UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION PAPER 2013/2014

TITLE OF PAPER: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS I

COURSE CODE: BA215/BA317

YEAR OF STUDY: B.COM 2 (FULL TIME), DIP COM 4 (IDE)

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. This paper consists of sections A and B.

2. The case study question – Section A, is compulsory.

3. Answer any three questions from section B.

NOTE: Marks will be awarded for good communication in English and for orderly presentation of work.

This examination paper should not be opened until permission has been granted by the invigilator.

SECTION A

THIS SECTION IS COMPULSORY

Creative Designs

Creative Designs, a textile and apparel manufacturer acquired its own computer in 1996. The first application to be developed and implemented was production and inventory control. Other applications that were added in succession were payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable. The applications were not integrated as a result of the piecemeal manner in which they were developed and implemented. Nevertheless the system proved satisfactory for several years. Generally, reports were prepared on time, and information was readily accessible.

Creative Designs operates in a very competitive industry. A combination of increased operating costs and the competitive nature of the industry have had an adverse effect on profit margins and operating profit. Sam Dladla, Creative Designs president suggested that some special analyses be prepared in an attempt to provide information that would help management improve operations. Unfortunately, some of the data were not consistent among reports. In addition there were no data by product line or by department. These problems were attributable to the fact that Creative Designs' applications were developed piecemeal, and as a consequence, duplicate data that were not necessarily consistent existed in Creative Designs' computer system. Dladla was concerned that Creative Designs' computer system was not able to generate the information his managers needed to make decisions. He called a meeting of his top management and certain data processing personnel to discuss possible solutions to the company's problems. The consensus was that a new information system that would integrate Creative Designs' applications was needed.

Creative Designs' controller suggested that the firm consider a data-base system that all departments would use. As a first step the controller proposed hiring a database administrator on a consulting basis to determine the feasibility of converting to a database system.

Required:

a. Identify the characteristics that constitute a system under the database approach. (10)
b. List the benefits and drawbacks to Creative Designs of converting to the database approach. (10)
c. What steps should be taken in converting to the new system? (10)
d. What are several key duties of the data-base administrator? (10)

SECTION B

Answer any three questions from this section.

1. Explain the importance of Porter's five competitive forces model in analyzing the impact of IT in business. (20)

2. Why would an organization prefer the database approach to the management of its information resources. (20)

3. Explain the concept of Porter's value chain and how it can be used to identify a company's information needs. (20)

4. What features should a good Human Resource Information System have and why are they important? (20)

5. Discuss the important features of executive information systems and explain their importance. (20)