

## MOR 385mg: Business, Government, and Society

Spring 2020

Tu Th 12-1:50pm

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### Course overall goals

“Business” is a contested institution. It could hardly be otherwise in a world characterized by improving economic conditions for many people but persistent suffering and inequities for many others. Many people worry about the social and environmental costs of a business system based on profit-driven market competition, wage employment, and minimal government regulation. Many others, on the other hand, highlight the rapid increases in productivity and improvements in living standards engendered by a dynamic business sector, and warn of the risks of undermining those benefits by imposing on business particular moral standards or stronger government regulation. And others again see in business a potentially powerful lever for positive environmental and social progress, if only businesses were pushed by their stakeholders towards more ethical and sustainable goals beyond financial gain. The debates are intense among proponents of these positions and others too.

Whether you plan to work in business or some other sector, you will find yourself drawn into these debates. And they are difficult ones. At the core of these debates, there are competing points of view about what we can call the “political economy of business”—about how to characterize the way economic and political forces *currently* interact in shaping the conduct, context, and consequences of businesses, and about how these forces *should* interact in an ideal world.<sup>1</sup> While objective evidence can serve to clarify some of the issues involved in these debates, interpretations and recommendations differ radically across the competing perspectives. Those debates persist because these perspectives differ in their underlying theories of society and of human nature and in their value presuppositions.

The theory underlying this course is that the main issues here involve both facts and values, and as a result there is no scientific theory that can reliably lead us to objectively correct conclusions. On many of the issues, it is difficult even to reach a workable consensus. And nevertheless, as citizens and as economic actors, we cannot escape the obligation to try. The principal goal of this course is to prepare you to deal with this challenge by giving you an opportunity to explore these competing perspectives in depth and to clarify your own views on them.

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term “political economy” to refer a broad range of theories, including those that apply rational-choice economic theory to political phenomena (public-choice theory and the new institutional economics), as well as “heterodox” alternatives (neo-Schumpeterian, Keynesian, post-Keynesian, radical, and Marxist). See J. A. Caporaso and D. P. Levine, *Theories of Political Economy* (1992) and F. Stilwell, *Political Economy: The Contest of Economic Ideas* (2011) for overviews.

## Course specific objectives

The course has objectives in each of three domains: political economy, strategic planning, and critical thinking. I think of them as successively deeper layers. Critical-thinking is the foundational skill for strategic planning, and in this course, strategic planning is the lens through which we will study political-economy. Upon successful completion of the course, students will have developed competencies in all three domains:

In the political economy domain, you should be able to:

- (1) explain the main competing perspectives in political economy;
- (2) analyze various social and policy issues from the vantage point afforded by each of these perspectives;
- (3) understand the strengths and weaknesses of each of these perspectives.

In the strategic planning domain:

- (4) analyze situations from the point of view of multiple stakeholders;
- (5) analyze how these diverse stakeholders interact in shaping the conduct of business;
- (6) identify and assess alternative course of action in light of multiple criteria;
- (7) develop more creative implementation approaches that respond to specific contextual challenges;

In the critical thinking domain:

- (8) balance advocacy and inquiry in discussion;
- (9) climb down the ladder of inference to identify the origin of divergent views;
- (10) find common ground in ambiguous, complex, and controversial problems.

## Required materials

- Course Reader at Bookstore (required)
- Other readings on Blackboard
  - If you have any questions or need assistance with the Blackboard course pages, please contact the Marshall HelpDesk at 213-740-3000 or HelpDesk@marshall.usc.edu

## Class process

Each week, we address a different topic, usually in two successive sessions: a first session focused on a case study and then a second session focused on some related readings. Note the sequence: in this course, unlike many others that use case studies, we do not use cases to illustrate how to apply a theory that is explained in the readings. Rather, the cases here portray situations that are complex and ambiguous—like the difficult situations we face in the real world, where the neither the critical issues nor the path to a solution are obvious. In this way, the course aims to help you build strategic planning and critical-thinking skills.

That said, you will usually find it helpful to prepare the case and readings together. The readings will often give you some perspective on the case and perhaps suggest some lines of analysis.

The class sessions that are focused on cases will usually begin with short oral presentations by one or two student teams, presenting their analysis of the case as if they were consultants and the rest of the class were the client in the case and representatives of other relevant stakeholder groups. We then open the discussion to the class as a whole. As a group, we will try to build a complete analysis of the situation and address the problems and issues it presents.

