



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

**Master of Science
Learning & Organizational Change**

MSLOC 431: Making Knowledge Work (KM II)
Spring 2007

Instructor: Jack Vinson

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Required Materials

MSLOC 431 Coursepak

Contents

Course Description, Format, Outcomes, Requirements	Page 2
Weekly Class Agendas and Topics	Page 5
Course Overview	Page 10
Course Packet Readings List	Page 12

Making Knowledge Work – Course Description

The goal of KM II is to introduce students to the application of knowledge management principles, primarily in the form of important skills and tools associated with knowledge management. Students will learn how to assess the tools from the viewpoint of knowledge management and fit in specific situations. And, as with all "II" courses, students will be expected to draw on the materials they've picked up in other LOC courses as well as in their experiences outside the classroom.

Two important themes will run through the course. 1.) The seeming dichotomy between KM projects that are geared towards improving corporate performance and those that help individuals do their work better. We will explore a range to aspects of this dichotomy and see where to use it to advantage and where it can get in the way of successful projects. 2.) How to look at knowledge management or any change effort within organizations and give the project a high chance of success.

Course Format

Class time will be highly interactive with group discussions based on the readings and off-line discussions. Students will enhance discussions with their experiences, ideas inspired by the readings, and relevant materials from other classes. We will have a number of guest speakers who will bring their perspectives to the classroom, and they will be prepared for interesting discussions of their ideas and concepts.

Expected Outcomes from This Class

Given a new technology or idea, students will be able to discuss whether it is "knowledge management." Application of student experience and LOC knowledge to KM problems.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Final grades will be composed of

Written assignments: 30%

Course participation: 30%

Blogging project: 30%

Community project: 10%

Written assignments

Students will be expected to turn in about five (5) written assignments throughout the quarter. These are primarily 2-3 page written / drawn assignments as described below.

Late Assignments

Late assignments (except where special consideration has been officially given) will lose 5% of the maximum assignment grade for each calendar day (including holidays) late; assignments more than 7 days late will not be graded.

Course participation

Students are expected to participate in class discussion and keep up with readings. In addition, to ensure that the class reporters (above) are not speaking into a void, everyone will be required to engage in the discussions through blackboard.

Blogging Project

Purpose

Over the last few years blogging has become a larger and larger part of life on the internet, but the uptake of blogging in corporations and individually is relatively small outside the circle of technologists. The purpose of this quarter-long project is to introduce the class to blogging by immersion. The project will introduce you to blogging technology, blogging practice, and the blogging community. We will also use blogging in connection with the overall theme of the course: the connection between the personal and the corporate in knowledge management.

Timeline

- Week 1: Introduce blogging; How to read blogs; Set up aggregators
- Week 2: Setup blogs; Picking topics; Write initial entries
- Week 3: First blog posts due
- Week 4-9: Check-in; Three posts / week; Blogging topics
- Week 10: Final Report
Every student will provide a final written report that describes their experience with blogging and addresses questions connecting blogging to the ideas of knowledge management. This paper will be 4-6 pages.
- Week 10: Blogging Discussion
The final activity for the blogging exercise will be discussions held by several groups, taking particular perspectives on the topic of blogging and how they relate to themes that develop within the course.

Blogging Project Expectations

- Students will post to their blog 3 or more times a week (through week 9), based on topics of their choosing and recommendations from class.
- Students will read what their classmates are writing, and possibly comment on that material.
- Students will incorporate materials they discover outside of the course materials.

Class Community-of-Practice Project

The intention of this project is two-fold. For the first half of the quarter, we will read, talk and think about what elements need to be part of a “Community” project in general. In the second half of the quarter, we will apply these ideas to a specific community project and develop a proposal by the end of the quarter.

Timeline

- Week 2: Initial discussion of communities, extending from KM I and other experiences.
- Week 3: Key elements of communities. How do these differ for individuals, collectives and corporations?
- Week 5: Generic proposal structure.
- Week 6: Introduce specific example.
- Week 7: Additional requirements needed?
- Week 8: Frame out the proposal
- Week 10: Proposal presentation / discussion.

Other Course Details

Communications

The student is responsible for any announcements, assignment changes, lecture notes, verbal information, and handouts furnished during the class. I will make regular use of Blackboard for class announcements; publishing additional files; and discussions.

