



Business

Short Term Abroad Program (STAP) *Tbilisi, Georgia*

Spring Break 2018

PROFESSOR: *Dr. Tom G. Geurts, FRICS*

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday = 2:00pm – 5:00pm and Thursday = 11:30am – 2:00pm

OFFICE LOCATION: Fungler 510

EMAIL: TGG@gwmail.gwu.edu

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: *Adam Johnson*

EMAIL: adamjohnson@gwmail.gwu.edu

CLASS MEETINGS: 06:00PM-09:00PM on Wednesday 1/24, 2/14, 2/28, and 3/28.

LOCATION: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This STAP will go to Tbilisi in Georgia, which is a country that is rapidly developing due to 1) its ideal location, namely proximity to the developed consumer market of the European Union and developing consumer market of China, as well as its close proximity to the oil rich Middle East, 2) political stability, and 3) still low wages compared to other developing countries such as Vietnam and South America. Indeed, since 2003, Georgia has been pursuing a strongly pro-Western foreign policy, aiming to be admitted to the EU and the NATO and in order to accomplish that they introduced a series of democratic and economic reforms, albeit with apparent mixed results. Nevertheless Georgia has been ranking higher (better) on surveys such as the *Index of Economic Freedom* (2017: 13th) and *Ease of Doing Business Index* (2017: 16th). Foreign investors have been taking note and indeed the result is that Georgia is becoming more integrated into the global economy: Its 2015 imports and exports account for 50% and 21% of GDP respectively. Furthermore its economy is moving away from being agriculturally based to becoming more devoted to the Service Industry (2016: The Service Industry represented 68.3% of GDP versus 9.2% for the Agricultural Sector). Tourism is also increasing in importance for the Georgian economy: In 2016, according to the Georgian National Tourism Administration, 2,714,773 tourists brought approximately US\$2.16 billion to the country.

In preparation of the trip the students will be provided with the information necessary so they can obtain a working knowledge of the industry in which their client operates, as well as the institutional and cultural framework of Georgia and its capital Tbilisi. Essential in this stage is that the students develop a meeting schedule of whom they want to meet and why, when in Tbilisi. Based on this I will arrange such visits. Clearly, if I see omission(s) in the program I will discuss this with the students.

Final analysis of the STAP will be accomplished through onsite meetings and faculty-facilitated discussions, which will give the students an 'on-the-ground' perspective of the economic, social,

political, and legal realities of Tbilisi/ Georgia in a larger global context. Work with the local host client will consist of a number of visits to the firm and meeting with key personnel. At the end of the trip there will be a formal presentation of the deliverable and feedback from the client.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Utilize a formal consulting framework to design and execute a custom-tailored process to answer the key business questions identified by a client organization. This process should include:
 - a. Developing working hypotheses
 - b. Designing and implementing a data collection plan
 - c. Synthesizing data to answer key questions identified by client organizations
 - d. Developing creative, well supported, impactful and actionable recommendations and implementation suggestions
 - e. Communicating, effectively and professionally, in written and oral form while executing a project plan as a team to respond to the challenges identified by the client
2. Demonstrate a deep knowledge of the structure and dynamics of their client's industry, and of the central topic/theme of their project.
3. Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the economic, social, political, and cultural aspects of the country where their clients are located, as well as demonstrate an appreciation for the implications that cultural and institutional distance have on global business practice.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

This course is comprised of 1) Classroom-taught "The Consulting Process" and 2) Practical application during an in-country residency, where these two components form one highly-intertwined experiential learning experience. As one academic experience, both the Washington, DC and in-country program are regarded as one in terms of preparation, deliverables and grading. Expectations of academic engagement and professionalism are thus equivalent while students are engaged in the United States as well as overseas, hence one grade will be provided for the entirety of the experience.

This course is eminently creative, practice oriented, and team-focused; students will be expected to take a leadership role in managing their own learning process. Students are expected to be highly entrepreneurial in finding the necessary sources of information to properly assess the current business landscape and in developing a sound proposal for their client. These sources include, but are not limited to, physical and online archives, industry experts, other professors, and potential consumers of the client's products and services. The professor will facilitate access to some of these sources, but they should be viewed as a starting point rather than the only sources of information needed to address the client's needs.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

All students enrolled in this course are required to have a personal Skype account; in years past this has been the most reliable and affordable means of holding conference calls with clients. Any expenses incurred for Skype communication are the sole responsibility of the student.

