Information Technology in Business and Society  
(INFO-UB.0001)  
Spring 2014

Professor  
John Horton  
john.horton@stern.nyu.edu, (212) 998-0369,  
http://www.stern.nyu.edu/faculty/bio/john-horton

Office Hours: KMC 8-81, Wednesdays from 9:00am-11:00am  
Link to Schedule: http://goo.gl/031n6J

Teaching Assistants  
TBA.

COURSE INFORMATION

Meeting Times  
Section 1 (INFO-UB.0001.001) meets Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00pm-3:15pm, KMC 4-60  
Section 2 (INFO-UB.0001.002) meets Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30pm-4:45pm, KMC 4-60

Course Overview  
Information Technology (IT) has radically changed the internal operations of organizations and the structure of the markets in which they compete. As a result, the toolkit of the business professional must include an understanding of the fundamentals of IT and its impact on other functional areas, such as strategic management, finance, accounting, marketing, and operations. This course is intended to provide this base set of knowledge and skills.

Course Objectives  
This course introduces you to information technology in business and society. Broadly, here’s what you’ll learn from the course, and why these things are important:

- First, as a future knowledge worker you will use personal computer systems in your work every day. You need to know how to publish information on the Internet, model and analyze decisions using a spreadsheet, and get information from relational databases. In this course, your in-class conceptual learning of these topics will be complemented by a set of computer-based self-learning tools.

- Second, in the digital firm, you will be involved increasingly in decisions about information systems. You will therefore need to recognize the large-scale systems that run modern organizations, understand what drives the success of a company’s IT investments, and learn how these investments facilitate effective business strategy and emerging business models, all topics that we will cover in this course.

- Third, you must know how to evaluate and analyze information-based products and services in the increasing number of industries that are being transformed by information technology. In this course, you will learn about the unique economics of information pricing and technological lock-in and network effects, so that you can perform informed business analysis and formulate effective strategies in the digital economy.

We will also discuss a set of special topics, which will include digital music, information privacy, data mining, digital piracy, and the business implications of online social networking. Assignments, projects
and case studies throughout the course will reinforce your learning of how to use information technology
to solve business problems.

**Course web site**

We will be using NYU Classes to access course materials and submit assignments. You can access the
course by logging on to NYU Classes at [https://newclasses.nyu.edu/portal](https://newclasses.nyu.edu/portal) (using your Stern netID/password), and choosing the course titled INFO-UB.0001 Information Technology in Business and Society. Make sure that you log in and get familiar with the course web site as soon as possible.

**Required textbooks and software**

There is an optional web-based software package, **SimNet Online for Office**. A registration code for
this package is also available for purchase in the main NYU bookstore.

In course readings will consist primarily of selected online content, which you can access from Blackboard.

**Deliverables and grading**

During this course, you will be assigned four or five individual assignments and three group projects. You
will have one midterm exam and one final examination (in early May, dates TBA). You are expected to
participate in classroom and online discussions. The breakdown of points (out of a total of 500) is as
follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments, projects and quizzes</th>
<th>200 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm examination</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>150 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Each assignment and project will provide you with a set of instructions and guidelines. Expect to use Excel, Access and the Web extensively. Examinations are closed book/notes/computer/PDA/iPod (you get the idea). We will further discuss their format in class.

In general, homework will be due on Mondays or Wednesdays by 11:59pm. Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of one percentage point off for every hour that the assignment is submitted late.

Group projects will be done in groups of about 5 students. After you have posted your personal profile,
your classmates will know you better, and this will help facilitate the group formation process. During
the semester, we will facilitate this process further, and we will give you a set of detailed guidelines
about working in teams. You may also be asked to evaluate the contribution of each of your team
members after each group project.

The classroom discussion presents a unique opportunity for you to develop and enhance your confidence and skills in articulating a personal position, sharing your knowledge, and reacting to new ideas. All of you have personal experience with information technology that can enhance our understanding of the subject, and we want to encourage you to share that experience.

The grade we assign for your class participation is a careful, subjective assessment of the value of your
input to classroom learning. We keep careful track of your contributions towards each class session, and
these contributions can include (but are not restricted to) raising questions that make your classmates
think, providing imaginative yet relevant analysis of a situation, contributing background or a
perspective on a classroom topic that enhances its discussion, and simply answering questions raised in
class. Emphasis is placed on the quality of your contribution, rather than merely on its frequency. A lack of preparation, negative classroom comments, or improper behavior (such as talking to each other, sleeping in the classroom or walking in and out of the class while the lecture is in process) can lower this grade.

**Participation and Attendance**
This course, like many other courses at Stern, uses learning methods that require active involvement (e.g., participation in discussions and exercises). Not only is this the best way to learn, but it also develops your communication skills. Regular attendance and participation are very important. Active participation requires good preparation—thoughtful reading of the assigned material and completion of assignments, quizzes, and projects before class is essential. We recognize that expressing viewpoints in a group is difficult, but it is an important skill for you to develop. We will do what we can to make this as easy as possible. If you feel that contributing on-line is easier for you than contributing in-class, please feel free to do so. Remember though that only regular and insightful contributions will be rewarded (e.g., asking a question about the homework will typically not increase your class participation grade).

In addition to in-class participation, you should also participate online, where we will discuss topics ranging from relevant developments in the news to issues related to the class material. The participation should be substantive: read what others have said and reply to their remarks, but do not repeat their points. You can also ask questions of each other. This will help you learn and prepare for exams. The discussion board will also be used to ask the instructor or TAs questions about assignments and exams as well as to facilitate group formation. All administrative questions should be posted there rather than sent to us in email.

**Academic Honor Code**
Consistent with Stern's honor code, your exams and quizzes should be completed individually. On individual assignments, you can only discuss the assignment with the TAs, or with the instructor. On group assignments, you can only discuss them with your teammates, with the TAs, or with the instructor. All external sources such as web pages, periodicals, books, etc. should be properly cited in your work. Any attempt to represent the work of others as your own will be considered plagiarism and will be referred to the Stern Discipline Committee. Penalties determined by this committee range from academic probation to expulsion. It is in your best interest to submit nothing or a partial assignment, rather than an assignment copied in violation of the honor code.

**Grading Issues**
We usually will publish the grading guide for the assignments and projects, so that students can learn from their mistakes and judge the fairness of the grade. If you believe that the grade you received was unjustified, you can appeal the grade. To appeal the grade you must write a one page explanation as to the reason for your appeal and hand it along with your graded assignment back to the TA responsible for that assignment. Please think twice before appealing a grade: the TA will completely re-grade the assignment, which may increase your grade, but may also lower it (e.g., if the TA catches more mistakes the second time around). If after re-grading you feel that your grade was again unjustified, you can appeal the grade with the instructor.

**Communicating with us electronically**
As far as is possible, rather than emailing us, you should post your questions on the relevant online discussion boards. This is far more efficient than individual back-and-forth email.

Before posting a question, make sure that you read through the course content online, the frequently-asked-questions, and the questions other students have posted. Often, you will find the
answer to your question in one of these.

In the event that you feel the need to email us directly with a question, please make sure to put INFO-UB.0001 at the beginning of the subject line, so that we recognize that the email is from one of you, and so that our spam filters do not accidentally delete your message. Please avoid sending email attachments.

**Individual Consultation**

We encourage you to meet with the TAs or with the instructor at any point during the semester to discuss your progress or any problems with the material or the assignments. We would prefer if you could come during the office hours, but if you cannot, please see the instructor after class, or send an e-mail, and we can schedule a time to meet. Please talk to us if you have questions or problems. We are here to help.