

Global Competitive Analysis / Consulting and Organizational Development in MNCs

– A Course on Management Consulting in an International Environment –

COURSE SYLLABUS

IBUS 426 / IBUS 718

Fall 2018

Instructor

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Timings

IBUS 426: Monday & Wednesday, 11:10 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.; #122

IBUS 718: Monday & Wednesday, 08:05 a.m. – 09:20 a.m.; #125

+ mandatory class on

Friday, Sep 07, 2018, 09:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.; #tba

This replaces regularly scheduled classes on Nov 19, and Dec 03.

Description

This advanced international strategy course is offered in cooperation with the South Carolina Small Business Development Centers (SC SBDC). It places you in the role of a management consultant or advisor to a company which has expressed strong interest in expanding its global business footprint. You will work alongside SC SBDC business consultants to engage the client, understand the client's business needs, conduct a market analysis, and develop concrete go-forward recommendations. You will also work with a leading global trade management software by Integration Point, and have the opportunity to earn an Integration Point global trade analyst business certification.

Other than helping you understand global business, this course aims at developing two essential management consulting skills:

- **Integration.** Business problems rarely present themselves as discrete issues from either the finance, accounting, strategy, marketing, or human resources discipline. Rather, business problems are complex; they require a management consultant to come up with creative solutions drawing on multiple means at the same time.
- **Communication.** Management consultants and business managers alike are not only valued for their functional and technical expertise, their skills at extracting information and constructing solutions, but even more for their ability to succinctly communicate and aid top management in its decision making process.



Student Learning Outcomes

1. Discuss the challenges and opportunities for operating, selling, and buying in a global business environment. Create an internationalization strategy for a specific firm from South Carolina.
2. Interact with industry decision makers, and apply management consulting frameworks and tools to solve real-life client problems.
3. Present results and recommendations using slide decks in a management-consulting style.

Course Evaluation Components

This course has individual and group evaluation components.

- Attendance and participation (individual; 15%)
- Global trade database (individual; 10%)
- Integration Point certification (individual; 10%)
- Consulting project preparation (group; 10%)
- Consulting project execution (group; 45%)
- Peer evaluation of contribution to consulting project (individual; 10%)

I reserve the right to make minor adjustments to the above component percentages.

In keeping with the University of South Carolina grading standards, grades will be issued as:

A = 90 to 100%	C+ = 75 to 79%	D = 60 to 64%
B+ = 85 to 89%	C = 70 to 74%	F = below 60%
B = 80 to 84%	D+ = 65 to 69%	

If you achieve an overall percentage in the ranges above, you will receive the letter grade associated with that range.

Attendance and participation (individual; 15%)

In this course, we will build a practical understanding of management consulting by working on a real-life consulting project. We will review some consulting frameworks and databases in class, but the focus is really on running a real-life consulting project.

To make all of this work, it is crucial that you regularly come to class and attend project meetings. Absence affects participation grades (you obviously cannot participate if you are absent). As per the university's attendance policy, you may have a maximum of 10 percent absences of regularly scheduled class hours (excused or unexcused). Therefore: If your absence exceeds 3 scheduled classes, your Attendance and participation grade is capped at 50%; if it exceeds 5 scheduled classes, you will automatically get 0% for Attendance and participation. Please note that asking someone else to sign the attendance sheet for you (or signing the attendance sheet for someone else) is a form of academic dishonesty; see the section on course policies in this syllabus.

Your grade depends on my subjective assessment of your contribution to class and to your project. I am hoping that you will raise relevant points that will help move the conversation forward in a constructive and thoughtful manner. Feel free to question what I or someone else says or the conclusions that are being drawn. "Simply talking" does not represent a contribution to classroom participation. Most important for a successful consulting project are people who do not only have great ideas and debate eloquently, but people who sit down and deliver. A hands-on can-do attitude counts the most in this class. Please see the Appendix for detailed grading criteria.

Learning in the classroom is a social activity. Some behaviors can be distracting and degrade the ability of others to learn, and my ability to teach effectively. Chief among these is the use of



electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, and mobile phones. Please do not use any kind of electronic devices during class unless we are explicitly working on the consulting projects and you are instructed to do so. There is ample evidence that use of laptops in university classes diminishes performance. Check out these links:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hot-thought/201007/banning-laptops-in-classrooms>
- <http://ideas.time.com/2013/10/09/why-i-banned-laptops-from-the-lecture-hall/>

I realize that some students prefer to use laptops to take notes, but there is no exception for that activity. Failure to comply will lower your Attendance and participation grade.

