Course Description – No business can survive long without strong information technology (IT) supporting a well-thought-out information system (IS) built by a management information systems (MIS) department. Information technology (IT) has become the backbone of business in all domains, for daily operations, to support and sustain growth, and as an important way to gain and sustain competitive advantage. Even the shortest interruption in service may case a loss of customers, cost an organization millions of dollars, and even threaten the firm’s survival.

The course is structured so that you will learn about the role of MIS in business, the components of MIS, how to design and develop an information system, and how to support systems thinking in capturing and analyzing data. You will learn how to use tools, such as Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access, to explore business-related data analysis and decision making.

The course is organized to provide you with the opportunity to learn about the core of information systems through material in our textbook, additional readings, exploration and discussion of current events, and through hands-on learning and problem solving using software such as Excel and Access.

Textbook – *M: Information Systems, 3rd Edition.* ISBN: 9780073376912. Textbook’s website: www.mhhe.com/BaltzanM3e . (The textbook is important for you to successfully complete the course.) (Note: We are not using the Connect software.)

Online Resources – Blackboard CE9.1, link to Courses, look under Course List for “MSOM 302 – B01.” Materials on Blackboard are available 24/7/365 (unless there is a network issue or a software update is occurring). This will be our primary location for distributing materials during the semester.

Other Resources – Other reading materials may be assigned. Generally, these will be posted on Blackboard (either in their entirety, via a link to a website, or with a citation that allows you to acquire the full reading through the library) or handed out in class. Refer to the semester schedule.
Prerequisite(s) – Before taking this class you should have completed 30 credit hours (i.e., have sophomore standing).

Learning Objectives – After successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in MIS
- Understand the direct relationship between business and MIS
- Recognize the global challenges affecting businesses and the role of MIS in the global environment
- Understand the major types of enterprise applications, the methodologies used to develop them, and to manage their development
- Describe the major policies businesses should implement to protect the privacy, security, and integrity of corporate and customer data and information
- Discuss the use of technology – including networks and MIS infrastructure – to support and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes
- Use decision support systems tools and techniques for business decision making and process improvement; explain the role of data warehouses in these systems
- Design and implement Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and Microsoft Access databases to support business decision making
- Draw connections between concepts covered in class and the situations you will see outside of class

Learning Goals (from the Business Minor Program):
- Students will develop analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that can be applied in a variety of business situations within a global business environment.
- Students will be able to use process analysis techniques and tools in order to assess and improve the ways in which organizations conduct business.

Course Expectations – There are several things you are expected to do as a participants in this course.

- Visit the course website (in Blackboard) regularly!
- Stay on schedule. Complete (and submit) all assignments on time
- Read the assigned material, then, if assigned, do the reading-related tasks/assignments
- Actively participate in course-related on-line discussions
- Check your (MasonLive) e-mail on a regular basis. (During the week, it is a good idea to check at least every other day.) All course-related electronic communication should be done via your GMU e-mail account, per university policy
- Expect to dedicate 10-12 hours of time per week (during the “B” term) to reading, studying and reviewing PowerPoint slides and audio notes, and doing assignments. Failure to spend a sufficient amount of time with the course materials typically translates into lower-quality performance, i.e., less retention of material and lower grades
- Contact me if a problem arises that is interfering with your performance in the course; i.e., do not wait until the end of the semester (when I have less flexibility in what I can do to help).

Course Communications – The Syllabus provides a detailed description of the course and required course materials. A general schedule is also provided, and it may evolve as the semester
progresses. Announcements will typically be posted in Blackboard, with significant issues also announced through your GMU e-mail.

If you e-mail me with a course-related question/issue:
- Use your GMU e-mail address (per university policy)
- Include your course and section # in either the subject line or at the top of the body of the message. (This is good general practice in communicating via e-mail.)
- Make sure you have already tried to find out the answer for yourself (see the If You Need Help section below)
- Explain the purpose of your e-mail

**If You Need Help – Look, Then Ask** – The Course Syllabus, the course Blackboard site, and the readings should be your first sources for answers to your questions. Most, if not all, of the answers you need can be found in one of these resources – that is why they are provided. Please use them. Then ask for help if these are not sufficient.

