Fall 2019
INSC 544: Business Information
The School of Information Sciences
The University of Tennessee
Class Meetings: Wednesday, 6:30pm – 9:10pm EST
Location: Online

Chris Cunningham, Adjunct Professor
Office Hours: by Appointment
Email: ccunni29@utk.edu

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1345 Circle Park Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996-0341
SIS Office: 865.974.2148
Fax (SIS): 865.974.4667

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Principles and practice of gathering and synthesizing business intelligence, including competitive intelligence, environmental scanning, and issues management: information evaluation and synthesis; role of strategic information in modern organizations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain the nature and importance of strategic intelligence activities;
- Identify and gather major sources of information to use in intelligence analysis;
- Describe ethical practices in intelligence activities;
- Design and apply structured intelligence methods to the analysis of open source information for national security, market intelligence, and other areas of practice.
- Work in teams to identify and analyze alternative scenarios for specific organizational contexts
- Design effective communications for conveying intelligence information to targeted audiences.

REQUIRED READINGS
There is no required textbook. However, readings will be assigned via Canvas

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

Students are not required to have had any previous experience with business or business information. The focus of the course is to introduce students to commonly used business information sources, and an overview of the work environment in a corporate setting or a public library providing business information service.
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
Students are expected to have adequate computing skills, including use of word processing, Web browsers, e-mail, PowerPoint, and Canvas. You should regularly visit the Canvas course site for class announcements, updates, assignments, and class discussions. You are required to purchase a headset with microphone to participate actively in the class. It is your responsibility to ensure your technology is working. If you encounter technical problems during class meetings, please post questions on the text chat and receive feedback from Tech Support. For immediate support: call 865-974-3117 or 1-877-974-3117.
Please note: Your UTK email address will be used as default for all communications in this course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS
For every written assignment:
• Papers (8½” x 11” paper) should be double spaced
• Use Calibri 12-point font
• 1-inch margin on all sides.
• Put page numbers at the bottom of each page
• Put your name, title of the assignment and course name on the top of the first page of text.

For citing sources, use APA style (Concise rules of APA style (2010), 6th ed., Washington, DC: American Psychological Association). If you do not own an APA style manual and it’s inconvenient to visit a library, you can find the basic guidelines at
http://www.apastyle.org
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Business Information Report topic due</td>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Online Searching Exercises (5% each x 5)</td>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Personal Reflection Exercise</td>
<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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1) CLASS PARTICIPATION (15%) (ONGOING)
Engagement with colleagues and course materials is essential to learning. Students should engage with each other throughout the semester via the Discussion Board on the course Canvas web site. Participation will be graded on frequency and quality of contributions.
2) **Online Searching Exercises (5% each x 5 = 25%) (Due: 10/16)**

Each student will search for answers to the questions listed below on 1) two business databases from the Library and 2) Google. Summarize the results of each search including: a) the strategy, results, and source(s) where you found the information, and b) a comparison of your experience with the databases vs Google. At the end of your paper, you should also include an overall reflection on your experience with this exercise.

Online Search Questions:

1. What was the market share for the Amazon Kindle in the U.S. in 2007?
2. What is the SIC code for Toyota?
3. Who are the main competitors for cable television in the U.S.?
4. How many deaths were there from tornadoes in the U.S. in 2009?
5. What was the closing stock price for Viacom at the end of the third quarter 2011?

The paper should be approximately 8 - 10 double-spaced pages in length. Please use Arial font, and a 12 font size. Be sure to cite all of your sources according to the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Use parenthetical references for those that you cite within the body of the text and a reference list at the end of your paper.

3) **Business Information Report (40%) (Due: 11/20)**

**Assumption:** Each student should assume that you are working in a corporate library and have been asked to prepare a background report for your executive staff about a competitor. For example, in Topic 1, you work in the grocery industry and Kroger is a competitor. At the beginning of the report you must state how you define your market: for example, is it at the national level? International? Regional? Is it segmented in a particular way? For example, are you only interested in the prescription market for Pfizer or just over-the-counter products?

You will choose between one of the following topics. You need to send your first and second choices to your instructor by no later than September 25; those who have not signed up by that date will be assigned a topic. Total page length should be no more than 15 double-spaced pages.

**Topic 1. What market position does Bi-Lo hold in the US grocery market?**

A. Executive Summary

B. Brief company snapshot of Bi-Lo Supermarkets: Include company mission and goals, description of core businesses, performance over the last 3 years. Include a short factual account of the history of Bi-Lo.

