Caulfield campus. It can also be taken by students in other majors or other programs as a 6 point elective unit which explains introductory concepts in Information Systems. The unit introduces the basic elements and concepts of IS from the five main perspectives from which the discipline has developed. It discusses the key elements of each perspective and compares and contrasts the merits of each perspective and its implications for practitioners of IS in industry

Unit synopsis

This unit will examine the nature of the information systems discipline and the key areas of professional interest and expertise required by information systems practitioners. The unit will aim to prepare students for further study in IS, by establishing a framework within which topics covered in the rest of the IS major can be located and understood.

The unit will initially focus on the fundamental components from which the study of IS derives: information - its nature and uses within organizations; and systems - their characteristics and operation. Using these foundations as a base, the unit will then examine some of the major streams of IS theory and practice, including the technological basis for IS, organizational processes for acquisition and development of IS, and the management of IS within organizations. The unit will also discuss the fundamental generic skills required of IS practitioners in areas such as problem-solving, communication, working in teams, and professional ethics.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On completion of this unit students will have knowledge and understanding of:

C1. the nature of information and organizational information needs

C2. the key concepts of systems theory, system modelling and the operation of information systems

C3. the key concepts in information systems development and the management of the systems development process

C4. the evolution of the Information Systems discipline, its conceptual foundations and its main specialist areas of study

C5. the way in which the specialist topics within the Information Systems discipline are reflected in the roles and responsibilities of an information systems professional in the workplace

Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

Upon successful completion of this unit, students will:

A1. Recognise the key features of the Information Systems discipline and appreciate the importance of its role in contributing to the development and implementation of solutions for organizational information needs and problems.

A2. Appreciate the range and diversity of the fields of study and areas of professional expertise encompassed within the IS discipline

A3. Recognise the key professional and ethical responsibilities of IS practitioners

FIT1020 Fundamentals of information systems - Semester 2 , 2008

Practical Skills

Upon successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

P1. identify and describe the key information systems issues surrounding organizational information needs and problems

P2. apply a range of Information Systems perspectives to the solution of an organizational information problem

P3. use basic analytical and design techniques to describe an organizational information need or problem

Relationships, Communication and TeamWork

Upon successful completion of this unit, students will:

S1. Recognise the importance of inter-personal skills and team work in the work of an Information Systems professional

S2. Understand the relationship of Information Systems professionals to other stakeholders involved in dealing with information issues in organizations

Workload

For on campus students, workload commitments are:

- two-hour lecture and
- two-hour tutorial (requiring advance preparation)
- a minimum of 1-2 hours of personal study per week for each one hour of contact time in order to satisfy the reading and assignment expectations.

Unit relationships

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this unit.

Relationships

FIT1020 is a core unit in the Information Systems major of the BITS.

You may not study this unit and CSE1204, IMS1001, IMS1501, IMS1805, MMS1403, BUS1021, GCO1813, GCO2601, GCO2851 in your degree.

Continuous improvement

Monash is committed to 'Excellence in education' and strives for the highest possible quality in teaching and learning. To monitor how successful we are in providing quality teaching and learning Monash regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. Two of the formal ways that you are invited to provide feedback are through Unit Evaluations and through Monquest Teaching Evaluations.

One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Unit Evaluation Surveys. It is Monash policy for every unit offered to be evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys as they are an important avenue for students to "have their say". The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

Student Evaluations

The Faculty of IT administers the Unit Evaluation surveys online through the my.monash portal, although for some smaller classes there may be alternative evaluations conducted in class.

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to
http://www.monash.edu.au/unit-evaluation-reports/

Over the past few years the Faculty of Information Technology has made a number of improvements to its courses as a result of unit evaluation feedback. Some of these include systematic analysis and planning of unit improvements, and consistent assignment return guidelines.

Monquest Teaching Evaluation surveys may be used by some of your academic staff this semester. They are administered by the Centre for Higher Education Quality (CHEQ) and may be completed in class with a facilitator or on-line through the my.monash portal. The data provided to lecturers is completely anonymous.
Monquest surveys provide academic staff with evidence of the effectiveness of their teaching and identify areas for improvement. Individual Monquest reports are confidential, however, you can see the summary results of Monquest evaluations for 2006 at http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/cheq/evaluations/monquest/profiles/index.html

Unit staff - contact details

Unit leader

Mr Martin Atchison
Senior Lecturer
Phone +61 3 990 31912
Contact hours : Monday 12-2, Tuesday 11-1, Wednesday 10-12, otherwise by appointment

Lecturer(s) :

Mr Martin Atchison
Senior Lecturer
Phone +61 3 990 31912
Mr Boon Yeap
Tutor(s) :

Ms Jessica Pereira

Teaching and learning method

Both lectures and tutorials will aim to explain theoretical concepts via formal instruction, backed up by heavy use of practical examples to illustrate key points. Students will be expected to take an active role in discussions and presentation of key concepts during both lectures and tutorials. There will be significant use made of tutorial and assignment work to highlight issues during lectures.

