MGT 6113

Pro Bono Consulting Practicum

Summer 2021

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**Practicum:** There are no formal class meetings. This practicum requires team members to organize themselves and regularly meet with each other, and with their client as needed. There is one kick off class meeting, and check-ins at midterm and final.

Please schedule a regular time for your team to meet at least once a week. The amount of time that should be allocated for a good project outcome is 125-150 hours per student. This includes time allocated for necessary team building, completing your project to build the capacity of the client organization, and presentations.

Professor Blum is available for consulting, guidance, linkage to information and resources, as well as to help with resolving concerns or problems if any arise.

Problems are rare, but when they arise, they are usually related to team dynamics and competencies related to managing oneself and influencing others (leadership with or without authority). It is always better to address team work early and to continuously address it throughout the project. Please be sure to read through the team dynamics materials posted on Canvas. It is also appropriate for you to search for resources that might be useful. If assistance would be helpful for the team to function well together, please reach out to Professor Blum. While the project is an important outcome, building your capacity by exercising the building of team-work and shared informal leadership skills are important aspects of the practicum.

**Course Objectives and Description**

Georgia Tech's Pro Bono Consulting Program is part of the Georgia Tech Net Impact chapter initiatives, and is aimed at helping not-for-profit organizations based in Atlanta resolve key strategic challenges by utilizing business practices and tools. We are also committed to providing exceptional educational and personal growth opportunities in leadership, teamwork and problem solving for motivated student participants. Over the course of the semester it is expected that you will engage in activities, reflections and learning leading to increased competencies in self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management.

Prior to beginning a project, you should work to get to know each other and define expectations and ways of working together. The team should work with our clients to set expectations and define the scope of the project. All projects are evaluated against our dual mission goal (client satisfaction and development of student leadership/teamwork competencies) as assessed by the client, the consulting team, and program faculty. Projects must refine (at the beginning) a defined problem scope of work that addresses a specific need. Upon completion, clients will receive a presentation (deck, executive summary and supporting materials) of findings with the expectation that results will be usable and considered for implementation by key organizational decision makers.

We pride ourselves with providing solutions that are practical, usable and easy to implement. Our teams, though independent, work closely with the clients’ staff and management as needed. This approach enables us to better grasp underlying issues, gather feedback on our work, adjust our approach early and throughout the process, and arrive at actionable solutions that our clients are prepared to implement.

**Course Materials**

1) There is no required text for this course

2) Students are expected to search for resources from journals, periodicals, texts, and functional or domain experts (eg. faculty or those who work in the field) that will help resolve the organizational problem and build the capacity of the organization if the solution is implemented.

3) Consultation with a person with experience in organizational consulting can be arranged if requested.

Suggestions for Reading: <http://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/consulting>.

# Practicum Deliverables

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| Deliverable | Due Date | Comments |
| Statement of Work (Group) | Week of May 24th  Must be posted by May 28th, 11:59 pm unless approval for extension is received. | This should cover the agreed upon responsibilities of both parties (Sudents and the client). Team Lead to submit through Canvas, with subject line of subject title SOW with the project name. Be sure to include names of all team members and the organization.  Examples: See Canvas Files |
| Mid-term Presentation (Group) | Week of June 27th  Due to be posted by July 2nd, 11:59 pm unless approval for extension is received | Please schedule a mid-term presentation with the client to take place during this week, and schedule an update with Professor Blum (could be rep from the team or the whole team). It is suggested that the date with the organization is set early in the semester when possible. Date of presentation should be shared with Professor Blum and Tiffany Cho. This should cover current progress as well as remaining tasks.  Team Lead to submit client presentation through Canvas, with subject line of subject title. Include all team members and name of organization.  Examples: See Canvas Files |
| Mid-term Team Assessment (Individual) | Week of June 27th  Due to be posted by July 2nd, 11:59 pm | Please use the template in the files section of Canvas to complete a team assessment. Each student is required to submit an assessment. Grades will be reduced for those who do not submit an assessment) All students to submit through Canvas.  See Canvas Files for the Midterm Team Assessment Template |
| Mid-Term Journal Submission (Individual) | Week of June 27th  Due to be posted by July 2nd, 11:59 pm | Please submit a 1-2 page (double spaced) journal entry that outlines your reflections about how your team developed and how it is functioning. Describe what is working well and why? You can also include any pitfalls that the team faced and whether and how they have been overcome. If there are still some things that interfere with smooth team functioning, please describe them, why they exist and what might be done to improve the team experience and performance. All students to submit through Canvas.  Note: It is recommended that feedback be provided to team members who are not meeting expectations and contributing to the group dynamics and performance. |
| Final Presentation (Group) | Week of July 26th. Due by July 31, 11:59 pm unless other arrangements are approved. | Final presentation should be presented to the client. Please communicate to Terry Blum through email about date and place of presentation as soon as it is scheduled. It is best to schedule this early in the semester and allow changes if needed.  Team Lead to submit presentation through Canvas, with subject line of subject title. Include names of all team members and organization.  Example: See Canvas Files |
| Final Team Assessment (Individual) | Due by July 31st, 11:59 pm | Use the template posted in Canvas for your Team Assessment. Submission of a team assessment is required, and grades will be reduced for those who do not submit an assessment.  See Files section of Canvas for Final Team Assessment Template.  Note: It is recommended that feedback be provided to team members who are not meeting expectations and contributing to the group dynamics and performance. |
| Exec Summary (Group) | Week of July 26th. Due by July 31, 11:59 pm unless other arrangements are approved. | This is a simple one to two page summary of the work you did during the semester that is prepared for the client. Team Lead to Submit through Canvas, with subject line. Include names of all team members and organization.  Examples: See Canvas Files |
| Final Journal Submission (Individual) | Due by July 31st, 11:59 pm | Please submit a 1-2 page (double spaced) journal that outlines your reflections/learnings about the leadership (maybe 2-3) competencies you focused upon during the semester. If you would like to work on developing them further, indicate how you might do that. In writing about leadership competencies, you can focus on your self awareness, self management, organizational awareness, and relations with others. You many include subcategories of competencies within these categories (see leadership competency framework on canvas). The focus can be on leading yourself or leading others whether or not you are the named leader. All students to submit a journal on canvas. |

