

**TSTD 6214 – Consulting Processes**  
**Celebrating Heritage, Fostering Community-based Tourism in Havana, Cuba**  
**Summer 2017**

### **Course Description**

This course involves an examination of the consultant-client relationship as well as introduction to the *wide array of approaches and tools* available for application in different consultative scenarios.

While being exposed to key theories and best practices from the consulting world, students will begin preparation for an actual consulting experience. They will work in teams to define the *scope of their consulting task*, conduct an *in-depth analysis of the strategic problem* at hand, identify *preliminary opportunities for actionable resolutions* and prepare an effective *plan for the two-week consulting fieldwork*.

### **Course Objectives**

- Provide theoretical and practical frameworks for issue identification, practice in prioritizing issues and problems/opportunities to be tackled in a consulting assignment.
- Experience the application of the management consulting process to the project undertaken for the client organizations.
- Build skills in using primary and secondary sources of information, accessing industry data and using specialized sources of information, conducting strategic analysis and designating key tasks as part of the preparation for a fieldwork assignment.

### **Consulting Process Stages**

- Select consulting client, review potential project topics and negotiate Scope of Work.
- Conduct literature review, research general and specialized information sources, perform interviews, conduct surveys, and complete other research activities.
- Identify issues, problems, or opportunities. Conduct a decision analysis utilizing pro/con, cost/benefit, decision criteria/objectives/decision alternatives, balanced scorecard, or other approaches.
- Select the best alternative or combination of alternative solutions. Prepare a list of recommendations for management to address the problems, issues, or opportunities uncovered. Document the consequences and benefits of selecting the recommended course of action.
- Create an implementation plan.
- Present the report (oral and written presentations).

### **Required Readings**

- Stroh, L. & Johnson, H. (2006). *The Basic Principles of Effective Consulting*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Rasai, E. & Friga, P. (2002). The McKinsey Mind: Understanding and Implementing the Problem-Solving Tools and Management Techniques of the World Top Strategic Consulting Firm. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gundry, L. & Buchko, A. (1996). Field Casework. California: Sage Publications.

## **Assignments**

The assignments for TSTD 6214 are linked with the assignments for TSTD 6282.

Requirement	TSTD 6214 Point Value	TSTD 6282 Point Value	Deadline
Case Study: Presentation	20	-	TBD
Planning for Consulting Assignment: Report and Presentation	20	-	TBD
Individual Research Report	30	-	TBD
Group Inception Report	25	-	TBD
Inception Report Presentation to Client	-	25	TBD
Final Oral Presentation	-	30	TBD
"Penguin Award" Paper	5	-	TBD
Time Log	-	15	TBD
Final Written Report	-	30	TBD
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

### **Case Study Presentation:**

Students will organize into consulting teams and develop a case study on relevant topics associated to this year's consulting assignment in Havana, Cuba. A list of the topics and presentation dates will be provided. Each consulting team will prepare a slide deck using the Case Study Template provided.

Consulting teams will prepare analysis points and present the case study in class. Each team should facilitate a dynamic presentation and be sure to engage peers in an interactive discussion about the case study.

Each consulting team should plan to submit the slide deck via Blackboard by 5:00 p.m. ET on the due date. Prior to the subsequent class, each team should upload the Power Point presentation in Blackboard's Discussions section ensuring that it incorporates the results of the class discussion.

The grading rubric outlined below:

*Content:* assignment objectives, clarity and quality of content, support for main points; 1-10 points.

*Organization:* informative and clear project summary, smooth transitions between topics, logical flow of sections/ideas; 1-5 points.

*Delivery:* professional and confident, audience engagement, command of language/avoiding jargon; 1-5 points.

### **Planning for Consulting Assignment:**

Students will organize themselves into three consulting teams. Each team will have primary responsibility for one of the three main objectives of the consulting assignment.

Each consulting team will work to develop a refined Scope of Work (SoW) for their respective component of the consulting assignment. Each team will also develop a detailed Methodology and Work Plan that will help to guide all phases of work. The work plan should include main tasks/activities, roles and responsibilities, and timeframes. Each group will also present their work in class. The SoW, Methodology, and Work Plan are all key elements of an inception report.

The grading rubric is outlined below:

*Content:* assignment objectives, clarity and quality of content, support for main points; 1-10 points.

*Organization:* informative and clear project summary, smooth transitions between topics, logical flow of sections/ideas; 1-5 points.

*Delivery:* professional and confident, audience engagement, command of language/avoiding jargon; 1-5 points.

