

College of Business
Department of Information and Management Science
Decision Support Systems
Summer 1998

ISM 4117–Section 1
Course Reference #14087
8:00-9:30 MW 209 RBA

Instructor: Jon (Sean) Jaspersen
Office: 336F RBB
Phone: 644-1861
E-Mail: jjasper@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
Webpage: <http://garnet.acns.fsu.edu/~jjasper/>
Office Hours: 3:30-5:00 MW and occasionally by appointment

This course is considered the capstone course in your MIS education at The Florida State University. In other ISM courses, you have learned various tools and techniques to assist you in systems analysis, design, and development. Furthermore, you have taken some general business courses, which provided you with various tools and techniques to assist you in understanding the fundamentals of business.

In this course, students are expected to draw upon “technical” tools and “business” tools in developing complete systems solutions to business problems. In particular, the context of managerial decision making will be studied. Students will participate in developing a decision support system (DSS) as a business solution to a business problem.

Prerequisites

This course has several stated prerequisites. Students must have completed *all* of the following courses before enrolling in this course: ISM 4212, ISM 4113, and QMB 4700. *None* of these prerequisites will be waived for any reason.

Course Objectives

The major objectives of the course are for the student to develop an understanding of the role of computers in direct support of managerial decision making; to reinforce previous understanding of the role of managerial decision making in organizations; and to apply this understanding, as well as prerequisite systems design, database, and programming skills, to the design of typical systems for managerial decision support. Specifically, each student should be able to:

- Understand the concepts of decision support systems structure and the principles of their design
- Analyze typical decision situations to determine whether it is practical to support them with computer technology and, if so, how
- Design and implement a decision support system
- Understand decision support and group decision support system use, development, and evolution
- Gain an appreciation of working on systems development projects in a team environment and obtain experience with project management

Course Text

Sauter, V.L., *Decision Support Systems: An Applied Managerial Approach*, New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997.

The course text is supplemented by material found at the following URLs:

- <http://www.Wiley.com/college/Sauter>
- <http://www.umsl.edu/~sauter/DSS/book/links.html>
- <http://garnet.acns.fsu.edu/~ekarahan>

In addition to the above text, you may also need reference material for various applications development software such as COBOL, Visual Basic, etc. However, you should defer any such purchases until project assignments have been distributed and discussed.

Occasionally additional reading and study from outside sources may be required or recommended. These sources will include, but are not limited to, recent newspapers, business journals and monographs, and the World Wide Web. Any such reading/study assignments will be announced in class by the instructor.

Office Hour Policy

Office hours provide an opportunity for you to obtain specific guidance and help with your understanding of the material. I expect you to use them as your needs demand. I tend to be unsympathetic toward individuals with grade problems at the end of the semester who have never attempted to get help via office hours.

If you cannot make regular office hours, I will be glad to make an appointment with you. However, appointments should be the exception. If you do not have an appointment to meet with me, please do not drop by my office and ask to see me. All appointments to meet with me must be submitted to me via e-mail. Oftentimes, I can adequately respond to questions through e-mail and appointments are not necessary.

Grading and Course Requirements

The course requirements and evaluation of each student's work in the course are based upon performance in three areas: final exam, group project, and class participation. Grade contributions and letter grade determination are shown below.

Final Exam	25%
Class Participation	25%
DSS Project	<u>50%</u>
Total	100%

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
94 - 100	A	84 - 86	B	74 - 76	C	64 - 66	D
90 - 93	A-	80 - 83	B-	70 - 73	C-	60 - 63	D-
87 - 89	B+	77 - 79	C+	67 - 69	D+	< 60	F

Final Exam. The final exam will be comprehensive and will cover text readings, lectures, and outside readings. The examination will emphasize interpretation and application of course material, not rote memorization.

Class Participation. Class participation is based on attendance, participation in class discussions, and contribution to those discussions. Students are expected to contribute to classroom discussions and activities. I will periodically give unannounced quizzes and/or in-class assignments. Your performance on these assignments and quizzes will be used in determining your class participation grade.

The quizzes and assignments will typically cover material that has been covered in prior class discussions or from the assigned reading for the current class period. Completion of the chapter review questions are strongly recommended as preparation for each class period.