Too often, people resort to asking for an answer before seeking the answer themselves, e.g., e-mailing seems to be an easier approach than checking the Syllabus, the course website, or a reading … and I do tend to respond fairly quickly to e-mails. However, this is taking advantage of my willingness to help and is using time I could have spent with someone who truly needed help. If you do ask a question, recognize that I may ask you for additional information on what you have already done to find out the answer for yourself before I answer the question for you. This approach is becoming increasingly common in education environments to encourage you to make the effort to find out the answer for yourself, a skill you will need for most of your career.

**Course Website** – Our course website can be found in Blackboard. (Go to [http://mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu), log on using your Mason Live credentials (i.e., username and password), and click on the “Courses” tab. Look for and click on “MSOM 302 – B01 – Summer 2015 …” If you do not find this course, please contact me immediately.

The website contains the Syllabus and will have a “Start Here” area to provide some course orientation materials and some material on on-line learning. Please review this material before proceeding to other course materials.

**Weekly Folders and Lessons** – A broad schedule is included in the Syllabus below. Assigned materials, including readings, PowerPoint slides + Audio notes, and other assignments (e.g., homework in Excel, Access, etc.) and due dates, will be grouped by week and posted in Blackboard. (They will typically be posted by late Sunday evening for each specific week.) Additional details will be added as each week occurs. At a minimum, you can expect to have one or more chapters from the book each week, a homework assignment due, and additional readings or other materials for thought (and other assignments). We will have the opportunity for on-line discussions (announced and explained through Blackboard), as well as other activities.

**Learning Tools Availability** – This course is offered completely online (except for the textbook, if you choose a printed version), i.e., there is no need to come to campus for any sessions or exams. Once posted, course materials are available 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. Virtual office hours are as posted (at the top of the Syllabus); some (optional) live, on-line sessions will be offered at specific time.
Announcements and Course Updates – You will receive an e-mail (sent to your GMU e-mail account) every week, typically by early Monday morning, providing an overview of the week’s activities. E-mail will also be used at other times to provide reminders, announcements, and updates to the schedule. All e-mails will also be posted as Announcements in Blackboard, too.

Blackboard Collaborate – One feature in Blackboard is called “Collaborate.” It is an on-line, virtual meeting area for our class. We will use it for office hours, for one-on-one meetings (see below), and for (optional) live tutorials.

To Use Collaborate, you either need a headset with a built-in microphone or a microphone plus headphones to participate in sessions that have audio capabilities. The course website has additional material on Collaborate.

Assignments and Grading – Weeks (and the semester as a whole) being on Monday and end at midnight on Sunday night.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># Assigned</th>
<th>Points for each item</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework/Mini-Cases</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10-50</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start-Up Activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
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Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- **A+** 98% or higher
- **A** 92% or higher, but less than 98%
- **A-** 90% or higher, but less than 92%
- **B+** 88% or higher, but less than 90%
- **B** 82% or higher, but less than 88%
- **B-** 80% or higher, but less than 82%
- **C+** 78% or higher, but less than 80%
- **C** 72% or higher, but less than 78%
- **C-** 70% or higher, but less than 72%
- **D** 60% or higher, but less than 70%
- **F** less than 60%

Exams – you will have two exams during the semester, per the schedule posted at the end of this document. You will take the exams at a time of your choosing within a one-week time range, using a service in Blackboard called “Respondus Monitor.” (Additional information on “Respondus” will be provided in a separate message once the semester has started. You will need to install a special browser on your computer, called “Respondus Lockdown Browser,” before you take the exam. You must have a webcam and microphone (they are used to record you while you take the exam). The technology requirements will be provided in the separate message noted above.