The class sessions that are focused on readings will take the form of a facilitated discussion rather than a lecture.

## **Preparing the case**

The detailed Session Information section below gives more specific “study questions” for the case discussions. However, these study questions are only prompts to get you going: they are not generally an agenda for your analysis nor for our class discussion. It is your job to identify the specific issues posed by the case and to decide how they can be best addressed. I will expect you to consider the case in the light of all the assigned readings for the theme, and to come to each class prepared to present and defend your own analysis.

## **Team “Consulting Reports”**

At the beginning of the semester, I will assign students to teams, and over the course of the semester each team will prepare Consulting Reports (CRs) on three of the cases in the syllabus.

You should think of these CRs as if your team were outside consultants reporting to your client in the case situation. Some cases give you flexibility in selecting your client: your team should consult with me in making this selection.

All the teams will prepare a CR on the first case, which we discuss in the third week of the semester. This will give me an opportunity to clarify my expectations, as I will give you written feedback and we will work through the case together in class that week. This first CR should be posted as an Assignment by each member of your CR team. Your other two CRs do not need to be posted as Assignments: instead, you should bring to class a hard-copy for me, and email it to me immediately after the class session.

In the subsequent weeks, we will typically have only two teams preparing CRs. One of these teams will present orally to the class. The other team will take the lead in responding the first team’s presentation on behalf of the client. The students in the class will role-play the client team (and occasionally some other stakeholders relevant to the situation).

To ensure maximum value from the work you invest in preparing these CRs, I will meet each team for 60 minutes as soon as possible after class (preferably the same day), to discuss the report’s strengths and weaknesses, and to brainstorm how the report could be strengthened. After the meeting, I will send the team and the class further feedback.

Detailed guidance on these CRs is in the Appendix on *Guidelines for Case Notes and Consulting Reports*. They will be graded using the criteria shown in the Appendix on *Grading Sheet for Case Notes and Consulting Reports*. I have also posted on Blackboard a PowerPoint template you can adapt for your presentation.

I have found that mastering these *Guidelines* is one of most valuable skills I can teach you. Your professional career depends crucially on the strategic planning and critical-thinking skills these reports rely on.

Note: As concerns the grading of the oral delivery, I will not penalize students for language difficulties when their first language is other than English.

## **Individual “Case Notes”**

In case discussion sessions such as I conduct in this course, students learn nothing if they have not invested sufficient time before class to study the case and formulate their own analysis and recommendations. Conversely, if you come to class having done this preparation, you can engage the discussion, confront your ideas with others’, and come away with deep insights. The investment is considerable, but the payoff is enormous.

It is for this reason that, for each case we discuss in the course (except the three cases on which you are doing a team CR), you need to prepare a “Case Note”—a written summary of your analysis. You

should use the *Case Notes Template* in this Syllabus's Appendix (it is also posted on BB). You will see that these CNs follow the same general structure as the CRs, but are somewhat simplified.

These CNs should be posted to (not pasted into) the Assignment page on Blackboard before the beginning of the relevant class session. Please post them as MS-Word documents. Late submissions will not be counted toward the grade.

You will need to prepare 12 cases over the semester. With your team, you will do CRs on 3 of these cases: on these three, you don't need to submit a CN. Of the remaining 9 cases, I will count towards the course grade the 7 CNs with the best grades.

### **Preparing the theme readings**

I expect you to come to class prepared for discussion, by having read that day's required readings. My goal in these sessions is not to lecture you on the materials: my assumption is that you have read them and will bring to class your observations (what was most interesting? new? most important to fix in memory?) and your questions.

### **After-class "Take Aways"**

In a case-discussion session, such as many of ours, much of the learning happens after class, as the "dust settles" and the key "take-away" lessons (TAs) become clearer in your mind. Each time we discuss a case, you will need to post a short note summarizing your TAs (10 lines or longer) to our Blackboard Discussion space. In general, our case discussions will be on Tuesdays, and your TA must be posted on BB by 6am Thursday that week.

These TA postings should focus primarily on the generalizable lessons you have taken from the case discussion. They might also include responses to other students' TAs already on the Discussion space, or discuss the connections you see between the case and the associated readings, prior class sessions, or other real-world issues. I will count the best 10 of your TA posts toward the final course grade.