No make-ups will be allowed for missed in-class activities. There will be enough of these activities that missing one or two will not significantly impact your final grade.

Participation will also include both assigned and no-notice brief presentations of the material assigned for the current class period. Two or more groups will be selected at the beginning of each Monday's class period. These groups will be expected to conduct the class discussion for the day's assigned materials. Presentations are expected to go beyond just summarizing or restating material.

Group Project. The group project gives you hands-on experience designing and building a decision support system. There will be absolutely no instruction on software used to develop the DSS project. It is expected that by this stage of your career you have an inventory of development tools which you can draw upon to organize and implement these projects. Further, it is specifically expected that you have *learned how to learn* a new programming language or how to research and use new features for languages with which you have some familiarity.

Groups should make every effort to complete the project early. Those who wait until the last minute risk delays with the computer facilities (i.e., down time, printer jams, computer crashes, etc.). Work turned in late will be discounted by 25% no matter what the reason.

Details on the project will be provided in separate handouts later in the semester. A due date and time will be specified for the project. A project turned in one second after the specified time (as determined by the instructor's watch) will be considered late. Projects turned in more than 72 hours late will not be graded (i.e., the student will receive a zero grade for the assignment).

For the 48 hour window preceding the time when the project is due, the instructor will be unavailable for student consultation. This is to encourage students to complete their project early.

Group membership will be assigned by the instructor. I will attempt to have groups with 2 or 3 members.

Electronic Course Support

I have set up an e-mail distribution list for the course through ACNS. Each student should add his or her e-mail address to this list by following the instructions found at the following URL: <http://register.acns.fsu.edu/>

I will periodically post messages to this list concerning the course schedule, course materials, or course administrative details. You are responsible for the information distributed on this list. You may use the list as a forum for on-line discussions about the course. This forum is to be used by you as an additional learning resource.

Feel free to post questions about issues, concerns, and/or clarifications regarding course material. Personal messages are not appropriate for this list and should be sent directly to the concerned individual. The address for the mailing list is: ISM-4117-01@garnet.acns.fsu.edu

Although I am also on the distribution list, I will seldomly respond to questions, problems, or issues posted on the list. This forum is to be used by you as an additional learning resource.

In addition, links to a copy of the syllabus and course grades can be found at the following URL:
<http://garnet.acns.fsu.edu/~jjasper/Summer98.html>

Students With Disabilities

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodation should: 1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) and 2) Bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating you need academic accommodations. This should be done within the first week of class.

Class Policies

Florida State University has an Honor Code that governs student academic performance both in and out of the classroom. The Honor Code appears in both the Student Handbook and in the FSU Catalog. The responsibilities of students, instructors, and judiciary personnel are spelled out in the Honor Code, as are potential penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

As a student at FSU, you are expected to abide by the Honor Code for this class and for all others in which you are enrolled. Please understand that portraying others' work as your own will result in appropriate sanctions.

My expectations of you are summarized below: (This is a representative, but not exhaustive list.)

- *Do not engage in disruptive behavior in the classroom.* Interfering with your fellow students' ability to learn will not be tolerated.
- *Attend class.* If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what material, homework assignments, schedule changes, etc. you missed. Do not come to my office a week later and ask, "Did I miss anything?" (Assume that I would answer "yes" to this question.) Do not expect me to keep track of what handouts you do or do not have, or to keep extra copies of handouts in case you lose yours.
- *Be prepared.* Each student is expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss the material from the assigned readings. I will expect students to have read the text already and rely on their preparedness to drive class discussions.
- *Arrive on time and stay for the duration of each class.* If you must be late to or leave early from class, please let me know and be as unobtrusive as possible. It is very disruptive to have students walking in and out of class during class time.

