Course Outline: BSNS 106

Information and Communication in Organisations, Semester Two, 2012

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Introduction

BSNS 106 provides exposure to key concepts surrounding the use and communication of information within organisations, and the role that information systems play in the generation and maintenance of high-quality information. Examples of topics discussed in this paper include: properties of good quality information; business intelligence and its role in organisational decision making; data modelling and information processing; and the types of information systems used in organisations. Additionally, BSNS 106 presents and discusses the skills needed to appropriately structure information for communication through different channels, such as visual or written communication.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of BSNS 106, students should be familiar with the following core concerns of information usage in organisations:

1. understanding the difference between data, information and business intelligence;
2. constructing business intelligence to assist with decision making in organisations;
3. designing databases to maintain high-quality information;
4. having an awareness of broader issues relating to information systems development such as ethical concerns, professionalism and technological impacts; and
5. communicating information effectively in both written and visual forms.

Teaching Staff

**Dr. Tony Savarimuthu**
Paper Coordinator
Room 9.18 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: Tue. & Thus.: 10am-11am

**Mr. Gary Burrows**
Lab Coordinator
Room 10.05 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: See timetable on office door

**Dr. Grant Dick**
Lecturer
Room 11.08 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: By appointment

**Dr. Nigel Stanger**
Lecturer
Room 9.04 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: By appointment

**Assoc. Prof. Michael Winikoff**
Lecturer
Room 11.07 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: By appointment

**Assoc. Prof. Hank Wolfe**
Lecturer
Room 11.09 (Commerce Building)
Email: bsns106@infoscience.otago.ac.nz
Office Hours: By appointment
Course Delivery

Every week students must attend two 50 minute lectures and a single 110 minute lab (see ‘Locations and Times’ for details of days, times, and rooms):

- **Lectures** present the key conceptual material through discussion and interaction between teaching staff and students. Multimedia and class exercises will be used to supplement the presentation. Lectures are supported by readings.  
  *Note that the lectures are presented in two streams; you only need to attend one “Lecture 1” lecture and one “Lecture 2” lecture.*

- **Labs** are interactive, collaborative sessions in which students attempt to cement concepts presented at lectures with their peers in a supportive environment. Labs are also used to discuss and work on assignment tasks.  
  *You are free to attend any lab time that you wish, so long as there are seats available. You are also welcome to attend more than one lab stream if you feel that you need more time to focus on the concepts discussed in a given lab.*

The course calendar (located on page 8 and online on Blackboard) details semester dates, lecture topics, labs, and assessment related scheduling information. Note that this calendar may change as the course proceeds. These will be announced at lectures and detailed on Blackboard.

*Students are required to prepare for and attend all classes to gain full benefit from the course.*

These activities should be prepared for by reviewing information detailed on Blackboard and completing any assigned readings. Students unable to attend a lecture are expected to catch up on missed material. Unless stated otherwise, all aspects of the course are examinable (see below).

Locations and Times

Lectures and labs run at the times shown in Figure 1 and are held in the following locations:

- **Lectures** – locations of lectures was not available at time of printing, *check Blackboard for locations.*
- **Labs** – All labs are located in the Macgregor and Rabel teaching labs on Leith St.

Course Schedule

A complete breakdown of the course content (in terms of lecture and lab topic) appears on page 8.
Expectations and Workload
The teaching team (see ‘Staff’) are committed to creating the best possible environment to facilitate student learning. However, learning is a joint activity that requires active participation from the learner. Students are therefore expected to attend and participate in all facets of the course. This includes activities such as revising material, completing assigned work, spending extra time researching difficult concepts, in addition to participating in lectures, labs, and assessments.

BSNS 106 is worth 18 points, which equates to spending 12 hours per week on the course (in accordance with University guidelines). This calculation includes the mandatory contact hours of lectures and labs (see ‘Course Schedule’) totalling 4 hours per week. The remaining 8 hours should be used for reading (assigned and personal research), lab preparation and completion, and course revision.

Course Materials

Required readings:
Most lectures (and some labs) in BSNS 106 are accompanied by one or more required readings. The purpose of these is to augment the material presented in the lecture. These will be made available on Blackboard in conjunction with the lecture material.

There are no required text books for BSNS 106.

Recommended readings:
A list of recommended readings is available on Blackboard. These should not be considered compulsory for the course, but you may find them useful for clarification on certain topics discussed in BSNS 106. This list will be updated throughout the course.