### **Class participation**

As in many of your other classes, your active participation in the class discussion is a crucial part of the learning process: your contributions help both you and the rest of the class master the target concepts and skills. In class, I will often "cold call," so please avoid embarrassment by telling me before class if you are not prepared. And if you are uncomfortable with class participation, please let me know at the beginning of term and I will work with you to help you overcome this barrier.

### **Teamwork**

I encourage you to prepare for class with one or more class-mates. You will learn a lot more if you prepare the cases and the readings in a group discussion. But I do request that once the discussion is over, you prepare your Case Notes and Take-Aways individually: I consider this a matter of Academic Integrity.

Your CRs require considerable teamwork. Unlike your experience with some other team assignments in other courses, you will find that the work involved in preparing these presentations cannot be divided up simply among your team-members. Each part of the CR has to fit with the logic of the other parts, and you will find that your team will need to revise the logic of your draft CR a few times in order to create a strong argument.

Given the importance of teamwork, I ask students to give their team-members feedback after each of their three CRs. The *Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form* (see Appendix and posted on BB) provides a template. After each CR, you should complete the form, then send it to each of your team members and to me. The goals here are (a) to ensure that your team surfaces and addresses any team

process issues in time to improve the next time around, and (b) to allow me to assess if there is any reason to adjust up or down any individual grades for outstanding or sub-par contribution to the team's effort.

### Mid-term and Final exams

Both the mid-term and final exams will focus on your mastery of the assigned course readings (*not* the case studies). These will be in-class, closed-book exams.

### Grading

Historically, the average grade in this course is B+. Course grades are calculated based on how you perform in the class, both relative to the course goals and relative to other students. The first part of that calculation is based on the weighted average of your performance in each of several categories:

Component	Weight
1 <sup>st</sup> team Consulting Report	5%
2 <sup>nd</sup> team Consulting Report	10%
3 <sup>rd</sup> team Consulting Report	15%
Class engagement:	
➤ Case Notes	20%
➤ In-class participation	10%
➤ Take-Aways	10%
Mid-term exam	10%
Final exam	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Your final course grade will depend on achieving a passing grade in each individual course component.

### Class attendance

Engagement is essential to your learning in this course, and you cannot engage during classes that you do not attend. If you must miss a case-discussion class, it is particularly important to prepare the relevant Case Note and submit it before the class.

### Technology policies

For most of our class time, I will ask you to close your laptops. Your classmates and I will appreciate your undivided attention. You will not need to take many notes. (If you have a DSP certification relevant here, please speak with me.)

### Class Notes Policy

Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual

or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings. No student may record any lecture, class discussion or meeting with me without my prior express written permission. I reserve all rights, including copyright, to my course syllabi, lectures, PowerPoints, prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in my class whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise. They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites.

### **Classroom etiquette**

An atmosphere of mutual respect and professionalism is in order. So please...

- arrive at class on time: late arrivals are disruptive to your fellow classmates and to the conduct of the class;
- avoid leaving the classroom while the class is in progress: biology has its imperatives of course, but our class is a collective conversation to which your contributions are important;
- turn off your cell phones—no calls, no texting, for 1hr 50mins;
- do not engage in side conversations during class;
- do not pack up and leave towards the end of the class until it is clear the class is over.

### **Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

### **Support Systems**

*Student Health Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255 -- 24/7 on call*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

*Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) / Title IX – (213) 740-5086*

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. <https://equity.usc.edu/>; [titleix.usc.edu](https://titleix.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*USC Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

*Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>*

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu); [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety. UPC: (213) 740-4321. HSC: (323) 442-1000*

24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Non-emergency assistance or information Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

**Students with Disabilities**

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services and Programs ([www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)). DSP provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. Email: [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Theme	Case
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>		
Jan 14	Introduction	
Jan 16	The contested place of business	
<b>FOUNDATIONS</b>		
Jan 21	Values in political economy	
Jan 23	Competitive vs Regulated capitalism	
Jan 28, 30	Competitive vs Regulated capitalism	At a crossroads: GM
Feb 4, 6	Ethical capitalism	Whole Foods
Feb 11, 13	Socialism	The USSR in 1988
Feb 18, 20	Social democracy	Sweden Inc.
<b>STAKEHOLDERS/DOMAINS</b>		
Feb 25, 27	Investors	Ben & Jerry's
Mar 3, 5	Customers	Facebook
Mar 10, 12	<i>Mid-term review and exam</i>	
<i>Spring break</i>		
Mar 24, 26	Suppliers	Rana Plaza
Mar 31, April 2	Government	The opioid epidemic
April 7, 9	Employees and the gig economy	Uber and its drivers
April 14, 16	Gender	Google
April 21, 23	International trade	Shaping the future of solar
April 28, 30	Students	Fossil-fuel divestment
<i>May 13, 2-4pm</i>	<i>Final exam</i>	

## SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

(Items marked with an asterisk are in the course reader. The others are on BB)

### INTRODUCTION

#### Jan 13: Course introduction

#### Jan 15: The contested place of business in society

Assigned readings:

\* C. Handy: "What's a business for?" *HBR* Dec 2002

M. Friedman: "The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits," *New York Times Magazine*, Sept 13, 1970

D. Vogel: "Limits of the market for virtue," *Ethical Corporation*, 2005

T. Moore: "Can We Rein in Corporate Power Within Capitalism? Or is Socialism Necessary?" *Socialist Alternative* 2004

Study questions:

1. How would each of the four authors of the assigned readings evaluate each of the other three? What would they agree and disagree on?
2. Which comes closest to your views?

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### FOUNDATIONS

#### Jan 21: Values in political economy

<No preparation required>

#### Jan 23: Competitive and Regulated capitalism: Readings

Assigned readings:

M. Friedman and R. Friedman: *Free to Choose*, Preface, Introduction, Ch 1

M. Friedman: *Capitalism and Freedom*, Ch. 2

N. Goodwin: "The limitations of markets: Background essay," Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts Univ. 2005

#### Jan 28, 30: Competitive and Regulated capitalism: Case

\* Case: At a Crossroads: General Motors and the Trump Administration's Fuel Economy standards (WDI 1-453-703)

Assigned readings:

\* "Climate change in 2018: Implications for business" (HBS 9-317-032)

N. Klein: "Capitalism vs the Climate," *The Nation*, 2011

S. Furth and D. W. Kreutzer, "Fuel Economy Standards Are a Costly Mistake" (Heritage Foundation 2016)

Study questions:

1. What are the implications of the new SAFE regulatory standards for the automotive industry?
2. What should the auto industry take into consideration before issuing any public comments regarding the new SAFE standards?
3. What are GM's strengths as a company and how do they relate to the new SAFE standards?

4. How should GM respond to the SAFE standards? What needs to be considered if GM suggests a NZEV mandate?
5. What role should business play in responding to or shaping government policy?

#### **Feb 4, 6: Ethical capitalism**

\* Case: Whole Foods: Balancing social mission and growth (HBS 9-410-023, rev'd Sept 2011)

Assigned readings:

- \* J. D. Margolis and H. A. Elfenbein: "Do well by doing good? Don't count on it," *HBR* Jan 2008
- \* R. Sisodia: "Four tenets to fix capitalism and unlock your business's potential," *IESEinsight* 2016
- \* J. O'Toole and D. Vogel: "Two and a half cheers for conscious capitalism," *CMR* 2011

Study questions:

1. In what ways do you think Whole Foods has created value for society? And how have their efforts to create social value led to business results?
2. How has Whole Foods grown while also trying to stay true to its social mission? I.e. what organizational strategies and processes have enabled them to balance these seemingly conflicting goals
3. In the last few years, has Whole Foods been more focused on growth than social mission? How does their support for large-scale organic farms fit with their broader social mission?
4. What changes, if any, would you recommend to Mackey for Whole Food's strategy going forward?

#### **Feb 11, 13: Socialism**

\* Case: The USSR 1988: The search for growth (HBS 9-795-060, rev July 1996))

Assigned readings:

- K. Marx and F. Engels: "The Communist Manifesto," 1848: Parts 1 and 2
- F. Hayek: "The uses of knowledge in society," *AER* 1945
- W P Cockshott and A F Cottrell: "Information and Economics: A Critique of Hayek," 1996

Study questions:

1. What was the Soviet economic strategy?
2. Was that strategy doomed to failure?
3. What should Gorbachev do?

Optional supplementary reading:

- B. Naughton: "Is China socialist?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2017

#### **Feb 18, 20: Social democracy**

\* Case: The welfare state and its impact on business competitiveness: Sweden Inc. for sale? (HBS 9-703-019, rev Nov 2002)