Office Hours

Since everyone has different schedules, I will not hold regular office hours. I will make all effort to be available on a regular basis for discussions in person or via phone or email. The best way to start this conversation is via email: jackvinson@jackvinson.com.

Academic Integrity

As an **MSLOC** student, you have entered a community of scholarship in which academic integrity is of the highest value. All students enrolled in the **MSLOC** program are expected to adhere to the standards for academic integrity. Students who violate these standards will be sanctioned as is deemed appropriate by the Director, Dean, and the faculty of the School. More information regarding academic integrity guidelines and policies can be found at <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Northwestern University is committed to providing equal access to all programming. Students with disabilities seeking accommodations are encouraged to contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (847) 467-5530 or mail to: ssd@northwestern.edu. SSD is located in the basement of Scott Hall. The SSD weblink is: <http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/>.

Week 1 March 26

Introductions

Personal - Corporate continuum

What is KM

Blogging project

- What are blogs
- Reading blogs

Assignments for next week

1. **PKM Assignment:** What does your personal knowledge management space look like? How do you organize your e-mail, contacts, files, internet favorites/bookmarks, paper filing? Do you organize it at all? Do you have a goal for this system? Do you stick to the goal? 2-3 pages (drawings / pictures encouraged).

Week 2, April 2

Blogging project

- Reading blogs
- Creating your own blog

Community project

- Goal of project
- Types of community
- experience with communities

Personal knowledge management

Assignments for next week

1. Setup your blog (<http://doohan.sesp.northwestern.edu/kmii/>) and email the URL to instructor and the T.A. Instructions available in class / online.
2. Start writing at least three posts per week on your blog through the rest of the quarter. See class discussion to understand scope of these posts.
3. One of this week's blog posts should be a longer item, discussing what you know of blogs at this point, based on your reading and other experience. Where do you see blogs fitting on the personal-collective-corporate continuum?

Week 3, April 9

Blogging project

- Review initial impressions assignments
- What is RSS?
- Adding more to your reading
- How to write and reference other sources?

Community project

- Key elements of a community
- Focus / WIIFM
- Trust

KM Projects

- Haystack Syndrome questions
- Project Management
- Layers of Buy-In

Assignments for next week

1. Three blog posts.
2. At least one of the three posts should be on the bulk pack readings thus far.
3. TBA: Preparation for SNA discussion.

Week 4, April 16

Blogging project

- check in with T.A.

SNA special session with Spiro Maroulis

- Details TBA.

Assignments for next week

1. Three blog posts.
2. Reflect on your PKM assignment with an eye towards categorization. What categories or topics are important to you? How do you prefer to think about these categories (hierarchical map, network of related terms, etc.)? How would you like to be able to add category or tag information to your system? In what ways do you see it helping your personal process? In what ways would it hinder your personal process? How might doing this today help you in a year?
3. Take your PKM system public: Reflect on how your PKM processes impact those of the people around you. What should others do to make it easy for you to find and understand what they have added to a “repository?” What should you do to make it easier for them?

Week 5, April 23

Community project

- Generic proposal structure
- What do you need to know to "build a community"
- Who should be involved
- How large is the community?

Content Management

Tagging & Categorization

Blogging project

- check in
- organizing your content

Assignments for Next Week

1. Three blog posts.

Week 6, April 30

Aimee Clum, guest speaker

Blogging project

- Check in
- Analogies

Community project

- Take what we've discussed thus far and apply to this problem

Collaboration & Social Software

Assignments for next week

1. Three blog posts
2. At least one post should explicitly reference other blogs you have been reading or have found. Link to the article, excerpt the intro or relevant passage and provide your observations or thoughts on the article.
3. TBA: Community project assignment.

Week 7, May 7

Blogging project

- Blogging in the enterprise

Community project

- Additional requirements based on the specific example
- Unique features of this community
- Special requirements of this community

Expertise / Expertise Locators

SNA Topic 2

- SNA and knowledge management
- Social capital

Assignments for next week

1. Three blog posts.

Week 8, May 14

IDEO guest speaker, Tom Stat

Innovation

Blogging project

- Check-in
- Taking the experience public
- Building conversation
- Becoming part of the community

Community project

- Frame out the proposal

Assignments for next week

1. Three blog posts
2. Community project: TBA.
3. Short paper on what you know and understand of best practices. What are best practices, based on your experience and the readings? How do you and your organization use best practices in your regular flow of work? Why (or why not) do best practices make sense in this environment? (2 pages).

