

Project Planning and Design

CREDIT 4 credits

INSTRUCTOR Dr. Scot Morse

OFFICE HOURS See website for current hours.

CLASS TIME Lecture: 10:00 to 11:50 Monday and Wednesday in ITC 301

TEXTBOOK None required.

Brief Course Description

This course is designed to guide students through the first phase of completing the M & IS professional project. Students will work with the instructor and other advisors to select, develop and plan a suitable project. This includes the initial concept, several rounds of research, writing, critique and refinement and concludes with a detailed proposed project plan and rough working professional project paper.

Note: This is the first of two courses that M & IS students must take to complete their professional project exit requirement. The second course, IS 642, should be taken in the term immediately following this course.

Sample Course Schedule

See the class website for a definitive schedule for the current term.

Week	Activities	Work due
1	Exploration of possible topics; brainstorming; discussion of good topics and examples; expectations for the project and class	Task 0: write about possible topics
2	Further topic exploration; students present topics to the class; discuss specific project topics	Task 1: title, statement of purpose, topic subject breakdown, mindmap
3	Students have topic selected; begin exploring topic in depth; work on ‘What is the point of the project?’ and ‘Why is this valuable?’ or ‘What is the problem to be solved?’	Status report: title, summary, work accomplished, work scheduled, obstacles, first literature review
4	Research topic; students present their ideas about the project and what it entails; review of literature/previous and related work	Status report; List of references/sources; Literature review
5	Research topic; students write comprehensive outline	Status report; outline; references
6	Writing commences; research continues; students begin writing relevant sections of their paper	Status report; Draft of research paper #1
7	Research and Writing continues; students present progress to the class	Status report; Draft #2
8	Research and Writing continues; students present progress to the class	Status report; Draft #3
9	Research and Writing continues; write formal proposal and plan for next term	Proposal document; work breakdown and schedule for next term
10	Committee selection finalized; proposal due to committee members	Proposal and plan
11	Submit: Professional Project Pre-approval Authorization and Application for Completion of Masters Degree to the Graduate office	Last draft of research paper for term #1

Learning Outcomes

The purpose of this course is for students to

- initiate, work on and complete an independent research project on a topic of their choosing, and to
- perform significant independent research at a Master’s degree level,
- that shows the knowledge and skills they have learned within the M & IS program, as well as
- advanced mastery of a topic within the Management and Information Systems discipline.

Students

- research and analyze, and

- invent, discover, criticize, solve or explain their chosen topic/problem at an advanced and mature level and then
- write a high quality research paper/report
- following academic or professional writing standards and formats.

Learning in this course contributes to a student's

1. ability to apply specialized knowledge in Management and Information Systems to a particular problem
2. ability to perform independent, self-driven and self-motivated research and analysis
3. ability to synthesize results of their research into coherent ideas
4. ability to write a lengthy and well-written research paper

Course Requirements: Students

Students will be required to complete work in four areas, which are described below. All work is to be done individually; there will be no group work.

Written assignments (40%) Each week students will document work on their project and submit a summary, likely in an online blog format. Will also include specific questions to be answered. Additionally, students write portions of their research paper each week.

Audio/visual presentations (20%) Students will present their work to the class in a lecture/discussion format for peer review and helpful comments.

Attendance and one-on-one interviews with the instructor (10%) Detailed help and constructive assistance will come from regularly scheduled interviews with the instructor.

Final Project plan/document (30%) The final project plan will be graded for completeness, accuracy, suitable planning, ... A draft of the final paper will be finished by the end of the term.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students will most likely need assistance editing their written work. Students will be responsible for finding a **professional editor** and arranging for regular editing of their papers. Note: this usually involves paying the editors. **Students are responsible for this cost; it is not included in the course.**

The course grade will be based upon the four requirements with the percentages shown above. A grade of C or better is awarded to all projects approved by the graduate committee faculty.

Course Requirements: Instructor

The role of the instructor in this course is to act as:

- research advisor
- project manager and facilitator
- content area expert for certain subjects
- peer reviewer

During the first few weeks of the term, when students are tasked with finding a project idea, the instructor will

- help generate ideas, offer suggestions and examples of good topics
- help explain what potential topics might involve
- evaluate ideas based on merits of: suitable difficulty, interest and relevance, appropriate subject material covering aspects of **both** business management and information systems, academic preparation and capabilities of the student, ...
- give approval for students to continue to pursue their chosen topic

After project topics have been selected and approved, the role of the instructor changes slightly to include the following weekly activities

- reviewing and evaluating the work produced by students, which usually involves listening to and watching student presentations as well as reading regular drafts of outlines and papers
- giving oral and written feedback to students to guide them through working on their project
- managing difficulties students may have
- directing students to resources that may help them in their work

Class time is not typically used for lecture by the instructor. A typical format for the bulk of the course may be:

- Monday (1hr 50min): Status reports and short presentations by students, with questions by students and instructor. Keeps students on schedule and provides peer review and feedback from other students in the class. Typically 10-15 minutes each for 8 students.
- Wednesday (1hr 50min): Individual meetings between instructor and students, 10-15 minutes each, where the instructor goes over their review of the student's work that week.
- Remainder of week: students submit this weeks draft of work/paper. Instructor reads it, marks it up for content and prepares remarks for students. Drafts are expected to be on the order of 25 pages by the end of the term. Focus is on content and organization and not on length at this point.

Attendance

Attendance for this class is critical, and may be included as a component of your course grade.

Disability Statement

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations at Western Oregon University, you are required to have your accommodations coordinated through the Office of Disability Services (ODS). ODS is located in APSC, Rm. 405. Phone: 503-838-8250 VTTY. Email: ODS@wou.edu

Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

Wolf Connection System Referral Program

Students in this class may be referred to the WOU Student Success Specialist (SSS) if the instructor determines their performance in the class is placing them at academic risk. The SSS will offer to work with referred students to address issues and develop a student success strategy. Irrespective of whether a referral has or has not been made, you are ultimately responsible for tracking your own progress in this course.

Academic Honesty

Code of Student Responsibility 574-031-0030 Specific Standards and Policies

The following list of prohibited forms of conduct is not all inclusive since it is not possible to list all potential violations. The University requires that all students behave in a manner congruent with established community standards and in a manner conducive to the development of the individual. Actions detrimental to the mission of the University and the legitimate activities of the academic community which constitute the University are in violation of this Code and may be subject to judicial procedures.

1. Academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to:

Cheating intentional use or attempted use of artifice, deception, fraud, and/or misrepresentations of one's academic work;

Fabrication unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information of citation in any academic exercise;

Facilitating dishonesty helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes students who substitute for other persons in examinations or represent as their own papers, reports, or any other academic work of others;

Plagiarism representing without giving credit the words, data, or ideas of another person as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another of research of another, including but not limited product of commercial vendor who sell or distribute such materials. And the

appropriation of and/or use of electronic data of another person or persons as one's own, or using such data without giving proper credit for it; or

Any use or attempted use of electronic devices in gaining an illegal advantage in academic work in which use of these devices is prohibited, and such devices include but are not limited to cell phones, pdas, laptops, programmable calculators, etc.