Global trade database (individual; 10%)

Managers are faced with a bewildering range of business information, available as text or data, from numerous public and private sources. The volume is constantly increasing, and typically multiplied in global activities. In consulting projects we often collect data and consolidate it in a more concise form in a slide deck, which leads to timely managerial decisions. With this activity, I ask you to investigate what information is available in country or global trade databases, and how it could be used for your consulting project. You will be randomly assigned one of the following databases (please see separate document with links and short descriptions available on Blackboard):

1. The World Bank
2. Ease of Doing Business Report
3. Passport
4. UNdata
5. Measuring business regulations
6. Corruption perception index
7. IMF data and statistics
8. globalEDGE
9. Business Monitor International
10. QoG Quality of Government
11. World Values Survey
12. European Social Survey
13. Gallup Analytics
14. USITC Interactive Tariff and Trade DataWeb
15. UN Comtrade
16. WITS World Integrated Trade Solution
17. Searates and Shipping rates
18. Hoover's Online
19. Mintel
20. IBIS World
21. eStatement Studies
22. Compustat North America and Global / WorldScope
23. ORBIS and OSIRIS
24. AMADEUS

I want you to prepare two slides. The first slide should give an overview of what this database is all about, who is maintaining/publishing it, how it can be accessed, what data can be found in it, and what business problem it supports. On the second slide, take an exemplary export problem, and show how data from this database can be collected, presented, and analyzed.

In class and on your assigned date, I want you to present these two slides to the class. You need to cover this presentation in about 7 minutes, plus 3 minutes for questions.

Please see the guidelines and examples on Blackboard on how to build good and self-explanatory management-consulting slides. A grading grid is provided in the Appendix.

Integration Point certification (individual; 10%)

Integration Point (www.integrationpoint.com) is a privately owned company founded by Tom Barnes in 2002. Tom Barnes is the CEO of the company, and a member of the Folks Center for International Business at the Darla Moore School of Business. Integration Point specializes in the development, implementation and support of global trade management software to efficiently manage the import and export of goods around the world.

As part of this course, you will receive free access to this software and to a self-learning platform. Integration Point experts will introduce you to the software. You then have time to explore the contents of the software on your own. There will be an online certification exam set in cooperation with Integration Point (see the Course schedule for the date). The results of this exam will count towards your course grade. If you meet the threshold set by Integration Point, you will receive a formal Global Trade Analysis certification by Integration Point. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know your password for the software and the learning platform. Make sure that your email ID captured in Blackboard is the one that you are using. Failure to do so might prevent you from taking the online exam, and result in 0 points for this grading component.

Consulting project preparation (group; 10%)

This is a group assignment, and course participants should form groups of about 5 students. Your group will be assigned a firm provided by South Carolina's Small Business Development Centers (SC SBDC). Your group will then be required to understand the business the company is in, and develop a specific internationalization strategy for this firm. This may be a country analysis, a recommendation for product customization or innovation, or a suggestion for localized marketing. Your report should contain a short and/or long-term implementation plan. Further details will be provided in class.

After you have been allocated your firm, there will be a kick-off session where you will interact – either remotely via Skype/teleconference or in person – with your client and the SBDC consultant. You need to be prepared for this session (further details in class).

Please see the Appendix for grading criteria.

Consulting project execution (group; 45%)

Please note that this is a lot of work in a short period of time; so please plan ahead with your other activities!

Most likely you have had some experience of working with teams already. If not, for sure, teamwork will be part of your job at some point. Teamwork requires your time and your involvement. It is your personal responsibility to manage your team, and to make sure everyone contributes equally. How you want to set up responsibilities in your team is your decision. Some level of “specialization” can help, but I strongly advise against dividing the tasks completely. To benefit from the learning associated with each task, and to ensure highest quality, it is best that all team members contribute to all aspects of the assignment.

