GW | Business

IBUS6297
Healthcare & Marketing Strategy:
The Swedish Experience

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COURSE CONTEXT

Sweden boasts an efficient and cost effective approach to healthcare, with a strong public-private partnership tradition. The private sector, academia, and governmental agencies collaborate to foster an innovative and competitive healthcare industry in Sweden. Many years of concerted efforts have assisted the development of a strong industry, and many new and exciting product concepts have emerged. Sweden is home to several groundbreaking innovations, such as the pacemaker, gamma knife, respirator, Xylocaine, and Losec, just to mention a few. Due to the dynamic changes in the US healthcare climate, the US market currently presents interesting opportunities and challenges for Swedish companies within biotech, medical technology, pharmaceuticals, and health care services.

OVERARCHING COURSE GOALS

This course will explore today's healthcare industry in Sweden. It will incorporate theoretical frameworks and topics relevant to international business, for example lifecycle of industries, infant industry considerations, aspects of innovation management across countries, impact of regulatory challenges, as well as clustering effects. Different examples from the healthcare sector will be used to demonstrate how these theoretical frameworks help us understand this important industry better.

In order to promote deep learning, students will be engaged in a consulting project, which features interaction with real clients in Sweden. The Swedish firms (in the healthcare sector) will present an issue or problem to the students, which relates to their impending or ongoing international expansion. Students will work in teams to research new market opportunities for the firm and propose their recommendations upon conclusion of the course. While in Sweden, students will meet with representatives from the real client company to discuss the parameters of the consulting project. In each project, students will help their client identify strategic and market opportunities to enable them to successfully enter into or expand in the US market.

The class will travel to Stockholm, Sweden, between June 23 and July 2, 2017 (Week 6 of the course). While in Sweden, students will meet with various industry participants, including some of Sweden's established healthcare companies. Time will be allotted during the trip for cultural site visits as well. In order to better understand the healthcare context in Sweden, there will also be opportunities for some networking with Swedish business executives.

Prior to departure, students will prepare themselves for optimal engagement in-country with the different stakeholders. Topics for this part of the course include a general course overview, team management skills and real client project expectations, as well as an overview of the healthcare sector in Sweden and important aspects of the country's business culture.

The ultimate objectives vis-à-vis the client is for students to formulate an actionable, strategic marketing solution that addresses the needs of a Swedish client for entry or expansion in the U.S. healthcare market.

Objective 1: Students will research necessary background information on U.S., Swedish, and global healthcare topics using primary and secondary sources.

Objective 2: Students will assess the client's needs for entry or expansion in the U.S. healthcare market.

Objective 3: Students will devise, implement, and evaluate a communication strategy that integrates in-person and remote communication and allows for continued feedback from the client to refine and improve proposed solutions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the class, students should be able to:

- Understand the development of the Swedish healthcare industry, identifying the factors that contributed to Sweden's competitive advantages in the industry and the roles that the public, private, and NGO sectors have played.

- Be able to navigate the US healthcare landscape and understand how federal and state-level regulatory frameworks, tariffs, trade policy, etc., impact opportunities for US market entry and expansion by Swedish healthcare firms.
- Map and explain the roles and relationships between the client organizations' respective stakeholder sets.
- Design and execute a custom-tailored data collection plan (inclusive of both secondary and primary research) to answer key business questions identified by client organizations.
- Implement a transferable, hypothesis-driven consulting process in order to effectively and efficiently meet client expectations.
- Provide client organizations with creative, impactful, and actionable strategic marketing solutions to key business questions via a written report and oral presentation.
- Compare and contrast the nature and quality of consultant-client communication and individual/group learning as experienced in the USA (pre-departure experience) and in-country (post-departure experience).
- Actively engage in team management and employ strategies to enhance productive team collaboration.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is eminently creative and practice-oriented. You will be working with real clients and consulting with them to address their needs. You are expected to be highly entrepreneurial at finding the necessary sources of information to properly assess the current business landscape and develop a sound set of recommendations for your client. These sources include, but are not limited to, physical and online archives, industry experts, 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.