If you have a university-recognized or accepted conflict that makes it impossible to take the exam by the deadline, contact me at least two weeks in advance of the deadline to discuss it. Note that personal travel plans are not an acceptable excuse or reason for a schedule adjustment/change. Failure to complete the exam by the deadline will result in a score of zero (except in case of a documented emergency).
Homework – There will be multiple homework assignments, typically every week. Some will involve spreadsheets, others working with a database, plus various non-software-based assignments, and several will be mini-cases or small journal entries. Due dates will be provided as the assignments are made; the due dates will typically be as we approach the end of a weekend (although some will be at other times).

Quizzes – Several quizzes will/may be administered during the semester to encourage you to keep up with the material that will ultimately be on the exams. Additional details will be provided.

Project – Given the on-line, independent nature of this class, there is NO semester project with this course this semester.

GMU Honor System and Code
- George Mason University shares in the tradition of an honor system. The Honor Code is an integral part of university life. Upon application to the university, students sign a statement agreeing to conform to and uphold the Honor code. Students are responsible for understanding the provisions of the code. Therefore, all students are responsible for understanding the provisions of the Honor Code. Plagiarism, cheating, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. Examples of on-line plagiarism and related matters may be found at: http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm.

Administrivia
- If you are a student with a disability and you need an academic accommodation, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through the DRC and should be made during the first two weeks of the semester.
- Cell phones, PDAs, etc. should be turned off, muted, or turned to vibrate during on-line exam and/or quiz sessions. Please do not send or receive (i.e., read) texts, tweets, e-mail, etc. or other communications during class.
- Notice will be given before each exam; review material may also be provided. Exams must be taken at their designated times. This will typically be a range of days in which to complete the on-line exam. In case of a missed exam or quiz period, adequate proof needs to be provided to justify the absence. The decision regarding a make-up exam/quiz will be at the sole discretion of the instructor. Missed exams/quizzes will be assigned a score of 0 (zero).
- Homework assignments are due on the date and time specified on the schedule. Late assignments will be accepted, but there is an increasing penalty for late materials. Assignments received up to 12 hours late will receive an automatic deduction of 20%; 12-24 hours will receive an automatic deduction of 30%; 24-48 hours will receive a deduction of 50%. Assignments received more than 48 hours late (i.e., 2 days) will receive a score of zero. All assignments are due via Blackboard unless otherwise noted. Please make sure assignments are appropriately formatted and performed and submitted using the proper software prior to the due date and time.
There may be some opportunities for some extra credit on assignments during the semester, but not as the semester ends.

Unless otherwise noted, all exams and quizzes are closed book and closed notes. They will be based on information contained in the textbook (including assignments and cases), class notes, or as discussed on-line.

Please use your GMU e-mail account for communications unless otherwise directed – I will. When sending an e-mail, include the course and section number as part of the subject header or in the body of the message. Please do not use the mail facilities in Blackboard unless directed to do so; I won’t typically look there for communications unless I know something is there that needs attention.

Technical Help – We have a wide range of technology backgrounds in this course, so some may require little additional assistance while others may need substantial individual help and tutoring on some concepts/topics. Don’t get frustrated if you are struggling with a concept or with an assignment. Asking for help isn’t a sign of failure—giving up because you didn’t seek help is.

Of course, first you should try to figure things out for yourself by taking advantage of the available resources that are related to the concept/topic, e.g., readings, videos, PowerPoint slides (+ audio), practice activities, etc. One-on-one help is available to supplement these resources, not to replace them.

If you have problems with the GMU network, Blackboard, the Virtual Computer Lab (VCL) or the Respondus Lockdown Browser, contact GMU’s IT Services Support Center (https://itservices.gmu.edu/services/view-service.cfm?customel_dataPageID_4609=6129) or call 703-993-8870.