### **Individual Research Paper:**

Each student will prepare a research report on the specific research issue they have focused on during the background research phase preceding fieldwork. The report should include important findings, brief analysis and recommendations for fieldwork.

Individual reports need to be between 7-9 pages (double-spaced) with any additional materials included in appendix section. Individual reports should be submitted by deadline, and uploaded in the discussion forum. The information from individual reports should be distilled and included in the group presentation.

The grading rubric is outlined below:

*Content:* Content indicates clear purpose, synthesis of ideas, in-depth analysis and demonstrates original thought and support for the topic; 1-10 points.

*Development:* Main points are well developed with specific evidence, facts and examples. High quality research is evident and sources are well integrated and these support main points argued in the paper. Quotations and Works are cited; 1-10 points.

*Organization:* Well-planned and well-thought out. Includes title, introduction, statement of purpose and main idea, transitions and conclusion. All paragraphs have clear ideas that are adequately supported and have smooth transitions; 1-5 points

*Style, Grammar, Mechanics:* Correct use of grammar, spelling, syntax and punctuation; all margins, spacing and indentations are correct; paper is neat and correctly assembled with professional presentation. There is clear use of a personal style of writing, suited to purpose. The report holds the reader's interest; 1-5 points.

### **Group Inception Report:**

Each team will prepare an Inception Report containing the following key elements:

- a) Purpose and scope of the consulting assignment
- b) Findings from background research
- c) Refined methodology

- d) Important fieldwork targets
- e) Work plan and logistics

Each team will also prepare and deliver a 20-minute presentation that will provide an overview of the inception report. A 10-minute Q&A segment will follow each group presentation. Presentations will not be graded but serve to prepare students for the on-site presentation of the inception report to client.

The grading rubric for group report follows:

*Content & Development:* Content indicates clear purpose and covered all main elements, in-depth analysis demonstrates original thought and support for the topic, high quality research is evident and sources are well integrated. Quotations and Works are cited; 1-15 points.

*Organization:* Well-planned and well-thought out. Includes title, introduction, statement of purpose and main idea, transitions and conclusion. All paragraphs have clear ideas that are adequately supported and have smooth transitions; 1-5 points.

*Style, Grammar, Mechanics:* Correct use of grammar, spelling, syntax and punctuation; all margins, spacing and indentations are correct; report is neat and correctly assembled with professional presentation. There is clear use of a personal style of writing, suited to purpose. The report holds the reader's interest; 1-5 points.

### **"Penguin Award" Paper:**

Each student will prepare a 1-2 page paper describing a breakthrough idea for the consulting project. Students are encouraged to really think outside the box and come up with one extremely creative, unconventional or even revolutionary idea addressing a specific aspect of the consulting project. A winner will be selected in class.

The evaluation rubric is outlined below:

*Content:* innovation and practicality of main idea/concept presented, clarity and quality of content, support for main idea/concept; 1-3 points.

*Organization:* well-planned and well-thought out, and logical flow of idea/concept; 1-2 points.

### **Grading**

Case Study: 20 points

Planning for Consulting Assignment: 20 points

Individual Research Report: 30 points

Group Inception Report and Presentation: 25 points

"Penguin Award" Paper: 5 points

Letter grades are assigned based on the distribution of total points for the course:

A = 92- 100

A- = 90 - 91

B+ = 88 - 89

B = 82- 87

B- = 80- 81

C+ = 78 -79

C = 72-77  
C- = 70-71  
F = Below 70

### **Course Participation**

This course is based on dynamic group work and active participation during class sessions. At the start of every session students will participate in brief in-class exercises related to the assigned readings. Guest speakers will provide additional relevant insights about the consulting process. Through different interactive approaches (i.e. Discussion Board, Class Discussion) students will summarize key points and extract possible applications to the assigned fieldwork.

### **Academic Integrity**

The code of academic integrity applies to all courses in the George Washington School of Business. Please become familiar with the code. All students are expected to maintain the highest level of academic integrity throughout the course of the semester. Please note that acts of academic dishonesty during the course will be prosecuted and harsh penalties may be sought for such acts. Students are responsible for knowing what acts constitute academic dishonesty. The code may be found at:

<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>

### **University Policies**

#### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.

**Disability Support Services (DSS)** 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 Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [gwired.gwu.edu/dss/](http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/)

#### **Mental Health Services 202-994-5300**

The University's Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. [counselingcenter.gwu.edu/](http://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/)