When your final presentation is due (see the course schedule):

- Hand in the mock invoice.
- Hand in your slide deck as a black-and-white printout (simple stapling; no fancy folders, please) and email a copy to me.
- Prepare 3 color copies (nicely bound) for the company and SC SBDC representative(s); include the mock invoice.

Please see the Appendix for grading criteria.

Peer evaluation of consulting project (individual; 10%)

A signed, completed peer-evaluation form (hard copy, see Appendix) is due on the day you are delivering your final presentation.

The grade for this component is meant to be an individual adjustment for the group grade, it is not an independent grade.

Course Textbook

This is a practical course on management consulting in an international environment. There is no set textbook. Please check Blackboard for examples and templates that will help you build good management consulting slides.

Course Policies

Academic honor code

You are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. This includes improper citation of sources, using another student's work, cheating, and plagiarism, lying in academic matters, fraud, bribery, unauthorized access to tests and examinations, and any other form of academic misrepresentation. Students suspected of such a violation will be reported to department officials and the Office of Academic Integrity.

In cases of academic misconduct, you will receive an F on the assignment in question. For serious and severe cases, you will receive an F for the entire course.

The academic honor code can be found here:

<https://www.sa.sc.edu/academicintegrity/honor-code-policy-information/>

Meeting and interacting with me

I am very happy to meet with you outside the classroom, but I would appreciate if you could please schedule an appointment through the web portal (use link provided on page 1). If you do not keep scheduled appointments, do not cancel them, and do not have a very valid (documented) excuse, it will negatively affect your Attendance and participation grade. If my scheduled office hours are inconvenient (e.g. because of other classes), please do let me know, and we'll find a solution.

If you send me an email, I will try my best to get back to you, but I may not always be able to respond immediately. If you can't attend classes because of sickness or job interviews, please do not send me an email; the attendance policy (see under Attendance and Participation) should take care of it.

If you don't agree with a grade ...

I do not entertain "grade-grabbing" discussions. If you believe that you have been unfairly evaluated, please revert back in writing within one week of receiving the grade making a clear and succinct argument for your case. I will then re-evaluate your work taking your reasoning into account, and discuss my re-evaluation with you. As a result, your grade can go up or down.

Student grievances process

Per university policy, the following process is available to address grading concerns:

http://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/moore/internal/rights_and_responsibilities/grievances.php

Confidentiality and conflict of interest policy

To protect the relationship between the SBDC and its clients, it is the policy of the SBDC that employees and consultants adhere to certain guidelines. You will be required to sign a *Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy* statement, which will be made available as a separate document.

Also, access to the Integration Point environments may only be used during this course, for the purpose of this course, and only by yourself.

Waiver of liability and release

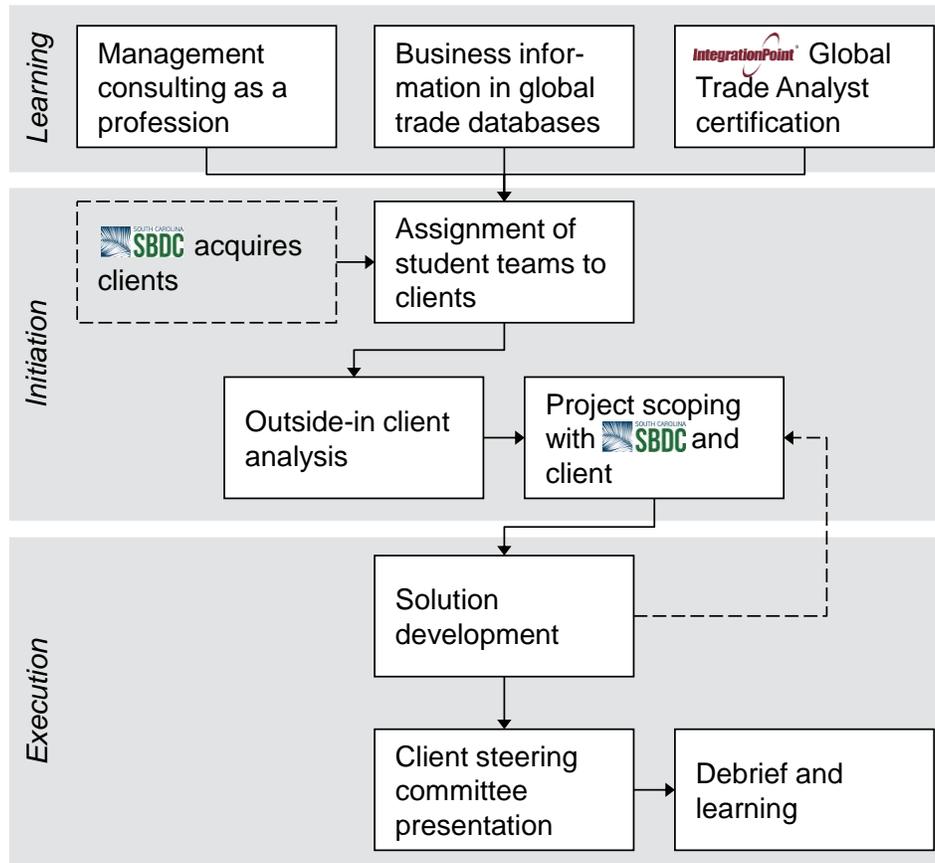
Participating in the consulting project may optionally include independently visiting client sites, attending client meetings, or doing other types of activities outside of the university campus. You will be required to sign a *Waiver of Liability and Release*, which will be made available as a separate document.

