

**Course Syllabus (tentative)**  
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**Course:** BUS 550  
**Title:** *The Contemporary Firm* (3 units)

“Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school.”  
---Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

**Program:** Master’s of Business Administration  
**College:** CSUCI Extended Education

**Semester:** Spring, 2008  
**Class:** 3770  
**Day/Time:** Tue 6:00pm - 10:00pm (4/1 - 6/17)  
**Location:** Thousand Oaks (off-site), Room 230-4  
**Lead Student:** Wayne Smith, Ph.D.  
**Office Room:** Thousand Oaks (off-site), Room 230  
**Office Hours:** Tue 5:00pm - 6:00pm (and by appointment)  
**Office Phone:** +1 818.677.4524 (off-site phone +1 805.777.9200)  
**Email:** [wayne.smith@csun.edu](mailto:wayne.smith@csun.edu) (Subject Line = “[CSUCI Bus550]”)  
**Public Web:** <http://ocw.smithw.org/2008spring/bus550-3770/>  
**Private LMS:** <http://csuci.blackboard.com/> (if needed)

**Required Materials (Bookstore):**

1. Laudon, J. P., and Laudon, K. C. (2008) *Management Information Systems: Managing the Digital Firm* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.), Pearson Education.
2. Four (4) Blue Books
3. Access to standard desktop software, including MS-Office (with MS-Access)

**Required Materials (non-Bookstore):**

1. Harvard Business Review (HBR) Materials—the URL is on the course web page
2. Supplemental Materials—the URL is on the course web page

**Recommended Materials:**

1. Pearlson, K. and Saunders, C. (2006) *Managing and Using Information Systems* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Wiley/Pearson, Hoboken:NJ.
2. Hacker, D. (2007) "A Writer's Reference" (6th ed.), Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston:MA.

3. Wall Street Journal (daily, printed subscription)

**Course Description:**

This course emphasizes the strategic and management issues associated with the effective use of information technology. Topics include information systems & control, databases and data mining, systems development, IT infrastructure and strategy.

**Extended Course Description:**

The course aims to introduce students to the various strategic, technological, and management issues associated with the effective use of information systems (IS), which is pervasive in the management of the contemporary business. Through a blend of lecture, case study, and experiential learning (individual and group assignments), students will explore the various strategic and organizational challenges facing the successful design, development, and implementation of IS company-wide. Topics will include knowledge management and enterprise systems, supply chain and customer relationship management, corporate/IS strategy alignment, globalization and outsourcing, organizational change, e-business, and intellectual property, secrecy and ethics. The role of the Chief Information Officer (“CIO”) will also be discussed throughout the course.

**Course Prerequisites:**

This course requires the completion of “Foundations of Business” business core.

**Department:**

The Martin V. Smith School of Business and Economics offers a variety of programs to serve matriculating students. Additional information about the Department and its programs is available in the CSUCI catalog. See:

<http://www.csuci.edu/academics/catalog/2007-2008/>

**Learning Objectives:**

This primary emphasis in this course is placed on acquainting students with the rigorous and relevant literature of management information systems (MIS) and information technology (IT). A secondary emphasis is on helping students understand the relationship between MIS/IT theory and practice in a modern organization. The specific objectives are to:

- Familiarize students with core vocabulary, concepts, and themes in MIS/IT
- Understand how MIS/IT theories, models, and frameworks apply to organizations, particularly for-profit firms
- Learn how major MIS/IT resources are acquired, developed, maintained, and managed.
- Explore major issues and trends in the MIS/IT field

**Pedagogical Approach:**

The course will use a variety of approaches including lectures, videos, class discussions, assignments, analyses of business news and cases, and in-class, experiential exercises.

**Learning Rhythms and Patterns:**

I tend neither to read nor summarize the required reading materials in class. I tend to offer clarifications, differences of perspectives, or explorations of the core material. I tend not to use a large number of presentation slides, much less post them online. Students must allocate sufficient out-of-class time to do the required reading in order to participate in class and ask substantive questions as necessary. Students will need to have mastered necessary skills in reading comprehension, retention, and recall. Each class session will generally begin with an opportunity to ask questions regarding the required reading materials or lecture topics from the previous class session. Each class session is generally oriented around one or two learning themes. The textbook materials support the core ideas of that theme, the peer-reviewed and other materials support key theories and models of that theme, and the non-peer-reviewed and other materials support key ideas in practice or working examples.

