



C. T. Bauer College of Business
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

BUSINESS CONSULTING LAB

GENB/MARK 7393-01/7394-01

**SECTION: 18490/18491/18493/18495
FALL 2024 MON 6:00-9:00 PM**

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**Textbook: The Basic Principles of Effective Consulting, Linda K. Stroh, PhD. Second Edition.
ISBN:978-1-138-54289-1**

LEARNING GOALS:

This course provides graduate students with a unique opportunity to learn-by-doing, solving a business problem for a real client. Students will be working on a team solving a problem in a dynamic, real-world environment. Students will learn:

1. Business analysis and decision making
2. The role of a business consultant
3. Project management
4. Communication, both written and oral
5. Teamwork
6. Listening skills
7. How to conduct yourself in an ethical manner

TIMELINE FOR THE CLASS

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| | READ | WATCH |
| 8/19 Introduction, formation of groups, assignment of clients. CHAPTERS 1-4 | | VR 1, VR 2, VR 3 |
| 8/26 | CHAPTERS 5-11 | VR 4, VR 5, VR 6 |
| 9/2 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY. By this date, the first meeting with your client will have taken place. I will attend this meeting. | | |
| 9/09 Project Charter/Scope Due | | |
| 9/23 Project Proposal Due | | |
| 9/30 Mid-term Presentation. Client check-in. Progress report due.
First Peer Evaluation due | | |
| 11/4 Client check-in. Progress report due. Second Peer Evaluation due. | | |
| 11/11 How to make an effective presentation (via Zoom) | | VR 7, VR 8 |
| 11/18 Presentation of Final Report to class. Everyone is required to offer feedback. | | |
| 12/2-12/12 Presentation of Final Report to client. I will attend this meeting. | | |

BOLD = In Person Class

VR = Video Resource (see below)

IMPORTANT. When meeting with your client, you are representing the C. T. Bauer College of Business of the University of Houston. As such, you must comport yourself in a professional manner. This means:

- NEVER be late for ANY meeting
- During meetings, silence your phone and DO NOT text, send emails or check your phone
- Always prepare a meeting agenda and send it out in advance of the meeting
- Always provide a meeting recap and send it out after the meeting
- Look professional when meeting with your sponsor or client
- No chewing gum
- When presenting, make sure your hands are not in your pockets
- Be respectful at all times to your colleagues, your sponsor and client
- Be actively engaged at all times
- Respect and maintain confidentiality
- Engage in ethical behavior AT ALL TIMES (WWGD)

Anything you submit for this class should be written in a professional style and **with no errors**. You should first take advantage of the readily-available tools that come with Word, such as **Spellcheck and Grammar check**. Next, after each member of your team has reviewed your paper/presentation, you should have a third-party **proofreader/editor** read it to see if it conveys your message and check for clarity, errors, omissions, typos, etc. You should also take advantage of the **UH Writing Center**, located in the Classroom and Business Building (**CBB**) **Room 220**. They offer online, one-on-one consultations to help improve your written submissions. Their writing consultants work with you to develop, articulate, and organize your thoughts and ideas (<http://uh.edu/writecen>). This free service is especially useful if English is not your native language.

DELIVERABLES:

1. PROJECT CHARTER/SCOPE. 1-2 pages. **Must be approved by instructor before sharing with client.**
Includes Industry and Company background; statement of problem. Project focus and scope. What is included and what is excluded in the project.
2. PROJECT PROPOSAL. 6-8 pages. **Must be approved by instructor before sharing with client.**
Includes Introduction; Industry and Company background. Problem Definition or the challenge facing the client. Specific focus and scope of the project. What is included and what is excluded in the project. (NB Project Creep). Process, Analytical approach i.e. what information will be gathered and how will it be gathered. Project Plan and Timetable.
3. FINAL REPORT. 20-30 pages. **Must be approved by instructor before sharing with client.**
Includes Executive Summary, Background and Situation Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Statement of Problem, Process, Analytical Approach, Analysis and Findings, Recommendations, Appendices as necessary.
4. CLIENT PRESENTATION. 30 minutes plus 15 mins Q&A. The presentation of your project must be made to the instructor and your classmates **PRIOR** to making the presentation to your client. This will be your opportunity to solicit feedback on your recommendations from your instructor and your classmates. Following this, you will schedule a presentation to your client.

Commitment to the BCL. What You Can Expect:

This class is a 6-credit hour course, equivalent of TWO classes. You will need to be self-motivated and disciplined. Time Management is critical to success in this course.

Weekly time commitment:

6 hours of class time equivalent (3 hours/class)

4 hours of class prep/reading equivalent (2 hours/class)

TOTAL: 10 hours per week MINIMUM!!!!

You will be expected to perform at a VERY high level throughout the semester.

Do You Have What it Takes to be a Consultant?

