

Global Project Management

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Tuning the Information Systems
Capstone Project at CMU and SMU

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[EXECUTIVE SUMMARY]

Introduction

Carnegie Mellon University and Singapore Management University both have a tradition of excellence in education, especially in the field of Information Systems. In addition, both schools have pledged to commit themselves to furthering global communication and collaboration in education. To that end, CMU and SMU recently formed a partnership and began an initiative to form several joint international project teams for the Information Systems capstone project. This capstone project (known as 67-475 and IS 480 at CMU and SMU respectively) provides Information Systems students with the opportunity to put their technical, project management, and leadership skills to the test by designing a useful system for a real client.

Although it is an exciting opportunity, adding an international component to an already difficult project can significantly increase complexity – as the initial set of teams found out. Despite an overall positive experience, participating teams reported that there was definitely room for improvement in several areas. The purpose of this report is to explore those areas from the perspectives of both CMU and SMU students and recommend ways in which the program could be improved to the benefit of all.

Based on the interviews and responses from team members and team leaders, as well as research about best practices for international project teams, we have identified key areas and will set the following goals for the report:

- Improve Process
- Improve Communication
- Improve Team Cohesion

We will lay out current problems in each area and present our recommendations for improvements in each area, as well as explore best practices gathered from experts.

[PROJECT OBJECTIVE]

Our purpose is to provide both Dr Randy Weinberg and Dr Benjamin Gan with a course document which can be use for future collaboration projects. In this report, we engaged students and faculty with interviews and discussions about their experience with their global projects. In addition we have also taken references from the previous report by David Dycus and Elaheh Sajadi to further our analysis of our case.

We set our scope at tackling the things that work and the things that did not work for the respective stakeholders.

Thus, our report objectives are as follows:

1. Interview previous teams and faculty in Singapore and in Pittsburgh.
2. Analyze the gathered information.
3. Recommend the appropriate changes to improve collaboration.