Assigned readings:

- \* Note on comparative capitalism (HBS 9-215-077, rev Jan 2018)
- R. Zeitelmann: "The myth of Nordic socialism," *Barrons*, April 2019
- E. Levitz: "Conservatives can't decide if Nordic socialism is a totalitarian nightmare or actually capitalist," *Intelligencer*, August 108
- M. McCarthy: "Democratic socialism isn't Social democracy," *Jacobin*, Aug 2018

Study questions:

1. Is Swedish social democracy successful? On what criteria?
2. Does the Swedish welfare state help or hinder innovation and economic dynamism?
3. Can the Swedish model survive in an increasingly interdependent global economy? If so, what would that require?

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## STAKEHOLDERS/DOMAINS

### Feb 25, 27: Investors

\* Case: Ben and Jerry's: Preserving mission and brand within Unilever (HBS 306-037, rev'd Jan 2007)

Assigned readings:

M. Kelly: "The legacy problem" 2003

L. Stout: "The problem of corporate purpose," *Issues in Governance Studies*, 2012

C. Elson: "Five reasons to support shareholder primacy," *Directorship* 2010

\* Note: "Shareholder value maximization, fiduciary duties, and the business judgement rule" HBS 9-318-097

Study questions:

1. Why did Unilever want to buy Ben and Jerry's?
2. Why did Ben and Jerry's sell to Unilever?
3. How should Unilever evaluate Couette's performance to date?
4. How would Ben Cohen evaluate Couette's performance?

### Mar 3, 5: Customers

\* Case: Facebook: Can ethics scale in the digital age? (HBS 9-319-030, rev Sept 2018)

Assigned readings:

N Patel: "It's time to break up Facebook," *The Verge*, Sept 2018

A. Abbott: "Antitrust and the Winner-Take-All Economy," *Heritage*, 2018

R. Levine: "Antitrust law never envisioned massive tech companies like Google," *Boston Globe*, June 13, 2018

L. Bassett: "Facebook after capitalism," *Jacobin*, Aug 2018

R. McNamee: "How to fix Facebook before it fixes us," *Washington Monthly*, 2018

Study questions:

1. Why has Facebook been so successful?
2. By mid-2018, Facebook confronts two challenges: (a) privacy/trust and (b) content moderation. What makes these so difficult?
3. How will Facebook's various stakeholders assess Facebook's new initiatives to deal with these challenges?
4. What recommendations would you make to Facebook's top management team?

### Mar 10: mid-term review

### Mar 12: mid-term exam

### Mar 24, 26: Suppliers

\* Case: Rana Plaza: Workplace Safety in Bangladesh A, B (HBS 9-514-034, HBS 9-514-035, rev Feb 2015)

Assigned readings:

I. Maitland, "The great non-debate over international sweatshops," *British Academy of Management Proceedings*, 1997

J. Smith: "Imperialism in a coffee cup," *OpenDemocracy*, July 2019

R. Locke: "Can Global Brands Create Just Supply Chains?" *Boston Review* 2013

Study questions:

1. In your view, what responsibility do the big brands who source from factories at Rana Plaza bear for the tragic deaths there?

2. What can we, as consumers and as citizens, do to improve things?

### **Mar 31, April 2: Government**

\* Case: The Opioid Epidemic (A) (Stanford ETH-18(A))

Assigned readings:

- \* "Business and government: Campaign contributions and lobbying in the United States," (HBS 9-113-037, rev'd 2015)
- J. Frieden: "Don't just blame drug companies for the opioid crisis," Medpage Today, April 2019
- J. Singer: "Scapegoating Opioid Makers Lets True Offender Get Away," Cato, April 2019
- C. McGreal: "How Big Pharma's money – and its politicians – feed the US opioid crisis," Guardian Oct 2017
- S. Strauss: "The opioid crisis," Freedom Socialist Party, Aug 2019

Study questions:

1. What are the responsibilities of the pharmaceutical companies here? How well have they lived up to them? What explains these companies' failures?
2. What is the responsibility of government here? How well have it lived up to them? What explains its failures?

