



**MBA 732 – Knowledge Management
Summer 2005**

Instructor: Michael D. Kull, Ph.D.

Meets: 6-1-6/29 and Fri 6/10, 6/17 and 6/24. 7:00-10:00pm.
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in June (i.e. not 6/3).

Classroom: ARL 257 (Arlington Campus)

Office Hours: By arrangement - normally 1 hour prior to class.

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Text: Assigned cases and readings to be determined.

Overview and Course Objectives:

Knowledge management (KM) has emerged as a new discipline in the past decade. This course explores where knowledge management has been, where it is going, and what concepts and behaviors comprise the practice of KM. Emphasis is shared among the various dimensions of KM, including people, technology, culture and social practices, systems and strategic thinking.

Course Objectives:

- To consider the social and economic context of a knowledge-based management environment.
- To provide a framework for understanding knowledge management, and management disciplines in general.
- To understand the *domain* and *field* of knowledge management as viewed by its leading thinkers and practitioners.
- To participate in the universe of discourse surrounding KM through class presentations, exercises, and guided research.
- To discuss case studies in KM and extrapolate the implications.

**Class Attendance:**

In this course, attendance is the most efficient way for you to learn and contribute to the class experience. Class attendance for this intensive summer course is expected to be 100%. If an emergency arises and you must be absent, please notify the instructor prior to class. Absences may be made up with an agreed-upon assignment depending upon instructor approval.

Honor Code:

Adherence to GMU's Honor Code is fully expected. All individual work is expected to be performed individually. All group work is expected to be performed collectively.

Requirements and Grading:

The course requirements and associated grade percentages are:

- Team Presentation 30%
- Final Exam 30%
- Individual presentation 10%
- Contribution 30%

Team Presentation:

For this project you will analyze a KM case provided in class and provide recommendations. As a team you will discuss the pros and cons of the case, any results from discovery and research efforts, and critique the assumptions made within the case. Explain to the class what the case is about, what happened, what were the lessons learned, and where you think the organization could have made improvements, or where they should go next.

There are two components to this project. Guidelines will be discussed in class.

- 1) **The team presentation:** (20%) A 20 minute presentation with 10 minutes of Q&A. This presentation should be dynamic and engaging and present an interesting analysis. Both style and substance will be evaluated and you are encouraged to make use of any digital media you have access to. Evaluations by the class and your team members will supplement a final vote by the class to determine which team has presented the most compelling case.



- 2) The executive brief: (10%) A 1000-1500 word write-up (6-8 pages). This is due the class prior to the day of presentation and will be made available to the class to review prior to the presentation.

“CORE:” Grading Criteria (1/4 each)

- C: Compelling Presentation – make it interesting and clear to the audience.
- O: Originality of Analysis – how inventive and practical are your interpretations and recommendations.
- R: Relevance to Course Content – how closely does your project integrate course concepts.
- E: Evidence – how well and how much do you integrate outside research and related examples.

Individual Presentation:

This is an individual grading assignment that will examine your ability to tell a compelling story about knowledge management. Locate a recent article from a business publication. Use about 2-3 pages to summarize, analyze, and interpret the story. The first page should summarize the case, the second and/or third pages should present your analysis and interpretation. You will present in front of the class in 2-3 minutes. **We will videotape the presentation.**

Think of yourself as a news reporter and tell the class the 5 Ws of the story: Who, what, where, when and why. Discuss: what is the value being created? What are the pros and cons? What obstacles and challenges exist? **TELL THE STORY.**

The goal is to make your presentation clear, concise, and effective. This is an learning approach that will also help you to improve your presentation skills.

Final Exam:

This will be an individual take-home exam that will cover the concepts presented in the readings and in class.

Contribution:

The major activity under this evaluation section is the individual interview. You are to identify and contact a KM practitioner and conduct an interview on KM, which you will share with the class on-line. The purpose of the interview is to learn from people working in KM in a real-life organization what the goals, obstacles, and successes have been in their work. The result will be a set of



interviews that will be made available to all students in the class. You may choose to assign from 10% to 20% of your grade to this activity.

Guidelines:

- Think of yourself as a journalist out for a good story.
- The interview should be between 15-30 minutes.
- You may conduct the interview in person, on-line, or over the phone, as you choose and as is mutually convenient.
- You may rely on note-taking or record the interview as you prefer, with the permission of the interviewee.
- Ask interviewees to give examples of their efforts in KM and tell you about what they have learned.
- In writing up your interview, you can focus on the actual text or on your interpretation of the interview, as you prefer, but include a balance of direct quotations and your thoughts.

Students are strongly encouraged to participate, role-play, and debate the concepts, models, methodologies, techniques, and other approaches presented. In-class activities are to be determined. Contributions may include posting links, articles, and other resources for the class.

Resources:

Many books, articles and websites exist that are dedicated to KM. Places to start:

KM Magazine

<http://www.kmmag.com>

KMWorld

<http://www.kmworld.com>

Brint.com

<http://www.kmnetwork.com>

For additional resources, go to: <http://www.amplifi.com/mba732.htm>

The WebCT courseware site is accessible through:

<http://webct38.gmu.edu>



Course Structure

This initial, basic topic structure is subject to revision as the course progresses. Additional readings, activities, links, slides, and other information will become available on-line as the course develops.

Date Class Topics

06-01 W	1: Making Sense of KM Introductions and Overview.
06-06 M	2: The KM Domain and Field Readings: "When Bad Things Happen to Good Ideas" http://www.darwinmag.com/read/040101/badthings.html Case: Buckman Labs
06-08 W	3: Strategic Approaches to KM Readings: "Choosing your KM Strategy" http://www.tlinc.com/articl51.htm "Developing a KM Strategy" http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/kmc_kmstrategy/ Case: Clarica
06-10 F	4: Communities of Practice Readings: http://www.research.ibm.com/journal/sj/404/lesser.html Case: Company Command.com
06-13 M	5: Best practices, lessons learned, and storytelling. Case: DHS LLIS
06-15 W	6: Guest Speaker: KM and Branding Readings (optional): Mercer Management Journal: "Rethinking Brand Strategy" "Delivering on the Brand Promise" Case: EPA (video)
06-17 F	7: Locating Experts and Expertise



	<p>Readings: "Locating Expertise at NASA" http://cba.fiu.edu/dsis/becferi/lsm6991/KMReview.pdf</p> <p>Case: NASA (video)</p>
06-20 M	<p>8: Enabling Technologies for KM Readings: "Exploring Failure Factors of Implementing Knowledge Management Systems in Organizations" http://www.tlainc.com/articl85.htm</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS Case: AKO</p>
06-22 W	<p>9: Emerging Topics: Knowledge Retention</p> <p>Readings: "Six Mistakes to Avoid..." and others optional. http://www.lostknowledge.com/pages/toolbox.html</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS</p>
06-24 F	<p>10: KM and Enterprise Intelligence</p> <p>A final word... http://informationr.net/ir/8-1/paper144.html</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS</p>
06-27 M	<p>11: TEAM PRESENTATIONS, FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT</p>
06-29 W	<p>12: TEAM PRESENTATIONS, FINAL EXAM RETURNED</p>