C. An analysis of Bi-Lo’s current position in relation to the market. You will need to identify the market, market structure and recent trends. You are likely to find it helpful to analyze the market using a framework such as PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technical factors) and look at Bi-Lo’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis). When addressing the question of whether it can maintain its top position, look at opinions emerging from different constituencies. (*Section C should be the largest section: about half the report*)
D. Conclusions. Summarize the main points, drawing on information in sections B and C.

E. Bibliography and Appendices

**Topic 2. Can the Apollo Group maintain its success in the U.S. distance education market?**

A. Executive Summary

B. Brief company snapshot of the Apollo Group: Include company mission and goals, description of key businesses and products, performance over the last 3 years, notable mergers and acquisitions.

C. An analysis of Apollo Group’s current position in relation to the market. You will need to identify the market, market structure and recent trends. You are likely to find it helpful to analyze the market using a framework such as PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technical factors). Note that regulatory factors and Government policies are important in this international industry. Also look at Apollo Group’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis). *(Section C should be the largest section: about half the report)*

D. Conclusions. Summarize your views, drawing on information in sections B and C.

E. Bibliography and Appendices

**Topic 3. Is Southwest Airlines still the market leader in the U.S. budget airline sector?**

A. Executive Summary

B. Brief company snapshot of Southwest Airlines: Include company aims and mission, description of core businesses, performance over the last 2-3 years, notable acquisitions, its place within its parent company’s portfolio.

C. An analysis of Southwest’s current position in relation to the market. You will need to identify the market, market structure and recent trends. You are likely to find it helpful to analyze the market using a framework such as PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technical factors). Note that trends relating to the travel industry more generally will be relevant. Also look at Southwest’s specific Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis). *(Section C should be the largest section: about half the report)*

D. Conclusions. Summarize your views, drawing on information in sections B and C.

E. Bibliography and Appendices
**Topic 4. How does the future look for Sprint as a cell phone network provider?**

A. Executive Summary

B. Brief company snapshot of Sprint. Include company mission and goals, description of core businesses, performance over the last 3 years, notable recent company events.

C. An analysis of Sprint’s current position in relation to the market. You will need to identify the market, market structure and recent trends. You are likely to find it helpful to analyze the market using a framework such as PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technical factors). Also look at Sprint’s specific Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis). Focus most particularly on its US market. *(Section C should be the largest section: about half the report)*

D. Conclusions. Summarize your views, drawing on information in sections B and C.

E. Bibliography and Appendices

**Topic 5. Can Comcast maintain its market share in US homes?**

A. Executive Summary

B. **Brief** company snapshot of Comcast: Include company aims and mission, description of core businesses, performance over the last 3 years, notable recent company events. You should include a note of where Comcast is based and a brief history.

C. An analysis of Comcast’s current position in relation to the market, including the market, market structure and recent trends. You are likely to find it helpful to analyze the market using a framework such as PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technical factors). Also look at Comcast’s specific Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis). *(Section C should be the largest section: about half the report)*

D. Conclusions. Summarize your views, drawing on information in sections B and C.

E. Bibliography and Appendices

**Please note: APPLIES TO ALL OPTIONS**

For section B, you must use *at least* two sources per company (e.g. two company databases) *in addition* to the company website.

For section C, you will be expected to synthesize material from a wide range of resources such as news stories, market research, official statistics and the trade press. Don’t forget to search Dialog!
Writing Tips
Being able to write concisely and clearly is an important skill, and you must keep to the page limit or you will lose points. Consider the following:

‡ See whether there are any long lists or a very detailed account of something (e.g. of a deal, or of company finances) that could really go in as an appendix, leaving just a brief summary in the main report.
‡ If you have a lot of direct quotations, it is better to summarize what is being said in your own words (although you still need to reference the source).
‡ You could simply go through the whole report and tighten up the narrative, cutting out any adjectives or phrases that do not really add any extra important information. You can sometimes cut a surprising amount doing this.

Finally, you could see whether there is any information that could be better conveyed in a chart or other graphic, rather than by a few paragraphs of text.

4) PERSONAL REFLECTION (20 %) (DUE: 12/4)
Students will write a 450-550 word reflection of the company project exercise. Students should address:

- The overall perception of the exercise
- Particular challenges of the exercise
- What was learned from the exercise and how you could improve
- Suggestions for improving the exercise itself

SUBMISSION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please submit all assignments in Microsoft Word using Canvas. Please do NOT submit pdf files. All assignments should be in electronic format, submitted with the following file structure:

Last name of student_assignment name.doc
Example: Cunningham_reflection.doc

COURSE POLICIES

COMMUNICATION
I encourage you to ask questions and give me feedback at any time so that I may assist you or adjust my teaching plan. The best way to reach me is by email). You are welcome to make appointments and meet with me in person or chat with me via Zoom.
I am required to communicate with you through your UTK email address. If you prefer to use another address, consult the [OIT Helpdesk](https://oit.utk.edu) to obtain directions for forwarding your UTK mail to your preferred address if you don’t wish to check both accounts.