- *Take exams during the scheduled time.* If, due to emergency or illness, you know you will miss a scheduled exam, it is your responsibility to let me know ahead of time (or, worst case, within 24 hours of the exam you missed). Make-up examinations will be significantly more difficult than the regularly-scheduled exams (since it means that I must do more work and you receive more time to prepare than your colleagues had). Make-up exams may be oral, essay, or another format, as determined by the instructor.
- *Let me know, as early as possible, if you have problems* with the material, projects, groups, etc. Ask questions during class. Come see me during office hours. Send e-mail messages. In short, if you are doing the work and need help, get it. I cannot help you if I am not aware of the problem. Problems often arise with group projects. If you find yourself in a group that is causing you problems which you and the group cannot work out, please come see me as soon as you can.
- *Privacy of grades:* Scores and grades will be posted outside my office door, 336F RBB. These scores will be posted according to the last four digits of the student's social security number unless you request me to do so otherwise. Scores on exams, projects, and final grades will not be discussed over the phone.
- *Syllabus changes:* The topics and dates as outlined in the course schedule are subject to change. All necessary changes will be announced and discussed in class. You are responsible for making sure you are aware of any such changes.

Miscellaneous Class Notes

1. *Programming Competence.* This course requires the development of a major management support system as part of a small development team. You will not do well on this project if you have not developed strong programming skills and are unable to learn new programming languages on your own.
2. *Project Design.* The DSS project requires you to first design the system which will meet the project specifications. This is an important difference from programming assignments you may have had in prior classes. Typically, programming assignments require you to implement programs that accomplish given, stated requirements. In this class, the project requires your group to develop those requirements. For many students, this process is a key determinant of project success.
3. *Keys to Success.* There are several characteristics and behaviors that differentiate the successful students from those who struggle with the class. In general, successful students:
 - Make coordination with the instructor a regular part of their study process and their project implementation. This corresponds to the habit of staying in touch with your boss (or your customer) in a business environment.
 - Get their projects underway early and stay on top of their projects. Successful students recognize that programming *always* involves unknowns and problems, no matter how competent they are, and they allow time for resolving the problems. Furthermore, they pay attention to project documentation.
 - Successful students don't wait for things to happen to or be explained to or delivered to them. They go out and try to take control of their studies, their projects, and their lives.

Daily Schedule--ISM 4117, Section 1, Summer 1998

Date	Topic	Chapters
11-May	Intro to Course	
13-May	Introduction to DSS	1
18-May	Decision Making	2
20-May	DSS Project Day	
25-May	Memorial Day Holiday	
27-May		
1-Jun	Components of a DSS: Data	3
3-Jun		
8-Jun	Components of a DSS: Models	4
10-Jun		
15-Jun	Components of a DSS: User-Interface	5
17-Jun		
22-Jun	Components of a DSS: Mail	6
24-Jun		
29-Jun	International DSS	7
1-Jul		
6-Jul	Designing a DSS	8
8-Jul		
13-Jul	Implementation and Evaluation of a DSS	10
15-Jul		
20-Jul	Group DSS	11
22-Jul		
27-Jul	Executive Information Systems	12
29-Jul		
3-Aug		
5-Aug	Final Exam	

Individual Information Sheet

Please fill in the requested information on both sides of this sheet and return it to me. I will use the information on this sheet to get to know you a little better. The information will also give me an idea of the background and experience of the members of the class. I will also use the information to assist me in assigning work groups.

Full Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

Social Security Number: _____

What is the name of the geographic location you refer to as home? (example: Tallahassee, FL)

What grade do you expect to get from this class?

What is your current GPA?

What do you expect the workload to be in this class? (study hours/week)

How many hours per week do you estimate you will devote to this class?

Tell me about yourself (what you like to do, what you plan to become, where you would like to live, etc.).

List any special interests or hobbies that you have:

What do you want to learn from this class?

According to federal law, I must have signed permission to post individual grades using some sort of identification number. Please circle one of the following options and sign below.

- a. I do not give Mr. Jasperson permission to post my grades using any form of personal identification.
- b. I give Mr. Jasperson permission to post my grades using the following identification number (please specify four **numeric** digits you will surely remember, for example the last four digits of your social security number):

Signature: _____

MIS Education and Experience

What grade did you receive in each of the following classes:

ISM 4212	_____	ISM 4030	_____	ISM 4113	_____
CGS 2402	_____	CGS 3403	_____	CGS 4404	_____
		QMB 4700	_____		

What types of business work experience do you have?

Please rate your level of knowledge about traditional systems analysis and design methods (e.g. data flow diagrams, data dictionaries, systems flowcharts, etc.) by circling the appropriate number below:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7
I know very little about them I am reasonably knowledgeable I am very knowledgeable