This course is a hybrid course, consisting of asynchronous online instruction combined with live sessions and face-to-face activities through the study abroad component. In the asynchronous online instruction, you are not required to login at the same time to "attend" class; however, you must still follow the timeline of readings, lectures, assignment submissions, discussions, etc., as designated in the course schedule. You will notice that the course is divided into weeks, and within the weeks, it is divided into days. This is to help pace you throughout the course. Submissions are due on the dates indicated; however, you can vary the preparatory work (e.g. readings and videos) to accommodate your schedule. It is imperative to keep up and plan ahead in order to collaborate with your teams on the client project.

In addition to the asynchronous course components, there are also a few live sessions, which are highly recommended but not mandatory. These sessions will be recorded so if you have a scheduling conflict, you can view them at a later date.

The face-to-face, study abroad component will take place in Sweden. While in Sweden, you will interact with the client and participate in daily site visits.

REQUIREMENTS

Comprehensive knowledge of international business (IB) concepts will be assumed. If you need a refresher or have a different disciplinary background, feel free to use the narrated PPTs under “Review Resources” to brush up on some of the basic IB concepts.

Technical skills required include:

- uploading files/submitting assignments online
- posting to discussion board
- recording and sharing a video presentation of self
- creating a multimedia presentation with voice narration

It is up to you to ensure that you are able to properly use your technology. The online format of this course requires students to be open to learning new technologies and to be flexible when technological errors inevitably occur. We may use tools that are new to you, and I will provide resources to help you learn them. Should you have any problems, please do not hesitate to ask me or your peers.

COURSE MATERIALS

Most readings and other materials will be provided to you via Blackboard. The following are required course materials:

- *The McKinsey Engagement: A Powerful Toolkit for More Efficient and Effective Team Problem Solving* (available on Amazon.com – check Blackboard for details)
- *Modern-Day Vikings: A Practical Guide to Interacting with the Swedes. (*available on Amazon.com – check Blackboard for details)
- Laptop computer
- Internet connection
- Microphone for audio recording - This could be a headset microphone, internal computer microphone, or even your smart phone. Please check audio quality.
- Camera - for pictures in Sweden. You will need photos and/or video for your mixed-media presentation.
- Microsoft Word, Excel, & PowerPoint

All assignments are out of 100 points. Each assignment is then weighted as a percentage of your total grade. Generally, feedback for assignments will be provided within 5 days of the submission date.

Group Work (60%)

Assignment	Weighted % of Final Grade
Input Report	10%
Game Plan Report	10%
Memo Portfolio	5%
Draft of Client Report & Presentation	Ungraded
Final Client Written Report	20%
Final Client Presentation	15%

Individual Work (40%)

Assignment	Weighted % of Final Grade
Peer Review of Game Plan Report	10%
Online Discussion Board Participation	10%
In-Country Class Participation & Site Visit Leadership	10%
Mixed-Media Presentation	10%

Input Report (10%)

At the very beginning of the course, students will define research topics that are critical to the specific industry of their respective client project. These topics should be based on the initial hypothesis formulation. In addition to outlining your tentative recommendation hypotheses, please also summarize the team's initial research findings.

Input reports (exclusive of bibliography) should not exceed 5 pages. Wherever possible, make use of bullets, summary tables, figures, and charts in your reports to make your memo visually appealing and quickly digested. All in-text citations should use parenthetical endnotes; a full reference list should be attached at the end of the assignment. Use the APA style guide to cite the sources (a good APA online guide can be found here: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/).

In the appendix, please include the following:

1) Scope of Work (at least a tentative version that you have discussed with your client in the first meeting)

2) Memo from first client meeting
3) TEAM FOCUS Process map template filled out to the best of your ability based on the limited information you possess at this point in time. You will keep tweaking this document as the project progresses.
4) Your Team Charter

Game Plan Report & Peer Review (10% (group) + 10% (individual))

About mid-way through the course, 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 guide
4. Appendix A - (if applicable) Drafts of primary research instruments (survey, interview protocol, focus group protocol etc.)
5. Appendix B - A list of defined milestones/due dates for the 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

Each student will be assigned another team's game plan to peer review. A peer review form should be used and will be available in Blackboard. We will make peer review feedback available to each team. Teams are expected to be responsive to and incorporate peer review feedback into the draft client written report.

Memos Portfolio (5%)

Student teams are expected to always compose a memo upon completion of any substantive communication with their respective client. Memos should outline the key components and content of the communication, as well as provide some analysis, take-aways and next steps. These memos are intended to help your team stay on track with the client engagement and ensure that everyone is on the same page. Your memos will be graded as one portfolio upon conclusion of the course.

