



MKT372 – Strategy Consulting

SECTION 06435

Fall 2022

CLASS MEETS: MW 9:30 – 11:00 in GSB 2.122

Instructor: Bill Peterson

Office: GSB 5.176c

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(please include section number in all emails)

Phone: 512-797-5690

Office hours: Tuesday 8:00am-noon (please schedule at <https://calendly.com/wtp3/bill-peterson-office-hours>). Email me if you would like to meet at another time.

TA: Lyndi McIntyre

Email: lyndi@mba.utexas.edu

Course Description

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

"Strategy Consulting", is a hands-on introduction to the science and art of strategy consulting with a focus on the application of marketing principles. Through discussion of consulting concepts, several assignments, and especially by executing an actual consulting engagement with a client company, successful students will gain a solid understanding of strategy consulting principles.

The objectives of this course include:

- Develop a working knowledge of, and actual experience with, strategy consulting.
- Refine ability to "frame" complex problems and make them analyzable - a critical skill in consulting and business (and in case-based interviews).
- Understand the various segments of the consulting industry and other business situations where consulting skills are important.
- Gain additional experience in applying marketing concepts.
- Develop additional competencies in the "soft" skills which are critical to consulting and business success: working with a client, working with teams, verbal and written communications, project management, etc.



HOW WILL I LEARN?

The majority of this class will consist of student teams executing an actual consulting project. These projects are extremely realistic opportunities for student teams to plan and execute a complete consulting engagement. Via a bid process, students will be assigned to a consulting team, and each team will execute a consulting engagement with a local company (i.e. the "client"). Each team will work with their client to understand their opportunity/problem, create a work plan and proposal, execute market research, conduct analysis and modeling, and structure their recommendations into a final report and presentation. Generally, teams will meet with their client at least monthly and with their instructor weekly to review progress and receive guidance for their project.

The class will meet in a traditional classroom format for the first several weeks and occasionally thereafter. Many weeks, however, there will be no class meeting. Instead, teams will work independently and meet individually with the instructor to review progress on their consulting project and receive feedback/guidance.

There will be several interim deliverables during the project. During the last two weeks of class, student teams will present their final recommendations to the client as well as present an executive summary of their project to the class.

While the class will include some time in a traditional classroom setting, much of the work (and much of the learning) will happen outside of the classroom: in team meetings, in meetings with the client, in meetings with the instructor, and in individual work. This is a rigorous class and students are expected to fully apply themselves and be prepared for each activity. Generally, it is expected that students will spend an average of 2-3 hours outside of class for each hour in class (i.e. an average of 6-9 hours outside of class each week).

PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE COURSE

Marketing 337 or 337H

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

This class should be treated as a professional business commitment. As in business, you will optimize your chance for success by:

- Being prepared for every class session and instructor meeting. Ask for help when you need it.
- Being curious in thinking about the root causes of the issues you will face in your consulting project and creative approaches to addressing them. Business is not a fill-in-the-blank exercise and neither is this class.
- Being participative by constructively sharing your ideas in the classroom, in team meetings, and in all class activities. Speak to be heard, be professional and respectful, and back your assertions with data whenever possible.



Course Requirements

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- (none)

REQUIRED DEVICES

- Computer or other device to access class materials, communicate with the instructor and other members of the class, and prepare required deliverables.

ASSIGNMENTS

Proposal:

- On the front end of the client engagement, consulting teams will prepare a proposal summarizing the objective, scope, work plan and other details of the proposed project. The proposal will be in the form of a MS Word document, no more than 4 pages (plus any appendices), 11-point font, single spaced, submitted via email to the client and instructor no later than the deadline communicated in class. Ideally this proposal will be presented to, and discussed with, the client. Additional details will be provided in class and/or on Canvas. Grading criteria will include the degree to which the Proposal includes:
 - Effective definition of project scope (balancing client needs/input vs. the realities of the time and resources available during the semester)
 - Effective definition of a SMART objective(s) for the project which reflects accurate use of framing techniques
 - Effective and complete use of secondary research
 - An effective work plan which defines the appropriate use of primary data collection to support the project objective
 - Clear articulation of team commitments (deliverables, schedules, etc.) and client commitments (provision of data, access to employees/customers/partners/etc., budget, etc.)
 - Delivery to the client (and instructor) in a professional and effective manner

Note it will be the original submission of the proposal to the client which will be graded (not any subsequent revisions).