Help with Course Concepts and/or Logistics – If you need help with course concepts or logistics:

- Ask the Professor Forum – the course website in Blackboard includes an “Ask the Professor” discussion forum. You may post questions there, and I will answer them (typically) within 24 hours Monday through Friday, and often on weekends, too. (Note the If You Need Help – Look, Then Ask section above.)
- E-mail – I check e-mail many times during the day. I will respond to messages within 24 hours Monday-Friday (usually even more quickly), and often on the weekends, too. (Note the If You Need Help – Look, Then Ask section above.)
- When questions are more complex than can be handled by a Forum post or e-mail, consider using Virtual Office Hours (through Blackboard Collaborate), one-on-one sessions (through Blackboard Collaborate, Skype, or in person, whichever works best for you)
- If an emergency arises and you need to reach me more quickly, my office phone number is at the top of the first page of this Syllabus.

Hardware Requirements
- A PC running Microsoft Windows 8/7/Vista/XP or a Mac running OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard) or higher, with at least 2 GB of memory. Screen size of 13” or greater works best
- A fast, reliable broadband Internet connection (e.g. through Cable, DSL, etc.). A wired connection is strongly recommended for taking exams!
- Computers speakers and/or headphones to listen to recorded content and videos
- A headset with microphone, or a built-in or external microphone, plus headphones, to participate in live audio sessions using tools such as Blackboard Collaborate
- Sufficient hard disk space to download the required software and save your assignments.
- An internal or external webcam and a microphone, for use during exams.
Software Requirements

- A web-browser supported by Blackboard (see Blackboard for more information)
- Access to Blackboard Collaborate. To verify, complete the Blackboard Collaborate System Check. Collaborate has its own software requirements (including an up-to-date version of Java) which the system will verify. Collaborate will be activated by Wednesday, June 3.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (this can be downloaded for free from www.adobe.com)
- A current version of Adobe Flash Player (which can be downloaded for free from www.adobe.com)
- The Respondus Lockdown Browser, used to take exams. It has software requirements of its own.
- Excel and Access are available through Mymason and the Office 365 button if you do not already have the software on your PCs. GMU does, or is supposed, to offer a way to use Access remotely. This will allow Mac users to run the software on their machines
- If you are using employer-provided computers, please verify with your employer’s system administrator that you will be able to install and use the required software for this class.
Note: This schedule is a guide and is subject to revision.

Note: This is an Internet-based, asynchronous course. In other words, there is no formal class meeting schedule. Instead, you are responsible for spending the time and learning the material on your own schedule. I encourage you to try to stick to the schedule below in terms of the chapter and topic content. The deadlines and due dates for the assignments and exams are set and you are expected to meet them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Assignment (see detailed in weekly summary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | June 1  | Ch 1 – Management Information Systems: Business Driven MIS  
Computer History – PowerPoint slide deck  
Reading: Mata, Fuerst, & Barney article (posted in Course Content area in Blackboard; questions posted to guide your reading; slides will be posted later in the week to give you time to read the article first)  
Course Orientation Quiz (posted 6/2) | |
| 2      | June 8  | Ch 2 – Decisions + Processes: Value Driven Business  
Business Processes | Spreadsheet Assignment |
| 3      | June 15 | Ch 3 – E-Business: Electronic Business Value  
Ch 9 – Systems Development and Project Management: Corporate Responsibility | Spreadsheet Assignment |
| 4      | June 22 | **Mid-Term Exam** (completed by midnight June 28) | Spreadsheet Assignment |
| 5      | June 29 | Ch 6 – Data: Business Intelligence | |
| 6      | July 6  | Ch 8 – Enterprise Applications: Business Communications | Database Assignment |
| 7      | July 13 | Ch 5 – Infrastructures: Sustainable Technologies  
Ch 7 – Networks: Mobile Business | Database Assignment |
| 8      | July 20 | Ch 4 – Ethics + Information Security: MIS Business Concerns  
**Final Exam** (completed by July 23) | Database Assignment |