Week 9, May 21

Blogging project

- Blogging projects

Evidence of knowledge work

Narrative

SNA topic 3

Assignments for next week (note, no class on Memorial Day)

1. Three blog posts.
2. Final blogging paper.
3. One post on the blog that provides an excerpt or teaser of your full paper. The goal is to encourage interested people to want to read your paper.

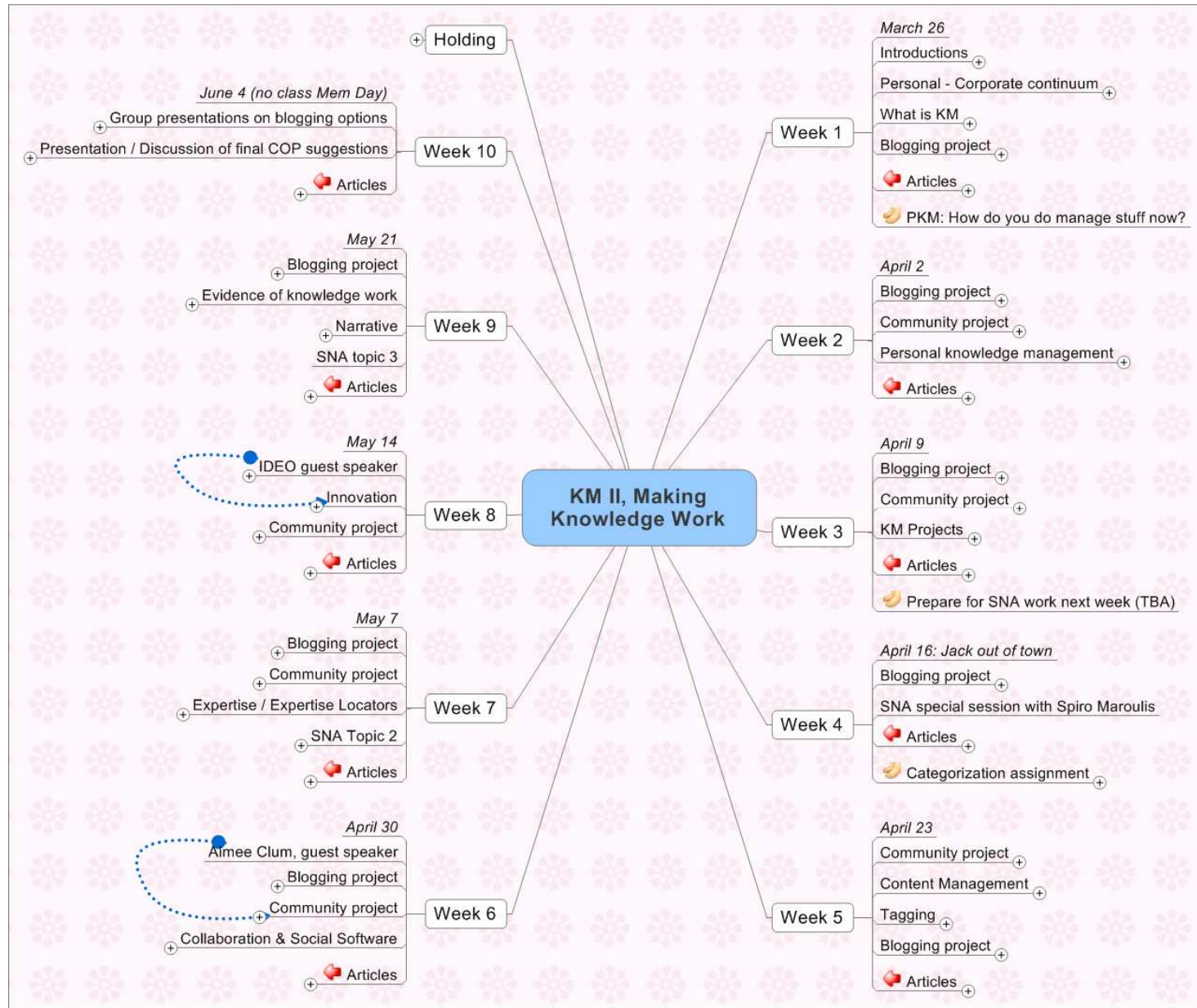
Week 10, June 4

Blogging project: presentations on blogging options

- Blogs for internal communication
- Blogs for personal use (outside of company)
- Blogs for professional use (on personal time)
- Blogs for external business communication

Community project: presentation / discussion of final COP recommendations

Course Overview



WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CLASS AGENDA	- Intros - Personal – Corporate dichotomy - What is KM	- Personal Knowledge Management	- Running KM Projects	- SNA session, discussion led by Spiro Maroulis	- Content management - Tagging & categorization	- Collaboration - Social Software	- Expertise location - Expertise - SNA topic (TBA)	- Guest speaker from IDEO (Tom Stat) - Innovation	- Narrative / Best Practices - Evidence of K.Work - SNA topic (TBA)	
Blogging Project	- Introduce project - Set up aggregators	- Reading blogs - Creating your own	- Review initial impressions - RSS - Other sources	- Check in	- Check in - Organizing content	- Check in - Blog analogies	- Check in - Enterprise blogging	- Check in - Building conversation and community	- Check in - Implement blogs	- Final blogging discussions
Community Project		- Introduce project - Types of community	- Key elements - Community purpose - Trust	None	- Structure of proposals - How to build - Who	- Unveiling an actual problem	- Requirements of example - Unique features	- Frame out a proposal	None	- Final community project discussions
