

ITM 321 (WI) Project Management (EU/Italy Focus)

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Overview of Project Management (EU/Italy focus)

Much of the work done today is organized around projects -- launching a new product, setting up a new program, organizing an event, starting a new business, implementing a new information system, setting up a new retail location, etc. The project manager (PM) coordinates the personnel and activities of a project to ensure the project meets the business requirements within time and budgetary constraints. To be successful, the PM needs a variety of skills and knowledge to manage technical, organizational and social aspects of the project. This knowledge base is referred to as the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK). This class covers key concepts, practices, tools and techniques of the PMBOK common to all projects.

Today many projects involve teams from across locations, countries, cultures, industries, so that being able to work effectively with diverse team members and stakeholders is very important. This course considers how project management is practiced in cross cultural project settings and cultural expectations and “best practices” for managing projects may vary in different settings. Studying project management while living abroad is a great way to experience and understand these cultural influences. PM techniques and practices will also be applied to analyze projects that have taken place, or are underway, in Italy, to highlight cultural aspects and to familiarize students with the Italian business and project context.

Project management is widely applicable across industries, professions, and careers. This course is intended for students in any major with an interest in project management as well as for business majors. (ITM 321 is an approved elective for MIS, MGT, and ENT majors in the Shidler College.) Project management also involves writing different types of documents (e.g., project charters, plans, memos) to communicate effectively, so the course will be writing intensive (WI).

Prerequisites for this course:

None.

Learning objectives:

- Explain the purpose of key project management “best practices” and techniques,
- Demonstrate awareness of one’s own cultural values and biases and how these impact the ways in which projects are developed and carried out.
- Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups in project settings.
- Analyze business, organizational and social settings to design project approaches with sensitivity for cultural influences.
- Apply relevant project management tools and techniques to analyze projects.
- Identify key assumptions and information for a well-developed project plan.
- Demonstrate a logical and disciplined approach to solving problems encountered by project managers.
- Discuss complex ideas related to project management with others, in discussion, in writing, and in group situations.

Project management concepts, practices, tools and techniques covered

This class is designed to help students develop analysis and problem-solving skills and apply those skills to projects, with special attention to the cultural implications PM in Europe and Italy. We begin with an

overview of project management processes and progress through specific practices, tools, and techniques, emphasizing the challenges of cross-cultural project management. Students will learn to professionally communicate ideas orally and in writing through summary issue reports and detailed case analyses. Students will work individually and in small groups to apply techniques and to develop a project plan during the semester. (See weekly schedule for details of topics.)

Course materials

1. Project Management, 2nd edition. By Adrienne Watt
Available for download or online use at <https://opentextbc.ca/projectmanagement/front-matter/introduction-2/>
2. Di Prata, O. & Cristiana Ercoli (2010). A key to understanding the challenges that face Italian project managers. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2010—EMEA, Milan, Italy. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
<https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/italian-project-managers-understand-challenges-6780>

Project management cases will be selected from the Sage Business Collection that Hamilton Library, UHM will make available by Spring, 2024. See appendix for list of cases.

Class sessions and participation

The course uses a combination of instruction on practices, tools, and techniques along with the case method of instruction to introduce, reinforce, and apply concepts of project management. These practices and techniques are applied to case studies of real projects (case reports), current project events and activities in Italy (issue reports), and a project planning assignment. Cases selected will be relevant to Italy and the EU context. Students are expected to draw from the study abroad setting in these assignments.

Attending class is mandatory. Students who miss more than one class without acceptable excuse (e.g. sickness) will lose 5% of course grade per class missed. Classes will involve a mix of lecture by the instructor on project management practices, tools and techniques followed by interactive discussion and analysis by the students of various cases, with examples provided by students through issue reports, projects, and case discussions. Class participation incorporates the frequency, relevance, and quality of contributions to class discussion. Students are responsible for preparing for class, working with others, participating in class discussion, and completing the writing assignments on time.

Learning through writing:

The class will be offered as writing intensive (pending approval by ITM Department submitted October, 2024) with the expectation that students will learn to write and communication in clear, concise and effective ways. Students will be instructed/guided in their use of generative AI technologies so as to increase their critical thinking and enhance their writing ability (rather than using “copy/paste” approaches).

