MONASH University

FIT5094
IT for management decision making

Unit guide

Semester 1, 2009

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Unit leader :

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Lecturer(s) :

Caulfield

- David Arnott

Introduction

Welcome to FIT5094.

FIT5094 is the first or foundation unit in the Business Intelligence Professional Track. It is also available as an elective for IT and BusEco graduate students. The unit provides an understanding of IT systems that are developed to support executives and managers. IT-based support of managers is also a major Monash research strength.

Unit synopsis

ASCED code: 020307 Decision Support Systems

This unit provides students with an understanding of the development and use of information systems that support managers, especially their decision-making tasks. Students will learn of the nature of management work and decision theory and how this affects the development of decision support systems. A number of commonly used decision support methods and techniques will be explored. Students will be introduced to personal decision support systems, group support systems, negotiation support systems, data warehousing, executive information systems and business intelligence.

Learning outcomes

At the conclusion of FIT5094 students will:

Understand the scope and application of IT for decision support; Have an understanding of the nature of managerial decision-making; Be familiar with the major approaches of IT-based decision support; Be able to choose the appropriate decision support approach for a particular project; Be able to undertake systems analysis for management support projects.

Workload

This is a six-point unit that, according to University guidelines, requires you to spend 12 hours per week (a total of at least 156 hours per semester). It is anticipated that, on average, you will spend, per week:

- 2 hours in the lecture,
- 2 hours in a tutorial/laboratory,
- 3 hours preparing for the tutorial/laboratory,
- 5 hours of your own reading and assignment work.

Unit relationships

Prerequisites

Before attempting this unit you must have satisfactorily completed FIT9003 Database systems design, or equivalent.

Relationships

FIT5094 is a core unit in the Business Intelligence Professional Track of theMaster of Business Information Systems, Master of Business Systems, and Master of Information Management and Systems. It is a preferred elective in the Master of Business (IT Management) and an elective in the Master of Information Technology and the Master of Applied Information Technology.

You may not study this unit and SYS4210, BUS5502 or IMS5005 in your degree.

Continuous improvement

Monash is committed to 'Excellence in education' (Monash Directions 2025 - http://www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions/directions.html) 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. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Unit Evaluation Surveys. The University's Unit Evaluation policy (http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html) requires that every unit offered is 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.

Faculties have the option of administering the Unit Evaluation survey online through the my.monash portal or in class. Lecturers will inform students of the method being used for this unit towards the end of the semester.

Student Evaluations

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

Improvements to this unit

The major change for 2009 is an increase in the duration of the tutorials and laboratories from one hour to two hours. This change has been made on the basis of student feedback in both semesters of 2008. A survey of students regarding assignment 2 has led to a number of changes, including an increase in the complexity of the problem definition. The use of podcasts was well received and the use of this feedback mechanism will be expanded in 2009.

In 2009 FIT5094 will be evaluated by online unit evaluations and two short web-based surveys.

Unit staff - contact details

Unit leader

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Lecturer(s) :

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Additional communication information

The lecturer is located on the Caulfield Campus. Appointments for Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings can be made at david.arnott@infotech.monash.edu.au.

Teaching and learning method

The main teaching method is a weekly two-hour lecture. This is complemented by a two-hour weekly tutorial or laboratory session. Students are encouraged to form informal study groups to regularly discuss the unit materials. The main source of information for the unit is the FIT5094 MUSO site.

Tutorial allocation

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	Using IT to support executive decision making	
2	Managerial information behaviours	
3	Overview of decision making and normative decision theory	
4	Behavioural decision theory 1	
5	Behavioural decision theory 2	

6	DSS development methods	
	Mid semester break	
7	Personal decision support systems 1	
8	Personal decision support systems 2	
9	Group support systems, negotiation support systems, knowledge management-based DSS	
10	Data warehousing, executive information systems and business intelligence	
11	DW/BI case study	
12	Decision support strategy and governance	
13	Review Session	

Unit Resources

Prescribed text(s) and readings

There are no prescribed texts for FIT5094.