**Computing Requirements**

You must have adequate computing skills, including but not limited to use of word processing, Web browsers, e-mail, listservs, and Canvas. You must learn how to submit your assignments using Canvas. The [Office of Information Technology (OIT)](https://oit.utk.edu) provides training classes in using varied technologies for students at no charge (advance registration is required).

You must obtain a UT email account and subscribe to the SIS student listserv. In addition, you must have the PowerPoint Reader or the regular PowerPoint software installed on your computer in order to download the lecture notes from Canvas.

**Class Attendance Policy**

It is assumed that each student be present and speak in class -- the equivalent of a "B" grade for "participation." Missing more classes or failing to participate will lower your grade; frequent participation will raise the grade.

Regular attendance is required and necessary. A substantial portion of your grade will be based on in-class work and participation. Unexplained absences will affect your grade; there will be a penalty of three (3) points for each class you miss without acceptable reasons. Contact me as soon as possible if you cannot attend class. If you will be absent from class, you must:

- Inform me in advance or as soon as possible after class
- Submit any work due from the missed class period
- Listen to class recording (from the previous semester; available upon request)
- Obtain notes, slides, etc. from Canvas
- Check with classmates for notes, announcements, etc.

*Acceptable reasons for absence from class include:*

- Illness
- Serious family emergencies,
- Special curricular or job requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences),
- Military obligation,
- Severe weather conditions,
- Religious holidays
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Obligations for court imposed legal obligations (i.e., jury duty, subpoena)
INCLEMENT WEATHER

“The chancellor (or appointed representative) may officially close or suspend selected activities of the university because of extreme weather conditions. When a decision to close is made, information is distributed to the campus community, shared with local media, and posted on the front page at http://utk.edu.” (http://safety.utk.edu/emergency-management/inclement-weather-policy/). SIS will cancel classes when UT is closed. Please check the SIS student listserv (UTKSIS-L@LISTSERV.UTK.EDU) for messages about closing.

DISABILITIES THAT CONSTRAIN LEARNING

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

CIVILITY

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: http://civility.utk.edu/.

CCI DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The College of Communication and Information recognizes that a college diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. All members of the College benefit from diversity and the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. As a result, the College is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and it recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society. The College is acutely aware that diversity and fairness are foundations that unite the College’s faculty, staff, students, and the larger communication and information community.
**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students should be familiar and maintain their *Academic Integrity* described in http://hilltopics.utk.edu/academics/ as: “Study, preparation and presentation should involve at all times the student’s own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that the student present his or her own work in all academic projects, including tests, papers, homework, and class presentation. When incorporating the work of other scholars and writers into a project, the student must accurately cite the source of that work.”

Students should abide by the *Honor Statement* described in the same Hilltopics, http://hilltopics.utk.edu/academics/:

> “An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism in any of its several forms is intolerable, and attention to matters of documentation in all written work is expected and required. Inadvertence, alleged lack of understanding, or avowed ignorance of the various types of plagiarism are not acceptable excuses.

*Specific examples of plagiarism are:*

- Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval;
- Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Students who may be unsure of the nature of plagiarism should consult the instructor or a guide for writing research reports. (Additional resources are available at http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagiarism.)

Infractions of academic integrity are penalized according to the severity of the infraction but may include a course grade of "F."
ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Student work is assigned a grade based on quality of thought and writing style, thoroughness of research and of references, appropriateness of length, and originality. Only exceptional work will receive an "A" grade. Papers that are received after the due date will be assigned a lower grade than would otherwise be received. All sources must be cited, quotations must be in quotation marks and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.

PREPARATION OF WRITTEN WORK

- All assignments must include your name, be in .doc or .docx format, letter size, with an 11 or 12-point font and 1” margins on all sides, use single line spacing and reasonable paragraph spacing (0-12 pt), and include page numbers. Assignments that do not follow the writing style requirements will get a deduction of two points.

- Use either APA or Turabian/CMS documentation styles when you cite sources. All sources must be properly cited, quotations must be formatted and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.

