ISOM4750 Business Project Management
Fall 2026

Department of Information Systems, Business Statistics, and Operations Management

COURSE: ISOM4750 Business Project Management
This course covers basic principles and practices of business project management. Special emphases are on project planning, scheduling, and control while addressing both the technical and the social, behavioral aspects of managing business projects.

Class time and venue:
(M) 1:30-2:50 pm, LSK-G005 (Computer lab)
(F) 9:00-10:20 pm, LSK-1005 (Classroom)

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TEXTBOOK: (For reference only) Project Management: The Managerial Process, 9th edition, by Gray and Larson, McGraw-Hill, 2024.

GRADING POLICY This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Final course grade will be determined by the following criteria and point distribution.

Quizzes (best 4 out of 5)*	20
Case analyses (2)	10
Lab assignments (10)	20
Final exam	50
Total	100

Grade	Description
A	Excellent performance: Demonstrates a comprehensive grasp of subject matter, expertise in problem-solving, and significant creativity in thinking. Exhibits a high capacity for scholarship and collaboration, going beyond core requirements to achieve learning goals.
B	Good performance: Shows good knowledge and understanding of the main subject matter, competence in problem-solving, and the ability to analyze and evaluate issues. Displays high motivation to learn and the ability to work effectively with others.
C	Satisfactory performance: Possesses adequate knowledge of core subject matter, competence in dealing with familiar problems, and some capacity for analysis and critical thinking. Shows persistence and effort to achieve broadly defined learning goals.
D	Marginal pass: Has threshold knowledge of core subject matter, potential to achieve key professional skills, and the ability to make basic judgments. Benefits from the course and has the potential to develop in the discipline.
F	Fail: Demonstrates insufficient understanding of the subject matter and lacks the necessary problem-solving skills. Shows limited ability to think critically or analytically and exhibits minimal effort towards achieving learning goals. Does not meet the threshold requirements for professional practice or development in the discipline.

* Each quiz needs to be completed in class on the date as indicated in the syllabus. There is no makeup quiz since we count only the best 4 out of the 5 quiz scores.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By completing this course, students should be able to:
1. Gain a "big picture" view of the field of project management and its strategic impacts on business success.
2. Apply relevant concepts, tools, and techniques to manage a project successfully.
3. Use project management software, such as Microsoft Project to plan for optimal utilization of resources as well as to monitor the project progress.

COURSE AI POLICY: You are prohibited from using generative AI (such as ChatGPT) to produce materials or content related to all assessment tasks such as case analysis and exam.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students at HKUST are expected to observe the Academic Honor Code all times (https://acadreg.ust.hk/generalreg.html). Zero tolerance is shown to those who are caught cheating on any form of assessment and a zero mark will be given. In particular, any act of cheating on exam will automatically result in an F grade for this course. All written assignments will be screened by Turnitin for plagiarism and points will be deducted when the similarity index is considered high (e.g., more than 25%).

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Monday (1:30-2:50pm), LSK-G005	Friday (9:00-10:20am), LSK-1005
Week 1: September 4		**Introduction** ■ Basic concepts of project management ■ Examples of business projects
Week 2: September 7, 11	**Project selection & portfolio management** ■ Project portfolio management ■ Project selection methodology	**Defining the project** ■ Project scope, priority, work package, and team ■ WBS and OBS
Week 3: September 14, 18	**MS Project lab #1** ■ Learning the basics of MS Project	**Estimating project times and costs** ■ Time and cost concepts ■ Top-down vs. bottom-up estimations, and learning curve effect
Week 4: September 21, 25 *(Quiz 1)*	**MS Project lab #2** ■ Creating and defining projects	**Developing a project schedule** ■ Project scheduling tools: CPM and Gantt chart ■ Extended techniques and consideration ■ Task relationship
Week 5: September 28, October 2	**MS Project lab #3** ■ Working with deadlines and constraints	**Managing project risk** ■ Risk management process ■ Computing the likelihood of completing a project on time ■ Advanced examples and PERT
Week 6: October 5, 9 *(Quiz 2)*	**MS Project lab #4** ■ Working with task calendar, estimates and dependencies	**Scheduling resources and costs** ■ Time-constrained vs. resource-constrained projects ■ Resource loading vs resource smoothing
Week 7: October 12, 16	**MS Project lab #5** ■ Working with resources, cost and budgets	**Reducing project duration** ■ Time cost tradeoff problem ■ Crashing vs. leveling