**Examinations and Quizzes:**

There will be one examination (a final examination) scheduled in advance. Each exam will cover the chapters covered in class to date as well as in-class discussions and other non-textbook materials. Due to time constraints, we will not be able to cover each and every aspect of the chapter readings or assigned readings in class. Nonetheless, you are responsible for all the material (i.e., it is “fair game” for the exam) unless explicitly directed otherwise by the instructor. No make-up exams will be given without a signed note from a medical doctor or public safety agency.

There will be at least two quizzes. The quizzes will not be announced in class; you will need to keep up with the reading, classwork, and assignments. *Please bring a large-format blue book with you to each class.* The final exam will require a blue book and the quizzes may require a blue book. Additionally, please bring a blue pen or black pen with you to class each day.

**Assignments and Reports:**

There will be at least one assignment and two reports noted in advance. There may be one or more in-class exercises announced in class as well. The assignments and reports will be described in advance and will be available on the course website.

- Hands-On Exercise (MS-Excel or MS-Access)
- Audio-cast Report
- Research Report

Assignments and reports announced in class may consist of self-assessments, case analyses, or short write-ups. Assignments and reports are due promptly at the beginning of class. Assignments and reports not submitted promptly at the beginning of class (I will make a “last call” announcement) are assessed an immediate 50% point penalty. No assignments or reports will be accepted after the end of the class session without a signed note from a medical doctor or public safety agency. Therefore, if you fear you might miss class or might not be able to turn in your assignment on time, you may give it to

another student to turn in on the correct day and at the correct time. Assignments and reports will be generally graded on straightforward point scheme (“scoring rubric”) enumerated within each assignment. In addition, the writing requirements will be scored for each assignment and report as well.

Be sure to collect your scored exams, assignments and reports (in other words, anything you turn in) and retain them in your records.

**Grading System:**

The contribution of each component to the final grades will be based on the following breakdown:

<b>Component</b>	<b>Relative Weight</b>
“Impact” PPTs	10%
Hands-On Exercise	10%
Audiocast Report	10%
Research Report	15%
Quizzes	25%
Final Exam	30%

Some grading components may have more than one instance of that component. Weights among instances within any component are distributed evenly. Letter grades are not assigned to any component. For each quiz and exam, I will provide not only the mean and standard deviation, but also the relevant percentiles as well. These percentiles can be used as guide as to help assess your relative performance in class. Each student has the same opportunity to earn high marks. Students should study diligently and strive for high marks on a persistent basis. All of your work matters. There is no “non-important” work in this class.

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the following (including plus/minus suffixes):

<b>Letter grade you earn</b>	<b>University interpretation</b>	<b>“Real World” interpretation</b>
A	Exceptional	Promote early
B	Very Good	Retain and provide merit pay increases
C	Average	Retain and provide cost of living increases only
D	Barely Passing	Let go when replacement is found
F	Failure	Fire immediately

I do not discuss any aspect of grades via email after the end of the semester.

**Classroom Disruptions:**

Please ensure that the audio portion (“ringtone”) of your cell phone is off during class. If you wish to use a computer in class to take notes, you must sit as far forward in the class as possible (usually in the first row of the room). Any cheating in class will result in a failed exam, an “F” in the course, and a letter to the University administration recommending that the student be expelled from the University.

Additional Classroom Behavior requirements for this class are listed at:

<http://ocw.smithw.org/general/behavior.pdf>

**University Absences and Disabilities:**

If you plan to be absent from class for a University-approved activity, such as athletics, please see me during the first week of class. Similarly, if you need special assistance with exams or are disabled as defined by the University, please see me during the first week of class. If you wish to record (e.g., via audio or video) any part of the classroom lectures, please see me during the first week of class.