Tutorial allocation

On-campus students should register for tutorials/laboratories using Allocate+.

Communication, participation and feedback

Monash aims to provide a learning environment in which students receive a range of ongoing feedback throughout their studies. You will receive feedback on your work and progress in this unit. This may take the form of group feedback, individual feedback, peer feedback, self-comparison, verbal and written feedback, discussions (on line and in class) as well as more formal feedback related to assignment marks and grades. You are encouraged to draw on a variety of feedback to enhance your learning.

It is essential that you take action immediately if you realise that you have a problem that is affecting your study. Semesters are short, so we can help you best if you let us know as soon as problems arise. Regardless of whether the problem is related directly to your progress in the unit, if it is likely to interfere with your progress you should discuss it with your lecturer or a Community Service counsellor as soon as possible.

Unit Schedule

Week	Topic	Key dates
1	Introduction to the unit	
2	Basic concepts in IS	
3	Organizational foundations of IS	
4	Organizational foundations of IS (cont)	
5	Information foundations of IS	
6	Information foundations of IS (cont)	
7	Systems foundations of IS	
8	Systems foundations of IS (cont)	
9	Technological foundations of IS	
10	Technological foundations of IS (cont)	
11	Systems development foundations of IS	
	Mid semester break	
12	Systems development foundations of IS (cont)	
13	Review	

Unit Resources

Prescribed text(s) and readings

There is no essential prescribed textbook for the unit. Many good generalist textbook introductions to IS are available, but the unit will not be following any one in particular, and no one text book will cover all the topics examined in the unit. Rather, students will be directed to specific readings relating to each topic covered.

Students who wish to buy a textbook should try the following as a useful generalist text:
Bentley L & Whitten J (2007) Systems Analysis and Design for the Global Enterprise, 7th ed, McGraw-Hill

Recommended text(s) and readings

Reference lists will be provided for specific topics on the Unit web site throughout the semester

Equipment and consumables required or provided

Students may use the facilities available in the computing labs. Information about computer use for students is available from the ITS Student Resource Guide in the Monash University Handbook.

Study resources

Study resources we will provide for your study are:

- Weekly detailed lecture notes outlining the learning objectives, discussion of the content, required readings and exercises;
- Weekly tutorial or laboratory tasks and exercises with sample solutions provided one to two weeks later;
- Readings on key topics covered in the unit;
- Case study examples realted to key topics;
- Assignment specifications and sample solutions;
- A sample examination and suggested solution
- This Unit Guide outlining the administrative information for the unit;
- The unit web site on MUSO, where resources outlined above will be made available.

Library access

The Monash University Library site contains details about borrowing rights and catalogue searching. To learn more about the library and the various resources available, please go to http://www.lib.monash.edu.au. Be sure to obtain a copy of the Library Guide, and if necessary, the instructions for remote access from the library website.

Monash University Studies Online (MUSO)

All unit and lecture materials are available through MUSO (Monash University Studies Online). Blackboard is the primary application used to deliver your unit resources. Some units will be piloted in Moodle. If your unit is piloted in Moodle, you will see a link from your Blackboard unit to Moodle (http://moodle.monash.edu.au) and can bookmark this link to access directly. In Moodle, from the Faculty of Information Technology category, click on the link for your unit.

You can access MUSO and Blackboard via the portal: http://my.monash.edu.au

FIT1020 Fundamentals of information systems - Semester 2 , 2008

Click on the Study and enrolment tab, then Blackboard under the MUSO learning systems.

In order for your Blackboard unit(s) to function correctly, your computer needs to be correctly configured.

For example:

- Blackboard supported browser
- Supported Java runtime environment

For more information, please visit: http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/downloadables-student.html

You can contact the MUSO Support by: Phone: (+61 3) 9903 1268

For further contact information including operational hours, please visit:
http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/contact.html

Further information can be obtained from the MUSO support site:
http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/index.html

Assessment

Unit assessment policy

The unit is assessed with assignments, unit test and a three hour closed book examination. To pass the unit you must:

- attempt the assignments, unit test and the examination
- achieve no less that 40% of the possible marks in the exam and assignment work
- achieve no less than 50% of possible marks

Assignment tasks

- ### Assignment Task

  Title : Assignment 1

  Description :

  This assignment requires you to apply the organisational and information perspectives to the analysis of a selected information system. See the unit web site for details.

Weighting : 15%

Criteria for assessment :

Assessment criteria will be provided with the assignment specification

Due date : Week 6 of semester

- ## Assignment Task

Title : Assignment 2

Description :

This assignment requires you to apply the technological and systems perspectives to the analysis of a selected information system. See the unit web site for details.