Week 8: October 23 *(Quiz 3)*	**Public holiday** (no class on October 19)	**Critical chain method**
Week 9: October 26, 30	**MS Project lab #6** ■ Customizing and formatting	**Case discussion** ■ KooDesign *(Case analysis due before class)*
Week 10: November 2, 6 *(Quiz 4)*	**MS Project lab #7** ■ Understanding task types and the scheduling formula	**Progress and performance measurement and evaluation** ■ Using the earned value concepts for project control ■ Performance indexes and forecasting tools
Week 11: November 9, 13	**MS Project lab #8** ■ Analyzing resource utilization ■ Tracking progress	**Managing multiple projects** **Organizational issues and project leadership** ■ Organization: Structure and culture ■ Being an effective project manager
Week 12: November 16, 20 *(Quiz 5)*	**MS Project lab #9** ■ Managing multiple projects	**Case discussion** ■ Esquel Group *(Case analysis due before class)*
Week 13: November 23, 27	**MS Project lab #10** ■ Working with resource pool for multiple projects	**Project closure**

For arrangement of class under weather warning signals, please refer to the University's official policy at https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/resource-library/bad-weather-arrangement-case-typhoon-or-rainstorm-class. If needed, announcement will be made in Canvas to hold the class in Zoom.

CASE ANALYSIS

General information:

While there is no page limit for the case analysis, it should be about two pages long, single spaced between lines but double spaced between paragraphs. *Please note that all written assignments will be checked by Turnitin for plagiarism. Penalty will be imposed for any submission with a high similarity score.* To avoid receiving a high similarity score, please do not copy and paste the case assignment questions or extensive use of exact wordings in the case.

For facilitating your case analysis, a list of suggested questions are given (below) but you don't need to follow them exactly. You can organize your answer any way you think best. Make sure your analysis is concise (use of bullet points for the answers is allowed) and avoids repeating information that already given in the case. A submission link is provided in Canvas for you to upload the analysis. Late assignment will not be accepted unless it is accompanied by a valid (e.g., medical) excuse.

Case assignment 1. KooDesign: Fast tracking a product design project
Due before class

(a) How did the client and KOODESIGN perceive the priority of performance, time, and cost in this project?

(b) How to compress the project duration to meet the client's expected market launch date?

(c) What are the disadvantages or limitations of fast tracking?

(d) How to deal with the resource overallocation issues once the project duration is compressed?

(e) How to use Microsoft Project to level the resource utilization on the existing project schedule?

Case assignment 2. Esquel Group: Fostering a culture of excellence
Due before class

(a) What made it so challenging for Esquel to plan and execute the Integral project?

(b) What were the significant risks that Esquel encountered when the Integral project needed to depend so much on external vendors?

(c) What Teresa could do differently in project control to complete the remaining construction and development activities?

Grading Criteria and Rubrics for Case Analysis

Evaluation summary (max 20 points for each criterion for a total of 100 points). *For reference only, as not all case questions will require all evaluation criteria below.*

Scoring rubrics	**Well exceed expectation (19 – 20)**	**Exceed expectation (17 – 18)**	**Meet expectation (15 – 16)**	**Below expectation (0 – 14)**
Identification of the main issues and/or problems	Identify and understand completely the main issues and problems	Identify and understand most of the main issues and problems	Identify and understand some of the main issues and problems	Identify and understand only few of the main issues and problems
Analysis of the issues	Insightful and thorough analysis of all the issues	Thorough analysis of most of the issues	Superficial analysis of some of the issues	Incomplete analysis of the issues
Comments on effective solutions or business practices	Well documented, identified, reasoned and appropriate comments/proposal on solutions to all issues	Appropriate, well thought out comments on solutions/proposal for solutions to most issues	Superficial and/or inappropriate solutions to some of the issues	Little or no action suggested, and/or inappropriate solutions to the issues
Make use of other relevant course learning materials	Apply extensively concepts learned in class or from other relevant learning materials	Apply some concepts learned in class or from other relevant learning materials	Apply a very limited amount of concepts learned in class or from other relevant learning materials	No application at all of any concepts learned in class or from other relevant learning materials
Use of language	Free of any grammatical or spelling error; good choice of words	A few grammatical or spelling errors; should have better choice of words	Some grammatical or spelling errors	Many grammatical or spelling errors
Total: Use the following ranges to reflect the overall performance. 95-100 (exceptional report writing and extremely effective); 90-94 (very good report writing and very effective); 80-89 (good and effective); 70-79 (acceptable and somewhat effective); below 70 (weak and not effective).				