SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This seminar is designed to help students become familiar with research in MIS. A broad range of research topics in IS literature will be reviewed in this seminar. This seminar, by any means, should not be viewed as a way to gain in-depth knowledge in a particular stream of IS research. Rather, this seminar is designed as a springboard to begin a literature review in your chosen area of interest and ultimately to develop a researchable question in that area. Finally, by the end of the semester, you should be able to constructively review journal and conference manuscripts, and make clear, concise, and interesting research presentations.

MEETING STRUCTURE

In preparation for each meeting, you will critically review and synthesize the articles assigned. In addition to critiquing existing work, the seminar will emphasize constructive discussions toward designing research studies to build upon and go beyond the status quo of the research streams studied.

EVALUATION

1. **Two article review (20%)**. You will be given two articles to review during the course of the seminar. Because these will be “live” reviews, timing and deadlines will be contingent upon the requirements of the conferences and journals for which you review. This will be coordinated by Kalle Lyytinen.

2. **Class preparation and participation (30%)**. For each class session, you should prepare a one page “conversation starter” that integrates the readings prior to each session.

3. **Research paper (50%)**. You will review the literature in an area you are considering for your dissertation, construct a conceptual framework which allows you to organize the relationships among important concepts in the area, and use the framework to offer a research question that you believe merits investigation. In addition, your paper should describe how you would research this question, and why you would believe the methodology is appropriate. The paper is due on December 7.
Guidelines for a Research Paper

The seminar research paper is expected to demonstrate the author’s capability to summarize independently results of scientific work within a specific field (over a period of c.a. 10 years). The summary should provide to an average scholarly reader an understanding of scholarly contributions to the scientific knowledge in a specific research field written in a review or survey form, and then pose a research question that merits investigation in that field. The report should also discuss used research methods which are acceptable to the specific scientific community investigated.

In short the summary should provide information about the following topics:

- basic concepts and theories
- key research problems and their evolution
- major findings and their evolution
- major criticisms and problems in research
- an assessment of the theoretical and practical impact of the research
- used research methods and their limitations
- a research problem formulation within that field

I urge you to examine some examples of how to write a survey and summary of conducted research (there are several examples in the reading packet). Use tables, charts and classifications to improve your presentation and condense the text. Don’t write just a reference of several papers you have read but try to synthesize and analyze their relationships and contributions. Develop some frameworks (or imitate others published so far), which you can use to organize your discussion and identify issues etc.

The types of questions which can be covered and assessed are:

- the significance of the obtained results; i.e. what is new, novel and practical in research
- are research designs appropriate and relevant and do they address problems that are important to the internal development of the science (theory, methods) and/or to some stakeholder groups (managers, designers, users, policy makers)
- are studies in the field examples of scholarly work and can you relate the work critically to other works in the field or reference disciplines.

In the area of research methods the types of topics discussed are:

- what research methods are used, how good are their research designs, and how well the research methods are applied (flaws, justification)
- how well the research has been carried out
In the area of communication
• how consistent and well-organized are the principal scholarly works in the area
• are there mistakes and flaws in representations,

In the area of research topic development
• how well defined the problem is in relation to the concepts developed?
• what type of research problem (how, why, what)?
• how does the question advance theory in the field?
• how does the question advance empirics in the field?
• how does the question relate to different stakeholders of the research?

A contents outline of the summary report can be
1. Introduction (1-2 pages)
2. Research field overview and summary of results (10 pages)
3. Significance of the contributions (1 page)
4. Critical review of the research methods used (1-2 pages)
5. Research problem and its motivation (3-5 pages)
6. Summary and conclusions (1-2 page)

MIDS 527 Schedule

Week of August 27 Dick Boland
Foundations
Readings:
MIS is a Mirage, J. Dearden
**Week of September 3  Dick Boland**  
**Article Review**  
Readings:  
Why I recommended that your manuscript be rejected and what you can do about it. R. Daft, in L. Cummings & P. Frost (Eds.), *Publishing in the Organizational Sciences*, 193-209.  
The Reviewer as Defense Attorney, L. Pondy, in L. Cummings & P. Frost (Eds.), *Publishing in the Organizational Sciences*, pp. 210-219.  
Writing up “intensive” research in the “standard article format” – enablement or constraint? Claremont Graduate School Working Paper, WP 10-92.

**Week of September 10  Fred Collopy**  
**Information design, Multimedia, HCI**  
Readings:  
Computing and Organizations: What We Know and What We Don’t Know, P. Attewell, J. Rule  
Week of September 17  Fred Collopy
Multiple hypotheses and condition seeking as research strategies
Readings:

Week of September 24  Youngjin Yoo
Group Support Systems/CMC
Readings:

Week of October 1  Youngjin Yoo
Strategic Use of Information Technology
Readings:

**Week of October 8  Michel Avital**

**Dependent Variable**

**Readings:**

**Week of October 15  Julie Rennecker**

**Technology Implementation**

**Readings:**
Optional—methodologically interesting

Week of October 22  Kalle Lyytinen
System Development/Research Theory
Readings:

Week of October 29  Dick Boland
Wanda Orlikowski’s work
Readings:
Week of November 5  WooYoung Chung

Technology Acceptance

Readings:


Week of November 12  Kalle Lyytinen

Infrastructures/Pervasive Computing

The reading materials for the Infrastructures lectures. There are very few classics in this area so those which are important sources of research and theory building are marked with an asterisk.

Readings: (The classics are marked with an asterisk.)


March S., Hevner A., Ram S. “Research commentary: An Agenda for Information Technology Research in Heterogeneous and Distributed Environments, Information Systems Research, 11, 4, pp. 327-341

*Williams R., Edge David, The social shaping of technology, Research Policy (1996), 365-399


**Week of November 19  WooYoung Chung**

Research Approaches
Readings:


**Week of November 26  Michel Avital**

Socio-tech perspective
Readings:


Mumford, E. "Socio-technical Design: An Unfulfilled Promise or a Future Opportunity?" In R. Baskerville, J. Stage, and J. DeGross (Eds.) Organizational and Social Perspective on Information Technology, Boston: kluwer, 2000, pp. 33-46 <<IFIP 8.2 Denmark>>


**Week of December 3  Julie Rennecker**  
Distributed work — social dimensions

**Readings:**


*A contemporary look at one type of distributed collaborative work arrangement.*

**Optional—for further interest**

Malone, Thomas W. and Crowston, Kevin (1994). The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination. *ACM Computing Surveys, 26*(1), 87-  
*An indepth development of coordination theory.*

*Not a classic, but useful descriptions of the work activities of different occupational groups with implications for technology design.*

*Again, not a classic, but adds dimensions to those addressed in the assigned papers.*