

Lingnan University - Department of Marketing and International Business –
M.Sc. in Marketing and International Business Programme

Course Title	:	Consulting Project
Course Code	:	MIB506
No of Credits/Term	:	6 credits / Term 1 to 2
Mode of Tuition	:	Project based approach supplemented with project-related workshops
Teaching Hours	:	Nil
Category in Major Programme	:	Required Course
Prerequisites(s)	:	Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	Nil
Coordinator	:	CAO Cong, Clark
Office	:	SEK101/6

Brief Course Description:

The purpose of consulting project is to prepare students with project management and client engagement skills in a real-world business setting. Under the supervision of their assigned project supervisors, students will normally work in a team of 5-7 members on an assigned client project to conduct marketing research and to address client's research question(s). The emphasis will be on applying marketing and/or international business theories, along with project management and data analysis skills, to the business problems and challenges raised by the clients.

Aims:

This course is designed to:

1. Apply concepts and theories of marketing and international business in fulfilling the goals of today's businesses.
2. Applying consulting skills to undertake managerial decisions with an emphasis on marketing and international business.
3. Develop proficiencies in a range of skills required to practice collaborative problem solving and consultancy.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Define** key factors and issues relevant to business problems;
2. **Develop** practical project plans and schedules to accomplish the research project;
3. **Conduct** a consulting project, manage project work process and client relationship;
4. **Solve** critical problems in the project with project management, marketing and analytical tools;
5. **Improve** interpersonal communication skills and the ability to present findings in a concise, easy to follow and persuasive manner.

Indicative Contents:

- Project management
- APA Style Writing
- Research Ethics and Plagiarism
- Analysis techniques (SPSS workshops)
- Presentation skills and consulting report writing

Teaching Method:

The teaching format of this course will be based on the close guidance of individual project supervisors, supplemented with a series of project-related workshops (e.g., SPSS/qualitative analysis, professional writing, research ethics and plagiarism, and presentation skills, etc.) that will provide practical trainings in various areas to students. Through the in-depth guidance of project supervisors, students will conduct field research to provide input for marketing decision. Heavy emphasis will be on “the real world” applications of the Marketing and International Business theories to conduct a market research and to provide suggestions to clients based on the project findings. A key feature of the course will be learning by doing in delivering the assigned client project.

Project supervisors will take full responsibilities to guide, monitor, support, and assess students’ project progress.

Disclaimer: This course will not prepare students for professional qualification with the Project Management Institute since we are not covering their full knowledge base areas and requirement.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

Under the supervision of assigned project supervisors on assigned projects, various components (including Project Proposal, Interim Findings Report, Final Project Presentation, and Self-Reflective Report) are used to assess the groups’ performance in line with learning outcomes.

Assessment:

Specific assessment methods/tasks	Weighting	CILOs to be assessed				
		1	2	3	4	5
Project Proposal	15%	√	√			
Final Written Report	20%	√	√	√	√	√
Final Project Presentation	30%			√	√	√
Project-related Workshops Participation	10%		√	√	√	√
Self-Reflective Report	15%					√
Peer Review	10%					√
TOTAL	100%					

1. Project Proposal (15%) - assessed by the Project Supervisor

A key deliverable for this class is the project plan. The statement of work should outline the project scope and the project plan will detail the schedule. It describes clearly what the project is and what it is not. The supervisor is responsible for assessing the proposal (see Appendix 1) and submit the marksheet by the end of December.

2. Final Written Report (20%) - assessed by the Project Coordinator

Each group, by the end of this course, must submit a final written report that provides a full-fledged rundown of the consulting project. This report should cover the business challenges and provides rationale for conducting a research project around a real-life business problem/opportunity. In terms of content, the report identifies specific research questions and objectives for the involved project, describes in detail its research design and data collection methods to address the involved questions, and reports its analysis results and implications drawn

for capturing the involved business opportunities or resolving practical problems. The supervisor is responsible for assessing the final report and submit the marksheet (see Appendix 2) by early May.

3. Final Project Presentation (30%) – assessed by the Project Supervisor (45%) and the Client (55%)

Each team will present its results at the end of the course. The presentation grade will be based on both content and delivery. The purpose of these presentations is to develop students' skills to make professional presentations. The presentation will be assessed by the respective Project Supervisor (45%) and the Client (55%) based on the marksheet (see Appendix 3). The group is required to submit the presentation file to the Program office as a record on the Presentation Day.

4. Project-related Workshop Participation (10%) - assessed by Program Office

Students are required to participate in all project-related workshops. One will lose participation marks for low attendance, consistent lateness, disturbing behavior, etc. The participation record and marks will be announced to all students and supervisors by the end of April.

5. Self-Reflective Report (15%) - assessed by the Project Supervisor

Students are required to submit an individual report of the project covering his/her reflection on how one arrived at the project charter, schedule time frame, rationale for using the research approach, analytical tool, tradeoffs with the recommendation, as well as learning from the application of interpersonal and client engagement skills in the project. The report will be assessed by the supervisor based on the marksheet and the marksheet (see Appendix 4).has to be submitted to the Program Office by the Mid of May.

6. Peer Review (10%) - assessed by group members

As teamwork is a crucial element of this subject, each consulting practicum will be performed as a team. Evaluations will depend on how well students work as a team.

7. Interim Report (Not Graded) - assessed by the Project Supervisor

To better monitor the progress and performance of the project, group will submit an interim report to the Project Supervisor. This report should summarize the research progress, providing descriptive findings, report analytical findings, and provide recommendations for the client's consideration. The supervisor is responsible for reviewing the interim findings report, ensuring the group is on the right track, and providing the team with comments and feedbacks on their performance. This report, however, is solely for progress tracking and thus will not be graded.

Required/Essential Readings:

Refer to the requirements of specific workshops as proposed by the instructors.

Recommended/Supplementary Readings:

Case interview secrets – Victor Cheng
www.caseinterview.com

Mckinsey Quarterly
http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/mckinsey_quarterly

Mckinsey Insight and Publication
<http://www.mckinsey.com/insights>

Boston Consulting Group
http://www.bcg.com/expertise_impact/publications/default.aspx

Bain Insights

<http://www.bain.com/publications/index.aspx>

List of Management Consultants

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_management_consulting_firms

Harvard Business Review

<http://hbr.org/2014/07/the-hbr-interview-i-came-back-because-the-company-needed-me/ar/1>

Important Notes:

1. Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3* hours of class contact and 6* hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
2. Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
3. Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.