Client Written Report & PowerPoint Presentation (20% + 15%)

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. However, at the core of each project is the development of a market entry or expansion plan in the US.

Final deliverables will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Comprehensiveness of research (primary and secondary)
2. Responsiveness to client needs/requests
3. Specificity and “actionability” of recommendations made to client
4. Creativity
5. Professionalism in writing and overall appearance

A draft written report will be due towards the end of the course. Students will receive feedback from the professor and are expected to incorporate that feedback into the final report and the PowerPoint presentation.

Teams must respond to and incorporate feedback to the professor’s comments on the draft written report BEFORE LEAVING FOR SWEDEN. A revised draft should be posted to Blackboard before departure. This version of the report should also be e-mailed to the client prior to departure in order to ensure a productive day of meetings on Monday, July 26th! It is required that the final written deliverable will be revised and updated based on information gleaned during the field experience. It is expected that the team PowerPoint similarly will be revised and updated while in the field.

Final oral presentations will be given to the clients in Stockholm on Friday, August 12th.

The flow of the presentation should be hypothesis driven and follow the suggested SCR method below.

All students are expected to complete a peer evaluation of all team members.

<u>Online Discussion Board Participation (10%)</u>

The Discussion Board (DB) is an open, graded forum where students will respond to one of the discussion prompts provided in Blackboard. **Each student is required to submit one** discussion post every couple of weeks, that is 2-4 paragraphs **(maximum)** in length giving your response to one of the weekly discussion prompts.

Since the goal of the weekly summaries is to stimulate a class discussion, students are also **<u>REQUIRED</u>** to respond to postings made by two (2) classmates. These responses thrive on multiple perspectives - debate, dialogue, and disagreement are welcome. Please be civil, professional and respectful of others’ postings. Engagement in this discussion forum will be reflected in each student's 'Participation' grade.

Suggestions for Discussion Board:

- **DO** strive for *quality over quantity* - more words do not equal better analysis
- **DO** reference weekly course content, and make sure to properly cite direct references.
- **DO NOT** regurgitate the weekly reading(s) and/or lecture, or write summaries that are purely "anecdotal"
- In responding to another's memo, **DO** address the student by name and, for context, make reference to which specific idea/s you address.

Discussion Board Guidelines and Tips

- Try to give your post a catchy 'Subject' line to entice others to read your post out of the many other choices.
- **Strong posts** are the ones that show clear understanding of the weekly material. They analyze the information, identify trends and patterns, reference financial and quantitative data, connect a relevant personal/professional experience to a business/policy trend, and make recommendations. These enrich the discussion and encourage participation from others.
- **Weak Posts** restate the weekly reading, and/or do not show an understanding of the material. They make judgments or assertions that are not support with (relevant) facts. They are purely "anecdotal", or simply agree with another's comment without further discussion or recommendations. Poor formatting, grammar and misspelling also hurt the quality of memos.
- In responding to another's memo, address the student by name and make reference to what you are replying, for context.
- Individual weekly feedback will be given, though people always seem to catch on quickly, which makes for great discussions.
- The winning formula is a few well-written posts every week which are insightful, analytical, and collegial, and which link course readings to current events.

In-Country Class Participation & Site Visit Leadership (10%)

Class attendance and participation is mandatory and will be evaluated strictly and on an individual basis. Your grade will depend on the quantity of your participation and, most of all, the quality of your participation. Your participation grade may be negatively affected by unprofessional behavior (e.g., inappropriate comments, chatting with classmates, inappropriate usage of laptops and electronic devices during site visits, etc.).

It will be particularly important to thoroughly prepare for site visits during our stay in Sweden. All students are expected to interact with our hosts during site visits and will be evaluated on this component. Our hosts are experts in their fields and are willing to share their expertise with us just for our benefit.

Once during our visit to Sweden you and a partner will take responsibility for being the primary “hosts” at a site visit. This entails giving a short overview of the course and the projects, ensure that the Q&A session is productive and engaging, and last but not least, thank the hosts for their willingness to share their time and expertise with our class.

Mixed-Media Presentation (10%)

After the trip, each student will be expected to prepare a 3-minute mixed-media presentation with highlights of their learning experience. The presentation should present key take-aways about the healthcare industry in Sweden gleaned from the site visits there. It should also reflect on the real client consulting experience.