Research Review:

- At approximately the mid-point of the semester, consulting teams will present a summary of their research findings to the client. The deliverable will typically consist of an annotated PowerPoint document of about 20 slides (plus appendices, if any) provided to the client and instructor no later than the deadline communicated in class. Time permitting, this research review will be presented to the class for discussion. Additional details will be provided in class and/or Canvas. Grading criteria will include the degree to which the Research Review includes:
 - Effective use of data collection techniques
 - Clear explanation of the linkage of the data collected to the objective of the project
 - An effective hypothesis on the likely final recommendations
 - Delivery to the client (and instructor) in a professional and effective manner

Final Recommendations:

- At the conclusion of the project, consulting teams will present their final recommendations to the client. The deliverable will typically consist of an annotated PowerPoint document of about 30 slides (plus appendices, if any) presented to the client and instructor no later than the deadline communicated in class. Each team will also present a summary of their project to the class. Additional details will be provided in class and/or Canvas. Grading criteria will include the degree to which the Final Recommendations include:
 - Accomplishment of the objective(s) of the project
 - A credible, data-driven approach for all recommendations
 - Accurate applications of consulting methodologies
 - Accurate applications of marketing concepts
 - Effective financial analyses and implementation plans, as appropriate
 - Delivery to the client (and instructor) in a professional and effective manner
 - Effective presentation of summary of project to class

Individual Contribution:

- All students are expected to "carry their weight" and make impactful contributions to their team consulting project. Students who are blatantly unparticipative in team projects will be subject to additional penalties including being "fired" from the team. Additionally, all students are expected to make meaningful contributions in all other aspects of the class (class discussions, presentations, instructor meetings, client meetings, etc.).
- There are two components to the individual contribution grade:



- 50% of the individual contribution grade will be based on the assessment of project team members.
- 50% of the individual contribution grade will be based on the assessment of the instructor and teaching assistant (with input from the client). Individual contribution will be assessed by the instructor and teaching assistant in every class and instructor meeting based on the following rubric:
 - Present and contributing especially insightful comments which enhance the learning of other students: 9-10 points
 - Present and actively contributing to the discussion: 8 points
 - Present and not obviously unprepared: 7 points
 - Present but unprepared: 5 points
 - Not present: 0 points

Students who are late to class or otherwise negatively impacting the businesslike environment of the class will be subjected to penalties.

- You will have the opportunity to suggest a self-appraisal of your individual contribution. This provides us an opportunity to identify and address any discrepancies in the perception of individual contribution. The format for this self-appraisal will be discussed in class.
- Like many aspects of business, there is a level of subjectivity in evaluating individual contribution. Additionally, not every student will have a chance to contribute in every class. Over the course of the semester, however, there will be ample opportunities for all students to contribute such that the individual contribution average at the end of the semester will be approximately 89-90 (in line with the target GPA for the class).
- To allow for the active extracurricular schedules of most upper-division Marketing students, the lowest two individual contribution grades for the semester will be dropped. Absences beyond two will not be excused for any reason. Note that students are responsible for all class material (including the material covered on days when class is missed). If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining the class materials from another student. Students who miss seven or more class sessions (or scheduled instructor meetings) for any reason will receive a grade of "F" for this course.



GRADING FOR THIS COURSE

The following table represents how you will demonstrate your learning and how we will assess the degree to which you have done so.

Component	Percent of Semester Grade			Evaluator			
	Team	Individual	Total	Client	Instructor	Peers	Team
Proposal	10%		10%	✓	✓		
Research Review	20%		20%	✓	✓		
Final Recommendations	40%		40%	✓	✓	✓	
Individual Contribution		30%	30%	✓	✓		✓
	70%	30%	100%				

PREVIOUS SEMESTER



COURSE OUTLINE

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at utexas.instructure.com. Check this site regularly and email me to ask questions about the course schedule.

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advanced notice as possible).

