



The Evolution of a Global Information System Course: Case Study at Southern Connecticut State University

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ABSTRACT

The education of a computer systems analyst in today's business environment requires exposure to the unique issues for dealing with information systems which cross country boundaries. One popular software package to deal with such issues is SAP R/3. This paper discusses the evolution of a course taught at Southern Connecticut State University in global information systems. The course is offered for the second time in the Spring 2003 semester at Southern and has 16 students currently enrolled.

INTRODUCTION

The writer participated in an MBA team-taught graduate course in global business operations. This experience led the writer to develop a new course, MIS400, Global Information Systems. This course is designed for undergraduate MIS students. A requirement for a program to become a major at Southern is that it have its own focused course on international issues for its field. This paper presents the experience to-date of that course.

CASE STUDY RESULTS

The first offering of the course was in the Spring 2002 semester at Southern. The schedule of topic for that course is shown as Figure 1. Lessons learned are discussed as the next generation of the course for Spring 2003.

Figure 1

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY-Spring 2002			
MIS400-01 GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS			
Meets: Tues. 6:00-8:30PM Instructor: Dr. Robert Mullen			
TEXTBOOK: Deans, P. Candace and Karwan, Kirk R.; <u>Global Information Systems and Technologies</u> ; Idea Group Publishing.; 1997.			
WEEK/DATE	TOPIC	READING	RESEARCH-WORK
1- 1/22	The Globalization of Business	Ch 1,2	
2- 1/29	Impact on Marketing Systems	Ch 3,4	
3- 2/5	Impact of the European Community	Ch 5	Team 1 Report
4- 2/12	Impact on Financial Systems	Ch 6,7	Team 2 Report
5- 2/19	Impact on Financial Services	Ch 9	Team 3 Report
6- 2/26	Impact on Accounting Systems	Ch 10,11	Team 4 Report
7- 3/5	EXAM #1 (WEEKS 1-6)		
8- 3/12	Impact on Manufacturing Systems	Ch 12,13,14	Team 5 Report
9- 3/19	Impact on Logistical Systems	Ch 15,16	Team 6 Report
10-3/26	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS		
11-4/2	Impact on R & D Systems	Ch 17,18	Team 7 Report
12-4/9	Impact on Human Resource Systems	Ch 20,21,22	Team 8 Report
13-4/16	Impact on entire enterprise	Ch 24,25	Team 9 Report
14-4/23	New issues since 2001	Ch 26,27	Team Report
15-4/30	Future issues		
16-5/7	EXAM #2 (WEEKS 8-15)		
NO FINAL EXAM			

Lessons learned from figure 1 include the following:

- Undergraduates need more guidance in research project work.
- Students seemed to like the opportunity to contribute research work to the class.
- Text book is too dated to use next semester. Need to find a new one.
- Include more coverage of SAP R/3 as example of global ready software.

Other future issues include:

- This would probably be a possible summer course that would attract the required ten students if offered in the late afternoon or early evening.
- This would probably be a good course to design for OnLineCSU to offer in the future in a distance learning situation allowing MIS students from sister schools in the Connecticut State University system to take this course for credit at their school.

Figure 2 represents the schedule for the upcoming Spring 2003 version of the same course demonstrating the changes from above analysis of the ex-

Figure 2

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY-Spring 2003			
MIS400-01 GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS			
Meets: Tues. 6:00-8:30PM Instructor: Dr. Robert Mullen			
TEXTBOOKS: - Dadashzadeh, Mohammad, <u>Information Technology in Developing Countries</u> , IRM Press, 2002; Nah, Fiona Fui-Hoon, <u>Enterprise Resource Planning Solutions and Management</u> , IRM Press, 2002; Tan, Felix, <u>Global Perspective of Information Technology Management</u> , IRM Press, 2002.			
WEEK/DATE	TOPIC	READING	
RESEARCH-WORK			
1- 1/22	The Globalization of Business	Ch 1 (2)	
2- 1/29	Impact on Human Resource Systems	Ch 2	
3- 2/5	Global Software Outsourcing	Ch 4	Team 1
4- 2/12	Undergraduate Global Education	Ch 6	Team 2
5- 2/19	ERP in a Global Company	Ch 9	Team 3
6- 2/26	Three-Tiered Global E-Commerce	Ch 10	Team 4
7- 3/5	EXAM #1 (WEEKS 1-6)		
8- 3/12	ERP and E-Business	Ch1 (1)	Team 5
9- 3/19	Evolution of ERP Systems	Ch 3	Team 6
10-3/26	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS		
11-4/2	A Case Study of ERP Implementation	Ch 5	Team 7
12-4/9	The Next Wave of ERP Implementation	Ch 8	Team 8
13-4/16	ERP in Brazil	Ch 10	Team 9
14-4/23	ERP in Australia	Ch 12	Team
15-4/30	ERP in New Zealand	Ch 15	
16-5/7	EXAM #2 (ERP)		
NO FINAL EXAM			

perience gained from the 2002 offering of the course. New textbooks were selected from IRM Press which provided three soft-cover books dated 2002 to overcome the outdated issue of the 1997 text used in 2002. The concept of students conducting research based on articles from one of the books will continue as the research assignment is thought to be important to this senior level course but which required more guidance for undergraduates. A third difference is the coverage of Enterprise Resource Planning software, in general, and SAP R/3 in particular, as examples of fully integrated packaged software ready for global implementation.

There appears to be enough students registered so far that the course will be offered. It is scheduled in one of the new classroom which will present an excellent environment for the course in a modern setting. Students will be informed that it is still considered a pilot offering of the course and their comments and suggestions for future versions will be sought and welcomed at the end of the course.

When this paper is presented in May 2003, experience from the Spring 2003 version will be available to compare to 2002 version. Suggestions for the 2004 version will also be available.

CONCLUSIONS

Courses in the MIS field need to undergo three iterations before they settle down into an acceptable pattern. Student input is critical to the evolution process.

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