



UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

School of Information Systems

Faculty of Commerce

BSA304 Decision Support Systems

Semester 2, 2006

Unit Outline

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Contents

UNIT SUMMARY	2
AIM	3
LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EVIDENCES	3
GENERIC GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES	5
DETAILS OF TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS	5
UNIT SCHEDULE	6
REFERENCES	6
SPECIFIC ATTENDANCE/PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS	8
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	8
HOW YOUR FINAL RESULT IS DETERMINED	8
SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS	8
REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS	9
PENALTIES	9
REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT AND APPEALS	9
FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE	11
ASSESSMENT DETAILS	12

Unit summary

Unit code	BSA304
Unit title	Decision Support Systems
Unit description	This unit is a third year unit in the Bachelor of Information Systems. It is designed to prepare students to critically understand the types of decision support systems used in business, their respective strengths and limitations.
Teaching staff	Bill Morgan
Campus & mode	Hobart, Launceston and Cradle Coast, Flexible
Unit weight	12.5%
Teaching pattern	Flexible
Pre and Corequisites	BSA201
Mutual exclusions	None
Assessment	100% continuous assessment
Required texts, etc	None
Recommended reading	Turban and Aronson, Decision Support Systems and Intelligent Systems Prentice Hall, Seventh Edition, 2005
Technical requirements	None
Software requirements	Microsoft Office
Access to information technology	Hobart, IS PC Labs, Information Systems Building Students will have access to the computer laboratories during the academic year. Proximity cards have to be used to gain access to laboratories. Launceston D130 Lab available during normal building open hours Cradle Coast Lab available during normal building open hours
Courses	<i>Notes:</i> Login codes are printed on the student's Statement of Fees and Enrolment. Use of these login codes is based on the assumption BCom, BIS, BCom-BIS, BA-BCom, BCom-BComp, BSc, BFA-BIS, GradDipIS, BCom-BSc, BIS-BMus, BIS-BTeach, BSocSci (Police Studies), GradDipInfoMgt, GradCertIS
Faculty web site	http://fcms.its.utas.edu.au/business/business/

Aim

This unit introduces the concepts of the role that decision support systems can play within organisations to facilitate individual and group decision making.

Learning outcomes and Evidences

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Understand the types of decision support systems used in business, their respective strengths and limitations
2. Understand the roles that decision support systems can play within organisations to facilitate individual and group decision making.
3. Examine and understand the major components of computer-based decision support systems.
4. Analyse and design decision support systems using standard software found in Microsoft Office

Upon successful completion of this unit a student should have attained:

1. *Understand the types of decision support systems used in business, their respective strengths and limitations*

Assessment

Evidence:

- HD level: Have a deep understanding and in-depth knowledge of the strengths and limitations of DSS used in business
- DN level: Have an extensive knowledge of the strengths and limitations of DSS used in business
- CR level: Have a sound knowledge of the strengths and limitations of DSS used in business
- PP level: Have a satisfactory knowledge of the strengths and limitations of DSS used in business
- NN level: To have been unable to demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and limitations of DSS used in business

2. *Understand the roles that decision support systems can play within organisations to facilitate individual and group decision making*

Assessment

Evidence:

- HD level: Have a deep understanding and in-depth knowledge of the roles that DSS plays both with individuals and groups
- DN level: Have an extensive knowledge of the roles that DSS plays both with individuals and groups
- CR level: Have a sound knowledge of the roles that DSS plays both with individuals and groups
- PP level: Have a satisfactory knowledge of the roles that DSS plays both with individuals and groups
- NN level: To have been unable to demonstrate an understanding of the roles that DSS plays both with individuals and groups

3. *Examine and understand the major components of computer-based decision support systems;*

Assessment

Evidence:

HD level:	To be able to critically evaluate and demonstrate clear understanding of the major components of a computer based DSS
DN level:	To be able to critically evaluate and demonstrate understanding of the major components of a computer based DSS
CR level:	To be able to critically evaluate the major components of a computer based DSS
PP level:	To be able to evaluate the major components of a computer based DSS.
NN level:	To have been unable to evaluate the components of a DSS

4. *Analyse and design decision support systems using standard software found in Microsoft Office*

Assessment

Evidence:

HD level:	To be able to design an effective, functional and flawless DSS using Microsoft Office
DN level:	To be able to design an effective and functional DSS using Microsoft Office
CR level:	To be able to design a functional DSS using Microsoft Office
PP level:	To be able to design a DSS using Microsoft Office
NN level:	To have failed to design a DSS using Microsoft Office

Generic graduate attributes

Attribute	Descriptor	Unit Specifics
Knowledge	Graduates will have an in-depth knowledge in their chosen field of study and the ability to apply that knowledge in practice. They will be prepared for life-long learning in pursuit of personal and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of systems an organisation can adopt to facilitate decision making • Be aware of appropriate technologies and how they may be utilised to support Decision Making;
Communication Skills	Graduates will be able to communicate effectively across a range of contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a high level of report writing;
Problem-solving Skills	Graduates will be effective problem-solvers, capable of applying logical, critical and creative thinking in a range of problems. They will have developed competencies in information literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualise basic requirements associated with the implementation of a DSS • Conceptualise benefits and associated limitations relating to the implementation of a DSS

Details of teaching arrangements

Lectures/Consultation sessions

This unit has been designed to be flexible. Therefore students can work through the material at their own pace. All students enrolled in the unit must have completed the Learning Modules by no later than 20th October, 2006.