Any requests for space required to conduct client calls or group work related to the STAP should be submitted via the following link: <https://academicscheduling.gwu.edu/virtualems/>

Students are expected to be participating in an active learning experience while overseas; such an engagement requires access to the tools of global business including: a laptop computer or tablet, and preferably a smart phone.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

GRADING

Group Work (60%)

Input Report	15%	Frame
Project Game Plan Report	15%	Organize
Client Written Report – Draft	Ungraded	Understand
Team Presentations – Draft	Ungraded	Understand
Final Client Written Report	15%	Synthesize
Final Client Presentation and Slide Deck	15%	Synthesize

Individual Work (40%)

Class Participation:	30%	
- Class Attendance and Participation		
- Midpoint Peer Evaluation		
- Onsite Participation, Visit Preparation, and Site Visit Leadership		
Final Reflection	10%	
	100%	

BRIEF CLIENT PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

There are three projects for two clients:

1) TBC Bank:

- *Company Info:*

TBC Bank is one of the largest banks in Georgia. Founded in 1992, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, TBC Bank currently employs over 6000 employees in Georgia, Israel, and Azerbaijan and is currently one of the only Georgian companies currently traded on the London Stock Exchange. See also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TBC_Bank

- *Project Information:*

1 = TBC Insurance is the insurance arm of TBC Bank. Currently, TBC Insurance is looking to add Health Insurance to its portfolio of insurance offerings. To do so they need help developing a solid business case including a financial model, market entry strategy, and a target operating model.

2 = TBC also has a wealth of customer data with which they want to perform a so-called Big Data Analysis project.

- *Core Subject Areas:*

Finance, Strategy, Decision Analytics, and Operations Management.

2) **Lithuanian Bakery:**

- *Company Information:*

Lithuanian Bakery was founded in 2005. Currently the company makes up about 3% of the Georgian bread and bun market with over 300 employees. The company offers over 70 types of bread products and its best seller is a traditional Lithuanian Rye Bread.

- *Project Information:*

Develop a marketing and branding campaign for their product(s).

- *Core Subject Areas:*

Marketing.

EXPLANATION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Input Report (15%)

A stated learning objective of this course is the development of broad knowledge of the economic, social, political, and cultural aspects of the country where your clients are located, as well as the demonstration of deep knowledge of the structure and dynamics of the client industry, and of the central topic/theme of your project.

To make immediate progress toward these central objectives of the course, all teams will be expected to define research topics that are critical to the specific industry of their respective client project beginning in the first phase of the consulting process. These topics should be based on the initial hypothesis formulation for the client's presenting problem. In addition to outlining tentative recommendation hypotheses, the team's initial research findings should be synthesized to present the landscape as you see it from your preliminary research. A bibliography must be included to support this assignment.

This assignment (exclusive of bibliography) should not exceed 5 double-spaced pages and is due on **February 14**. Wherever possible, teams should make use of bullets, summary tables, figures and charts in their reports to make the report visually appealing and quickly digested. All in-text citations should be parenthetical endnotes; a full reference list should be attached at the end of the assignment. Use the APA style guide to cite the sources. Purdue's Online Writing Lab hosts an excellent guide for APA citations and can be found here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

In the appendix, please include the following:

1. Scope of Work Agreement (at least a tentative version that you have discussed with your client in the first meeting)
2. Memo summarizing major takeaways from the first client meeting
3. The TEAM FOCUS process map template filled out to the best of your ability based on the limited information you obtain at this point in time. You will keep tweaking this document as the project progresses
4. Your Team Charter

2. Project Game Plan Report (15%)

As students are moving into the Understanding phase of the Friga model, each team will submit an initial team game plan report. This report will include:

1. A statement summarizing the client engagement issue/topic/challenge
2. A descriptive outline of the client written report. The outline should include fully drafted text for every aspect of the report that is already known/researched. Where "blanks" remain, a list of remaining research questions the team is still pursuing should be embedded into the report.
3. A full bibliography in APA style
4. Appendix A - (if applicable) Drafts of any primary research instruments (survey, interview protocol, focus group protocol, etc.)
5. Appendix B - A list of defined milestones/due dates for team project, inclusive of expected interviews and "touch base" meetings with clients and other individuals
6. Appendix C - A detailed description of the roles and responsibilities for each team member

All game plan reports should be posted on Blackboard by **February 28**. Teams should also create a brief PowerPoint summarizing the game plan report. You will be required to present this information informally in the **February 28** class.

