

IDS 331 - Business Analysis Using Spreadsheets Course Syllabus Spring 2007

Microsoft Excel is an incredibly powerful tool for all situations requiring quantitative analysis. Accountants and financial officers use Excel in summarizing and forecasting. Marketing managers apply Excel tools in competitive analysis and sales planning. Operations managers use Excel for fact-based decision support. Entrepreneurs use Excel for general planning and record-keeping. This course will give you the opportunity to

- *Use Excel's powerful built-in tools*
- *Create user-friendly applications in Excel*
- *Apply Excel tools to typical business problems*

This course is intended for a general undergraduate business student who has an interest in problem analysis. Students who take the course should come away with good analytic skills based in Excel and knowledge of the basic techniques involved in application development using Visual Basic for Applications. The content of the course is defined by the objectives listed on Page 5.

Course Data

Instructor: Professor Jane Hagstrom

Office: UH 718

Phone: 312-996-0779

E-Mail: Hagstrom@uic.edu

Office Hours: Will be posted on Blackboard under Staff Information

Call Number: 21806

Meeting time: 11:00-12:15TR

Meeting place: Tuesdays BH 208

Thursdays EPASW L270

Prerequisites:

- IDS 200 or equivalent experience with Excel
- It is recommended that you take ACTG 110 concurrently if you have not already taken it.

Required Materials

- Wayne Winston, **Microsoft Excel Data Analysis and Business Modeling**, Microsoft Press, 2004 or later.
- John Walkenbach, **Excel VBA Programming for Dummies**, Wiley, 2004 or later.

Recommended Materials

- R. A. Abrams and J. N. Hagstrom, **IDS 355 Lab Manual**

Assignments and Exams

Exam (10%)

At the beginning of the term, you must complete an on-line exam on Excel Fundamentals at a satisfactory level.

Quizzes (20%)

There will be a quiz almost every week. The quizzes will cover reading and class material. Depending on the number of quizzes, I will drop 1 or 2 of your lowest quiz scores before computing the semester grade.

Homework (25%)

Homework will consist of activities that must be performed using Excel and/or VBA. Depending on the number of homework assignments, I will drop 1 or 2 of your lowest homework scores before computing the semester grade. Unless you are extremely proficient in Excel and in programming skills, you should plan on spending 6 hours a week outside of class reading or doing homework. You'll probably find you enjoy it!

Exam on VBA (15%)

Towards the end of the semester, there will be an exam on programming in VBA. It will be based on the skills you needed in doing your homework assignments.

Project (25%)

There will be a project at the end of the term. It will require the use of Excel and VBA. You will find a list of potential topics on Blackboard under Course Information/Project Information. ***Projects based on something you are doing at work are especially encouraged!***

Attendance (5%)

At the beginning of the semester, you will be allocated a score of 20 points for attendance. On days that we do not have a quiz, and possibly on days when we do, I will either take attendance or call on students individually during the class period. If you are not there when I take attendance or call on you, you will lose 1 point from this score.

Plagiarism and Inappropriate Use of Others' Work:

If you cheat, you cheat everybody, including yourself!

It is plagiarism to submit another person's work as your own. It is important for you to understand how this applies when you do computer work. In this course, it will be okay to borrow ideas and even parts of your analysis from outside sources; it will not be okay to copy anyone's work and call it your own. You should be aware that it is as much work to successfully disguise a classmate's work as your own as it is to do your work yourself. It is easier for me to detect disguised copying than you might think. When you borrow material from outside sources, it will be a good idea to include a comment indicating where the material came from - and you need to make sure it works!

What is Honest Computer Homework?

In order to avoid others' misusing your work, *you should not share your papers or files with others*. In a first case of plagiarism on a homework assignment, the copier and the copied will be penalized by a negative score on the assignment; this score will not be dropped at the end of the semester. A second case will lead to the institution of university procedures.

Failure to follow the rules below will be considered cheating.

