

Case Method Workshop

Workshop Content Overview

Contact: grandon@usf.edu

Date: 6 September 2017
Location: Mohammed Ali Hasbini Doctoral Suite, Muma College of Business, University of South Florida
Intended Participants: Faculty, students and administrators interested in developing discussion and research cases, and employing discussion cases in the classroom and online.

Background: The workshop is principally intended to introduce faculty members, as well as postgraduate students, to the use of the *case method*, both as a means of research and instruction. Most workshop materials were developed as part of a 2-year project that was funded by the *Secure and Trustworthy Computing* (SaTC) program of the U.S. *National Science Foundation* (NSF Award #1418711, “EDU: Developing Open Authentic Case Studies for a MS in Cybersecurity Capstone Course”) specifically intended to develop case studies for use in a cybersecurity curriculum.

The Case Method: The case method is an interactive teaching method that involves using a detailed description of a real world decision situation to stimulate an in-depth classroom discussion, typically lasting 75 to 90 minutes. The principal pedagogical objective of the approach, which was originally developed and refined at *Harvard Business School*, is to help students improve their *judgment under conditions of considerable uncertainty and ambiguity*. As such, the case studies developed to support these discussions rarely have a “right” answer and the actual outcome associated with a particular decision tends to be less important than the process through which the decision was reached.

Workshop Objectives: The workshop is intended to provide participants with an in-depth look at the case method as applied in business but broadly applicable to other areas as well. Topics to be covered will include:

- *Types of case studies and their application:* The term “case study” means many things to different people. A framework for understanding the various types of case studies and their appropriate uses will be introduced.
- *Facilitating case discussions:* Each day will begin with a facilitated discussion of a case study so that workshop participants can experience the process from the student’s perspective.
- *Developing discussion cases:* The steps in the process of developing a discussion case will be examined, with particular attention being given to the ins-and-outs of cases profiling decisions in external organizations.
- *Evaluating learning:* A variety of techniques used to assess student learning developed as part of the project will be described, emphasizing the broader challenge of evaluating judgment.
- *Publishing discussion cases:* Outlets for publication of peer-reviewed discussion cases will be examined, as well as other outlets through which cases can be distributed.

Workshop Logistics and Costs: There is no cost for the workshop.

Organization

Workshop Schedule

Specific activities are subject to change based on participant interests.

8:30-9:00am	Introductions
9:00-10:15am	Lecture & Exercise: Types of case studies & why we use them
10:30-11:00am	Lecture: Case method and learning
11:00-11:30am	Lecture: Facilitating case discussions
11:30am-12:30pm	Walkthrough: Case writing checklist
12:30-1:30pm	Lunch
1:30-2:00pm	Lecture: Writing discussion cases for publication
2:00-2:30pm	Walkthrough: Case writing cheat sheet
2:30-4:00pm	Exercise: Write your own first page
4:00-4:30pm	Wrap-up

Activity Descriptions:

Exercise: Types of case studies and why we use them. Using an exercise first developed for the U.N. Staff College, participants will judge the appropriateness of a series of topics as the basis for possible discussion cases. Once results have been tallied, the facilitator will expand on how different types of cases are used employing a question and answer format.

Lecture: Case method and learning. The conceptual basis of the case method is explored with a particular focus on the types of complexity best suited for discussion and research cases.

Lecture: Facilitating case discussions. A presentation and discussion of how instructors can facilitate case discussions.

Walkthrough: Writing discussion cases for publication. The steps of the case writing checklist (Appendix B of *Informing with the Case Method*) are discussed, including: finding case sites, choosing an appropriate topic, gathering information, involvement of the IRB in the process, acquiring case release and publication. Publication opportunities for discussion cases are presented and the *Journal of IT Education: Discussion Cases/Muma Case Review* template is discussed.

Lecture and Exercise: Case writing cheat sheet. Participants will prepare a one page “selfie” case introduction using the “case writing cheat sheet” provided.

Exercise: Write your own first page. Using the Muma Case Review template, each participant will write a case first page encapsulating the decision.

Workshop Website

An accompanying website will be set up using the Canvas Learning Management System. The site will include links to slides, handouts, the book *Informing with the Case Method* and will continue to be available to participants after the workshop is completed. All materials on the site have been prepared under the Creative Commons NC 4.0 license, and may be freely shared with others.

About the Lead Facilitator



Grandon Gill is a professor at the *University of South Florida's Muma College of Business*, where he also leads the Doctor of Business Administration program as its academic director. He holds an AB (cum laude) from *Harvard College* and an MBA (high distinction) and DBA from *Harvard Business School*. He teaches introductory and intermediate courses in programming for undergraduates and also teaches case method capstone courses in the MIS undergraduate, MS-MIS and Executive MBA programs. He has also taught a variety of IT courses during his tenure at USF, from computer systems concepts to doctoral case methods. He received USF's Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award in 2007 and 2013.

Gill has published or edited more than 40 case studies, most recently for the *Journal of IT Education: Discussion Cases*. His recent book, *Informing with the Case Method*, has been the basis of workshops in the U.S. and around the globe. Thus far in 2013, venues have included the *NSF TUES PI Conference* in Washington D.C., *RMIT: Vietnam* in Ho Chi Minh City, the *United Nations Staff College* in Turin, Italy, and at the *3rd International Symposium on Integrating Research, Education, and Problem Solving (Special Track on Case Methodologies)*, Orlando Florida.

Gill is passionate about using technology as a teaching tool and has studied distance learning, strategy, and practice, alternative course designs, and tools for course development and delivery, all under the general heading of informing science. His research in this area has been published in many journals, including *Informing Science*, *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*, the *Journal of Information Systems Education*, *eLearn*, and the *Journal of IT Education*. He has also published multiple times in *MIS Quarterly*, the MIS discipline's leading journal—his most recent article considering the MIS fields from an informing science perspective. His academic service includes stints on the editorial boards of six journals. He is currently Associate Editor-in-Chief of *Informing Science: the International Journal of the Emerging Transdiscipline* and an editor for the *Journal of IT Education: Discussion Cases*. In 2016/2017 he launched two peer-reviewed journals: the *Muma Case Review* and the *Muma Business Review*. He serves as a Governor and Fellow of the Informing Science Institute.