

INFO 6215

Business Analysis and Information Engineering

Contact Information:

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Office Hours by request via Zoom/Teams

Course description

This course will work to develop the skills necessary in the analysis, planning, communication and execution of business and change strategy in today's evolving world. We will take a "learn by doing" approach with an overall theme of business strategy, communication and the future of work. We will use real life cases and methodologies to focus on translating complex business needs into practical, flexible and sustainable business solutions that create a positive and effective end user experience. Using a variety of resources and tools we will explore trends relating to the future of work and how best to pivot and adjust as needed striving for optimal ROI.

Course Objectives

This course aims to provide a competitive advantage for students interested in the synergy of business and technical engineering strategies and program management. Students who successfully complete this course will gain skills in the following subjects, acquiring a solid business foundation as well as effective consultative approach:

- Principles of business analysis and strategy through identification of evolving stakeholder needs, with a focus on approaches for thoughtful and customized execution as well as how to maintain the best interests internally and externally while building professional credibility and relationships.
- An introduction to business communication with an emphasis on skills necessary to translate and explain technical concepts to non-technical stakeholders, including information exchange and how to optimize delivery of concepts to diverse audiences.
- Innovation and design-thinking skills using context management, with a focus on outcome orientation and strength to pivot and flex (bring to action/understand the context); this will aim to strengthen students' abilities to pilot and test through analysis of various concepts and subsequent application of these ideas to non-technical oriented functions.
- Concepts in problem-solving, including how to foster the ability to anticipate issues and opportunities, adopt holistic and unbiased opinions in evaluations and assessments, formulate appropriate questions, and gain an ability to switch comfortably between focused and helicopter views.

Technical/course materials requirements

Required

Lean Change Management – Innovative Practices for Managing Organizational Change

Jason Little

This book combines ideas from Agile, Lean Startup, change management, organizational development and psychology to set a framework and foundation for thinking about change.

Course Evaluation

Class attendance and participation – 20%

Two short written assignments (Read & React) – 20%

- 1 individual, short presentation from written assignment – 10%

Mid-semester interview – 25%

Team Project Report & Presentation – 25%

Information building and sharing

We will use a mix of videos, articles, guest speaker personal accounts and course reading to analyze the various paths organizations have taken related to business strategy and change implementation.

"Read and react" assignments will be posted at least 2 weeks in advance of the due date and students will be asked to "read and react" to 2 assigned articles or videos throughout the semester, presenting 1 of the 2 to the class. These will be short reflections and learnings; 1-2 pages max. per case.

Mid-semester project:

Each student will be asked to interview someone from an external organization who has actively participated in a systems implementation/change initiative focusing on a retrospective approach of 1) what worked, 2) what could have been improved and 3) what were lessons learned. Framework and more details to follow.

End of semester group project:

Students will be assigned randomly to a group in which they will create a scenario and research, analyze, propose and prepare a 1) business case and 1) project plan for the implementation of a new system focusing on the future of work. The organization can be fictitious. The tool should be something existing in the market. The more creative with the scenario and organization, the better.

The objectives will be to:

- 1) Understand stakeholder needs and create a reflective and compelling business case
- 2) Select an appropriate vendor/tool to match the needs of the stakeholder and share the approach taken to make the selection
- 3) Create a project plan and timeline; articulate considerations made in the process