MGT 6113
Pro Bono Consulting Practicum
Fall 2023

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Practicum: **Practicum:** This practicum requires team members to organize themselves and regularly meet with each other, and with their client. There is one on-line kick off class meeting (August 30th). There are also required check-ins with Kathleen Kurre.

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 105-125 hours per student. This includes time allocated for necessary team building, understanding the purpose and ecosystem of the non-profit client, at least weekly team meetings, your individual research/work, completing your project to build the capacity of the client organization, and presentations.

Professor Blum is available for help with resolving concerns or problems if any arise.

In addition, a consulting advisor (and co-course leader), Kathleen Kurre, is available, by appointment, for group consultation (provide guidance, problem solving and brainstorming) throughout the semester. The consultation is primarily about the project content, but also extends to group dynamics and client management. It is also expected that the group will meet with her at least twice. One meeting should be scheduled between when you submit your SOW and prepare your midterm presentation. Another meeting should be scheduled for after the midterm and before the final. You many schedule additional meetings as needed.

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 peruse the team dynamics materials posted on Canvas, and schedule, at the beginning of the term, at least weekly team meetings. It is also appropriate for you to search for resources that might be useful for working in teams and engaging in shared/collective leadership. If assistance would be helpful for the team to function well together or manage the client (an important relationship competency) please reach out to Professor Blum and/or Kathleen Kurre. 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 activities 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 (which differs from the problem/project description you were provided). It is recommended that teams working with clients for whom projects have been previously completed connect with a member from a previous team, examine the deliverables of the previous project, and potentially learn how to best execute a project with the organization. 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. Please plan for and build meetings with the client into your schedule. Consider scheduling your midterm and final presentations way in advance.

NOTE: The semester goes by quickly so you must schedule time immediately to get to know each other and set the stage for effective team dynamics/collective leadership. You must also schedule time with your organization to define the operational SOW, arrange for cadence of meetings and information you will need to do your work (schedule meetings in advance). Please plan your project, and schedule (in advance) accordingly. This work requires generosity with when you can be available, and flexibility as things need to pivot.

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. Students are expected to go deeper than the organization might require to assure their own learning.

3) Consultation with our consulting advisor is available on request.

4) Students are expected to peruse guidestar.org. You sign up for a free account and can look up organizations by location, name or NTEE code. Form 990s are sometimes good sources of information about the organization's financial situation. Even if your organization is not listed, it is a good overview of the nonprofit section in the US.

5) The Georgia Tech library is a good source for resources related to nonprofit organizations, consultancy, data sources you might need, and subject matter information.

Practicum Deliverables

Deliverable	**Due Date**	**Comments**
Statement of Work (Group) Check List (Individual)	This should be posted before Sept 13, 11:59pm unless approval for extension is received. The team should arrange for an on line meeting with Kathleen Kurre after the SOW and before the midterm. It is also possible to meet before the SOW is submitted.	This should cover the agreed upon responsibilities of both parties (Students and the client). It should include the final objective and the processes (access to people and information) that might be necessary to reach the objectives. Team Lead to submit through Canvas, with subject line of subject title SOW with the project organization's name. Be sure to include names of all team members and the organization. Before submitting the SOW, the teams should have met to get to know each other and to start forming their team. In addition, the team should have a good systems map of the organization and its ecosystem. One or more meetings with the client

		organization will also be necessary to adequately create a SOW. In addition to the SOW, students will be asked to check off and submit that they read the syllabus and kick off power points, understand the ecosystem of the organization, and have a good plan for working together and with the organization to complete the project. Template posted on CANVAS.
Mid-term Presentation (Group)	Presentation to client between October 16 and 23. Due to be posted October 23rd, 11:59 pm unless approval for extension is received.	Please schedule a mid-term presentation with the client to take place between (October 16-23). It is suggested that the date with the organization is set early in the semester when possible. Date of presentation should be shared with Terry Blum and Kathleen. Kurre. This should cover current progress as well as remaining tasks. Team Lead to submit client presentation through Canvas. Include all team members and name of organization.