Date	Day	Class	Class Type	Class Topics
8/22	M	1	Discussion	Course Overview
8/24	W	2	Discussion	The Consulting Process
8/29	M	3	Discussion	The Initial Client Meeting and the Proposal
8/31	W	4	TBD	TBD
9/5	M			(Labor Day)
9/7	W	5	Presentations	Secondary Research Presentations
9/12	M	6	Discussion	Framing the Problem
9/14	W	7	Discussion	Data Collection Strategies
9/19	M	8	Discussion	Best Practices for Data Collection
9/21	W	9	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
9/26	M	10	Discussion	Best Practices for Research Reviews
9/28	W	11	TBD	TBD
10/3	M	12	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
10/5	W	13	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
10/10	M	14	Presentations	Research Review Summary Presentations
10/12	W	15	Presentations	Research Review Summary Presentations
10/17	M	16	(no class meeting)	Research Reviews with Client
10/19	W	17	(no class meeting)	Research Reviews with Client
10/24	M	18	Discussion	Strategy Formulation and Modeling
10/26	W	19	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
10/31	M	20	Discussion	Implementation Planning and Packaging
11/2	W	21	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
11/7	M	22	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
11/9	W	23	TBD	TBD
11/14	M	24	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
11/16	W	25	(no class meeting)	Instructor Meeting
11/21	M			(Thanksgiving)
11/23	W			(Thanksgiving)
11/28	M	26	Presentations	Class Presentations
11/30	W	27	Presentations	Class Presentations
12/5	M	28	(no class meeting)	Final Presentations to Client

Policies

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#), 512-471-6259 (voice) or (512) 410-6644 (video phone).

GRADING POLICIES

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

Semester Average	Grade	Grade Points
93-100	A	4.00
90-92	A-	3.67
87-89	B+	3.33
83-86	B	3.00
80-82	B-	2.67
77-79	C+	2.33
73-76	C	2.00
70-72	C-	1.67
67-69	D+	1.33
63-66	D	1.00
60-62	D-	0.67
59 or less	F	0.00

Consistent with the guidelines for business electives suggested by the Undergraduate Program Office, the average grade for this course will be between 3.4 and 3.6 (or ~89-90%).

To avoid any misunderstanding regarding rounding methodology, grades will NOT be rounded up - an 89.99 (as close as it is to 90) will still be a B+.

Note that the grade calculations shown on Canvas are occasionally in error. The official grades for this class will be calculated as described in this syllabus and may be different than the grade calculations shown on Canvas.

Out of fairness to all students, I do not arbitrarily change grades or give additional extra credit opportunities. There will be no exceptions. The way to get the grade that you want is by earning it during the semester, and not by asking for an exception at the end of it.



If you believe there is a grading error which is cause for review, you may make an appeal. All appeals must be submitted via email (not Canvas) to bill.peterson@mcombs.utexas.edu and must be received no later than 11:59pm on the 7th calendar day after the grade is posted on Canvas or otherwise communicated to you. Your appeal must include a detailed, fact-based explanation of why you think the grade is in error. Note that an appeal is not an opportunity to provide new information or explain a previous submission but instead to correct a legitimate grading error. Your grade may be increased or decreased as a result of the appeal. Appeals for team deliverables must be agreed to by all team members (and the outcome will apply to all team members). Due to tight grading timelines at the end of the semester, no appeals will be considered during the final two weeks of the semester.

LATE WORK

Because we have a client depending on us to deliver our work by committed deadlines, late assignments are not accepted. Due dates and times will be communicated in class and/or on Canvas.

ABSENCES

Students are expected to attend and participate in all scheduled class activities. To allow for the active extracurricular schedules of most upper-division Marketing students, the lowest two individual contribution grades for the semester will be dropped. Unless required by University directive, absences beyond two will not be excused for any reason. Note that students are responsible for all class material (including the material covered on days when class is missed). If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining the class materials from another student. Students who miss seven or more class sessions (or scheduled instructor meetings) for any reason will receive a grade of "F" for this course.

