UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION 2019

TITLE OF PAPER:	STRATEGIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS
PROGRAM:	BCOM 4 (FULL TIME)
COURSE CODE:	BUS412/BA402
TIME ALLOWED:	THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B)

2. THE CASE STUDY 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

NORCOM

Norcom, a division of a large manufacturer, needed a new distribution and customer service system to replace its old system. The project was to take 18 months to complete and cost approximately E5 million. The project team was comprised of 2 business and IT staff members. After two years, the CIO was fired and the company hired a new CIO who was known as an expert in saving troubled projects. The new CIO found that management had committed three grave errors from the start.

1. They picked the wrong software using a very naïve Request for Proposal process.
2. They did not formulate a project plan
3. No one "owned" the project. The information system staff assumed the users owned the project, while the users were under the assumption that the information system staff owned it. Management believed the vendor owned it.

The CIO developed a 2,000 line-item plan to bring order and direction to the project and set to work. However, three months later, the system failed completely, even with the best IT staff and consultants working on it day and night. The failed system was supposed to be the company's preeminent system, but it could not even process customer orders correctly, resulting in complaints about late shipments and receiving the wrong goods.

After three years and E4 million the new CIO polled the staff anonymously. All but two said the project was beyond saving, and they were holdouts who had staked their careers on the project. So the CIO had to tell his boss, the president of the division, that the project was not worth saving. It was a very difficult message for the CIO to give and for the division president to receive. At first, the president would not accept the idea of killing a project that had cost so much money. In the end, however, he accepted the decision and all the ramifications involved. The ramifications included corporate IT taking control of all IT operations at his division.

Required

a. List the primary components of an RFP.   (5 marks)

b. Based on the information given in the narrative, identify possible components or deficiencies in Norcom's RFP that could have led the new CIO to claim that it was naïve or insufficient.   (10 marks)

c. Identify possible approaches Norcom could have used to evaluate this RFP.

(10 marks)

SECTION B

Answer any three questions from this section

Question 1

Under three headings, discuss the major drivers for IT governance   (25 marks)

Question 2

Give a detailed account of the key leadership approaches to be adopted by management in respect of IT at the different quadrants of the strategic grid.   (25 marks)

Question 3

Discuss adaptive methodologies and explain their importance in ensuring effective IT project delivery.   (25 marks)

Question 4

A local college has embarked on a process of improving its service provision to its stakeholders. Part of this exercise involves an E2.5 million IT project that is largely outsourced to a foreign IT company. Discuss, under four headings, the precautions that the college must take to ensure success of such an alliance.   (25 marks)