Subject Description

This subject will identify and assess the contributions of accounting to management planning and control, in both profit and public sector organisations. Drawing upon insights gained from conventional and critical research paradigms, particular emphasis is given to the influence of political, organisational and cultural contexts on the choice, efficacy of, and the purposes served by, management planning and control systems.

Objectives

As a result of active participation in seminars, conscientious attention to the weekly readings and satisfactory completion of all assessment work, students should be able to:

⇒ appreciate the importance of control systems to organisations;
⇒ specify the essential ingredients of effective management control systems;
⇒ describe the main contributions of accounting to effective management planning and control;
⇒ identify the consequences of conventional views of the role of accounting for management planning and control systems;
⇒ question the impact of accounting on management planning and control systems;
⇒ recognise the relationship between management planning and strategic planning;
⇒ assess the significance of trust for an effective management planning and control system;
⇒ critically evaluate planning and control systems in terms other than their ability to promote optimum performance;
⇒ recognise the political dimensions of planning and control systems;
⇒ understand the essential behavioural nature of management planning and control systems;
⇒ write well-argued and convincing case study reports and present the final product in a professional manner; and
⇒ present a case cogently and with conviction.

Lecturer

Professor Warwick Funnell will lead the seminars in this subject each Wednesday morning between 10.30 and 12.30 in room 19.2021. My consultation times are Monday morning 9.30-12.00 and Wednesday morning 9.00am to 10.30am. My telephone number is (02) 42213739. I may also be contacted by email: warwick@uow.edu.au

Reading Material

Each week there will be a selection of readings drawn from a wide variety of sources, including the textbook set for this subject. For ease of access, most of these readings have been collected and lodged with the Faculty of Commerce Resource Room in building 40. Students should consult the readings and make copies as appropriate. The text which students are encouraged to buy is: MacIntosh N. (1995), Management Accounting and Control Systems: An Organisational and Behavioural Approach, Chichester, Wiley. This has been placed in the Closed Reserve section of the Library along with Public Sector Accounting and Accountability in Australia, which will be used for Seminar 13.

Teaching Approach

The aims of the subject will be achieved through extensive readings, the completion of case studies, other formal assessment work, lively discussion amongst members of the class and presentation of case study reports by nominated students. Students are expected to be prepared for each of the seminars by completing all of the readings. For those weeks which have a case study, the reading may be reduced to allow students more time to prepare their responses to the issues raised in the case study. Case studies provide the opportunity to apply knowledge and to be alerted to the complexities that confront management on a daily basis.

In addition to the content of case studies emulating conditions in practice, case studies also provide the opportunity for students to develop their ability to work in teams. This is now one of the most highly prized characteristics which employers seek in prospective employees. Increasingly, success in the corporate world is built upon the talents and contributions of individuals working as part of small teams. Thus, students will be asked to sort themselves into groups for the purpose of examining case studies. Each week that there is a case study, representatives of one of the groups will lead the discussion of the case. Irrespective of which group is presenting a case study in a particular week, all students must prepare each of the case studies. Part of the progressive assessment for this subject will be derived from an evaluation of case study presentations.
While students will be encouraged to work together to analyse case studies, they will be expected, when submitting a report for assessment, to take themselves aside at the time of writing up the results of their deliberations and write a report which reflects some of their own ideas and their own way of presenting an analysis of the case study. Obviously, if much of the analysis of the case study was carried out with members of a group, many of the ideas and conclusions will be similar across members of the group.

Performance Assessment Methods

The final composite mark in this subject is composed of:
Two Case studies (10% each)  20%
Essay     20%
Class Participation   10%
Final Exam     50%
100%

Case Study Reports
Case study reports will be expected to be around five pages in length with adequate headings and subheadings to indicate the direction of the discussion and the main points raised. Reports must also have conclusions. Students will be expected to prepare all case studies, although only two will be submitted for assessment and count towards the final marks given in this subject. Students may select the case studies, from those provided, which they would like to count towards their progressive mark. To assist students with their case study preparations, some of the first seminar will be devoted to case study presentation and analysis.

Case study reports must have the following features:
⇒ one and a half line spacing;
⇒ completed using a computer word processing package;
⇒ be at least in 11 or 12 point font; and
⇒ have a cover sheet stating student name, subject name and number and the topic relevant to the case study.

Seminar Presentation
The seminar mark in the progressive assessment refers to the presentation of case studies and participation in the discussion of the readings in class. During the presentation of case studies, students should consider using the overhead projector with transparencies and the chalkboard. At the conclusion of the seminar, any case studies that are to be considered as part of the progressive assessment are to be submitted for assessment.

