

DISC 4367 Quality Management

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Course description

This is a practical course in quality management. The course provides a set of tools that can be used in any business to define, monitor, and improve quality. The first half of the course includes lectures, case studies, and computer exercises. When we finish the academic work, you will know how to do the following: Develop management definitions of quality and value, trace the effects of product and process design on quality, estimate the cost of quality, prepare cause-and-effect diagrams for quality problems, evaluate the quality capability of a production or service process, and develop control charts to monitor quality data

During the second half of the course, students work in teams (4-6 people each) on quality internship projects in Houston-area businesses. Team assignments, including appointments of team leaders, are made by the instructor. Each team submits a project report and gives an oral presentation. Each team member receives the same grade.

Textbooks

James R. Evans and William M. Lindsay, The Management and Control of Quality (6th edition), South-Western, 2005. Do not purchase earlier editions of this text.

William Strunk & E. B. White, The Elements of Style (4th edition).

Internet resources

Instructions for access to internet materials will be given in class. The materials are organized in subdirectories as follows:

- Class notes
- Syllabus
- Worksheets
- X-Man Solutions

Print everything under Class notes and bring the package to class every day. The Syllabus subdirectory contains the latest class syllabus and schedule. Worksheets are Excel models for quality analysis and control (documentation is in a Word file in the same subdirectory). Finally, the X-Man Solutions refer to problems worked in class.

Attendance and punctuality

Attendance is important. Students with more than two unexcused absences will be dropped from the course. If you must miss a class, notify me by e-mail. Punctuality is also important. There are numerous exercises done in class and it is disruptive when students arrive in the middle of an exercise. I realize that late arrival is sometimes unavoidable, but students who are repeatedly late will be dropped from the course. Please note that these rules for attendance and punctuality apply to both regular classes and team meetings.

Grading policy

Final course grades will be computed using the following weights:

Homework assignments	40%
Exam	20%
Project	40%
Total	100%

Homework assignments

There are two homework assignments as listed below. See the class schedule for due dates.

Homework # 1

Chapter 1, Cases I – III, pp. 43-46

Chapter 2, Cases I – III, pp. 85-87

Chapter 3, Cases I – II, pp. 144-146

Homework # 2

Chapter 10, Case I, pp. 506-508

Chapter 11, Cases I – III, pp. 560-563

Chapter 12, Cases I – II, pp. 629-633

Chapter 13, Cases I – II, pp. 681-682

Your job is to answer the questions at the end of each case. There are no restrictions on length, except that you should write at least one page for each case. You may answer the questions one at a time, or you may combine the answers in an integrated report. Organize and format your homework as follows. Page one is a cover sheet containing only your name, Homework Assignment # 1 or # 2, and the date. Place this information on three lines, left-justified, at the top of the page. Leave the rest of the page blank for grading comments. Following the cover sheet, start each case on a new page, with the name of the case at the top. Single-space the text using a 12-point font with one-inch margins. Number the pages at the lower right.

In grading the homework, please note that writing and content are equally important. This means that a report with serious errors in organization, grammar, usage, punctuation, or spelling will receive a failing grade. You will improve your writing through study of William Strunk & E. B. White, The Elements of Style (4th edition). This little book (85 pages) is the standard guide to the fundamentals of good writing, and must be read before the first homework assignment.

Strunk & White's Part V, An Approach to Style, contains 21 suggestions; all are valuable, but three are especially important in writing for this course. First, write from an outline. No one can write a coherent case report without some kind of top-down strategy. At least sketch out your major arguments and the points you want to make in support of each one. Second, write with nouns and verbs, not with adjectives and adverbs. Certainly adjectives and adverbs are indispensable parts of speech, but they are overused. Make sure adjectives and adverbs are really necessary. Third, do not overstate arguments and conclusions. A single overstatement can make an entire report suspect because readers lose confidence in your judgment.

When you complete the first draft, audit your writing. In Part I, Strunk & White give 11 elementary rules of usage. Apply these rules because you can be sure that I will do so in grading. Pay special attention to Rules 1-5 and 9-11. Use Rule 1 for forming the possessive singular of nouns. Check each comma in your paper using Rules 2-5. In each sentence, make sure that the number of the subject agrees with the number of the verb (Rule 9). Check each pronoun for case (Rule 10). Verify that any participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence refers to the grammatical subject (Rule 11).

In Part II, Strunk & White give 11 rules for composition. Apply these rules in auditing your writing, and pay special attention to Rules 14, 15, and 17. Follow Rule 14 and write in the active voice. Make definite assertions as in Rule 15. Rule 17 holds that vigorous writing is concise, and exhorts you to omit needless words. This rule does not mean that all sentences should be short, or that you should write in outline form. In a nutshell, Rule 17 means that every word must tell. Your report should be free of trite expressions, meaningless phrases, and redundancies.

As a final check, review Part IV of Strunk & White, which lists a number of words and expressions commonly misused. You will be penalized if you repeat any of the mistakes in Part IV. As a general policy, write in plain business language, without slang, jargon, buzz-words, acronyms, or contractions.

Course schedule

Updates will be posted as necessary to the course schedule in the syllabus subdirectory. Please note that reading assignments listed in the schedule should be completed before each class meeting.

Academic Honesty

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy is strictly enforced by the C. T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of this policy will be tolerated. A discussion of the policy is included in the University of Houston Student Handbook, <http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. In order to receive academic accommodations, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (telephone 713-743-5400), and present approved accommodation documentation to their instructors in a timely manner.