Student disability services policy statement

Any student with a documented disability should contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 803-777-6142 to make arrangements for appropriate accommodations. Please also let me know.

Course Roadmap

The below diagram is a graphical representation of the course schedule. It helps to understand how the various activities build upon each other.



Course Schedule

Please note that the below schedule and topics are both subject to change. We are going to work on real company projects, there will be a number of guest speakers, and not everything can be planned for ahead of the course.

#	Date	Topics, Activities, Readings, and Prep-Work
1	27 Aug	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review syllabus Explain assignment: Global trade database (individual) Explain test: Integration Point certification (individual) Explain assignment: Consulting project (group) <p>To-dos after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get started with assignment Global trade database

<p>2 + 3</p>	<p>29 Aug 05 Sep</p>	<p>Managing a Consulting Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of management consulting • Client engagement process <p>Management Consulting Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key-takeaway vs. topical titling • Dos and Don'ts <p>To-dos after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turner, A. N. (1982). Consulting is more than giving advice. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> (Sep-Oct), 60/5, pp. 120-129. • Christensen, C. M., Wang, D., & van Bever, D. (2013). Consulting on the cusp of disruption. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> (Oct), 91/10, pp. 106-114. • Review material provided on Blackboard. <p>Book recommendation (<i>optional reading</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rumelt, R. (2011). <i>Good Strategy, bad strategy: The difference and why it matters</i>. New York, NY: Crown Business.
<p>4 + 5</p>	<p>07 Sep</p>	<p><u>Special class on Friday, September 07, 2018: 09:30 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.</u></p> <p>Integration Point</p> <p>Guest speaker <i>LeAnna Lennon</i>, Global Trade Content Analyst, Integration Point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Integration Point global trade management software <p>To-dos after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through material on the Integration Point learning platform • Familiarize yourself with the Integration Point software
<p>6 + 7 + 8</p>	<p>10 Sep 12 Sep 17 Sep</p>	<p><u>!!! Due today !!! (Sep 10)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Global trade database (PowerPoint)</i> <p>Individual presentations of global trade database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content discussion • Review of slide design mechanics
<p>9</p>	<p>19 Sep</p>	<p>Forming consulting groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of students to groups • Allocation of clients to groups <p>Starting a consulting project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside-in company and industry analysis • Project planning • Effort estimation • Stakeholder communication <p>To-dos after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start preparing for first client meeting