Students are required to work through the Learning Modules on Vista rather than attending lectures. Progression from one Learning Module to the next will require the submission of the practical task for that Learning Module and completing a quiz.

There will be three 1-hour online chat sessions held weekly on:

Monday 3-4pm

Wednesday 11-12am

Thursday 8-9am

In Weeks 14 to 26 (1-13)

Student Self-help

Each learning module contains a discussion board. Students should use these discussion boards as a means of soliciting help on simple queries from other each other.

Unit schedule

Learning Module	Topics	Practical	Assessment Release
1	Decisions, Decision Making & Decisions in organisations	Decision Making Report	
2	Decision Support Systems overview	Microsoft Access – Constructing Queries	
3	Executive Information Systems	Microsoft Access – Advanced Queries and Excel Charting	
4	Systems Perspective	Information Quality	
5	Data Warehousing	Excel	Report
6	Sensitivity Analysis	Sensitivity Analysis Exercise	
7	Modelling	Modelling	
8	Decision Trees	Decision Trees	
9	Expert System Development	Expert Systems - Inference	
10	GSS and GDSS	GDSS Software report	Project
11	Implementation, Integration and Impacts	Macros	
12	Creative Decision Making and Problem Solving	Multiple Perspectives	

Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

The University is committed to providing a safe and secure teaching and learning environment. In addition to specific requirements of this unit you should refer to the University's policy at:

http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/ohs.pdf

References

Turban and Aronson, *Decision Support Systems and Intelligent Systems*, Prentice Hall, Seventh Edition, 2005.

Learning expectations and strategies

Expectations

The University is committed to high standards of professional conduct in all activities, and holds its commitment and responsibilities to its students as being of paramount importance. Likewise, it holds expectations about the responsibilities students have as they pursue their studies within the special environment the University offers.

The University's Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning states:

Students are expected to participate actively and positively in the teaching/learning environment. They must attend classes when and as required, strive to maintain steady progress within the subject or unit framework, comply with workload expectations, and submit required work on time.

It is expected that students will familiarise themselves with access and use of the WebCT/Vista system operated by the University for the electronic delivery of course materials, and for various forms of communication.

It is expected that students will consult email sent to their University email address at least twice a week for notices relating to the administration of the unit, and for notification of the results of assignments.

It is expected that students will read the background material specified in the course curriculum, will actively attend and participate in tutorials, and be prepared to discuss relevant issues arising with tutors, lecturers and fellow students.

Student Expectations of the Unit

Students enrolled in this Unit may reasonably expect the following:

1. To be able to contact a lecturer by electronic mail, to raise issues arising in the unit, either relating to content or student performance within the unit.
2. Subject to availability, to be able to discuss such issues in person with the lecturer.
3. That assignments will be marked and the marks will be returned with 3 weeks of due dates.
4. That all relevant notices regarding the administration of the unit, including any necessary changes, will be communicated to all students enrolled in the unit via email.

These expectations are in addition to those specified in relevant University regulations.

Learning strategies

If you need assistance in preparing for study please refer to your tutor or lecturer. For additional information refer to the Need Help With Your Studies? website :

<http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/students/>

If you will be using WebCT/Vista for the first time and would like some information on how to use Vista@UTAS support:

http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/Vista_Support.htm

Some of the units you will study use videoconferencing to deliver lectures and tutorials. To enable you to get the best out of a videoconference please refer to the following guide. <http://www.its.utas.edu.au/videoconf/vcstudentguide.pdf>

Specific attendance/performance requirements

Participation and the active contribution of all students in their allocated workshop will be monitored for assessment purposes (see section on Assessment details).

Assessment Summary

Component	Weight/Value	Due date
Continuous practical assignments	30%. (Components are not equally weighted)	Friday 20th October, 2006
Project	40%	Friday 20th October, 2006
Report	30%	Friday 20th October, 2006

How your final result is determined

In order to pass a unit, the School of Information Systems expects that students:

Complete all pieces of assessment (12 practical modules, report and project) and Achieve a total mark of at least 50% in the total assessment of the unit.

Note:

In exceptional circumstances, the School reserves the right to adjust the above assessment rule.

Submission of assignments

Students must submit assignments for the unit by the specified dates and times (if given), unless prior approval has been granted via an assignment extension form, at least 24 hours before the assignment is due to be submitted.

Every assessment task has a due date and method of submission. These due dates and methods of submission must be adhered to.

For each piece of assessment, there will be only one method of submission. The method will be clearly identified on the assignment sheet.

Notes:

Students must take responsibility for the correct submission of their assignments.

