



School of Information Management

## **INFO 560 COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE**

Trimester Two 2007

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

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#### **Contact Details**

Course Coordinator: Derek Stephens  
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Easterfield Building, Kelburn Parade, Wellington  
Tel 463 5875  
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**Course Dates:** 9 July 2007 to 12 October 2007  
**Course Time:** 5.00-6.30 p.m.  
**Venue:** SIM Online Conferencing System

#### **Course Description:**

INFO 560 examines the use of ethical competitive intelligence techniques for information gathering on competitors, the market, and environment. CI enables 'actionable intelligence' to be generated for strategic and tactical management decisions. An ethical approach is necessary to avoid misconceptions of industrial espionage.

INFO 560 will be taught as a synchronous distance teaching course, and will be available as an elective in the MLIS programme, and to information professionals for continuing professional development as a Certificate of Proficiency.

Students will gain a broad introduction to:

- the value of information and intellectual capital to organisations;
- competitive intelligence cycle functions, the role of counter-competitive intelligence and the work of CI units;
- company structures and financial reporting requirements;
- intellectual property and related legislation;
- a range of hardcopy and electronic competitor and business information sources;
- ethical behaviour when conducting CI;
- importance to organisations of being aware of competitor activity and the external factors affecting success;
- information of value to organisations: external and internal, and its likely availability, covering sources and protections;
- use of DIALOG (or other) online host database as a CI source;
- web techniques for CI;
- the importance of organisational culture in CI;
- personal qualities required for success.

### **Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Undertake library and Internet research and record their findings according to standard academic requirements.
2. Understand some of the important historical, philosophical, technical and commercial principles underpinning competitive intelligence
3. Evaluate the business opportunities and limitations that competitive intelligence considerations place upon managers.
4. Appreciate the use of competitive intelligence as a management tool, and how it can contribute to the organization's general governance framework.
5. Discuss competitive intelligence, what it is, what makes it important, and what the consequences can be for managers in business and government.
6. Explain the ethical considerations and practices that must be adhered to within competitive intelligence units.
7. Provide advice regarding counter competitive intelligence activities to safeguard an organization's intellectual assets.

### **Time commitment**

To achieve satisfactory grades, you should expect to 12.5 hours per week on INFO 560 (including time spent in the weekly session). Most sessions will commence with an overview of the topic for the week, case study examples and discussion. Case study and relevant articles will be made available via Blackboard the week before the session. The idea is to stimulate discussion and get students thinking about the subject area in a typical business context. Hands-on computer-based sessions will take place as workshops, in Wellington and Auckland, on the use of DIALOG for competitive intelligence. Times and place will be advised in due course. The balance of your time should be spent reading any provided material, on Blackboard and on the Internet, and doing your preparation work for the weekly session and assignments.

**Mandatory course requirements:**

- Completion of written projects on time and in format required
- Attending at least 9 of the 12 of classes

**Course schedule**

INFO 560 will be held in the second trimester (July-October) of the 2007 academic year. There will be no sessions for two weeks during the mid-trimester break (20 August-2 September).

**Internal and Open Learning students (combined class)**

There will be a 1.5 hour evening class each week on Mondays from 5.00-6.30 p.m. using Internet conferencing. See 'Online information' for details.

**Schedule**

Date	Week	Topic	Readings
9 July	1	Overview of competitive intelligence and introduction to assignments	Murphy ch 1-3
16 July	2	Discussion of P and G case study. CI systems and approaches	Online readings Murphy ch 3-5 and 13
23 July	3	Primary and secondary sources	Murphy ch7-15
30 July	4	Web-based searching	Workbooks to be provided
6 Aug	5	DIALOG session	Workbooks to be provided
13 Aug	6	Financial analysis	Murphy ch 16-21. Workbooks to be provided
<b>Mid-trimester break</b>			
3 Sept	7	National differences in attitudes and approaches to CI	Online readings
10 Sept	8	Ethical issues in CI	Murphy ch 6 and online readings
17 Sept	9	Counter competitive intelligence	Murphy ch 24 and online readings
24 Sept	10	Origins of CI and development of a CI timeline	<a href="http://km.lboro.ac.uk/kmci/">http://km.lboro.ac.uk/kmci/</a>
1 Oct	11	Research into the reasons for CI failures – a case study example	Online readings
8 Oct	12	Final review and discussion of implications for CI careers	Online readings

**Course Resources:**

Extensive use will also be made of the Internet to obtain current material. Student assignments will also be prepared from information available in the library and on the Internet, but care should be taken to ensure that only authoritative sources are used. Because the topics dealt with change so

fast, reading lists and papers will be made available on CD-ROM or through Blackboard. Use will also be made of the teaching and communications potential available through Blackboard.

There are various books on competitive intelligence such as: Christopher Murphy, *Competitive intelligence: gathering, analysing and putting it to work*. Gower, 2005. Other authors and editors include Craig Fleisher, Leonard Fuld, Benjamin Gilad, and Conor Vibert. Any one of these would be suitable background reading. In addition, students will be provided with PDFs of relevant journal articles for discussion in-class across a range of topics.