10	24 Sep	<p>Consulting project kick-off with SC SBDC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation setting <p>Speaker: <i>Michele Abraham</i>, State Director, SC Small Business Development Center (SC SBDC), Columbia</p>
11	26 Sep	<p>Individual presentations of global trade database (cont'd.)</p>
12	01 Oct	<p><i>!!! Integration Point Certification Exam !!!</i></p> <p>Bring your laptop to this session, and ensure you have online access to the learning platform and the software.</p>
13	03 Oct	<p><i>!!! Due today !!!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside-in analysis for client kick-off <p>Group presentations of outside-in analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content presentation to other students • Review of slide design mechanics <p>To-dos after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine-tune your material for client kick-off
14	08 Oct	<p>Individual presentations of global trade database (cont'd.)</p>
15	10 Oct	<p>Kick-off consulting project with clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During normal lecture hours. • Meet with your clients and SBDC consultant, either via Skype/telco or face-2-face. • Understand your clients' requirements and agree on project scope. <p>To-do after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document project scope, develop project plan. Agree with client. • Put together effort estimation. • Develop stakeholder communication strategy. • Put everything together in a project approval document.
16 + 17	15 Oct 17 Oct	<p><i>!!! Due today !!! (Oct 15)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approval document <p>Group presentations of project approval document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to other students • Discussion of project approach • Review of slide design mechanics <p>To-do after class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on project.
18 + 19	22 Oct 24 Oct	<p>Guided project work in groups</p>



20	29 Oct	Exporting with containers: The role of the freight forwarder Speaker: <i>David Bryant</i> , Account Executive, John S. James Co.
21	31 Oct	Exporting with parcels Speaker: tbc, UPS
22 23	05 Nov 07 Nov	Guided project work in groups
24 25	12 Nov 14 Nov	<i>!!! Due today !!! (Nov 12)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your (almost) final slide deck Dry-run of presentations To-do after class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last fixes to slide deck Preparation for steering committee with clients Organize logistics for steering committee
	19 Nov	NO CLASS
26 + 27	26 Nov 28 Nov	<i>!!! Due today !!! (Nov 26 and 28)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final slide deck Mock invoices Peer evaluation Consulting Project: Steering Committee Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting teams present their results Company representatives and SBDC consultants present
	03 Dec	NO CLASS
28	05 Dec	Feedback on Consulting Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual discussion of client feedback Comparing effort estimation vs. actual effort Course Summary & Wrap-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learnings from consulting project

There is no final exam.



Appendix A: Grading Grid for Attendance and Participation

Grading Grid: Attendance and Participation					
	A+ (100) .. A (95) .. A- (90)	B+ (87) .. B (83) .. B- (80)	C+ (77) .. C (73) .. C- (70)	D+ (67) .. D (63) .. D- (60)	F (40, 20, 0)
"Normal" classes	Consistently adds insight to the class, which moves class discussion to a new level. Thoroughly prepared. Helps other learn. Outstanding methodological and factual knowledge. Perfect and punctual attendance.	Adds informed insight to the class. Occasionally states or restates the obvious. Is thoroughly prepared for each class. Very good methodological and factual knowledges. Some classes may have been missed, but does not exceed the university mandated limit of 3 absences.	Is relatively passive, and only sometimes contributes to classroom discussion. When doing so, often just states the obvious. Some classes may have been missed, but does not exceed the university mandated limit of 3 absences.	Does not proactively contribute to classroom discussion, group discussions, or coursework. Is often lost when called upon. Contributions are repetitive or non-value adding. Often unprepared. Does not recall topics from previous classes. Missed more than 3 scheduled classes, but not more than 5.	Destructive classroom behavior or commentary. Prevents others from learning. Missed more than 5 scheduled classes (excused, unexcused).
Project work	Has outstanding ideas, proactively takes initiative, and brings things to conclusion. Is at the same time respectful to others, and integrates other team members. Gives credit to others when applicable. A great teamplayer.	Has good ideas. Deliverables of high quality.	Is rather passive in project work, more often than not waits for things being assigned to her/him. Deliverables contribute to the success of the project.	Does not sufficiently contribute to the project, shows little interest, just does the bare minimum. Still contributes to the project in a positive manner.	The project team would have been better off without this team member. Deliverables are often substandard, and need to be reworked by others.