# Course Requirements and Grading

The final deliverable will be evaluated by Professor Blum and will include informal input from the clients. Student assessment of their team members is used to inform the professor if an equal division of the final grade is questionable. If issues are signaled in the midterm, steps will be taken to discuss them. Usually students are able to work out issues and their feedback to each other is more important than the actual assessment that is submitted.

Conflict resolution and team work are leadership competencies that are important to develop and teams are urged to discuss these topics. Reflections on shared leadership and resolving conflicts could be included in the submitted journals. If task conflict is not resolved, it can interfere with the quality of the product for the client and certainly affects the learning experience of the students. If needed, please seek guidance from Professor Blum for coaching about resolution before it interferes with the trust required for quality team outcomes.

Please note that the team lead is in charge of logistics. Everyone is expected to share in the collective leadership of the group, which means that team members lead, influence and develop each other.

Grading Policy: The grading policy is based on overall performance in the course. It is unusual for a team not to earn an A in this practicum, but it has happened on rare occasions and is usually the result of an inadequate Statement or Work or unresolved interpersonal dynamics that interfere with the execution of the project.

The following is a way of understanding the grade makeup and student accountability. Failure to submit, or delay in submitting, any component of the individual assignments is grounds for downgrade by a letter grade. If issues arise it is always better to communicate with the Professor and get permission in advance for delays.

Midterm Project Deck 20%

Midterm Team Assessment 05%

Midterm Journal 10%

Final Project, Deck, Executive

Summary 50%

Final Team Assessment 05%

Final Journal 10%

# Additional Course Notes:

**Inclusivity Statement:** Every student in this practicum, regardless of personal history or identity categories, is a valued member. Your experiences are valuable and important, and you should feel free to share them as they become relevant to the project practicuum. No student in this practicum is ever expected or believed to speak for all members of a group. In this classroom, you have the right to determine your own identity. You have the right to be called by whatever name you wish, and for that name to be pronounced correctly. You have the right to be referred to by whatever pronouns you choose. You have the right to adjust those things at any point in your education. If you find that there are aspects of the course instruction, subject matter, or “classroom” environment that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Professor privately without fear of reprisal.

**Client Meetings:** You (or members of the team) are required to meet (in person or virtually) with your client at least 3 times during the semester (Introductory Meeting, Midterm Presentation and Final Presentation). It is, however, encouraged that the meetings be in line with what the client deems appropriate and the team requires to complete an excellent project. Consulting and problem solving is about meeting the needs of the client.

**Recommendations about initial meeting and SOW:** Getting started can be a challenge, so we recommend that you plan an initial period of research (eg. web search, prior projects) so that you are aware of the client’s “business”.

Understanding and agreeing about the scope of work at the outset is essential. If there is more than one person representing the client organization it is important to assure that there is consistency in their expectations about the deliverable at the outset. Be sure to plan as many on site or virtual site visits as needed. These will help engage the client and give you first-hand knowledge of what they are dealing with. Also, be sure to use your network and the resources that Georgia Tech brings to the table. Outside resources are generally more than willing to help students who seek advice/help – these resources depend on the type of project you are doing, so don’t be afraid to do a Google/Linked In (etc) search or discuss with the Professor.