Students will learn about project management through writing exercises in which they analyze project management situations and produce typical project management documents. Each student will write a minimum of 16 double-spaced pages (approximately 250 words/page) or 4,000 words, as an integrated component of assignments. Students will write four brief issue reports (250-300 word) that highlight project management concepts in projects occurring in Sydney or elsewhere in Australia. Each will develop a case analysis assignment (appx. 1000 word report). Students will complete an integrated project planning assignment that builds on individual writing assignments (drafts) completed through the semester to produce a comprehensive project proposal (2000 words with drafts, revisions). Students must complete all writing assignments successfully to pass the course with a D+ or better to receive writing intensive credit.

Final exam

The final exam will be based on in-class lectures, assigned reading materials, materials brought into the classroom through participation exercises, and discussions during class sessions. The format will include multiple choice, short answer, and brief interpretive open-ended questions.

Course assignments:

- ***Project management issue write-ups:*** Project events are reported in the news every day. Each student will select an article that discusses some aspect of project management and write an analysis approximately **250 words long** (one double-spaced page). We will practice in class with a sample analysis. Student work will be graded on accuracy, thoughtfulness and writing quality (correct grammar, clear sentences; good flow). To receive credit, the student must:
 - Select a project with relevant PM aspects occurring in Italy and no more than 5 years old; students will use local resources such as newspaper accounts, online resources to identify project events.
 - Write a summary (approximately 250 - 300 words) that
 - i. briefly identifies key elements of the project (who, what, when, where, why of project);
 - ii. identifies and explains two (2) project management concepts relevant to the article;
 - iii. recommends briefly what a project manager should learn from the project reported;
 - iv. is grammatically correct and does not plagiarize (no copying sentences from the article);
 - v. has a complete and accurate citation for the information source.
 - Submit the summary electronically and bring a hardcopy for in class work; and,
 - Participate in in-class group exercises to review and critique each other's analysis.
 - Any use of Gen-AI to complete the assignment must be disclosed, with prompts used and a progressive refinement of AI-generated text using the student's own words submitted.
- ***Project management exercises and homework:*** We will practice project planning and management techniques in class. Some problems require the use of software; students are encouraged to bring a laptop computer to the class. These are learning exercises and will be evaluated on effort, participation, and quality of the assignment turned in. Students will work in groups in class (or between classes) to solve the problem and will present solutions in class.
- ***The project experience and project plan:*** The best way to learn about project management is to do it! We will focus on the project planning and initiation stages to produce the project management documents needed to launch the project. Each student will identify a "real life" project relevant to their experience in Italy. Students will meet with project "clients" to analyze the project situation and will develop the project documents in stages through the semester. Each "deliverable" will be submitted in draft form, students will workshop the draft with Dr. Davidson and other students. The draft will be revised and included in the final report. Students will present the project plan in the last classes. (Sample reports and templates will be provided.)
- ***Exam:*** There will be a final exam to assess students' understanding of project management techniques and concepts. The exam will be short-answer and/or multiple choice.

Case Analyses: A typical case study is a writeup of a project management problem. Students will define the problem, identify alternative actions, incorporate differing opinions and viewpoints, perform analyses, apply judgment to the results, propose a course of action, and be able to explain and defend it. The success of the case method depends upon the active, effective participation of the students. Students will prepare to discuss all cases and to work on them in class. Students will write up one of the case studies as a formal business presentation style. The instructor will provide feedback and students may revise and resubmit for final grading. Formal business report style will be stressed.