FIRING A TEAM MEMBER

Occasionally, an unproductive team member can negatively impact the opportunity for a team to have a meaningful learning experience (and negatively impact the quality of the work for the client). In such circumstances, teams can consider "firing" the offending team member. The process for firing a team member is as follows:

- If a team is having an issue with a team member that cannot be resolved internally, the team must first meet with the instructor and present a proposed "Performance Improvement Plan" (PIP) for the offending team member. The PIP must detail the performance issues and the specific improvements which are required. If approved by the instructor, the offending individual has one week to comply with the PIP.
- Seven calendar days after the PIP is delivered, and if the performance improvement plan has not motivated adequate improvements, the team can propose to fire the offending individual. This requires unanimous consent of the remaining team members and approval of the instructor.
- Remaining team members will be held accountable for completing the work of the fired student. In other words, the team will be granted no slack because they are down one team member.



- The fired student will independently complete a project similar to the one assigned to the team (to be defined by the instructor), but which will be evaluated completely separately and will involve no client interaction.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the BBA Program's Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty at <http://my.mcombs.utexas.edu/BBA/Code-of-Ethics>. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all faculty responsibilities described there. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described there. If the application of the Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty to this class or its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, the integrity of the University, and the value of our academic brand, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/> to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

Note that, much like an actual consulting engagement, resourcefulness is required and encouraged for MKT372. Given the uniqueness of each project in this class and unless otherwise indicated, you will need to access outside resources. This is acceptable provided that:

- All analysis, recommendations, and deliverables are prepared solely by the students.
- Any information from sources other than class discussion and assigned materials is clearly and completely attributed.

Any other use of outside resources is considered a violation of the academic integrity standards for this class and is subject to the maximum penalties.

All class discussion material, exams, quizzes and other materials used in this class are copyrighted. Additionally, some class material is covered by non-disclosure agreements with client companies. Reposting or distributing class material is heavily punishable independent of the University of Texas Honor Code.

TEACHING MODALITY INFORMATION

Unless otherwise specified, all scheduled class meetings will be in-person. There will be no alternative to in-person attendance for these class meetings. Instructor meetings, office hours and other activities as specified will generally be conducted synchronously on Zoom.



CLASS RECORDING PRIVACY

Any class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed, and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

SHARING OF COURSE MATERIALS IS PROHIBITED

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found on such sites that are associated with a specific student, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) in the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

MCCOMBS CLASSROOM PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the Texas BBA experience hinges on this. You should treat the Texas BBA classroom as you would a professional corporate environment. Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects. The Texas BBA classroom experience is enhanced when:

- Students arrive on time. On-time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On-time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- Students display their name cards. This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
- Students are fully prepared for each class. Much of the learning in the Texas BBA program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual but their peers who count on them, as well.



- Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- Students attend the class section to which they are registered. Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience and safety.
- Technology is used to enhance the class experience. When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand, they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distractions. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of technology in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate.
- Phones and wireless devices are turned off. We've all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, but it also cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

By [UT Austin policy](#), you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCCAL (the [Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line](#)): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

TITLE IX REPORTING

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.



2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the [Title IX Office](#) or email titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

CLASSROOM SAFETY AND COVID-19

- For any illness, students should stay home if they are sick or contagious, not only to stop the spread, but also to promote their personal wellness.
- The university will continue to provide rapid antigen self-test kits at distribution sites throughout campus. Students can receive up to four tests at a time.
- The university will provide [symptomatic COVID-19](#) testing on campus for all students, faculty and staff.
- UHS maintains up-to-date resources on COVID, which can be found at:
 - <https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus.html>
 - https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_exposure_action_chart.html

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety and Security](#), 512-471-5767,

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.



- For more information, please visit [emergency preparedness](#).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

DISABILITY AND ACCESS

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful [resources](#) available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. A [Counselors in Academic Residence \(CARE\) Program](#) is available in each college from the [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#).

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES (UHS)

Your physical health and wellness are a priority. University Health Services is an on-campus high-quality medical facility providing care to all UT students. Services offered by UHS include general medicine, urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, gynecology, sports medicine, physical therapy, lab and radiology services, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and much more. For additional information, visit <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-4955.

SANGER LEARNING CENTER

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit [Sanger Learning Center](#) or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).



STUDENT EMERGENCY SERVICES

UT's [Student Emergency Services](#) provides assistance, intervention, and referrals to support students navigating challenging or unexpected issues that impact their well-being and academic success. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, please register with [Student Emergency Services](#). SES will verify your situation and notify your professors.

PREVIOUS SEMESTER