School of Information Studies & SU Abroad
Spring Semester 2014

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Class Meeting: Thursdays 2-3pm GMT/3-4pm CET
Location: https://webconference.syr.edu/
Online (iLMS): http://blackboard.syr.edu

COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

Learn to collaborate globally by actually doing it with other SU Abroad students in Europe. Blended course model with residency in Florence, Italy.

KEY DATES

Course start: January 27, 2014
Florence Residency: February 28 – March 2. Students arrive in Florence late Thursday Feb. 27 and leave late afternoon/evening on Sunday March 2nd.
Course ends: April 27, 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Whether you are an IT professional, manager, architect, doctor, or musician geographically distributed collaboration and virtual organizing are increasingly important in today’s global labor market. This hands-on course will cover relevant topics in technology assisted global collaboration, with emphasis on three core areas:

1. Understand global collaboration using social and communication theories
2. Best practices for the use of these technologies
3. Experiencing global collaboration

First, students will have the opportunity to use a variety of collaboration tools, including Adobe Connect, SharePoint, Google Docs, Skype, social media technologies, email, conferencing technologies, and intranet Wiki and web applications. Students will experiment with and explore these tools in a self-guided way, encountering difficulties and challenges, and also overcoming them.

Second, students will be exposed to best practices and the successful use of these technologies within the geographically distributed enterprise. This will include online communications etiquette in varying formats (e.g. email vs. online meetings), the strengths and weaknesses of various technologies, time zones, virtual meetings, etc.

Finally, topics one and two will be addressed within the broader lens of internationally oriented virtual organizations and teams, including non-technical emphases on how organizations conduct business over
large distances, across national boundaries, within various national and international regulatory frameworks, and in widely varying cultural settings.

**Learning Outcomes**

The following learning outcomes will be addressed by the material and coursework in this course. Learning outcomes were developed by considering the *knowledge* that students should acquire and the *skills* they should develop. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a model, learning outcomes for this course include fundamental levels of learning and understanding along with higher order abilities, including analysis, evaluation, and creative action. Emphasis is on student-directed, instructor-guided activities.

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand global collaboration using social and communication theories in regard to:
  - Virtual & Distributed: What is it?
  - Types of Relations: Strong and Weak Ties
  - Temporal Organization of Distributed Work
  - Knowledge sharing in virtual global collaboration
  - Culture in global collaboration
  - Leading Global Teams
  - Social Media in Global Collaboration
  - Outsourcing

- Identify and apply best practices for the use of these technologies
  - Effective Meetings: F2F and Virtually
  - Comparing Collaborative Tools (e.g., SharePoint versus Google Doc)
  - Professional Email
  - Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Presentations

- Experience, analyze, and improve global collaboration
  - Hands on experience with global collaboration, its benefits and challenges
  - Studying real world global organizations and develop recommendations for improvement

**Course Format**

The course format will mirror the course content. Students and the instructor will be distributed across Europe and over the course of the semester use various collaborative tools and strategies to stay in touch, teach, learn and coordinate our activities. The course format is built around four elements:

**Residency in Florence, Italy:** We will all meet face-to-face in Florence, Italy for a 3-day residency February 28 – March 2. The course will include lectures, guest lectures, group work, and an excursion. There will be a course fee of approximately $250, which will cover housing and meals but not airfare. You will be responsible for organizing your own travel to the SU Florence center.

**Online Learning:** We will make use of Syracuse University’s Learning Management System powered by Blackboard (iLMS) for readings, lectures, Blogs, case studies, and discussions. These online environments are central course features and will ensure learning and project progress despite the geographical distribution of students and instructors. In addition, we will experiment with a number of other online communication tools.
Teleconferences: Weekly throughout the semester we will meet online for lectures, discussions and project presentations. These will include both small group sessions and class sessions. We will experiment with different tools to facilitate these meetings.

Global Collaboration Project: Students will be divided into groups which each span the SU European Centers. Each group will work on a semester-long project that will address the course topics. As part of the project the student are expected to conduct interviews and observations about global collaboration in their local cultures. Students will discuss various stages of their project with each other, the instructors, and local experts on global collaboration.