Students are expected to adhere to the following procedure for submission:

*Submitted files **MUST** be checked by the student to ensure that correct submission of the file has been undertaken.*

*Students are expected to notify the Lecturer **WITHIN TWO HOURS** of submission if their files have not been submitted correctly.*

Students must take responsibility for safely backing up of their own files during the academic year to ensure that no files are permanently lost.

Requests for extensions

Extensions will be given only under the following conditions:

- Employment related issues: Arrangements for an extension must be made with the lecturer prior to the assignment due date. Documentation from your employer is required.
- Illness: A medical certificate must be presented to the lecturer either prior to the due date or as soon as possible after the due date.

The lecturer of the unit will address any extraordinary extension falling outside of these criteria.

All extensions must be applied for on the appropriate form, which is available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/students/forms/ExtensionForm.pdf>. Verbal extensions will not be accepted.

Students should not assume that all extension applications will be granted. Students must have received confirmation of the extension by the Lecturer in order for an extension to be granted.

Any extension granted will have a new submission due date and time. Given the flexible nature of the unit, extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

Assignments that are not submitted by the due date and time will incur the following penalty:

Penalty

10% (of mark achieved) per day or part thereof (excluding extensions) for late submissions.

Review of assessment and appeals

1. It is expected that students will adhere to the following policy for review of any piece of **continuous assessment**.
 - a) Within 5 days of the release of the assessment result, the student should request an appointment with the Lecturer. **The student should be prepared to discuss specifically which section of the marking criteria they are disputing and why they consider the mark is inappropriate.**
 - b) Following this discussion, students may request a formal remark of the original submission (in accordance with Rule of Academic Assessment 111, clause 22.1). This remark will be undertaken, where practicable, by an alternative assessor.
2. Students under with Rule of Academic Assessment 111, clause 23 may also request a review of the **final result** in a unit. The request and payment must be made within 10 days from the date of the result notification.

Students are referred to:

<http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/RULE111.pdf> and
http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/flowchart_review_assesment.pdf

Complaints Procedure

It is expected that students will adhere to the following policy for making any complaint or grievance directly related to a Unit:

- a) In the first instance, students are to approach the Lecturer or Unit Coordinator concerned and arrange a time to speak with them about their concern.
- b) If an issue remains unresolved, the student should approach the Head of School and arrange a time to speak with them about their concern.

If the School's internal policy of complaints is unable to resolve an issue, students should consult Ordinance 8 Student Complaints for further direction.

Academic referencing

In your written work you will need to support your ideas by referring to scholarly literature, works of art and/or inventions. It is important that you understand how to correctly refer to the work of others and maintain academic integrity.

Failure to appropriately acknowledge the ideas of others constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism), a matter considered by the University of Tasmania as a serious offence.

The appropriate referencing style for this unit is

For information on presentation of assignments, including referencing styles:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/library/assist/gpoa/gpoa.html>

Please read the following statement on plagiarism. Should you require clarification please see your unit coordinator or lecturer.

Plagiarism

While students are encouraged to discuss the assignments in this unit and to engage in active learning from each other, it is important that they are also aware of the University's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example downloading an essay wholly or in part from the internet, copying another student's work or using an author's words or ideas without citing the source.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>

The University reserves the right to submit assignments to plagiarism detection software, and might then retain a copy of the assignment on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.

It is important that you understand this statement on plagiarism. Should you require clarification please see your unit coordinator or lecturer. Useful resources on academic integrity, including what it is and how to maintain it, are also available at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/students.html>

Further information and assistance

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you are advised to raise these with your lecturer in the first instance.

There is a range of University-wide support services available to you including Student Services, International Services and Learning Development. Please refer to the *Current Students* homepage at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/students/>

Should you require assistance in accessing the Library visit their website for more information at <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>

Help resolving concerns about this unit

In the first instance you should contact your lecturer. If the matter is still unresolved and you would like to know who to contact or the procedures for resolving your concern refer to the following website:

http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/complaints_info.html

The Hobart based Tasmanian University Union (TUU) or the Launceston/Burnie based Student Association (SA) may also be able to assist.

The School reserves the right to alter the details contained in this Unit Outline. Students will be advised of changes to the outline via their University email account and it remains the responsibility of the student to check their email for such changes.

Assessment Details

Assessment task 1

Task description	Continuous Practical Assignments
Task length	NA
Links to unit's learning outcomes	2 and 4
Assessment criteria / guidelines	As specified in each of the Practical Modules
Due Date	20th October, 2006

Assessment task 2

Task description	Project
Release Criterion	Released at the completion of Module 5
Links to unit's learning outcomes	1, 2 and 4
Assessment criteria / guidelines	Develop a DSS solution for the organisation presented in the scenario.
Due Date	20th October, 2006

Assessment task 3

Task description	Review of current DSS System
Release Criterion	Released at the completion of Module 10
Task length	2000 words
Links to unit's learning outcomes	1 and 3
Assessment criteria / guidelines	Review DSS systems currently available. Prepare a report on one of the reviewed systems identifying benefits and limitations
Due Date	20th October, 2006