REQUIRED READING & COURSE PREP	- Morgan - Drucker	- Wikipedia: Blog - McGee - Roell	- Koh, et. al. - Bartlett-Bragg	- Burt - Anklam - HBR on SNA	- van der Wal - Rainie - Gilbane - Sbarcea - Snowden	- Boyd - Beardsley, et. al. - Wilson - Uzzi & Dunlap	- Lamont - Portes - Reagans, et. al. - Gilbane - Lee	- Leonard-Barton & Straus - Gabberty & Thomas - Rosenberg	- Efimova, et. al. - Tsui - Lee & van den Steen - Balkundi & Kilduff	- Edelman - Nickols
ASSIGNMENTS DUE IN CLASS		1. PKM Assignment	1. Set up your blog 2. Blog: current impression 3. Blog: Three posts a week.	1. Blog: three posts a week. 2. Blog: comment on bulk pack readings. 3. SNA preparation (TBA)	1. Blog: three posts a week. 2. Categories and tagging of PKM. 3. PKM influence on others	1. Blog: three posts a week.	1. Blog: three posts a week. 2. Blog: reference other blogs. 3. Community project (TBA)	1. Blog: three posts a week.	1. Blog: three posts a week. 2. Community project (TBA) 3. Best practices assignment.	1. Blog: three posts a week.

KM II Course Packet Reading List

Week 1

- Morgan, R. (Mar 2007). Blogs: business blogging; your small business can benefit from using blogs to raise awareness, increase customer loyalty, and boost sales. *PC Magazine*, 26.5, 97.
- Drucker, P. (Spr 2000). Managing knowledge means managing oneself. *Leader to Leader Institute*, 16, 8-10.

Week 2

- Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com): read on-line entry for “blog”
- McGee, J. (April 1, 2002). Knowledge work as craft work. Retrieved April 1, 2005, from www.mcgeemusings.net/stories.2002/03/21/KnowledgeWorkAsCraft.html
- Roell, M. (2004). Distributed KM: Improving knowledge workers’ productivity and organizational knowledge sharing with weblog-based personal publishing. Paper presented to BlogTalk 2.0, “The European Conference on Weblogs,” Vienna, July 5

Week 3

- Koh, J., Kim, Y., Butler, B. & Bock, G. (Feb 2007). Encouraging participation in virtual communities. *Communications of the ACM*, 50(2), 69-73.
- Bartlett-Bragg, A. (2003). Blogging to learn, *Knowledge Tree*.
- Reference: Goldratt, E. (1991). Haystack syndrome: sifting information out of the data ocean, North River Press.
- Reference: Goldratt, E. (1997). Critical chain, North River Press.

