

A Paradigm For Utilizing An Information Systems Project Management Course For Evaluating Program Effectiveness

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Abstract

This paper describes the implementation of a capstone project management course that is a requirement for graduating seniors in an undergraduate Computer Information Systems (CIS) program at a regional university. The description provides a model which includes the culmination of students' academic training in Information Systems (IS) curriculum which is part of a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program in an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited college of business.

The requirements of the course include an application of technical and business skills, as well as systems development and project management skills—all working on an actual information technology project for an external sponsoring organization. Rationale for implementing this type of course includes the benefits it provides to the students, the project sponsors who participate in the projects, and the IS faculty providing the training. Feedback from the course is used as integral part of the curriculum assessment process used for accreditation purposes. The paper presents qualitative data from participating external sponsors, students, and participating faculty.

Processes involved in program evaluation and assessment of outcomes may tend to raise the level of anxiety in academic circles. The process should focus on student products and processes, curricular structure and operation, and the environment that surrounds them. This paper provides a model which would be of interest to faculty in similar information systems programs who wish to reinforce or enrich similar processes.