Appendix B: Grading Grid for Global Trade Database

Grading Grid: Global Trade Database					
	A+ (100) .. A (95) .. A- (90)	B+ (87) .. B (83) .. B- (80)	C+ (77) .. C (73) .. C- (70)	D+ (67) .. D (63) .. D- (60)	F (40, 20, 0)
First slide	Demonstrates a detailed understanding of the database; makes appropriate and powerful connections. Very helpful write-up for the upcoming consulting project.	Demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the database. Starting point for the consulting project. Does not quite meet the standards of a leading management consulting firm.	Demonstrates a valid but somewhat incomplete understanding of the database. Overly simplistic. Overall, does not add much value for the consulting project.	Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the databases; makes little connections. Incomplete in many respects. Poorly structured (e.g. mostly bullet points). Cannot be used by others for the consulting project.	Total inadequacy of coverage makes hardly any valid connections. Incomplete in most respects, does not reflect requirements.
Second slide	Presents a highly relevant worked example of how the database can be used in the consulting project. Supports theory on the first slide.	Presents a relevant worked example of how the database can be used in the consulting project. Supports theory on the first slide.	Worked example is not thorough enough.	Worked example lacks details, somewhat superficial, does not support theory on the first slide.	Inadequate example, very poor and extremely superficial execution.
Storyline	Storyline demonstrates a sophisticated clarity, conciseness, and correctness. Slide body connected to storyline.	Storyline is accomplished in terms of clarity, conciseness, and correctness. Sufficient interlinkage between storyline and slide body.	Storyline lacks clarity or conciseness, and contains numerous errors. It does not sufficiently link with slide body.	Storyline is unfocused and imprecise. It contains serious errors and spelling or grammar mistakes. Storyline is either too long or too short.	Storyline contains irrelevant information, or is badly written. Difference between headline and storyline not understood.
Layout and precision	All elements properly aligned, consistent font type and size, smart use of colors. Text short and crisp, yet easy to understand. Professional command of English.	Most elements properly aligned with minor mistakes. There are instances where the text could be rephrased to make it more easily accessible. Good command of English.	Weakness in alignment of some elements, inconsistencies in font type and size. Overreliance on fancy elements instead of content. Good command of English.	Poor slide building skills. Many elements not aligned, frequent inconsistencies. English needs proofreading.	Generally bad slide design. Poor English.
Note: Regardless of the reason, 10 percentage points will be subtracted for every day of late submission.					



Appendix C: Grading Grid for Consulting Project Preparation

Given the real-life nature of the consulting projects and the differences between topics and companies, it is impossible to establish and adhere to one grading grid. However, I will use the following areas and criteria to grade your group work:

- Outside-in analysis into company, industry environment, and/or markets
- Slides and other material used to moderate the kick-off session
- Logistics arranged for the kick-off session
- Moderation of the kick-off session
- Project plan
- Effort estimation
- Stakeholder mapping and communication plan

Appendix D: Grading Grid for Consulting Project Execution

I will use the following areas and criteria to grade your group work:

- Progress of consulting project
- Communication with stakeholders, interaction with client
- Overall usefulness of your work for the client
- Quality and creativity of your approach
- Depth of your research
- Storyline
- Layout of slides
- Precision and neatness of your slide deck
- Mock invoice and time-keeping
- Steering committee presentation

Depending on the nature of your consulting project and other projects in the class, I reserve the right to add other criteria, remove some, and assign different weightages.



Appendix E: Peer Evaluation Sheet

Your name / Student number: _____ / _____

Assignment Topic: _____

Assessing your fellow team members should be taken seriously, as it is your input into how well your team members performed during your team assignment in this course. You can reward those members, who did an outstanding job. Also, you can let me know about members who did less than they should have when performing team assignments. Some points you might want to keep in mind are as follows:

- The individual’s attendance at group meetings
- Their flexibility when scheduling group meetings
- Their preparedness at group meetings
- Their contribution at meetings (e.g., quality of discussion, ideas)
- Taking an active part in outside research (e.g., library searches)
- Overall contribution towards team assignment

List all team members **alphabetically by last name, followed by the first name**. Include yourself in the list, but **do not rate yourself** (leave the score beside your name blank). Scores can range from **0.0** (no contribution at all on this project) to **1.5**. The sum of the scores for all team members must equal the number of members in your team minus 1.0 (i.e., yourself). For example, if you have a 5-person team, you can allocate 4 points (i.e., 5-1) among your four team members. If everyone contributed equally, you would assign each team member a 1.

#	Last name, first name	Student number	Score (0.0 ... 1.5)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
Total (must equal the number of team members minus 1)			

Note: If you assigned any team member a very low score (0.3 or less), you need to be able to back up your marking with written evidence (e.g., logs of meetings, emails) attached to this sheet.

Your signature

Date