3. and 4. Final Client Written Report and Final Client Presentation and Slide Deck (30%)

The main deliverable in this class will be a professional, client-responsive, and actionable client report. Each report will differ depending on the task assigned and client needs. Reports will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Responsiveness to client needs/requests
2. Comprehensiveness of research (primary and secondary)
3. Specificity and "actionability" of recommendations made to client
4. Creativity
5. Professionalism of the report, presentation materials, and actual delivery of the proposals

The final presentations to the clients will be during the in-country residency, namely Friday **March 16**. The clients will be asked to provide explicit feedback on the quality of the work of the team, both in terms of content and delivery. The final report and presentation grade will be based on assessment by the professor with feedback from the client.

Final presentations will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Ability to keep to the established time limit
2. Clear, easy-to-read, professional text and graphics
3. Persuasiveness, on-stage confidence, and energy of presentation
4. Full-room eye-contact, speech clarity, body posture/gestures
5. Ability to respond to questions from client

5. Class Participation (30%)

As an active learning experience your continued and rigorous engagement is critical to the progress of your project work as well as your academic success in the course.

Class Attendance and Participation

Class attendance and participation is mandatory and will be evaluated strictly and on an individual basis. Your grade will depend on quantity of your participation and, most of all, the

quality of your participation. Your participation grade may be negatively affected by unprofessional behavior in the Washington, DC (e.g., inappropriate comments, classroom distractions, chatting with classmates) as well as onsite (e.g., tardiness, lack of preparation for business visits and client meetings, attentiveness at required events).

It will be particularly important to prepare for the required sessions and activities where we have external guests. These people are experts in their domains and are willing to share their knowledge with us just for our benefit. Let's honor this by ensuring all are particularly professionally engaged during these sessions.

Midpoint Peer Evaluation

In an effort to assist in the development of each student as a learner and consultant a midpoint peer evaluation will be provided by and to each team member. This evaluation, an operationalization of the TEAM (Talk Evaluate Assist and Motivate) model, will serve as an opportunity to provide sound and constructive feedback to team members with the aim of encouraging team productivity and efficiency. Consistent feedback from past STAP participants illustrate that this is a critical opportunity for teams to share constructive feedback to all team members to improve project performance and professional development.

Onsite Participation, Visit Preparation, and Site Visit Leadership

Engagement while onsite in client meetings, business visits, and required cultural activities is critical to the success of each student. To facilitate this students will be expected to be active participants in onsite activities and prepare for meetings through the production of formal site visit forms. Leadership roles will be assigned for each site visit and responsibilities provided by the instructor.

6. Final Reflection (10%)

Students are required to submit a written reflection paper on their experience in the Consulting Abroad Program including: the client organization, the destination city, or other site visits and business meetings in the project destination.

The paper can cover, but is not limited to, any of the following aspects of the business meetings/visits: 1) Organizational information of the host, 2) Any particular aspect of the host organization's management functions interests you, 3) What aspect of the business meeting discussions that strikes you the most, 4) What are the take-aways you have from this visit, or 5) any social and cultural aspects of the destination cities.

The length of reflection should be 3 double-spaced pages due no later than **April 7**.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

"The McKinsey Engagement" by Paul N. Friga.
Other readings will be provided on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Progress and Travel Clearance

All students participating in this course are required to maintain good academic standing. The university reserves the right to remove students not making successful academic progress – with assessment on an ongoing basis – and such students will not be authorized to travel for the overseas engagement of the STAP program.

Group Work

This course intends to replicate the conditions under which a team of consultants work jointly to address their client's problems. As a result, group-work will be the norm rather than the exception. It is critical that team expectations are set from the beginning of the engagement. Given the amount of time that you will have to spend working together every week it is advisable that, from the beginning, all the members of the team agree on reserving specific blocks of time to plan and distribute the work, discuss and integrate it, and produce the reports and presentations as required.

All members of the team are expected to be prepared to discuss any aspect of the group's work at any time.

Portable Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Many use laptops to help them take notes or reference the Internet as it relates to in-class discussion. However, no student is expected to be surfing the web, checking email, sending text messages, or working on other class assignments. Out of respect for the instructor and fellow classmates it is expected that you will use your laptops and other electronics judiciously. Bear in mind that cold-calling is fair game at any point during class. Participation grades will be impacted for any student who is unable to respond or who provides a far less than satisfactory response.

Professional Conduct

All students enrolled in this course are representing The George Washington University during their project work and expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Students who fail to do so will receive a written warning and be subject to removal from class sessions and/or the project team. Egregious behavior may result in immediate suspension from the project teams, with return to the United States at student expense, and/or receipt of a failing grade in the course. Students should refer to the complete participation agreement which must be signed electronically prior to travel and is provided in the appendix of this syllabus.

