

SCM 3301H

Honors Colloquium in Supply Chain Management

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Course description

This course is the Honors Colloquium for Business majors. You will learn how to forecast customer demand, convert the forecast into capacity and staffing plans, choose business locations, determine inventory requirements, define and measure quality, manage waiting times in service businesses, and schedule projects. You will also learn to write consulting reports about operations management problems.

Materials

At the University Copy Center, purchase packet # 98, Lecture Notes in Operations Management. This spiral-bound book contains copies of all PowerPoint slides used in the course.

Purchase William Strunk & E. B. White, The Elements of Style (4th edition), ISBN 0-205-30902-X. This book will be used every day in class.

Also purchase the cases and readings listed below. The bookstore sometimes packages the cases and readings together, and sometimes they sell them individually. Make sure you have them all:

- New Balance Athletic Shoes (9-680-110)
- What is the right supply chain for your products? (97205)
- The Power of Virtual Integration: An Interview with Michael Dell (98208)
- Behind the growth in material requirements planning (75510)
- Ford Motor Company: Supply Chain Strategy (9-699-198)
- The Views of Deming, Juran, and Crosby (9-687-0110)
- Right Away and All at Once: How We Saved Continental (4193)
- Hank Kolb, Director Quality Assurance (9-681-083)
- Benihana of Tokyo (9-673-057)

Internet resources

Go to www.bauer.uh.edu/gardner. The User ID and password will be provided in class.

The course materials are organized in subdirectories as follows;

Case Questions	Suggestions for analyzing case studies
Homework	Homework solutions
Lecture Notes	PowerPoint slides
OM	The Operations Manager (OM) text
Readings	Supplementary readings
Syllabus	Latest class syllabus and schedule
Worksheets	Excel worksheets to accompany OM

Print the OM text and bring it to class each day. Also bring a calculator each day.

Class preparation

Prior to class, do the reading assigned for each topic. After class, do the homework problems in the OM text and experiment with the computer models in the worksheets subdirectory.

Homework will not be graded but will help you prepare for the examinations. In the computer models, try different data and parameters and study the results. Although you will not be tested on your knowledge of worksheets, the models will improve your understanding of the course. Furthermore, the models are useful in practice.

Attendance and punctuality

Attendance is important. Students with more than one unexcused absence will be dropped from the course. If you must miss a class, notify me by email.

Punctuality is important. There are numerous exercises done in class and it is disruptive when students arrive in the middle of an exercise. I realize that late arrival is sometimes unavoidable, but students who are repeatedly late will be dropped from the course.

Grading policy

Case reports	50% (4 written reports -- see schedule)
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
	100%

Both exams consist of problems similar to those worked in the lecture notes and the homework assignments.

How to write case reports

Writing and content are equally important in case reports. Any report that contains serious mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation, usage, or organization will receive a failing grade.

Preparation of a case report usually involves three sessions: analysis, first draft, and rewrite. You are encouraged to work in a study group to analyze cases, but the writing must be your own. When you finish the first draft, put it aside, then come back and clean it up in a separate session. Good writing always means rewriting, and a fresh look at your draft pays dividends.

Before you sit down to write, spend a few minutes reviewing William Strunk & E. B. White, The Elements of Style, Part V, An Approach to Style. Part V contains 21 suggestions for good writing. All of these suggestions are valuable, but three are especially important in writing for this course. First, write from an outline. No one can write a coherent case report without some kind of top-down strategy. At least sketch out your major arguments and the points you want to make in support of each one. Second, write with nouns and verbs, not with adjectives and adverbs. Although adjectives and adverbs are indispensable parts of speech, they are overused; make sure all adjectives and adverbs are necessary. Third, do not overstate arguments and conclusions. A single overstatement can make an entire report suspect because readers lose confidence in your judgment.