Essay
The essay is to be no longer than 2,500 words ie. around eight to ten A4 pages. It is to have the same presentation features as the case study reports (see above). In addition, it is to contain:
⇒ a synopsis, to appear after the cover sheet, of around 100 to 150 words;
⇒ a referencing system in the body of the essay which follows the method used by the American Accounting Review. Students are to familiarise themselves with this
system (also called the Harvard system). Students who fail to reference adequately and honestly will be heavily penalised.

⇒ a reference list at the end of the paper which shows for each entry the author, date of publication, the name of the article in inverted commas if it refers to a journal, the journal name in italics, volume and issue number and the page numbers of the article. This information must appear in this order. For examples see references below in the reading lists. If a book is used the system of referencing is the same, except after the date of publication should come the name of the book, in italics, the place of publication and then the publisher.

The essay is due on 19 April 2000 and is to be handed to the lecturer in class on this day.

Choose one of the following topics on which to write your essay.

“The task of the control process is to keep actual activity within ... a dynamic feasible region; that is to keep each individual and interest group satisfied enough to continue to provide their necessary support towards ensuring that appropriate activities are carried out” (Otley and Berry p.39). Discuss this ‘positivist’ or structural functionalist view of management planning and control systems.

or

Explore the relationship between trust in organisations and the need for formal control systems. In your discussion include an examination of the role of trust in a world class competitive environment.

or

How might control systems create control without the need for overt, visible control mechanisms? Refer in particular to the writings of Foucault.

Final Examination
The final examination is conducted by the university administration. Details of the date and time of the examination are posted around the university prior to the examination period. The examination will be composed entirely of essays. Students will be expected to draw upon their reading covered over the session.

Attendance Requirements
Students are reminded that 10% of their final mark has been allocated to class participation. In the absence of satisfactory reasons for absences from class, students who do not attend at least ten (10) classes will have their class participation mark heavily penalised.
Supplementary Examination

For information on the University’s supplementary examinations policy see the 2000 Postgraduate Calendar. Consistent with University provisions, in general, it is the policy of the Department of Accounting and Finance to give supplementary examinations only in exceptional circumstances.

Plagiarism

There are severe penalties for plagiarism i.e. using another person’s work without acknowledgment. Students are referred to the University of Wollongong 2000 Postgraduate Calendar for more information on plagiarism.

Students with Disabilities

“If a student with a disability requires reasonable accommodation in this subject, they are strongly advised to discuss the issues early in the session with one of the following people: the Disability Liaison Officer, the Faculty Disability Adviser and/or the subject coordinator” (University of Wollongong Education Committee 1996).
SEMINEAR PROGRAM AND READINGS

Summary

1. Introduction and Case Study/Essay Workshop
2. Perspectives on Management Planning and Control: What You See Depends Upon Where You are Standing
3. The Organisational Context of Management Planning and Control
4. Foundations of Control: Goals and Controls
5. Delivering Control
6. The Human Factor: Behavioural Impacts on Management Planning and Control Systems
7. The Contribution of Trust to Management Control: The Ethical Organisation
8. Foucauldian Perspectives on Control
9. The Politics of Planning and Control
10. Strategic Planning
11. Difficult Liaisons: Control in Decentralised Organisations
12. Competitive Advantage and Management Planning and Control Systems
13. Public Sector Management Planning and Control

Detailed Program

1. Introduction and Case Study/Essay Workshop

The aim of this seminar is to ensure that everyone in the class knows what is expected of them in both their case study work and their essay.


2. Perspectives on Management Planning and Control: What You See Depends Upon Where You are Standing


3. The Organisational Context of Management Planning and Control


4. Foundations of Control: Goals and Controls


Case Study


5. Delivering Control


Case Study

6. The Human Factor: Behavioural Impacts on Management Planning and Control Systems


Case Study


7. The Contribution of Trust to Management Control: The Ethical Organisation


Case Study


8. Foucauldian Perspectives on Control


9. The Politics of Planning and Control


**Case Study**


10. **Strategic Planning**


**Case Study**


11. **Difficult Liaisons: Control in Decentralised Organisations**


**Additional Background Reading:**


**Case Study**

**Case Study**

12. **Competitive Advantage and Management Planning and Control Systems**


**Case Study**


13. **Public Sector Management Planning and Control**

Funnell W. and Cooper K. (1998), *Public Sector Accounting and Accountability in Australia*, Sydney, UNSW Press. Chapters 1,2,3,4. (A copy of this text is in the Closed Reserve in the Library).