

**COURSE:** EWKLP 506: Knowledge Management and Innovation

**SEMESTER:** Fall 2009

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Ikujiro Nonaka  
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Graduate School of Corporate Strategy  
Hitotsubashi University

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School of Business  
Chuo University

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objective of this course is to offer an overview of knowledge management through philosophy, academic articles, and case studies. Starting with the definition of knowledge, students will learn various aspects of knowledge creation and utilization and are expected to understand the theory of knowledge creation as well as the practical application of knowledge management.

**STRUCTURE:**

The course starts with the definition of knowledge by such philosophers as Descartes, Nishida, and Plato. Next, classical organization theoretical works, such as those of Barnard, Simon, and Maslow will be discussed to see how organizational knowledge-creating theory is based on them, and how it differs from them. Then, the theory of organizational knowledge creation will be discussed, including various components such as *ba*, knowledge assets, leadership, and enablers.

The theoretical part is followed up by the study of case studies to learn how firms have built their knowledge-based business systems. Companies such as 3M, Suntory, Seven-Eleven, Eisai, Honda, NTT DoCoMo, and the U.S. Marines will be studied.

Students will also learn about theory building methodologies to construct their own theory. Finally, the application of knowledge creating theory to broader fields, such as regional or national knowledge creation, will be discussed.

**TEACHING METHODOGY:**

The theoretical part of the course will be conducted mostly through the use of lectures and the dialectic approach. The application part of the course, which deals with knowledge creation within companies, will be conducted mostly through the use of case studies and discussion, augmented by outside speakers representing the respective companies taken up in the case studies. Also, throughout the course, students are required to make presentations in small groups on what they have learned.

**GRADING:**

Class participation (including group presentation): 40%

Final exam and research report: 60%

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:**

Nonaka, I., Toyama, R., & Hirata. T (2008). *Managing Flow*. Palgrave Macmillan.

**SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS:**

Descartes, R. (1994). (New Introduction by T. Sorell). *A Discourse on Method Meditations and Principles*. London and New York: Everyman's Library.

Nishida, K. (1992). *An Inquiry into the Good* (M. Abe & C. Ives, Trans.). Yale: Yale University Press.

Nonaka, I., & Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The Knowledge-Creating Company*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [ 0195092694]

Simon, H. A. (1997). *Administrative Behavior* (4th ed.). New York: The Free Press.