Recommended text(s) and readings

There is no compulsory text for FIT5094. However, the following two texts are general textbooks that cover the DSS area. They both have chapters or sections that address some sessions. Both are available from the reserve collection of the Caulfield Library. (The first edition of Marakas is still relevant.)

• Mallach, E.G. (2000) Decision Support and Data Warehouse Systems. Boston: McGraw Hill (ISBN 0-07-289981-6).
• Marakas, G.M. (2003). Decision support systems in the 21st Century (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall (ISBN 0-13-101879-5).

A large number of articles and other reading material will be made available on the FIT5094 MUSO site.

The Caulfield campus library has a world-class collection of books and journals on decision support related topics.

Required software and/or hardware

You will need access to:

- iThink simulation software
- Firefox or Internet Explorer browser
- Word processor
- Spreadsheet

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

Equipment and consumables required or provided

Students studying off-campus are required to have the minimum system configuration specified by the Faculty as a condition of accepting admission, and regular Internet access.On-campus students, and those studying at supported study locations 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;
- Assignment specifications and marking guides;
- Access to past examination papers;
- 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.

The Educational Library and Media Resources (LMR) is also a very resourceful place to visit at http://www.education.monash.edu.au/library/

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

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 mark will be the weighted combination of examination mark (weight 50%), assignment 1 (weight 25%) and assignment 2 (weight 25%). Where a student obtains less than 40% in either the exam or the two assignments taken together, a mark of no greater than 44-N will be recorded.

Assignment tasks

- ### Assignment Task

  Title : Assignment 1

  Description :

  The objective of this assignment is to analyse and understand a decision process and to identify ways of improving the process. Mastery of this task is essential for systems analysts working in a decision support role.

  Details are available on the FIT5094 MUSO site.

  Weighting : 25%

  Criteria for assessment :

  The marking guide is available on the FIT5094 MUSO site.
  Due date : Monday 20 April 2009

- ### Assignment Task

  Title : Assignment 2

  Description :

  The objective of this assignment is to gain a critical understanding of a software application for personal decision support. A key aspect of the assignment is an insight into the role of a systems analyst in a DSS engagement.

  Details are available on the FIT5094 MUSO site.

  Weighting : 25%

  Criteria for assessment :

  The marking guide is available on the FIT5094 MUSO site.
  Due date : Friday 22 May 2009

  Remarks (optional - leave blank for none) :

  The assessment of this assignment will take place in a simulated work environment. Students are required to attend a half-hour session allocated to them in the period Monday 25 May to Friday 5 June 2009.

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Examinations

- **Examination 1**

  Weighting : 50%

  Length : 3 hours

  Type (open/closed book) : Closed book

Assignment submission

Assignments will be submitted by paper submission to your tutor during your tutorial. Do not email submissions.

Assignment coversheets

Coversheets are available via the "Student assignment coversheets" (http://infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/assignments/) page on the faculty website.

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 by email to the Chief Examiner at least two days 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 from the Chief Examiner must be attached to the assignment submission. Note that the following reasons will not be considered in an application for an extension:
- Time management or excessive workload. Assignments falling due on the same dates, or work projects where an increased workload could reasonably be anticipated are your responsibility to manage.
- Hardware or software failures, whether of personal or University equipment. You have a professional responsibility to make back-up copies of all work in progress, and retain copies of submitted pieces.

Monash University has a range of support services for students including Counselling and Language & Learning. If you are experiencing difficulties in your studies these services may be of great assistance.

Late assignment

Assignments received after the due date will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day, including weekends. Assignments received later than one week (seven days) after the due date will not be accepted.

This policy is strict because comments or guidance will be given on assignments as they are returned, and sample solutions may also be published and distributed, after assignment marking or with the returned assignment.

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.