Week 4

- Burt, R. (2000). *The network structure of social capital*. In B. Staw, & Sutton, R. (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior*, 22. New York, NY, JAI Press.
- Anklam, P. (May 2003). KM and the social network, *Inside Knowledge*, 6(8).
- Cross, R. Liedtka, J., & Weiss, L. (Mar 2005). A practical guide to social networks, *Harvard Business Review*. Reprint #R0503H.
- Reference: Burt, R. (2005). Brokerage and closure: an introduction to social capital.
- Reference: SNA examples from Valdis Krebs, SNA practitioner

Week 5

- Blog post: Van der Wal, T. (April 1, 2005). Explaining and showing broad and narrow folksonomies. *Personal InfoCloud*.

- Lee, R. (Jan 2007). 28% of online Americans have used the internet to tag content. *Pew Internet & American Life Project*.
- KM as a framework for managing knowledge assets. *Gilbane Report*, 12(9), 2005, www.gilbane.com.
- Sbarcea, K. (Feb 2007). Corporate sustainability and the role of knowledge management: preliminary exploration. creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/au
- Snowden, D., (July 2002). Complex acts of knowing: paradox and descriptive self awareness. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Special Issue, 6(2), 100-111.

Week 6

- Boyd, S. (May 2003). Are you ready for social software? *Darwin Magazine*, www.darwinmag.com
- Beardsley, S., Johnson, B., & Manyika, J. (2006). Competitive advantage from better interactions. *McKinsey Quarterly On-line*
- Wilson, T. (Oct 2002). The nonsense of 'knowledge management'. *Information Research*, 8 (1)
- Uzzi, B., & Dunlap, S. (Dec 2005). How to build your network, *Harvard Business Review*, 53-60. Reprint #R0512B.
- Reference: Also see Stowe Boyd's continuing commentary on social software at /Message
- Reference: Jones, L., & Lerman, K. Social browsing on flickr
- Reference: Leuf, B., & Cunningham, W. (2001). *The wiki way: quick collaborating on the web*. New York: Addison Wesley
- Reference: Ebersbach, A., Glaser, M., & Heigl, R. (2005) *Wiki web collaboration*. Berlin: Springer.

Week 7

- Lamont, J. (Jan 2003). Expertise location and the learning organization (tool overview). *KMWorld*, 12(1).
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 1-24.
- Reagans, R., & McEvily, B. (2003). Network structure and knowledge transfer: the effects of cohesion and range. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48(2), 240-267.
- Blogs and wikis technologies for enterprise applications. *Gilbane Report*, 12(10), 2005.
- Blog post: Lee, J. I don't need no stinkin' blog. *APQC Knowledge Management blog*

Week 8

- Leonard-Barton, D. & Straus, S. (July/Aug 1997). Putting your company's whole brain to work. *Harvard Business Review*, 75 (4),110-122. Reprint #97407.
- Gabberty, J. & Thomas, J. (2007). Driving creativity: extending knowledge management into the multinational corporation. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Information, Knowledge and Management*, 2.
- Rosenberg, M. The seven myths of knowledge management. Copyright DiamondCluster International, Inc.
- Reference: Leonard-Barton, D. (1995). Wellsprings of knowledge: building and sustaining the sources of innovation. *HBS Press*

Week 9

- Efimova et. al. Discovering the iceberg of knowledge work: a weblog case. *Publication pending*.
- Tsui, E. Technologies for personal and peer to peer knowledge management. www2.csc.com/lef/programs/completed_02.html
- Deishin, L. & Van den Steen, E. (Feb 2007). Managing know-how. *HBS Working Papers*.
- Balkundi, P. & Kilduff, M. (2005). The ties that lead: a social network approach to leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 941–961.

Week 10

- New frontiers in employee communications. Edelman Change and Employee Engagement in partnership with PeopleMetrics, 2006.
- Nickols, F. (2004). Meeting the challenge of the shift to knowledge work. Retrieved from home.att.net/~nickols/articles.htm