Technology Requirements

As an online course, students will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer and a reliable broadband internet connection. A webcam, microphone, and headset will also be required. Many laptops have building webcams and microphones. Most of the abroad centers give students access to computers but it is strongly recommended that you bring your own laptop, webcam and headset. Students who may not be able to meet these requirements should speak to the course instructor before registering to discuss alternative arrangements.

Enrollment

The course is open to all SU Abroad students associated with the SU Abroad Centers in London, Madrid, Strasbourg, and Florence. The course has a limit of 15 students.

Readings

All the required readings for the course are accessible on Blackboard. This will be a blend of textbook chapters, research papers, managerial publications, case studies, and news publications. The readings can be found in the module folder for which they are expected to be read. You will be expected to read the equivalent of approximately 2-3 articles per week.

The readings fall in three classes:

- **Read**: Important reading that you are expected to understand and use in your discussions, analysis, and assignments.
- **Review**: Know what the article is about and able to easily navigate the article later.
- **Optional**: Recommended by the instructor but not required for completing the course.

Assignments & Evaluation

Attendance and participation in teleconference (20%): This is an experiential course. Students are expected to attend each weekly teleconference session and the residency. Active participation in discussion and class exercises are important. There are many small activities that students will participate in without a specific grade, but not participating in those activities will lower the Class Participation Grade.
Discussion Board (30%): The discussion board is a central element of this globally distributed course. The weekly discussions on blackboard allow you to digest the readings and lectures, demonstrate your comprehension of the material, and engage with the instructor and fellow students. Equally important, discussion board participation prepares you for our class teleconferences.

For each discussion forum the following are expected:

- Post a minimum of 3 substantial posts on 3 different days; Sunday through Thursday.
- Initial posting has to be posted on Sunday or Monday and of 100-150 words. The initial post will not count towards your grade if posted late than Monday night.
- Reply to at least two of your classmates (these may be shorter) on the following days
- Grammar and Organization – Be sure posts are clearly written, concise, well organized, grammatically correct and spell-checked.

The discussion rubric describes how I will evaluate your participation in each discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Average/Acceptable</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connection to readings/resources</td>
<td>Discussion connects external resources or material from other weeks with the week's materials &amp; readings</td>
<td>Engages with course materials &amp; readings</td>
<td>No connection made to course materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Posting contributes to class by using the material to analyze a case or your experiences, synthesize multiple perspectives or create new perspectives.</td>
<td>The posting addresses the topic by summarizing and applying the readings</td>
<td>Comments are irrelevant or lack substance</td>
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Individual assignments (20%): The course will include a number of individual assignments including a personal blog, the online virtual games, a small field study of a global company and two small reflection papers.

Group Projects (30%): To experience global collaboration you will be placed in small groups which each have to solve a number of group assignments. These include among others: 1) conducting an online class meeting using some collaborative tool, 2) maintaining a wiki reviewing online collaborative tools, and 3) assisting a global company improving their distributed collaboration.

Focus on Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation: Strive to demonstrate higher order thinking skills in your posts and assignments. Below are two illustrations of Bloom's Taxonomy, a model that conveys lower and higher order thinking skills. While knowing, comprehending, and applying new information is very important, stretch yourself! Gear your posts toward analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating what you learn.
For example, repeating content from the readings may indicate that you have a knowledge level understanding of content, and that's great. You might also be able to apply what you've learned from the course to an assignment for the course. You could move further up the taxonomy by analyzing a real world problem using content you've learned. You could also show your higher order skills by synthesizing many content examples into a new product or by evaluating the final product and identifying areas for continuing improvement.

**LETTER GRADES**

The Grading Scale is as follows:

5 – Assignment is perfect. Students should not expect 5s.

4 – Good job. Assignment covered all bases. No major flaws.

3 – Assignment had some major flaws, but was overall sound.

2 – Assignment had multiple major flaws but still had some merit.

1 – Assignment has some significant problem, is not complete, or was not completed as according to directions

0 – Failed assignment.

At the end of the semester, a final grade will be assessed for each student. Students with mostly 4s should expect an A and mostly 3s will be an A-. Grades of 2 are closer to a B, and lower grades will be assigned to students with 1s or 0s.