COURSE GRADES

The class grade is based on:

Class participation (includes all case discussions, use of techniques, writing workshops in class)	20%
Project management issue reports (4 points each/5 assignments)*	20%
Case analysis (1 written case)*	15%
Final exam	15%
Project experience presentation and report*	30%

*WI grade component

The letter grade will be based on a sum of points earned as follows:

A+ (96 and above)	B+ (86-89.9)	C+ (76-79.9)	D+ (65-69.9)
A (91-95.9)	B (83-85.9)	C (73-75.9)	D+ (60-64.9)
A- (90-92.9)	B- (80-82.9)	C- (70-72.9)	F (less than 60%)

Schedule of topics, readings, assignments (draft)

Week	Topics	Readings	Assignments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro to project management: Why project management? Challenges of PM Project vs. process Project staging – waterfall vs agile methods 	Project Management Chapter 1,2,3, 4	
2 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chartering a project Engaging Stakeholders & responsibility matrix PM in Italy – special considerations In-class writing workshop 	Chapter 5, 6, 7 Challenges of PM in Italy paper	Issue report #1
4 - 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting project scope Defining requirements In-class writing workshop/ issue reports 	Chapter 8, 9	Issue report #2
6 - 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project planning; work breakdown structure First cut at project schedule (PERT/CRM) Project management software; Gantt charts 	Chapter 10, 11	Issue report #3 In class exercises
8 - 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeting the project Obtaining resources and refining the schedule Project management software: the project schedule Issue reports 	Chapter 12	Issue report #4 Topic/team/focus of semester project In class exercises
10 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and managing risks Managing change; the change budget Comprehensive case discussion 	Chapter 14, 16 Case 1 reading	Case discussion 1 Case report 1
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining status and updating the project plan Communicating with the team and stakeholders Comprehensive case discussion 	Chapter 15 Case 2 reading	Case discussion 2 Case report 2
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project completion Semester project work time 	Chapter 17, 18, 19	In-class feedback/review
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project presentations and discussion 		Project Plan reports
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class review and final exam 		

ITM 321 Learning Outcomes Rubric (incorporating SA learning objectives*)

Goal	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Articulate the importance and influence of project management in carrying out successful projects.	In analysis of cases, fails to identify the effects of these influences on project outcomes	Identifies primary effects of these influences on project outcomes	Identifies and anticipates cultural implications of decision-making in projects
Demonstrate awareness of own cultural values and biases and how these impact their ability to work with others.*	Fails to demonstrate understanding of cultural values and biases in a business problem. Applies a single decision model.	Incorporates cultural sensitivity into understanding and proposing solutions to business problems.	Demonstrates sensitivity to cultural norms in developing recommendations and presenting analysis.
Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.*	Fails to communicate appropriately in class discussions	Takes differences in communication style into consideration in communicating with others	Demonstrates sensitivity to others in communication of ideas and opinions. Show understanding of others.
Investigate and analyze business and organizational needs to formulate project goals and direction.	Does not use project management best practices, techniques or tools to identify and analyze issues	Performs adequate analysis to identify business problems using some PM techniques	Performs in-depth analysis and proposes appropriate project solutions, relying on best practices
Compare the effects of organizational and cultural environments on project management approaches*	Does not identify differences in environments on project management approaches.	Demonstrates a limited understanding of how project environments influence project outcomes	Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of organizational and cultural implications for project outcomes
Demonstrate a logical and disciplined approach to solving project management issues.	Analysis is scattered and/or not logical. Conclusions are not supported by findings	Case reports and in-class discussions demonstrate well-supported arguments leading to the conclusion	Case reports and in-class discussions demonstrate logical and well-supported arguments. Reports are well written.
Discuss complex ideas regarding project management issues and techniques with others	Does not actively participate in discussions. Is not able to articulate his/her position vis-à-vis the case or topic.	Actively participates in discussions, articulating his/her positions and conclusions.	Actively participates in discussions, articulating his/her positions and conclusions. Responds appropriately to queries regarding the case issues.

Written Communication Rubric

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing.

