

HOME EXAM (40 points)

## IBB135 Project Management

**TIME AVAILABLE AND SUBMISSION DATE.** This text is sent on Aug 21<sup>st</sup> and is also made available on the Student Portal. Submit your dissertation electronically in PDF format through the hand-in function in the Student Portal before Saturday Aug 28<sup>th</sup> at 17:00. Please submit separately any article that you refer to (excluding the ones used in this course) and that you have available on PDF format (thanks!). If you are a first-time user of the hand-in function, you might want to explore it before your hand-in (you can replace/delete your files until the deadline). Use e-mail as backup only in case the Student Portal would become unavailable.

**CONDITIONS.** The standard rules apply for this home examination, with the following exception. You may, at wish, write a thesis together with a fellow course student also participating in this exam. Pair writers write one common text, mark it with their two IDs, create one PDF file, and hand it in once.

**THE ASSIGNMENT.** You are to carry out the assignment by writing a minor thesis (essay), within the given areas. This means selecting relevant literature, interpreting it, arguing for and against, posing different points of views against each other in order to analyse the differences and similarities, etc. Investigate and reflect upon the subject areas from a theoretical point of view. However use, if you wish, empirical observations to support and clarify your arguments and reasoning. Clarify when you are making your interpretation, as opposed to giving someone else's. Structure your writing so that it is clear how you have thought and what your reasoning is. Try to conclude with a "therefore", i.e. draw your conclusions for each sub-section of your discussion. Relate your discussion to the lectures, seminars, and course literature as you see fit, but you may also include other theory. The assignment is roughly framed, and while containing some examples of typical problems to be examined, you are expected to define "problems" and the frame of reference yourself.

**REFERENCES AND SOURCE MATERIAL.** Use of the literature to carry an argument does not just necessitate clear references to the source, it also means specifying *how* you have used it. It is not enough just to give loose references; you will need to show *how you have applied those thoughts/ theories/ perspectives that are contained in the appropriate reference.*

**FORMAT FOR SUBMISSION.** Use PDF file format. We use blind-marking of theses; therefore, use your Personal ID/CID (not your name), (a) as file name and (b) as identification on your thesis. Pair writers use both IDs. Including references, a maximum of 9 pages in total.

PLEASE DO NOT STATE YOUR NAME IN YOUR TEXT; USE YOUR TEN-DIGIT ID ONLY

**MARKING CRITERIA.** In these types of exams there are rarely any definite right or wrongs. Marking is therefore a *qualitative act*. This means that individual texts may vary a great deal but still be marked with the same number of points. However, it is important that you use any relevant text in the text-book and the Literature Seminar articles (see the course syllabus). Hence, we need to see that you have read the appointed texts. Note that you are not supposed to just reproduce the theory, but rather to use it as a basis for and content in your argumentation and discussion. In order to get high marks you need to use additional references to the compulsory ones. We will consider *area treatment, structured reasoning, your ability to reflect, and your use of theory; how they are appraised (understanding, depth of analysis), clarity of thought and formulation stringency, (logical consistency), whether or not your conclusions are valid in relation to the subject of your discussion and, of course, what conclusions you draw.*

**RESULTS AND REVIEW.** The marks will be sent before Sep 17<sup>th</sup> at 17:00. Review can be carried out by appointment with Jan Wickenberg.

For help to interpret the assignment, contact Jan Wickenberg.

**Good Luck!**

**1. Stage-gates in multi-project organizations** (15 points) maximum 3 pages

Many multi-project organizations use stage-gate systems (originally developed by Robert G. Cooper) in order to monitor and control projects. However, practitioners report that stage-gate work do not always behave according to Cooper's theory. What could the problems be; why would the stage-gate system not work? Is this a serious problem that needs attention? Can it be dealt with; if so, please provide recommendations for practitioners.

**2. Risk management** (15 points) maximum 3 pages

The theory of risk management is appealing; if we manage the risks involved in our project, we will stay clear of them, and hence, our project will succeed. But then, how come that this simple idea has not been perfectly implemented, considering it has been known for such a long time? Are there inherent flaws with the theory of risk management, or do perhaps project management practitioners not care about risks turning into issues in their projects? Your task is to critically examine the concept of risk management.

**3. The Research Project Work as a learning arena** (10 points) maximum 2 pages

Teamwork is important in projects, and lots of theory regard how to create a performing team. Other theories state that the ability to learn is important, as learning drives performance. Consider a revised process for the Research Project work; if, next year, you would be appointed project manager for a Research Project team consisting of five students (junior to you), how would you organize and manage the new Research Project, considering what you learned from your participation this year, and considering that you would not be allowed to perform any operative work (gaining company access, interviewing, literature studying, writing) yourself. Especially, how would you organize/manage if your goal is to (a) maximize learning among all members of the team, or (b) maximize the grading for the members of the team?

*Before I served as a consultant to Kennedy, I had believed, like most academics, that the process of decision-making was largely intellectual and all one had to do was to walk into the President's office and convince him of the correctness of one's views. This perspective I soon realized is as dangerously immature as it is widely held.*

Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State

*The virtues are lost in self-interest as rivers are lost in the sea."*

Franklin D. Roosevelt, former US president

*There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. These are things we do not know we don't know.*

Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defense