**ON ATTENDANCE AND KEEPING UP**

A fundamental component of this course is spirited discussion of course topics and issues. You are required to participate during the residencies and online in the discussion boards and blogs. Expectations for your online participation will vary throughout the semester. Mostly, we expect that you log on a few times a week to update your blog, read and comment on blogs and discussions; however there will be periods when you will need to log in and commit daily time the group discussion.

Your participation grade will be based upon the overall quality of your contribution throughout the semester. When you respond, make your argument using lecture materials, your experience and fully
cited articles. Responses such as, “I agree!” and “Thanks for that great url!” are fine, but they are not counted toward participation. You are expected to be “visible” in the electronic environment. This means participation in online topics and questioning. Students should contribute something to each other’s blog and discussions.

Keeping up: Learning in an online environment and collaborating globally require careful time management.

Putting work off until the due date leads to lower grades due to poor quality work, last-minute technological failures, and the temptation to plagiarize. In an online environment last minute work is deadly. No one can comment on an entry made just before a deadline and group members cannot rely on a collaborator that does everything at the last moment. Those who procrastinate will find that, especially with the online environment, they face a constant series of challenges. Be proactive and stay continually engaged.

If you are having difficulties keeping up with the class you are encouraged to contact your instructor immediately so that appropriate arrangements can be made to alleviate the problem. It is vitally important that you keep both your instructor and your teammates aware of limitations, such as work-related travel, deadlines or illness, that impede your ability to participate in any given discussion or class related activity.

Netiquette and Online Participation: When discussing content on the Learning Management System (or any electronic forum), students should strive to use proper netiquette. Here are a few suggestions about posting in the public LMS forums: You might also want to look at Net Etiquette (a.k.a. netiquette) at http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html if you are new to on line class participation

- The tone of your postings should be similar to the tone you would use in a classroom discussion, questions from you to the professor(s) or other students liven up the conversation as they do in class.
- In classroom discussion, rather than just presenting your opinion you are encouraged to question and build on other’s opinion. If you can cite something you read to back up what you said, so much the better. When commenting on another’s point you may find it helpful to copy the idea you are discussing.
- Keep the discussion pleasant.

**Course Webpage – Learning Management System (LMS)**

Syracuse University’s learning management system Blackboard will serve as the communication center. The readings, handouts, this syllabus, and all other electronic information about the course (including your grades) will appear on Blackboard. The iSchool is in the process of moving from in own iLMS to Blackboard. The direct URL to Blackboard: http://blackboard.syr.edu/ If the university support cannot help you can go to the iSchool’s learning management support at ilms@syr.edu or Peggy Brown at 315-443-9370.

**Academic Integrity**

The structure of the course is designed to encourage exploration and to tap into your natural curiosity, and so I trust that you will neither need nor want to violate the school’s or the university’s standards for
academic conduct. Nonetheless, school regulations require me to include the following statement in the syllabus: The academic community of Syracuse University and of the Academic Integrity

The academic community of Syracuse University and of the School of Information Studies requires the highest standards of professional ethics and personal integrity from all members of the community. Violations of these standards are violations of a mutual obligation characterized by trust, honesty, and personal honor. As a community, we commit ourselves to standards of academic conduct, impose sanctions against those who violate these standards, and keep appropriate records of violations. The academic integrity statement can be found at: http://supolicies.syr.edu/ethics/acad_integrity.htm

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, multiple submission of work, misuse of resources for teaching and learning, falsifying information, forgery, bribery, and any other acts that deceive others about one's academic work or record. Students who are new to the University must learn our standards of academic practice. Students who have questions about what constitutes academic integrity should consult this document, their faculty advisors, and instructors. Students should also be aware that standards for documentation and intellectual contribution may depend on the course content and method of teaching, and should consult instructors for guidance.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In compliance with section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Syracuse University is committed to ensure that “no otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity...” If you feel that you are a student who may need academic accommodations due to a disability, you should immediately register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 804 University Avenue, Room 308 3rd Floor, 315.443.4498 or 315.443.1371 (TTD only). ODS is the Syracuse University office that authorizes special accommodations for students with disabilities.