Academic Integrity

The professor will strictly abide by the academic integrity policies as stated at <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html#definition>. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. **ANY ASSIGNMENT INCLUDING PLAGIARIZED MATERIAL (see Academic Integrity Code for definition) WILL RECEIVE AN F. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

Late Assignments

No late assignments will be accepted. Note that 5 minutes late constitutes a late assignment. Students are expected to make arrangements to hand in assignments prior to the deadline. If you anticipate a course absence the day an assignment is due, you should plan to complete the work ahead of time, turning in the assignment early via email. Alternative methods of assignment submission should be sought prior to the class period. Failure to turn in assignments before class will result in a zero for the assignment.

Final Grades

Final grades will reflect the student's total points earned in the course. Students will be able to track progress in the Blackboard gradebook. All grades are final. There will be no extra credit offered in this course.

Grading Disputes

If a mistake occurs in grading, students are requested to submit a written request for a grade change outlining what is believed to be the error in grading. I will respond back to you as soon as possible in writing.

Attendance

Attendance and participation in both formal class meetings and required co-curricular programming in Washington, DC and all official activity in Georgia are mandatory and will be evaluated strictly on an individual basis. To receive a high grade in participation, you must come to class prepared and must contribute frequently and with high-quality, substantive comments.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Disability Support Services

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202.994.8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242 to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss>.

For accommodation overseas students are directed to contact Global & Experiential Education (G&EE) early on in the planning process. G&EE will liaise with Disability Support Services and in-country travel providers to establish eligibility and coordinate reasonable accommodations. For more information please email sbintl@gwu.edu.

Classroom Emergency Preparedness and Response Information

Please consult the following link for GWU emergency procedures at <http://gwired.gwu.edu/upd/> as well as reference the important numbers below.

GW Campus Police (Emergency)
Foggy Bottom – 202.994.6111

GW Campus Police (Non-Emergency)
Foggy Bottom – 202.994.6110

Communication from the University

GW Campus Advisories is the University's principle method used for communicating incident-related information, including class cancellations, to the GW community. Visit www.CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu to sign up for Alert DC (text message alerts) and download GW Alert(desktop notifications). In addition, the University posts recorded messages on the GW Info line 202.994.5050.

OVERSEAS PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

Successful preparation for your STAP engagement will require careful attention to meetings prior to travel and after arrival at your destination.

On-campus orientation: As a part of your preparation for international travel Global & Experiential Education will hold a pre-departure travel briefing during the **February 28** class session. During this meeting students will review health and safety resources, University travel policies, and situational protocol. This is one of many opportunities to seek out the expertise of this office to best prepare for a healthy and safe overseas experience.

In-country orientation: Students should expect to participate in an in country orientation during the first day of the overseas program. In this session faculty will share information about location-specific emergency and non-emergency procedures related to health and safety for the duration of your program.

CLASS OUTLINE

Each lecture will have a specific theme in order to ensure that we cover all relevant topics before we go in-country.

Date	Topic	Preparation	Assignments
January 24: Introduction	1) Discussion of the Projects. 2) Creating a Team, Managing a Team, and expected Deliverables. 3) In-country Scheduling.	Read: "The McKinsey Engagement" by Paul N. Friga. Read: "Team Roles" by Tom G. Geurts. This document will be posted on Blackboard.	None
February 14: Focus on Georgia	1) Student presentations about the current Economic, Social, and Political situation in Georgia. 2) Discussion of Input Reports. 3) Discussion of preliminary itinerary in Tbilisi.		Submission and Presentation of Input Report
February 28: Focus on Secondary Research	1) Guest Speaker Patty Garcia about Travel Policies. 2) Final Preparation for Trip. 3) Student presentations of the Project Game Plan Reports.	By this date teams should have done significant amount of data gathering in regards to the industry and work environment relative to their respective projects.	Submission and Presentation of Project Game Plan Report

	4) Round Table Discussion about final client presentation. All teams are expected to share constructive feedback for each team.		
March 28:	1) Review and Lessons Learned. 2) Reflection Discussion.		
April 7:			Submission of Final Reflection Report

MODIFICATIONS TO THE SYLLABUS

This syllabus represents the best possible plan at this time. The instructor reserves the right to make revisions to any item on this syllabus, including, but not limited to, any class policy, the course outline and schedule, examination schedule, grading policy, required assessments, etc. Changes will be announced on Blackboard.