VIDEO RESOURCES:

WORKING IN TEAMS:

VR 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwJzVmTR92s> Characteristics of Effective Teams. Alex Lyon 4:07

LISTENING:

VR 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wUCyjiyXdg&t=3s> Active Listening Skills. Alexander Lyon 06:13

VR 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jeUWhn-7HU&t=369s> Comprehensive Listening Skills. Alexander Lyon 07:08

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

VR 4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuQpGzL_14g How to Make the Best Gantt Chart in Excel. David McLachlan 15:58

VR 5 https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=project+management 10 Project Management Terms You Need to Know. Adriana Girdler 13:56

ETHICS IN BUSINESS:

VR 6 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHrDUu4Rjtg> The Importance of Business Ethics. Travis Stewart 8:00

PRESENTING:

VR 7 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwpi1Lm6dFo> How to Avoid Death by PowerPoint. David Phillips 20:31

VR 8 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjcO2ExtHso> Life After Death by PowerPoint. Don McMillan 03:59

GRADING:

PROJECT CHARTER/SCOPE	10
PROJECT PROPOSAL	20
FINAL REPORT	30
CLIENT PRESENTATION	20
CLIENT FEEDBACK	<u>20</u>
TOTAL	100

FEEDBACK:

At the conclusion of the project, feedback on the value that your team provided to the client as well as on the professionalism of each team member will be solicited by the client and will form part of your final grade. In addition, **Peer Evaluations** will be used at the mid-point and at the end of the semester. Everyone will be asked to evaluate the performance of the members of their own team. Both the **Client Feedback Form** and the **Peer Evaluation Form** can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including [CoogsCARE](#) and the [UH Go App](#). UH [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a [Let's Talk](#) location in-person or virtually. [Let's Talk](#) are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The [Student Health Center](#) offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The [A.D. Bruce Religion Center](#) offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text [988](#), or chat 988lifeline.org.

Academic Honesty Policy

High ethical standards are critical to the integrity of any institution, and bear directly on the ultimate value of conferred degrees. All UH community members are expected to contribute to an atmosphere of the highest possible ethical standards. Maintaining such an atmosphere requires that any instances of academic dishonesty be recognized and addressed. The [UH Academic Honesty Policy](#) is designed to handle those instances with fairness to all parties involved: the students, the instructors, and the University itself. All students and faculty of the University of Houston are responsible for being familiar with this policy.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

Excused Absence Policy

Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) and [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#) for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored

activity or athletic competition. Under these policies, students with excused absences will be provided with an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the course grade or a satisfactory alternative. Please read the full policy for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences. Additional policies address absences related to [military service](#), [religious holy days](#), [pregnancy and related conditions](#), and [disability](#).

Recording of Class

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center](#). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Resources for Online Learning

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On](#) website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, Blackboard, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

UH Email

Please check and use your Cougarnet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the Cougarnet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your Cougarnet email, [login](#) to your Microsoft 365 account with your Cougarnet credentials. Visit [University Information Technology \(UIT\)](#) for instructions on how to connect your Cougarnet e-mail on a mobile device.

Webcams

Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on (*state when webcams are required to be on and the [academic basis](#) for requiring them to be on*). (Example: *Webcams must be turned on during exams to ensure the academic integrity of exam administration.*)

Security Escorts and Cougar Ride

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety, please call [713-743-3333](tel:713-743-3333). Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called "Cougar Ride" that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

Syllabus Changes

Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through (*specify how students will be notified of changes*).

Online Exams

The Office of the General Counsel has recommended to make sure students are aware that: (1) students are permitted to take their online tests or quizzes in a computer lab or other open space; and (2) there is no requirement that a student use their own personal computer or that they complete exams and quizzes in any specific location (e.g., their home). The Office of the General Counsel has advised that students be made aware in advance that an environmental scan may be conducted as a part of an online exam.

CLIENT FEEDBACK FORM

Please check one box below for each question

	STRONGLY AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The work done by the team has value to our organization			
The work done by the team was high quality			
The team showed professionalism at all times			
The team worked well with the client			
The team was always on time for meetings, etc.			
The team issued a meeting agenda and recap before/after each meeting			
The team communicated effectively with the client (meetings, project status, etc.)			

Do you have any particular observations on the team members?

TEAM MEMBER

OBSERVATIONS

Is there anything else you would like to tell me or the team?

Please return this form to: pgalvani@uh.edu

PEER EVALUATION FORM

YOUR NAME _____

DATE _____

NAME OF TEAM MEMBER	QUALITY OF EFFORT	QUANTITY OF EFFORT

A = Excellent

B = Above Average

C = Marginal (If 3-score average = C, lose ½ grade i.e. from A- to B+)

D = Unacceptable (If 3-score average = D, lose full grade i.e. from A- to B)

Observations:
