_____

HOME EXAM (40 points)
IBB135 Project Management, PROM, 2008 .

TIME AVAILABLE AND SUBMISSION DATE. This text is handed out on May 22nd and is also made available on the Student Portal. Submit your dissertation electronically on PDF format through the hand-in function in the Student Portal before Thursday May 29th at 17:00. Please, also submit any article that you refer to (excluding the ones used in this course) and that you have available on PDF format (thanks!). If you are a first-time user of the hand-in function, you might want to explore it before your hand-in (you can replace/delete your files until the deadline).

CONDITIONS. The standard rules apply for this home examination, with the following exception. You may, at wish, write a thesis together with a fellow course student. Pair writers write one common text, mark it with their two IDs, create one PDF file, and hand it in twice.

THE ASSIGNMENT. You are to carry out the assignment by writing a minor thesis (essay), within the given areas. This will mean selecting relevant literature, interpreting it, arguing for and against, posing different points of views against each other in order to analyse the differences and similarities, etc. Investigate and reflect upon the subject areas from a theoretical point of view. However use, if you wish, empirical observations to support and clarify your arguments and reasoning. Clarify when you are making your interpretation, as opposed to giving someone else's. Structure your writing so that it is clear just how you have thought and what your reasoning is. Try to conclude with a "therefore", i.e. draw your conclusions for each sub-section of your discussion. You are expected to relate your discussion to the lectures, seminars, and course literature. The assignment is roughly framed, and while containing some examples of typical problems to be examined, you are expected to define "problems" and the frame of reference yourself.

REFERENCES AND SOURCE MATERIAL. Use of the literature to carry an argument does not just necessitate clear references to the source, it also means specifying *how* you have used it. It is not enough just to give loose references; you will need to show *how you have applied those thoughts/ theories/ perspectives that are contained in the appropriate reference.*

FORMAT FOR SUBMISSION. Use PDF file format. We use blind-marking of theses; therefore, use your Personal ID (not your name), (a) as file name and (b) as identification on your thesis. Pair writers use both IDs. The number of pages is limited to a maximum of **8 pages in total.**

MARKING CRITERIA. In these types of exams there are rarely any definite right or wrongs. Marking is therefore a *qualitative act*. This means that individual texts may vary a great deal but still be marked with the same number of points. However, it is important that you use the texts from the relevant Literature Seminars. Hence, we need to see that you have read the appointed texts. Note that you are not supposed to just reproduce the theory, but rather to use it as a basis for and content in your argumentation and discussion. In order to get high marks you need to use additional references to the compulsory ones. We will consider:

Content/Subject area treatment, structured reasoning, ability to reflect
Use of theory: how they are appraised (understanding, depth of analysis)
Clarity of thought and formulation stringency, (logical consistency)
Whether or not your conclusions are valid in relation to the subject of your discussion and, of course, what conclusions you draw.

RESULTS AND REVEIW. The marks will be posted on the course pages before June 18th at 17:00. Review can be carried out by appointment with Jan Wickenberg.

For help to interpret the assignment, contact Jan Wickenberg or Per Svensson.

Good Luck!

1. Discuss project selection in relation to project goals. (10 points max)
2 pages, including references

Projects may have different types of goals, key objectives, and the goals may be more or less clear and stable over time. There are different types of project selection methods and how they are applied (procedures when using them) may differ depending on the situation.

Discuss how the goals influence what are appropriate project selection methods and procedures. In your answer you are supposed to concentrate on goal characteristics but you may also include other contingency variables (situational characteristics) of importance.

2. Projects and learning (15 points max)
3 pages, including references

It is a common understanding that organizations need to manage its stocks and flows of intellectual capital and experience in order to remain competitive. What can be done on a project level to facilitate learning within and between projects? Who is responsible for this learning to take place?

3. Use of stage-gates in multi-project organizations (15 points max)
3 pages, including references

Many theorists advice practicians to apply stage-gate models in order to control projects (and most large multi-project organizations do). However, practicians report that stage-gate work do not behave according to theory. Your task is to explore why and then to recommend improvements. First, apply a mechanistic perspective and discuss shortly the purpose and rational advantages of stage-gates. Then, use the shadow system perspective and discuss thoroughly why stage gate work is seemingly irrational, and what can be done about it.

4. (Extra) Answer the on-line Course Evaluation questionnaire (2 points)

We kindly ask you to respond to the confidential questionnaire, as your feedback is important to us. Especially, we ask you to write comments, as we find them most valuable for our continuing efforts of improving this course. The link to the on-line questionnaire will be sent to you by e-mail. To encourage you to respond, we reward responding students with two points. This is not a formal part of the exam (thus, you may discuss/cooperate at will), but the points are included in the Home Exam results (max 40 points).