GROUP WORK

This course intends to replicate the conditions under which teams of consultants jointly to address their client’s problems. As a result, group-work will be the norm rather than the exception. Make sure you set clear team expectations at the very beginning. Given the amount of time that you will have to spend working together every week it is advisable that, from the beginning, all team members 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.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The professor will strictly abide by the academic integrity policies as stated in the Code of Academic Integrity. 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. For additional information refer to the Office of Academic Integrity and the Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Support Services to establish eligibility and to coordinate appropriate accommodations.
Academic Center (Rome Hall) Suite 102, 801 22nd Street, NW
Phone: 202-994-8250, Email: dss@gwu.edu, Website: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss

UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The University Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referrals to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills issues. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals: Marvin Center Ground Floor, 800 21st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20052 Phone: 202-994-5300, counsel@gwu.edu

CONSULTING POINTERS

For this course, we rely on Paul Friga's consulting framework, TEAM FOCUS (as outlined in "The McKinsey Engagement"), to guide our work with our clients. This does not mean that we will follow it religiously but some useful principles are worth highlighting:

- **Hypothesis Testing:** Rather than starting the research process at a 30,000 foot level (i.e., pooling tons of data and then looking for recommendations within), teams should start by exploring similar business problems/challenges from similar contexts (whether marketing, market expansion, finance, etc.) and **extract strategy lessons** from those examples. These strategy examples, including the problems the strategies were devised to solve, will be used to create **"recommendation hypotheses**." Each hypothesis will be proven or disproven based on information and data collected during the research process. In this way, the strategy hypothesis governs the types of information to be collected and keeps the scope more narrow and the research process more efficient. Teams should plan on coming up with approximately 3 hypotheses to test.

- **Data-Driven Testing:** Data should drive the hypothesis testing process. Hypotheses will be dismissed or maintained based on what the data reveals. For example, one example recommendation hypothesis could be "Target the 45+ year old market segment." This should be accompanied by information such as market size, demographic trends/changes, market demand, and benchmarks against other age groups. Final strategy recommendations should be accompanied by a quantification of their impact on the company, such as net-present value analysis, market segmentation analysis, benchmarking to other companies and/or industry averages, analyzing and comparing competitor strategies. Students should be aware of information bias, in other words, the cherry-picking of information in order to prove a hypothesis works when in fact other data exists that might suggest it doesn't! **Students need to let the data guide the process in an unbiased way**.

- **Governing Thought**: The governing thought is the high-level "goal (or message)" that guides the whole project, from the research process to the recommendation formulations to the final PowerPoint presentation. All of the work conducted during the consulting project should be explained in terms of how it advances/ relates to/ or supports this goal. This is particularly important during the oral presentation to the client!

- **Report Structure:** The final report and PowerPoint presentation should be structured so that it provides the recommendations upfront. Academic papers tend to focus on building the case for a proposed solution and then revealing the recommendation at the end. However, in consulting the answer should be front and center, and then followed by research and analysis that proves it is a solid recommendation. To support the proposed recommendation(s), students should use a "Situation- Complication-Resolution" framework. First, under Situation, explain what is going on right now that is problematic (keep this high-level). Second, under Complication, explain in more detail what are the causes/contributors to the problematic situation. From the example above, have competitors come up with a more effective strategy for targeting the 45+ year old segment and that's why sales are down? Are there internal weaknesses that need to be addressed, such as ineffective management? Is the market changing in such a way that customers want different product attributes or additional sales channels? Finally, under Resolution, you explain exactly what needs to happen to address the problem. Here is where you are as specific as possible. The difference between the Recommendation and the Resolution is that the recommendation is a high-level summary of the resolution. So the order looks like:
Recommendation(s) --> supported by Situation, Complication, Resolution. Note that if there is more than one recommendation, each one must be supported by its own SCR analysis. When presenting these findings as a PowerPoint, there should be no more than 8-10 slides for the SCR of each recommendation. Beyond 10 slides the details are probably too nit-picky and can be relegated to the appendix.

- **PowerPoint:** First, cut the text bullet points and let the data dominate the slides. Second, each slide should have a descriptive headline (at the top of the slide) that describes the content being discussed within the slide. Rather than using something generic like "Market Expansion Strategy," use "Expand market reach by focusing on key growth demographics."