### **April 7, 9: Employees**

\* Case: Uber and its driver-partners: Labor challenges in the on-demand transportation networking sector (NA0429)

Assigned readings:

- M. Feeney: "Level the Playing Field - by Deregulating," Cato Feb 2015
- A. Campbell: "California just passed a landmark law to regulate Uber and Lyft," Vox Sept 2019
- D. Henwood: "No, it's not a gig economy," and "The gig economy fantasy," Jacobin June 2018
- V. Dubal: "Why the Uber Strike Was a Triumph," Slate May 2019

Study questions:

1. What factors support the classification of Uber drivers as employees? As independent contractors?
2. What would you recommend to legislators concerned about the adequacy of our labor laws?
3. What would you recommend to Uber drivers?
4. What would you recommend for Uber moving forward?

### **April 14, 16: Gender**

\* Case: Gender and free speech at Google (HBS 9-318-085, rev July 2018)

Assigned readings:

- \* A note on women and power (Stanford OB-78 rev'd 8/11)
- R. Greszler and J. Sherk: "Equal Pay for Equal Work: Examining the Gender Gap," Heritage Foundation, 2014
- N. Fraser: "The feminism of the 1 percent has associated our cause with elitism," Jacobin Aug 2019

Study questions:

1. Was Google justified in firing Damore?
2. What should Brown recommend now?

### **Mon April 21, 23: International trading partners**

\* Case: Shaping the future of solar power: Climate change, industrial policy, and free trade (HKSG Case 1992.0)

Assigned readings:

\* Note: “‘New’ theories of international trade,” (HBS 9-390-001)

N. Loris, J. Spencer: “The Department of Energy should not be the green banker,” Heritage, 2011

M. Mazzucato: “Building the Entrepreneurial State: A New Framework for Envisioning and Evaluating a Mission-oriented Public Sector,” Levy Institute

Study questions:

1. Why did the US government promote Solyndra?
2. Should governments undertake industrial policy? And more specifically: should they take the lead in developing technologies that can respond to the challenge of climate change?
3. What should the US government do about China?

### **April 28, 30: Students**

\* Case: Fossil fuel divestment (HBS 9-620-026, rev Sept 2019)

Assigned readings:

R. Bradley: “Don’t divest, invest in fossil-fuel America,” Forbes May 2017

B. McKibben: “Hit fossil fuel where it hurts – the bottom line,” Rolling Stone May 2018

\* G. Serafeim and M. Fulton: “Divestment alone won’t beat climate change,” HBR Nov 2014

M. Maslin: “Top 5 ways corrupt corporations spend \$200M/yr to spread confusion and denial about climate emergency,” The Conversation, Nov 2019

Study questions:

1. What are the responsibilities of corporate leaders in the face of climate change?
2. Should USC divest from fossil fuel?

### **May 13, 2-4pm: Final exam**

## Guidelines for Case Notes and Consulting Reports

*NOTE: These Guidelines are for both your weekly Case Notes and team Consulting Reports. I have presented them in the context of the Consulting Reports, but the content of the analytic work you need to do is identical in nature. In practice, I don't expect as thorough or detailed an analysis for the Case Notes as for the Consulting Reports (for example, I am not expecting a Sensitivity analysis); but this kind of analysis is a skill that advances with practice, and the more rigorous your weekly Case Notes, the more your skill will improve.*

These Guidelines reflect the accumulated insights of many colleagues with whom I have taught with over the years. They are consistent with, and offer elaboration on, Marshall's "USC-CT" framework for Critical Thinking:

- U: Uncover the various potential problems, challenges & opportunities vis-à-vis organizational goals.
- S: Select the most critical problem(s), challenge(s) and/or opportunity(ies). Prioritize.
- C: Create a multitude of potential solutions.
- C: Choose the solution(s) that has the potential to be the most effective.
- T: Translate your solution(s) into an effective implementation plan.

They are designed to help you structure arguments about "strategic" issues. Such issues are typically deeply ambiguous: our first task in these situations is to resolve this ambiguity. These issues are therefore rather different from those you encounter in many other courses, where the challenge is to resolve not **ambiguity** but rather **uncertainty** and **complexity**. Where issues are uncertain and complex but not ambiguous, we can often resolve them through calculation of some kind, even if the calculations are themselves complex. By contrast, where issues are ambiguous, the meaning of our goals and the significance of the facts at hand are in dispute, and calculations therefore do not convince. To find the way forward here, we cannot rely on calculation but must make a reasoned appeal to intuition in order to resolve these different meanings and developing a shared understanding.

