INLS385 SYLLABUS

INFORMATION USE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

THE BASICS

To quote from the SILS course descriptions, this course is about:

Basic concepts in the way that information, people, and technology interact to influence organizational effectiveness. Principles of problem solving, teamwork, leadership, and organizational change/innovation.

BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

What it means is that we are going to consider the ways information is used within organizations. But to do that, we will have to consider the cultures of organizations and how they behave. In the process, we will consider the role of information technology within organizations, but it won't be our primary focus.

Our primary focus will be on understanding how information flows within organizations, and how that understanding can provide us with a way to deal with innovation and change in organizational contexts.

We consider theoretical foundations for practical applications and we will look at lots of examples, perhaps some you may never have considered.

Plan to read a lot, think even more, and to share the results of your reading and thinking with your peers. We want to develop the capacity for critical thinking about information use and, in the process, begin to develop some personal problem-solving skills that may be put to good use in any organization.

METHOD OF TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION

Most of the class will be a mix of lecture, question and answer, discussion, and in class activities. Plan to bring your laptops with you to reach out for information you might want to introduce in class.

You will have multiple written assignments and a final in this class. Your written products may be either blog postings or something in a medium of your choosing. You may choose to store your work in a website/portfolio of your own design. Should you not choose to use blog postings or a website/portfolio, plan to store your written work in your Sakai dropbox.

## THERE ARE NO ASSIGNED TEXTBOOKS, BUT WE WILL HAVE LOTS OF READINGS

ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT WILL BE

Choo, C. W. (2006). ***The knowing organization: How organizations use information to construct meaning, create knowledge, and make decisions***. New York: Oxford University Press.

Readings from it will be available online from UNC Libraries.

A book review of this text noted:

Because this book examines system design and knowledge management by treating the corporation as an information-seeking, creating, and using community, it has direct relevance to scholars of communication in the corporate context. Choo builds a framework that shows the corporation as an organised intelligent seeker, creator, and user of information and knowledge for the construction of meaning and decision-making. He incorporates Karl Weick's theory of sensemaking in the sharing of meanings and the use of rules and routines to reduce complexity and uncertainty. The text is well crafted and detailed, requiring some effort to navigate through the many concepts and levels of integration that Choo attempts in building his framework. The book will appeal to information systems specialists, and should be attentively visited by communication specialists, too.
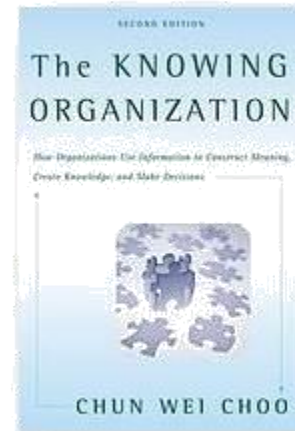
Richard Varey, University of Salford, review in Corporate Communications: An International Journal 1999 4(2), p. 106-7

OTHER READINGS

When additional readings are assigned, they will be made available electronically through the class schedule and the specific session pages.

EVALUATION

Percentage of final grade	Evaluation Mechanism
10%	a report that displays your understanding of the individual in the organization
15%	a report that displays your understanding of organization structure
15%	a report that displays your understanding of organization behaviors
10%	a report that displays your understanding of the role of technology and the organization
25%	the value you add to your classmates experience in this class
25%	Final exam

MODULE REPORTS

We often do not realize what we have learned until after due deliberation. Writing a module report provides you an opportunity to reflect on the readings and lectures, and reading the reports you write provides me a chance to assess to what extent you have met the learning objectives.

VALUE ADDED

The value you add to your peers' experience in this class is based on three things:

1. Attendance

   You are expected to attend all classes and to arrive to class before it starts. You should be seated and ready to start at 0930. If you need to miss a class, let me know so we can expect that you won't be with us.

2. Deportment

   Be courteous to your classmates. Turn off cell phones, pagers, and other devices that might disrupt class. Use your information tools to support current course activities only. Pay attention. Try not to pursue other interests during the class session.

3. General Participation

   Class participation consists of doing the following: being prepared for class, making observations about the readings, asking questions, taking notes, actively working on in-class exercises and actively listening. Everyone will get the chance to participate.

FINAL EXAM

There will be a final exam. It may be an in-class exam, or it may be an in-class submission of a take-home project. In either case, you will be informed of the specifications at the final review session.

GRADING

THE TABLE BELOW SHOWS THE STANDARD FOR GRADING USED IN THIS CLASS.

One of the important things we hear from employers of IS grads is that our grads have the ability to express themselves clearly and coherently in written and verbal formats. Accordingly, our evaluation tools for INLS385 are written and verbal formats.

But what kind of standard will be applied?

Subjective assessment draws upon the instructor's professionally developed awareness of quality in academic or other work. This may be essential for assessing with validity, because some outcomes require sensitivity to context and thus cannot be assessed in a fixed way across contexts. Objective assessment, in contrast, relies on quantitative scales that could apply to description of student work or performance. [IUPUI]

Therefore, grading the evaluation tools for INLS385-001 is necessarily a subjective effort and a grade will generally mean the descriptors in the table below.

Letter	Points	What it means
A	95 >	Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected
A- B+ B B-	92-94 87-91 83-86 80-82	A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment
C+ C C- D+ D	77-79 73-76 70-72 67-69 60-66	A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level
F	< 60	For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance

HONOR CODE

Faculty and students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill adhere to their Code of Student Conduct. Accordingly, you all should recognize that most software applications available in the computer lab are copyrighted and cannot be copied.

We can learn much from each other and we will do that. I expect each of you to help each other.

We'll discuss what we expect in terms of cooperative, collaborative, shared work and the honor code.

THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Honor Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

Campus Code

It shall be the further responsibility of every student to abide by the Campus Code; namely, to conduct oneself so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

WHAT IT MEANS TO US

The system rests on several central tenets:

- the university community, including faculty and students, share a commitment to the pursuit of truth, and the dissemination of knowledge to succeeding generations of citizens devoted to the high ideals of personal honor and respect for the rights of others
- these goals can only be achieved in a setting in which intellectual honesty and personal integrity are highly valued; other individuals are trusted, respected, and fairly treated; and the responsibility for articulating and maintaining high standards is widely shared
- both students and faculty must play active roles in fostering a culture in which honor is prized and acting to remedy violations of community norms relating to academic misconduct, injuries to members of the University community, and conduct that adversely affect University operations and resources

The principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship govern the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University as they have during the long life of this institution.

- your acceptance of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in the Code of Student Conduct and a respect for the most significant Carolina tradition
- your reward is in the practice of these principles

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code.

- you are encouraged to work together with your fellow students and to share knowledge and learning
- however, academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work

DIVERSITY

In this class, we will discuss diversity as a general good for organizations. It is a fundamental value for INLS385.

WHAT THIS FACULTY STANDS FOR

In support of the University's diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value.

We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability.

As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to:

- Ensure inclusive leadership, policies and practices;
- Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research;
- Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse opinions are valued;
- Recruit traditionally underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff; and
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups in the State.

The statement represents a commitment of resources to the development and maintenance of an academic environment that is open, representative, reflective and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness.

Remember, on occasion you may have felt yourself to be a member of a minority group, picked on by a majority group. Here at school, you may find those roles reversed. Do not fall prey to the temptation to use your new majority sensibility to get back at those who may have picked on you in the past, when you were in a minority group. Treating others as you would have them treat you is always a good rule to follow.