Majoring in Information Technology Management *

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN™
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

What is ITM (formerly MIS)?

Information Technology Management (ITM) or Management Information Systems (MIS) is the study of people, technology, and organizations. If you enjoy technology like i-Phones, i-Pods, and FaceBook, you have what it takes to major in information systems. All you need is an interest in technology and the desire to use technology to improve people's lives. Many people think that ITM/MIS is all programming. However, programming is just a small part of our curriculum and there are many, many jobs in ITM/MIS where you do not program.

Everyone who works in business, from someone who pays the bills to the person who hires and fires, uses information systems. For example, a supermarket could use a computer database to keep track of which products sell best. And a music store could use a database to sell CDs over the Internet.

Information isn't worth much if it doesn't serve a purpose. ITM/MIS students learn how businesses use information to improve the company's operations. Students also learn how to manage various information systems so that they best serve the needs of managers, staff and customers. ITM/MIS students learn how to create systems for finding and storing data and they learn about computer databases, networks, computer security, and lots more.

What kind of people pursue ITM/MIS?

There are a lot of different profiles, but here're some traits we've found make great ITM/MIS professionals. Do these describe you? If so, then our ITM/MIS program is for you!

* Are good problem solvers

* Like to work with people

* Can think strategically about technology

* Like responsibility for developing and then implementing their ideas

* Can bridge both technology and business

* Can see both details and the big picture

* Are excellent communicators

* Can manage time and resources well

*Reference: http://www.mis.eller.arizona.edu/content/view/50/412/#compare

What's the difference between ITM/MIS and CS (computer science)?

Maybe it'd be useful to compare ITM/MIS to some of the other fields related to information technology.

	ITM/MIS	CS (computer science)	ECE (electrical computer engineering)
Focus	**Organization**	Software	Product
Objective	**More efficient or effective business**	Reliable computer program	Improved engineered product
Core skill	**Problem solving**	Logic/procedures	Engineering
Core task	**Determine business requirements for information systems**	Deliver information systems to meet defined requirements	Determine information processing requirements of devices
Theoretical vs. applied	**Balanced**	Applied	Balanced
Generic job title	**Analyst/Designer**	Builder	Architect and Builder
Typical starting job title	**Business systems analyst**	Application Programmer	Engineer
Career goals	**Senior organizational manager**	Programming manager	Senior engineering or product manager
College home	**Business**	Science	Engineering

ITM/MIS is the ONLY major that focuses on both business processes and information technology. If you are interested in business and technology, like theory but not too much, like technology enough to want to keep up with what's hot but don't want to be writing programs or putting together chips all your life, then ITM/MIS is for you. We believe that the most upwardly mobile career path for those who like to work with business and technology is definitely in ITM/MIS.

*Reference: http://www.mis.eller.arizona.edu/content/view/50/412/#compare

Why should I take courses or major in ITM/MIS?

The development of new information retrieval methods, as well as the improvement of existing ones, is currently one of the hottest frontiers in the field of information science.

The number of reasons for taking courses in and/or majoring in ITM/MIS is as vast and varied as the number of individuals who have chosen to do so. The more important reasons are:

High placement rate   Information systems are more strategically important now than ever and individuals who understand information systems and business are in high demand.

High salaries   Top ITM/MIS graduates command very competitive salaries. The average total compensation for IT jobs is around $82,293 (as per ComputerWorld Salary Survey 2008)

Job satisfaction   ITM/MIS professionals make a significant contribution to the competitiveness and well-being of the organizations in which they work. They also help people and interact with a variety of personalities and levels of management/staff.

Fun   ITM/MIS majors are intelligent and dynamic people who can interface well with both humans and machines. They enjoy working with people and are able to communicate well.

Challenge   The rapid rate of change in the information systems world provides professionals with constant opportunities to learn and grow.

What jobs do ITM/MIS graduates go into?

As you can probably already tell, ITM/MIS is an integrative field. ITM/MIS professionals are the "communication bridge" between business needs and technology. This means that you will have to understand how to figure out how things work, solve problems, find things out, communicate what you found, and learn a lot of new things on a regular basis. It's a dynamic field, and it takes dynamic people to do well in it. People who can think fast, work hard, and balance a lot of things should really think about ITM/MIS. Here's only a sample of the kinds of ITM/MIS jobs.

• Business Analyst	• Systems Developer
• Business Application Developer	• Database Analyst
• IT Consultant	• Web Developer
• Systems Analyst	• Network Administrator
• IT Development Project Leader	• Technical Support Specialist
• Database Administrator	• Information Systems Manager
• Business Intelligence Analyst	• IT User Liaison

*Reference: http://www.mis.eller.arizona.edu/content/view/50/412/#compare

Aren't all the ITM/MIS jobs going to India or China?

Let's dispense with this myth once and for all. It's true that the trend toward outsourcing has caused a reduction in the number of computer programmers needed. Programming is a relatively straightforward conversion of system requirements into specific programs, and anybody who's reasonably smart can do it. With the global programming market being influenced by the fact that requirements can be digitized (converted to 1's and zeros) and shipped over the Internet to other countries (with lower wages), the ability for programmers in high-wage countries to keep demanding this level of pay will be reduced.

That said, who do you think creates the specifications and requirements that are being shipped offshore to be converted into programs? ITM/MIS professionals are creating those specifications and requirements! They are in higher demand and many international companies realize the importance of having analysts here in the US to develop the solution specifications and are hiring ITM/MIS professionals in the US.

Further, there are coordination and other hidden costs to offshoring arrangements that many companies don't want the hassle. Bottom line: If you want a job that works with business and technology then you should be in our ITM/MIS Program!

How long will MIS jobs be around?

As per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008-09 Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) employment of computer and information systems managers is expected to grow 16 percent over the 2006-2016 decade, which is faster than the average for all occupations.

"Prospects for qualified computer and information systems managers should be excellent. Fast-paced occupational growth and the limited supply of technical workers will lead to a wealth of opportunities for qualified individuals. While technical workers remain relatively scarce in the United States, the demand for them continues to rise. This situation was exacerbated by the economic downturn in the early 2000s, when many technical professionals lost their jobs. Since then, many workers have chosen to avoid this work since it is perceived to have poor prospects.

Workers with specialized technical knowledge and strong communications skills will have the best prospects. People with management skills and an understanding of business practices and principles will have excellent opportunities, as companies are increasingly looking to technology to drive their revenue".

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