Blackboard and Student Email:
Our primary point of contact (in terms of distribution of course material) is Blackboard (https://blackboard.otago.ac.nz/). This should be your first port of call for any documents (e.g. lecture slides, assignment specifications) relevant to you completion of BSNS 106.

In addition to announcements on Blackboard, the teaching team will, when necessary, attempt to contact you via your student email. Please ensure that you check your student email regularly, or redirect your student email to a preferred account. If you do not use your student account for email, please include your student id in all correspondence with the teaching staff.

Assessment
All material presented in BSNS 106 is examinable (except where stated otherwise) by the methods detailed below. All important assessment information such as times, content, guidelines and so on will be discussed at lectures and where appropriate, detailed on Blackboard in the week prior to each assessment. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of this information, keeping track of their own progress, and catching up on any missed classes.
Unless otherwise stated, each assessment must be submitted before 5pm on the due date.

**Learning objective assessment**

The assessments contained in this paper are designed to test your understanding of the overall learning objectives of the paper. The mapping of assessed learning objectives to specific assessments is shown in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Assignment 1</th>
<th>Assignment 2</th>
<th>Assignment 3</th>
<th>Assignment 4</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment 1: Manual business intelligence and decision making**

The purpose of this assignment is to create a “manual” information system and then use this system to produce business intelligence for decision making in a small, imaginary business case.

*This assignment is due on the 3rd of August and is worth 10% of your final mark.*

**Assignment 2: Written assignment**

Using the information presented in lectures and labs, you will write a short essay (~800 words) addressing a contemporary issue in information and communications technology (ICT).

*This assignment is due on the 17th of August and is worth 10% of your final mark.*

**Assignment 3: Constructing a database**

Building from assignment 1, you will create a small database to maintain information for a small information system case study. This database will ultimately be the basis for work conducted in assignment 4.

*This assignment is due on the 14th of September and is worth 10% of your final mark.*

**Assignment 4: Complete information system**

Building from assignment 3, you will create a user interface and reports for a small information system.

*This assignment is due on the 5th of October and is worth 15% of your final mark.*

**Group Work in Assignments**

*Please note that assignments 1, 3 and 4 may be completed in pairs.* Details of how pairs are formed and how work is submitted will be discussed during lectures. Working in pairs is optional and students that choose to work as individuals will not be disadvantaged. Once pairs are formed they cannot be disbanded without consultation with coordinator. Groups may not be declared after the first assignment deadline.

**Labs:**

Each week, you are assigned a number of practical tasks aimed at extending the concepts presented in labs. These tasks are designed to be completed by a typical student within you allotted lab time. You are
expected to demonstrate your completion of these tasks by uploading your work (via Blackboard) during the week that follows the assigned tasks. Where appropriate, teaching staff will provide feedback on your work that may be useful for the completion of later assignments.

*Completion of all lab tasks is worth 5% of your final mark, and 0.5% will be deducted for each lab that you fail to upload your completed tasks.*

**Final Exam:**
A two hour final examination administered by the University Examinations Office will be held after lectures have ceased. This assessment examines material imparted through lectures, readings and labs (except where stated otherwise). Nearer the time, students will be advised of the date, time and venue of the examination by the Examinations Office.

*The final exam is worth 50% of your final mark.*

**Paper Pass Requirements**
There are no specific pass requirements for BSNS 106. The total weighted mark (see Table 2) over all assessments determines your final mark for the paper. *You must achieve a mark of 50% or greater in your final mark to pass BSNS 106.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 (Manual Bl.)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 (Written assignment)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 (Create database)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4 (Create user interface)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of lab tasks</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Impairment**
If you are suffering from anything that is likely to impair your study in this course, please let the Course Coordinator know as soon as possible. If your impairment is related to a specific internal assessment component, please use the special consideration form on Blackboard to alert the teaching team to your case.

*With proper notification, the teaching team will endeavour to support any students that may require assistance with completing course requirements.*

**Class Representatives**
The class (or student) representative system is an avenue for encouraging communication and consultation between staff and students. It provides you with a vehicle for communicating your views on the teaching and delivery of the paper and provides staff with an opportunity to communicate information and gain constructive feedback from students. It contributes to the development of a sense of community within a department and it adds a further dimension to the range of support services offered to students.
Volunteers for the role of class representatives will be called early in the semester. The OUSA invites all class representatives to a training session, conducted by OUSA, about what it means to be a class representative and some of the possible procedures for dealing with issues that arise. They also provide information on the services that OUSA offers and the role OUSA can play in solving problems that may occur. The OUSA provides support to class representatives during the semester. Departmental staff will also meet with class representatives during the semester to discuss general issues or matters they wish to have considered.