	Professional	Proficient	Threshold
Context and Purpose for Writing	Clearly identifies the purpose and intended use of the report, with consideration of the audience giving sufficient detail to inform the reader. Explains potential complicating issues in sufficient detail.	Clearly explains the purpose of the report in a manner consistent with the audience.	States the purpose of the report. Demonstrates some attention to context, audience and purpose.
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant and compelling content to support conclusions and shape the report. Excludes irrelevant materials.	Uses appropriate, relevant content to explore ideas through most of the report.	Uses appropriate content to develop some of the ideas in the report.
Logical progression	A logical and compelling argument is well constructed through elegant use of language.	A logical argument is well constructed that ties the development of the report together. Ideas are presented in a logical succession. Transitions and links are used successfully to develop a logical progression. Paragraph organization aids understanding.	Ideas are presented without fully developing a logical progression of ideas.
Sources and evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas appropriate to business writing	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and relevant sources to support ideas	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to business readers with clarity and fluency. Report is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that conveys meaning to business readers in a respectful and serious tone. Language has very few errors.	Shows emerging awareness of business writing style. Rarely uses language that impedes meaning. Report has few errors in usage.

Appendix: Selection of Project Management Cases Relevant to Italy for use in class

Carnival Cruise Lines: Wreck of the Costa Concordia, by Jeremy Foster, Mary Jo Sorrentino, Charles Florance, James S. O'Rourke, published by the Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication, Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame, 2012.

<https://sk.sagepub.com/cases/embed/carnival-cruise-lines-wreck-of-the-costa-concordia>

Abstract: On Friday, January 13th, 2012, around 9:40 p.m. local time, the Costa Concordia, a luxury cruise ship carrying 4,200 passengers, punctured its hull off the coast of Italy. What followed the collision was a chaotic evacuation, irresponsible actions from the ship's captain, and a lack of communication from the parent company, Carnival, all leading to a public relations disaster.

“My Dad or My Boss?” The Story of a Family Hotel, by Alessandra Tognazzo, Sage Publications Business Case Originals, 2017. <https://sk.sagepub.com/cases/embed/my-dad-or-my-boss-the-story-of-a-family-hotel>

Abstract: This is the real story of Fabrizio Vienna and his hotel. Hotel Terme Antica Vienna is a family owned and managed hotel situated in Abano Terme, a famous spa location in the north-east of Italy. Fabrizio wants the family dynasty to continue within the business. To realize his wish, he has started to give some ownership stakes to his children but he feels he needs some help to realize his dream. He calls Paolo, a family business consultant. The case reports a rich set of materials: Paolo's notes about the family and the business history, some transcriptions from the interviews Paolo did with the family managers and some drawings by the children. The main topics on which the case focuses are: decision-making, relationship conflicts and role conflict. The case provides potential discussion and review of factors impacting on succession, innovation, strategy and human resources relating to small and medium enterprises.

Co-Creating Urban Commons (Bologna, Italy), published by Bloomberg and John Hopkins niversity. <https://citiesofservice.jhu.edu/resource/co-creating-urban-commons-bologna-italy>

Abstract: Historically, Bologna, Italy, was a city with strong civic engagement, but citizen participation had decreased and onerous bureaucratic requirements had made it difficult for people to effect change in their communities. The city passed a regulation to streamline civic engagement, allowing citizens and private organizations to sign collaboration pacts with the city in order to improve public space. Bologna also created labs in the city's six districts that served as hubs of innovation and collaboration with citizens. In just a few years, city officials have seen a marked increase in citizen engagement — about 480 collaboration pacts have been implemented to date, and more than 14,000 people voted in the first year of participatory budgeting.

Megaproject management – case studies of Torino, Vancouver and Milano Winter Olympic Games, by A. I. Vaccarini, A. Gulc, published by Wydział Inżynierii Zarządzania Politechniki Białostockiej, 2021, 5(1), s. 45-54; <https://open.icm.edu.pl/items/a80cbe87-d2a7-4438-9f99-4e8b6e3770f2>

Abstract: Games are giant projects that need to be planned and monitored carefully since the purpose of project is to realize all the tasks within the planned times and costs. The aim of this article is to present two of the past Olympic Winter Games: Torino 2006 and Vancouver 2010 in order to identify success and failures concerning the project management of these megaprojects. The analysis in the research was conducted using case study method. Under some project constrains, the first presented case is considered as an example of failure, while the second one as a successful project. Moreover, the future Olympics of Milano 2026 is presented, which has the chance of becoming a megaproject well man-aged. The article includes the conclusion section presenting the potential of the project of Torino 2026 Olympic Games and the recommendations based on the management of the previous examples of megaprojects.