IS 628: Computer-based Information Systems
Reading Preparation Assignment
Chapter 13
Leading the Information Systems Function

Read Chapter 13 of the text, pp. 536 — 558.

Be prepared for class discussion based on the following questions:

1. Why has the IS leadership role in organizations become so important?
2. What benefits are associated with centralized governance of IT resources, and how do these differ from those associated with decentralized governance?
3. What practices help ensure that the costs of providing an IT service are aligned with the needs of business managers?
4. Some chargeback systems can lead to negative "tensions" between IS and business leaders. Why do you think this happens, and what might an IS leader do to alleviate them?
5. Compare the Acceleration and Containment strategies for supporting user computing, and provide a rationale for why a firm might choose one or the other.
6. Describe how a company policy could minimize a specific business risk associated with user computing.
7. What are some of the key concerns associated with managing an IS organization's personnel?
8. What types of mechanisms can be used to help increase collaboration across business and IS leaders?
9. What are some of the global IS management challenges that face IS leaders today?
10. What are some of the potential benefits from outsourcing arrangements that need to be carefully assessed?
11. This chapter emphasizes the need for strong business/IT relationships for managing IT. Describe what you think contributes to a strong cross-unit relationship and whether or not you think it may be more important for managing IT than managing other business functions.
12. What circumstances might lead an entire organization (or business unit) with a federal IT governance design to change to a centralized IT governance design?
13. What potential benefits can be associated with a green IT initiative, and how can they achieved?
14. Describe a circumstance under which you think it will be difficult to enforce a corporate "standard" for purchasing a newer user technology—such as a BlackBerry or iPhone (or other type of handheld device or PDA).
15. What are some of the pros and cons for an IS leader to consider when deciding whether or not to outsource (a) its computer and network operations (e.g., data center, networks, helpdesk) and (b) a large software development project. What are the differences (if any) between your two lists, and why?