**Dishonest Practice and Plagiarism**

*Students should ensure that all submitted work is their own.* Any student found responsible for dishonest practice (e.g. copying the work of others, use of unauthorized material in tests) in relation to any piece of work submitted for assessment shall be subjected to the University’s Dishonest Practice regulations. This may result in various penalties, including forfeiture of marks for the piece of work submitted, a zero grade for the paper, or in extreme cases, exclusion from the University.

Plagiarism is a form of dishonest practice. Plagiarism is defined as the copying or paraphrasing another’s work, whether intentionally or through failure to take proper care, and presenting it as one’s own. In practice, this means plagiarism includes any attempt in any piece of submitted work to present as one’s own work, the work of another (whether another student or published authority).¹ Any student found responsible for plagiarism shall be subject to the University’s Dishonest Practice Regulations as outlined above. [http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/plagiarism/](http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/plagiarism/)

**Concerns about the Course**

We hope you will feel comfortable coming to talk to us if you have a concern about the course. The Course Co-ordinator will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have. Alternatively, you can report your concerns to the Class Representative who will follow up with departmental staff. If, after making approaches via these channels, you do not feel that your concerns have been addressed, there are University channels that may aid resolution. For further advice or more information on these, contact the departmental administrator or head of department.

**Disclaimer**

While every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate, it is subject to change. Changes will be notified in class and via Blackboard. Students are encouraged to check Blackboard regularly. It is the student’s responsibility to be informed.

¹ University Plagiarism Policy: [http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003145.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003145.html)
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Labs</th>
<th>Assessment/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>09-Jul -</td>
<td>1 Welcome</td>
<td>1 Welcome/Basic data manipulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-Jul</td>
<td>2 What is ICT?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>16-Jul -</td>
<td>3 Business Intelligence and Decision Making</td>
<td>2 Manual production of business intelligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-Jul</td>
<td>4 Information Systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>23-Jul -</td>
<td>5 Reporting and Visual Communication of Information</td>
<td>3 Interpretation and generation of visualisations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27-Jul</td>
<td>6 Written Communication of Information</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>30-Jul -</td>
<td>7 Forms of Written Communication</td>
<td>4 Free lab time</td>
<td>Manual BI (10%) Due 03-Aug-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03-Aug</td>
<td>8 Information Sources and Evidence</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>06-Aug -</td>
<td>9 Assignment II Discussion</td>
<td>5 Referencing, information sources, ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-Aug</td>
<td>10 Information Collection</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>13-Aug -</td>
<td>11 Modelling Information</td>
<td>6 Data modelling</td>
<td>Written Assignment (10%) Due 17-Aug-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17-Aug</td>
<td>12 Databases (I)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>20-Aug -</td>
<td>13 Databases (II)</td>
<td>7 Creating databases</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>14 Information Systems Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>27-Aug -</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Mid semester break</strong></td>
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<td>31-Aug</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>03-Sep -</td>
<td>15 Supply Chain and Customer Relationship Management</td>
<td>8 Querying databases</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07-Sep</td>
<td>16 Enterprise Resource Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>10-Sep -</td>
<td>17 Decision Support Systems</td>
<td>9 Creating user interfaces</td>
<td>Create Database (10%) Due 14-Sep-2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-Sep</td>
<td>18 Information Processing (I)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>17-Sep -</td>
<td>19 Information Processing (II)</td>
<td>10 Producing reports</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-Sep</td>
<td>20 Distributed Information Systems</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>24-Sep -</td>
<td>21 The Web and Cloud Computing</td>
<td>11 Processing and automation</td>
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<tr>
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<td>28-Sep</td>
<td>22 Ethics and Privacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>01-Oct -</td>
<td>23 Information Assurance</td>
<td>12 Free lab time</td>
<td>System Completion (15%) Due 05-Oct-2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>05-Oct</td>
<td>24 Human-Information Interfaces</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>08-Oct -</td>
<td>25 Case studies in Information Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12-Oct</td>
<td>26 Wrap-up</td>
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