Mid-term Team Assessment (Individual)	Due to be posted by Oct 23rd, 11:59 pm The template is posted on Canvas, but the team may develop its own template and share it with Professor Blum in advance.	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 Note: It is recommended that feedback be purposefully provided to team members who are not meeting expectations and contributing to the group dynamics and performance (as well as to those who are). These can be difficult conversations when there is shirking, but the purpose is to improve group process. It should be attended to continuously rather than only offered at the end.
Mid-Term Journal Submission (Individual) Plus time sheet	Due to be posted by October 23rd, 11:59 pm Schedule an appointment with Kathleen Kurre after the midterm and before the final.	Please submit a 2-3 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. In addition, looking out between now and the end of the semester, describe changes, pivots the team is making to the initial plan/structure in terms of team members' roles, structure, client and/or team communications schedule/structure. All students to submit through Canvas. In addition to the journal, please submit a time sheet with the high level of your individual and team activity noted.
Class Meeting: Presentations and Insights	Class will meet 5:15-6:15 pm on Wednesday, November 8th Room and link will be announced	Teams will be asked to prepare and present 4-5 slides (info will be posted) 1. Client and team. 2. Client description, problem and how you are going about solving it. 3. What are the challenges in working with the client and each other. 4. What are the individual learning and skills you are developing. (Slide of composites: neither consensus nor individual/attribution identification is needed).

		Students will be polled about their ratings of their peers' presentation…for feedback, competition, and fun.
Final Presentation (Group) Plus time sheet	Do this between Nov 27 and Dec 8th. Deck, appendix and exec summary (see below) to be posted by Dec 11th, 11:59pm unless other arrangements are approved.	Final presentation should be presented to the client. Please communicate to Terry Blum and Kathleen Kurre 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.. Include names of all team members and organization.
Final Team Assessment (Individual)	Due by Dec 11, 11:59pm The team may develop its own template and submit it to Professor Blum in advance.	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. This feedback should be continuous rather than offered at the end.
Exec Summary (Group) Part of final submission	Posted with final deck by Dec 11th, 11:59 pm unless other arrangements are approved.	This is a simple one to two page summary of the project recommendations you presented to 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) Include time sheet	Due by Dec 11th, 11:59 pm unless other arrangements are approved.	Please submit a 2-3 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. In addition to the journal, please submit a time sheet with the high level activity noted.

Course Requirements and Grading

The final deliverable will be evaluated by Professor Blum (in consultation with Kathleen Kurre and Kelly Newman) and may 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. Grading is a result of the overall team submission and the individual submissions. In addition, an individual grade may be affected (downgraded by a letter grade—or more) by the input of their team members, by not submitting individual assignments (assessments, journals) or missing the class presentation without prior permission.

It is unusual for a team not to do well in the practicum, but it has happened, and is usually the result of an inadequate Statement of Work or unresolved interpersonal dynamics that interfere with the execution of the project. An individual in the team may earn a lower grade than the team based on shirking, or students not turning in their individual assignments.

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.

SOW and individual Check off	P/F
Midterm Project Deck	35%
Midterm Team Assessment Midterm Journal (P/F)	Minus letter grade if not submitted or if quality is poor
Class Presentation and Ratings	15%
Final Project, Deck, Appendices, and Executive Summary	50%
Final Team Assessment Final Journal (P/F)	Minus Letter grade if not submitted or if quality is poor

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 practicum. 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. The initial meeting should explore how communications should take place. It is appropriate to discuss why things went well past projects, or what processes could be improved, if it is a repeat client. For repeat client projects, it is appropriate to communicate with past MBA students who worked on the project and/or look at the past projects.

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" and its environment. Also, do not underestimate the importance of getting to know your team and building a good plan to work together

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, and to ask for access to the people and information you will need to complete the project. 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.