Write each case report from the viewpoint of a consultant to the company. That is, write to an audience, either the case protagonist or the company CEO, not to the world at large. You must arrive at unambiguous conclusions. State those conclusions in the first paragraph, then spend the rest of the report justifying and defending them. Any proposed solution to a business problem has advantages and disadvantages, so be sure to discuss both.

Explain any models or ideas that may be new to the audience. For example, in the New Balance case, it is unlikely that anyone in the company has ever heard of exponential smoothing or dimensional analysis. If you use these models, explain them and tell the audience why they are appropriate for the business decision at hand.

Write about the problems in the case, not about textbook ideas. Do not waste space by repeating obvious information or exhibits from the case. Do not speculate about what you might do with more information. You have all the information available to management at the time of the case – use it and make a firm decision.

Organize and format the report as follows. Page one is a cover sheet containing only your name, the name of the case, and the date. Place this information on three lines, left-justified, at the top of the page. Leave the rest of the page blank

for grading comments. Following the cover sheet, attach the text or body of the report, which may not exceed three pages. Single-space the text using a 12-point font with one-inch margins. Use section headings in the text to make the report easier to follow.

After the text, attach as many exhibits as necessary (they do not count against the page limit) to give the details of quantitative analysis or any other research that would make for tedious reading in the body of the report. Refer to each exhibit in the text, and make sure that the reader can understand the report without having to stop and work through an exhibit in detail.

The questions below are designed only to get you started on case reports. Do not confine your report to these questions. If you think other issues are important, analyze and discuss them.

New Balance Athletic Shoes (Written report # 1)

1. What is a reasonable estimate of the total volume (in pairs) that New Balance must produce in the next 3 years?
2. What are the major strategic considerations in choosing a location?
3. Which location option should Jim Davis choose? Why?

Ford Motor Company: Supply Chain Strategy (Written report # 2)

1. Should Ford model its supply chain on Dell Computer?
2. What are the alternatives?
3. What are the likely implementation problems?

Hank Kolb, Director, Quality Assurance (Written report # 3)

1. What are the causes of the quality problems on the Greasex line?
2. Develop a time-phased plan for Hank to improve product quality.

Benihana of Tokyo (Written report # 4)

1. Would you change Benihana restaurant design? How and why?
2. Would you change any Benihana management policies? Why?
3. Evaluate Benihana's strategy for growth.

Audit your writing

Audit your writing using Strunk & White. In Part I, Strunk & White give 11 elementary rules of usage. Apply these rules because you can be sure that I will do so in grading. Pay special attention to Rules 1-5 and 9-11. Use Rule 1 for forming the possessive singular of nouns. Check each comma in your paper using Rules 2-5. In each sentence, make sure that the number of the subject agrees with the number of the verb (Rule 9). Check each pronoun for case (Rule 10). Verify that any participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence refers to the grammatical subject (Rule 11).

In Part II, Strunk & White give 11 rules for composition. Again, apply these rules in auditing your writing. Pay special attention to Rules 14, 15, and 17. Follow Rule 14 and write in the active voice. Make definite assertions as in Rule 15. Rule 17 holds that vigorous writing is concise, and exhorts you to omit needless words. This rule does not mean that all sentences should be short, or that the report should be written in outline form. In a nutshell, Rule 17 means that every word must tell. Your report should be free of trite expressions, meaningless phrases, and redundancies.

As a final check, review Part IV of Strunk & White, which lists a number of words and expressions commonly misused. You will be penalized if you repeat any of the mistakes in Part IV. As a general policy, write in plain business language, without slang, jargon, buzz-words, acronyms, or contractions.

Academic Honesty

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy is strictly enforced by the C. T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of this policy will be tolerated. A discussion of the policy is included in the University of Houston Student Handbook, <http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. In order to receive academic accommodations, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (telephone 713-743-5400), and present approved accommodation documentation to their instructors in a timely manner.

Course schedule

The course schedule is in the syllabus subdirectory. Updates will be posted as necessary.