

CIS 84000 Doctoral Seminar: Virtual Teams and Virtual Communities

Prof. R. Benbunan-Fich, Spring 2020

Meeting Times: Thurs 10-12noon

Classroom: TBA Conference Room

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Course Objectives and Description

This course examines the theories and methodologies used in the study of virtual teams and virtual communities. Virtual teams (groups of people working together but distributed in time and/or place) have become increasingly widespread for both managerial and technical collaboration and for decision making. These teams are transforming the nature of work and reshaping organizations. Online Communities are larger groups of people with common interests or goals that meet through Computer-Mediated Communication Systems. Some of these communities are cooperative and involve specific contributions from its members for their sustainability.

The main objective of this course is to expose doctoral students to diverse theoretical approaches, methods, levels of analysis, and perspectives used to research virtual teams and virtual communities. Students are expected to gain a thorough understanding of the current research literature as well as the challenges in these areas.

Since it is a doctoral seminar, this course entails extensive reading and discussion of the recent research literature on this topic. Active student participation is essential. Classes will follow a seminar style, with student presentations, active student participation and debates. Thus, students are expected and required to come to class fully prepared to discuss all the assigned readings. Class participation grades will be allocated on the basis of the quality, quantity and regularity of contribution.

Grading

The final grade in the seminar will be based upon the following weights:

In-class presentations and participation	20%
Assignments	20%
Written Exam	30%
Term Paper	30%

Presentations/Participation: Students should read the papers before coming to class and be ready to discuss all of them. In each session, students will present and summarize one paper and the rest of the participants will act as discussants. Aside from prior preparation, each student should actively participate in the critical evaluation of all the papers contribute with useful insights to the discussion.

Assignments: Every student is expected to prepare ahead of class a set of discussion questions integrating all the assigned papers. In addition, there will be other individual assignments (such as critiques of theory and/or empirical sections of papers, and immersion in an online community) where students will develop further their critical thinking and writing skills.

Written Exam: At about two thirds of the semester, the students will take a written examination to demonstrate their knowledge of the assigned readings and the research challenges in this area as well as the integration of the material covered in the seminar.

Term Paper: Throughout the semester, the students will work with the professor to prepare a literature review paper summarizing the current papers on this topic. Milestones and deadlines will be assigned throughout to guide the students in the data collection, analysis and synthesis of the selected papers. The term paper must be submitted during the final exam week. Late papers will not be accepted.

Readings

Electronic copies of all the articles assigned as readings will be posted on Blackboard along with any other relevant material for the course.

Weekly Schedule

The following is an overview of the topics and the corresponding readings for each week. These readings include a selection of articles published recently in IS journals. Additional references on each topic are available upon request for students interested in a deeper knowledge of a particular area. This is a tentative plan, subject to revision as opportunities and the interests of the group evolve.

Week 1 (1/30): Introduction – VT and OC in IS

Altschuller, S. and Benbunan-Fich, R. (2013) The Pursuit of Trust in Ad-hoc Virtual Teams: How much Electronic Portrayal is Too Much? *European Journal of Information Systems* 22 (3), 619-636.

Liu, Y., Li, H., Goncalves, J., Kostakos, V., and Xiao, B. (2016) Fragmentation or cohesion? Visualizing the process and consequences of information system diversity, 1993–2012. *European Journal of Information Systems* 25(6), 509–533.

Raghuram, S.; Hill, N.; Gibbs, J.; Maruping, L. (2018). Virtual work: Bridging research clusters. *Academy of Management Annals* 13(1), 1-34.

Week 2 (2/6): Virtual Team Theories

Dennis A. R., Fuller R. M. and Valacich, J.S (2008) Media, tasks, and communication processes: a theory of media synchronicity. *Management Information Systems Quarterly* 32(3), 575–600.

DeSanctis, G. and Poole, M.S. (1994) Capturing Complexity in Advanced Technology Use: Adaptive Structuration Theory. *Organization Science* 5(2) 121-147.

Zigurs, I. And Buckland, B. 1998. A theory of task technology fit and group support systems effectiveness. *MIS Quarterly* 22(3), 313-334.

Week 3 (2/13): Virtual Team Theories and Reviews

Gallivan, M. and Benbunan-Fich, R. (2005) A Framework for Analyzing Levels of Analysis Issues in Studies of E-collaboration. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* 48 (1), 87-104.

McGrath, J. E. 1991. Time, Interaction and Performance, *Small Group Research* 22(2), 147-174.

Shen, Z., Lyytinen, K. and Yoo, Y. (2015) Time and information technology in teams: a review of empirical research and future research directions. *European Journal of Information Systems* 24 (5), 492–518.

Week 4 (2/20): Online Communities - Theories and Reviews

Butler, B. S.; Bateman, P. J.; Gray, P. H.; Diamant, E. I. (2014) An attraction–selection–attrition theory of online community size and resilience. *MIS Quarterly* 38 (3), 699-728.

Johnson, S. L.; Faraj, S.; Kudaravalli, S. (2014) Emergence of Power Laws in Online Communities: The Role of Social Mechanisms and Preferential Attachment. *MIS Quarterly* 38(3), 795-821.

Dissanayake, I.; Zhang, J.; Gu, B. (2015) Task Division for Team Success in Crowdsourcing Contests: Resource Allocation and Alignment Effects. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 32(2), 8-39.

Week 5 (2/27): Virtual Team Performance

Bartelt, V. L.; Dennis, A. R. (2014) Nature and Nurture: The Impact of Automaticity and the Structuration of Communication on Virtual Team Behavior and Performance. *MIS Quarterly* 38 (2), 521-A4.

Espinosa, J. A.; Nan, N.; Carmel, E. (2015) Temporal Distance, Communication Patterns, and Task Performance in Teams. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 32 (1), 151-191.

Magni, M.; Ahuja, M. K.; Maruping, L. M. (2018) Distant but Fair: Intra-Team Justice Climate and Performance in Dispersed Teams. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 35(4), 1031-1059.

Week 6 (3/5): Virtual Team Communication and Collaboration

Curtis, Aaron M.; Dennis, Alan R.; McNamara, Kelly O. (2017) From Monologue to Dialogue: Performative Objects to Promote Collective Mindfulness in Computer-Mediated Team Discussions. *MIS Quarterly* 41(2), 559-588.

Peng, C-H.; Lurie, N. H.; Slaughter, S. A. (2019) Using Technology to Persuade: Visual Representation Technologies and Consensus Seeking in Virtual Teams. *Information Systems Research* 30 (3), 948-962.

Srivastava, S. C.; Chandra, S. (2018) Social Presence in Virtual World Collaboration: An Uncertainty Reduction Perspective Using a Mixed Methods Approach. *MIS Quarterly* 42(3), 779-819.

Week 7 (3/12): Team Processes and Members' Perceptions

Cummings, J.; Dennis, A.R. (2018) Virtual First Impressions Matter: The Effect of Enterprise Social Networking Sites on Impression Formation in Virtual Teams. *MIS Quarterly* 42 (3), 697-726.

Robert, L, P.; Dennis, A, R.; Ahuja, M, K. (2018) Differences are Different: Examining the Effects of Communication Media on the Impacts of Racial and Gender Diversity in Decision-Making Teams. *Information Systems Research* 29(3), 525-545.

Havakhor, T.; Sabherwal, R. (2018) Team Processes in Virtual Knowledge Teams: The Effects of Reputation Signals and Network Density. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 35 (1), 266-318.

Week 8 (3/19): Contribution in Online Communities

Ray, S.; Kim, S. S.; Morris, J. G. (2014) The Central Role of Engagement in Online Communities. *Information Systems Research* 25(3), 528-546.

Hsien-Tung Tsai; Bagozzi, R. P. (2014) Contribution Behavior in Virtual Communities: Cognitive, Emotional, and Social Influences. *MIS Quarterly* 38(1), 143-166.

?? Chen, W.; Wei, X.; Xiaoguo Zhu, Kevin (2018) Engaging Voluntary Contributions in Online Communities: A Hidden Markov Model. *MIS Quarterly* 42(1), 83-108.

Week 9 (3/26): Dynamics of Participation in Online Communities

Chee W. P.; Kankanhalli, A.; Tan, B. C. Y. (2015) What Motivates Contributors vs. Lurkers? An Investigation of Online Feedback Forums. *Information Systems Research* 26(4), 773-792.

Khansa, L.; Ma, X.; Liginlal, D.; Kim, S. S. (2015) Understanding Members' Active Participation in Online Question-and-Answer Communities: A Theory and Empirical Analysis. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 32(2), 162-203.

Benjamin, V.; Zhang, B.; Nunamaker, J. F.; Chen, H. (2016) Examining Hacker Participation Length in Cybercriminal Internet-Relay-Chat Communities. *Journal of Management Information Systems* 33(2), 482-510.

Week 10 (4/2): Communication and Conflict in Virtual Teams

Dewan, S.; Ho, Y-J.; Ramaprasad, J. (2017) Popularity or Proximity: Characterizing the Nature of Social Influence in an Online Music Community. *Information Systems Research* 28(1), 117-136.

Kuang-Yuan Huang; Chengalur-Smith, I. S.; Pinsonneault, A. (2019) Sharing Is Caring: Social Support Provision and Companionship Activities in Healthcare Virtual Support Communities. *MIS Quarterly* 43 (2), 395-435.

Faraj, S.; Kudaravalli, S.; Wasko, M. (2015) Leading Collaboration in Online Communities. *MIS Quarterly* 39(2), 393-412.

Spring Break (from 4/8 to 4/16)– No classes

Week 11 (4/23): Sustainability of Online Communities

Bock, G.-W.; Ahuja, M. K.; Suh, A.; and Yap, L. X. (2015) Sustainability of a Virtual Community: Integrating Individual and Structural Dynamics. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 16 (6), Article 3.

Huang, Peng; Tafti, Ali; Mithas, Sunil (2018) Platform Sponsor Investments and User Contributions in Knowledge Communities: The Role of Knowledge Seeding. *MIS Quarterly* 42(1), 213-240.

Week 12 (4/30): Written Examination

Week 13 (5/7): Student Presentations and Feedback

Week 14 (5/14): Course Wrap-up and New Research Directions