For those considering a career in CI the main professional association is the Society for Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP) <<http://www.scip.org/>> which has a chapter in most US states and some international affiliates, in the UK for example. The Special Libraries Association <http://www.sla.org/> has a competitive intelligence division for members. Students can join for \$US35.

### Assessment

None of the LIM courses has a final examination. This course will be internally assessed, and there will be two assignments due during the trimester.

Assignment	Date due	Value	Length
<b>1. Competitive intelligence report</b>	10 Sept.	50%	2200 words max.
<b>2. Essay on ethics</b>	1 Oct.	35%	1600 words max.
<b>3 CI Historical example</b>	8 Oct.	15%	600 words max.

### Late assignments

In keeping with standards of professionalism appropriate to this programme, it is expected that deadlines will be honoured. In fairness to students who complete work on time, work submitted after the due date / time will incur penalties for lateness. The penalty is up to 5 % of the report's grade per day (or part thereof) up to one week after the due date. Assignments will not be accepted after this date unless an exemption has been granted by the course coordinator. Unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (*e.g.* serious illness, family bereavement) may lead to a waiver of this penalty but need to be discussed with the Course coordinator as soon as possible.

### Word count

All work submitted **MUST** contain a word count, easily available from your word-processing program. Bibliographic references are not counted. The word count should appear under your name. (**Note:** your name should appear only on the back of the last page of the assignment.)

## Presentation

Assignments must be submitted in hard copy as outlined below. They should be computer-formatted, 12pt font, 1.5 line spacing, single sided papers, to allow for written comments on the paper. Length of the document should be between 10 to 15 pages. Where appropriate, use should be made of the APA bibliographic convention.

## Plagiarism

You should read and take heed of the statement on collaboration and plagiarism in the “General University information” section; you *must* acknowledge all sources you use. You are expected to present information in your own words, based on your understanding of the background material you read. ***Any assignment which is extensively plagiarised will receive an automatic fail grade.***

## Submission

Remember to keep a copy of each assignment you send us, just in case the original goes astray. Assignments should be submitted as follows:

### Open learning students:

- **Post:** To LIM O.L.—INFO 560, School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington.
- **Courier:** To LIM O.L.—INFO 560, Room EA121, Easterfield Building, Kelburn Campus, Victoria University of Wellington.

### Internal students:

- **Post:** To LIM INTERNAL—INFO 560, School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington.
- **Deliver:** To the LIM Assignment Box, 1st floor, Easterfield Building. This box is cleared as soon as the Administration Office opens on the morning following the due date. Any late assignments should be delivered to the following address:
- **Courier or late delivery:** To LIM INTERNAL—INFO 560, Room EA121, Easterfield Building, Kelburn Campus, Victoria University of Wellington.

## Online information

You will be required to use the resources for this course which are available in the School’s Blackboard online learning environment:

<http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>

The Blackboard Web-based learning environment will be used to post course information notices, and enable ongoing electronic discussion forums on topics or issues introduced in or out of class. Students are also encouraged to use Blackboard for information sharing, and to post questions for electronic and in-class discussion. You should also read the appropriate module Web pages in conjunction with the module readings and course notes.

Details on how to access Blackboard are in the *Administration Handbook*, but if you have any difficulties logging on please contact the Help Desk, at:

[its-service@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:its-service@vuw.ac.nz)

All students will be automatically enrolled in 'LIM Programmes Information' on Blackboard. General announcements and information will be posted here, and students should check this site regularly.

### **Internet conferencing**

Distance sessions conducted via the Internet using the Chatterbox application; in order to participate students will need an Internet-connected PC running Windows XP or Windows 2000, microphone, and headphones/speakers. To connect, go to the Internet conferencing page (and read the "Getting Started" information) at

<https://conferencing.sim.vuw.ac.nz/>

There is also an 'Internet Conferencing' button linking to this page in Blackboard.

*Some days before your first session, and at least 15 minutes before each subsequent session, you should test your system by going to the Echo Room.* Regular classes will be held in the main LIM Conference Room; additional Discussion Rooms are available for breakout groups, and as a "waiting room" if a class is proceeding in the main LIS room. Study groups can use the discussion rooms out of regular class times.

For further information, follow the help links on the Internet Conferencing page; details, including screen name conventions, are also available on Blackboard under LIM Programmes Information.

## *General University information*

### **Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office**

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

### **Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office**

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1).

The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

## **General University Statutes and Policies**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the VUW homepage at:

[http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/calendar\\_intro.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html)

Information on the following topics is available electronically at:

[http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/downloads/course\\_outlines\\_general\\_information.pdf](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/downloads/course_outlines_general_information.pdf)

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html>

## **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email [manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz) or phone (04) 463 5233 ext. 8977. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email [pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz) or phone (04) 463 5842.