Weighting : 25%

Criteria for assessment :

Assessment criteria will be provided with the assignment specification

Due date : Week 11 of semester

Examinations

- **Examination**

    Weighting : 60%

    Length : 3 hours

    Type (open/closed book) : Closed book
- **Examination**

    Weighting : 10%

    Length : 1 hour

    Type (open/closed book) : Closed book

    Remarks (optional - leave blank for none) :

    This is a unit test which will be conducted during the tutorial class of week 8 of semester

Assignment submission

Assignments will be submitted by **paper** submission to **your tutor.**

Assignment coversheets

Use the Faculty of IT cover sheet

University and Faculty policy on assessment

Due dates and extensions

The due dates for the submission of assignments are given in the previous section. Please make every effort to submit work by the due dates. It is your responsibility to structure your study program around assignment deadlines, family, work and other commitments. Factors such as normal work pressures, vacations, etc. are seldom regarded as appropriate reasons for granting extensions. Students are advised to NOT assume that granting of an extension is a matter of course.

Requests for extensions must be made to the unit leader before the due date. You will be asked to forward original medical certificates in cases of illness, and may be asked to provide other forms of documentation where necessary. A copy of the email or other written communication of an extension must be attached to the assignment submission.

Late assignment

Assignments received after the due date will normally be subject to a penalty of 5% per day. This penalty may be adjusted according to circumstances at the discretion of the unit leader.

Return dates

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

Assessment for the unit as a whole is in accordance with the provisions of the Monash University Education Policy at http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/

We will aim to have assignment results made available to you within two weeks after assignment receipt.

Plagiarism, cheating and collusion

Plagiarism and cheating are regarded as very serious offences. In cases where cheating has been confirmed, students have been severely penalised, from losing all marks for an assignment, to facing disciplinary action at the Faculty level. While we would wish that all our students adhere to sound ethical conduct and honesty, I will ask you to acquaint yourself with Student Rights and Responsibilities (http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/about/committees-groups/facboard/policies/studrights.html) and the Faculty regulations that apply to students detected cheating as these will be applied in all detected cases.

In this University, cheating means seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in any examination or any other written or practical work to be submitted or completed by a student for assessment. It includes the use, or attempted use, of any means to gain an unfair advantage for any assessable work in the unit, where the means is contrary to the instructions for such work.

When you submit an individual assessment item, such as a program, a report, an essay, assignment or other piece of work, under your name you are understood to be stating that this is your own work. If a submission is identical with, or similar to, someone else's work, an assumption of cheating may arise. If you are planning on working with another student, it is acceptable to undertake research together, and discuss problems, but it is not acceptable to jointly develop or share solutions unless this is specified by your lecturer.

Intentionally providing students with your solutions to assignments is classified as "assisting to cheat" and students who do this may be subject to disciplinary action. You should take reasonable care that your solution is not

accidentally or deliberately obtained by other students. For example, do not leave copies of your work in progress on the hard drives of shared computers, and do not show your work to other students. If you believe this may have happened, please be sure to contact your lecturer as soon as possible.

Cheating also includes taking into an examination any material contrary to the regulations, including any bilingual dictionary, whether or not with the intention of using it to obtain an advantage.

Plagiarism involves the false representation of another person's ideas, or findings, as your own by either copying material or paraphrasing without citing sources. It is both professional and ethical to reference clearly the ideas and information that you have used from another writer. If the source is not identified, then you have plagiarised work of the other author. Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that is insulting to the reader and grossly unfair to your student colleagues.

Register of counselling about plagiarism

The university requires faculties to keep a simple and confidential register to record counselling to students about plagiarism (e.g. warnings). The register is accessible to Associate Deans Teaching (or nominees) and, where requested, students concerned have access to their own details in the register. The register is to serve as a record of counselling about the nature of plagiarism, not as a record of allegations; and no provision of appeals in relation to the register is necessary or applicable.

Non-discriminatory language

The Faculty of Information Technology is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in all forms of communication. Discriminatory language is that which refers in abusive terms to gender, race, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or nationality, ethnic or language background, physical or mental ability, or political or religious views, or which stereotypes groups in an adverse manner. This is not meant to preclude or inhibit legitimate academic debate on any issue; however, the language used in such debate should be non-discriminatory and sensitive to these matters. It is important to avoid the use of discriminatory language in your communications and written work. The most common form of discriminatory language in academic work tends to be in the area of gender inclusiveness. You are, therefore, requested to check for this and to ensure your work and communications are non-discriminatory in all respects.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities that may disadvantage them in assessment should seek advice from one of the following before completing assessment tasks and examinations:

- Faculty of Information Technology Student Service staff, and / or
- your Unit Coordinator, or
- Disabilities Liaison Unit

Deferred assessment and special consideration

Deferred assessment (not to be confused with an extension for submission of an assignment) may be granted in cases of extenuating personal circumstances such as serious personal illness or bereavement. Information and forms for Special Consideration and deferred assessment applications are available at http://www.monash.edu.au/exams/special-consideration.html. Contact the Faculty's Student Services staff at your campus for further information and advice.