DUE DATES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments should be submitted to the “assignments” area of Canvas and are due (officially) at 11:59 p.m. EST on the due date listed on the syllabus. If your assignment is not ready by the deadline...

- You must send me an email informing me that your assignment will be late.
- After submitting your assignment to Canvas, send me an email informing me that your assignment has been submitted.
- One point will be deducted for each 24-hour hour period the assignment is not turned in.
- Late submissions will not be credited if the graded assignments have already been returned to the rest of the class.

INCOMPLETES

Based on adopted University of Tennessee-Knoxville and SIS policy, a grade of I (Incomplete) is reserved for emergencies that prevent the student from completing the course on time. Incompletes are granted only under "the most unusual of circumstances" and solely at the discretion of the instructor. Plan your semester's course of study carefully to insure sufficient time to complete the required work.

For students who simply "disappear" without contacting the instructor and without completing the required form, an "F" is submitted.
ASSIGNING GRADES

Please note that I do not assign letter grades for individual assignments, but will mark your paper with my comments and provide a point score based on the possible points earned for that assignment. If you’d like to compute a letter grade based on the score provided, divide your score by the total points possible for the assignment and refer to the “Evaluation” scale for the corresponding letter grade. For example, if you earned 23/25 points on an assignment, your percentage grade would be 92. Your final grade will be based on total points earned/total possible points over the course of the semester.

GRADING DISPUTE

Grading by its very nature is a subjective process, and it is virtually impossible to design exercises that can be objectively quantified with precise numeric scores. If you need clarification for the grade you receive, please make your request immediately after the distribution of the assignments; after one week, the grades reported to you are final.

EVALUATION

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>≥93</td>
<td>(4 quality points per semester hour) superior performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.75</td>
<td>(3.7 quality points per semester credit hour) intermediate grade performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89.75</td>
<td>(3.5 quality points per semester hour) better than satisfactory performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87.75</td>
<td>(3 quality points per semester hour) satisfactory performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.75</td>
<td>(2.7 quality points per semester credit hour) intermediate grade performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79.75</td>
<td>(2.5 quality points per semester hour) less than satisfactory performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-77.75</td>
<td>(2 quality points per semester hour) performance well below the standard expected of graduate students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.75</td>
<td>(1 quality point per semester hour) clearly unsatisfactory performance and cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>≤59.75</td>
<td>(no quality points) extremely unsatisfactory performance and cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td>(no quality points) a temporary grade indicating that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course but, due to unforeseen circumstances, has been unable to finish all requirements. An I is not given to enable a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade. The instructor, in consultation with the student, decides the terms for the removal of the I, including the time...</td>
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limit for removal. If the I is not removed within one calendar year, the grade will be changed to an F. The course will not be counted in the cumulative grade point average until a final grade is assigned. No student may graduate with an I on the record.

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>S/NC</td>
<td>(carries credit hours, but no quality points) S is equivalent to a grade of B or better, and NC means no credit earned. A grade of Satisfactory/No Credit is allowed only where indicated in the course description in the Graduate Catalog. The number of Satisfactory/No Credit courses in a student's program is limited to one-fourth of the total credit hours required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P/NP</td>
<td>(carries credit hours, but no quality points) P indicates progress toward completion of a thesis or dissertation. NP indicates no progress or inadequate progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>(carries no credit hours or quality points) indicates that the student officially withdrew from the course.</td>
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**COURSE EVALUATION**

You will be invited to evaluate the course at the end of the term. Please participate in this valuable process. I also invite your comments throughout the course and read all comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• Appendix A: The Evolution of the U.S. Intelligence Community-An Historical Overview  
• Appendix B: An Overview of the Intelligence Community |
• The Reference Interview Tutorial  
• Knowledge Acquisition (please note the information on interviewing).  
|---|---|---|---|
• NATO. (2002). *NATO Open Source Intelligence Reader*. |
• The Multiple Dimensions of Information Quality.  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>10/16</th>
<th>Information on National/International Economy</th>
<th>Economic indicators: import and export information</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Beebe, Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10/30</td>
<td>Communicating Results</td>
<td>• Beebe, Chapter 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>References</td>
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</table>
  • Beebe, Chapter 14  
  • Heuer & Pherson, Chapter 6  
|      | 11/27  | Thanksgiving Break            | No Class 😊                                                                                     |
| 15   | 12/4   | Course Summary Questions and Answers Due 12/4: Personal Reflection |                                                                                                  |

**Disclaimer**

Please be aware revisions may be made to this syllabus and schedule over the course of the semester, and as such, the content contained within may be subject to change.