You Must Not:

1. Lend/Give another student your file.
2. Lend/Give another student a printout of your work.
3. Dictate the solution of a problem to another student.
4. Borrow/Take another student's file.
5. Borrow/Take another student's printout.
6. Let another person dictate a solution to you
7. Leave a printout or file where another student might find it.
8. Do anything that might lead to you or someone else copying another student's work.
9. Copy any work from any source without attributing it to the source in the same way you would provide a citation when you put a quote in a paper.

You May:

1. Look at any book.
2. Look at items posted on our Blackboard site.
3. Look at information that is publicly available on the Web.
4. Look at your notes and homework assignments.
5. Talk to others about your approach to the problems.

What is an Honest Team Project?

The preceding rules apply if you substitute "Your Team" for "You" and "another team" for "another student". If cheating is detected on a submission of a team project, I will start university procedures.

What is an Honest Quiz or Exam?

Of course the standard rules about cheating on quizzes and exams will apply.

If cheating is detected on a quiz, the participants will be penalized with a negative score on the quiz; this score will not be dropped at the end of the semester. On the second instance of cheating on a quiz, I will start university procedures.

If cheating is detected on an exam, I will start university procedures.

Objectives for IDS 331

In addition to the list below, selected items from the Project Topics list will be included, based on student interest.

Excel Mastery

1. Basic skills at the level of the Microsoft User exam on Excel Fundamentals
2. Rapid application of standard Excel techniques
3. Auditing toolbar
4. Charts
5. Named ranges
6. Lookup and reference functions
7. Logical functions
8. Validation
9. Filtering and sorting
10. Pivot tables
11. Recording macros

Excel Developer Skills

1. Good design
2. Creation of data entry forms
3. Referring to objects, methods, and properties in the Excel object library
4. Variable types, variable scope in VBA/Excel
5. Assignment statements, expressions
6. Logical structures in VBA
 - a. Branching statements: `If...Then...Else`
 - b. Loops: `For Each`
 - c. `Exit` statements
7. Procedures and functions in VBA
8. Using arguments in procedures and functions

Communication Outside of Class

There are four major ways to communicate with me. Please consider which is best for a particular situation. Below I list some advantages and disadvantages as I view them.

Face-To-Face

You can catch me before or after class if your question is short. You can come to one of my office hours or make an appointment for another time.

- I always prefer to communicate face-to-face, so I will appreciate your making the effort to meet with me – but ask for an appointment rather than skip another class.
- If it is my office hour, or you made an appointment with me, I will try to spend as much time with you as you need.
- If we are meeting in a lab, you can work on assignments while you are waiting for me.

Via the Blackboard Discussion Board

You can post a question on the Discussion Board in Blackboard.

- I always appreciate your posting a question on Blackboard, because then other students can see my answer. – My rule is “If one person in the class has a question, there are several others who will appreciate hearing the answer.”
- I will check the Discussion Board every day, unless I am out of town or have connection problems.
- Please phrase your question carefully to make it easy for me to give you the answer you need.
- Everyone in the class can see everything on the Discussion Board, so please do not post any personal questions there.

Via E-Mail

You can e-mail me.

- I will try to check my e-mail once every day.
- Your question should be simple, or very precisely stated, since it will not be efficient to trade e-mails back and forth.
- If your question is one that I think many people in the class will have, I may post the answer on the Blackboard Discussion Board.
- Your e-mail should have a meaningful subject line that includes “331”. My e-mails that have no subject line get thrown out without opening. If the subject line contains 331, your e-mail will be filtered into my Teaching mailbox, which I give high priority to. In my Teaching mailbox, I will prioritize answering e-mails by looking at the subject line of your e-mail. The subject “urgent” is not meaningful to me.
- You will be able to send me a file if that will help. Please make it clear to me exactly where in the file I should look. (Don’t use .zip)

Via Phone

You can phone me if you have a short question.

- Unfortunately, I'm planning to be on campus only on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and will be in my office approximately half of each of those days.
- I will be checking my phone messages on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- If you leave a message, please leave your phone number and some idea of the hours that I will be able to reach you at that phone number.
- If you have a question about a problem on an assignment, you will want to have started the problem so that you can give me a very precise question.