\* \* \*

Think of your case analysis as a consulting engagement. Imagine that you have been given a chance to study the focal organization and to come up with a diagnosis and a set of recommendations. (Note that these same guidelines apply if you are preparing a proposal to bring to your supervisor or to your peers about an issue in the organization you work in.)

A few issues are immediately posed:

- \* You will need to explicitly identify a specific client, since your action recommendations will need to be ones that this client can implement.
- \* In this course, you have some latitude in choosing your client: even if the case is written from the point of view of a given firm or person, you might choose to take as your client one of the other stakeholders. However, in choosing your client, make sure the case and associated readings provide you with enough material. Please consult with me beforehand so we agree on your choice of client.
- \* The issues to be resolved may not be obvious; but this is also true of many real-world situations. The Study Questions in the session descriptions are offered only to get your thinking going—they are not an agenda for your analysis.
- \* In this situation, you are not a "subject matter expert" but rather a "facilitator": your client will know more about the issues and context than you, so your job is not to "sell" them on your recommendation but to lay out a clear chain of reasoning so that they can use your input to clarify their own thinking.

You will make this presentation to the class, and you should think of the class as if we were the client and their leadership team. (Do keep in mind, however, that in some class sessions, some students will be assigned to play the role of representatives of other stakeholder groups.) Given this context, and given the time constraints on your presentation, you should not waste time repeating the case facts that would be known to this audience. (In real engagements, you might review these case facts to establish common ground and to buttress your credibility; but in class, that will be a waste of precious time.)

\* \* \*

Your presentations should include the following elements:

First, it is usually a good idea to begin with a single **summary** slide that states your key “take-away message.” The best way to do this is to state succinctly (a) the key issue facing the client organization, (b) the root challenge that makes it difficult to resolve this issue, and (c) your main recommendation for overcoming this root challenge.

Second, you should lay out an overview of your presentation—the **agenda**. This slide should tell us what topics you will address in what order. It will be much more impactful if simultaneously you can summarize in a short phrase the key conclusion of each of these parts of the presentation. If you do this slide well, it can lay out in skeleton form the substantive logic of your argument leading to your key recommendation.

Third: the body of the report. Here you may want to reiterate the key **Issue** facing the client if your summary slide’s characterization of that issue needs more explanation. The key issue is the problem to be resolved, so it is important that you state it in a way that your client will immediately recognize as an accurate statement of their problem. Your statement of the issue creates a “shared context” with your client/audience. It is sometimes pretty obvious, and you may have addressed it sufficiently in your summary slide; but sometimes it is less obvious and warrants a slide and discussion to itself. This is the USC-CT step: “*U: Uncover the various potential problems, challenges & opportunities vis-à-vis organizational goals.*”

You need to be as clear as possible about the time-horizon relevant to this Issue. The time horizon you set will condition your analysis, recommendation, and implementation plan. These will be different if the Issue you address is something that needs to be resolved over the next six months versus, say, the coming three years. If you choose a longer-term issue, then it goes without saying that you will deal with the shorter-term issues that its implementation poses in your Implementation plan. Less obviously: if you focus on a shorter-term issue but you think there is a longer-term issue lurking behind it, you should address the latter in your Implementation plan too, as something the client should start considering.

Having identified the key Issue, your next task is to “peel the onion” another few layers to identify the **Root challenge** facing the client. This is the USC-CT step: “*S: Select the most critical problem(s), challenge(s) and/or opportunity(ies). Prioritize.*” One way to do this is to use Toyota’s “Five Whys.”<sup>2</sup> The Root challenge is the factor that makes it difficult for the organization to resolve its key

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<sup>2</sup> As explained on Wikipedia: The problem (or what I am calling the Issue) is that my car won’t start. Ask:

1. *Why?* - The battery is dead. (first why)
2. *Why?* - The alternator is not functioning. (second why)
3. *Why?* - The alternator belt has broken. (third why)
4. *Why?* - The alternator belt was well beyond its useful service life and has never been replaced. (fourth why)
5. *Why?* - I have not been maintaining my car according to the recommended service schedule. (fifth why, a root cause)

Issue successfully. Think of your task here as akin to a physician's: the patient (client) comes in with a whole set of "presenting symptoms" (i.e. Issues) —it's your job to identify the most pressing of these symptoms and then identify the underlying disease (i.e. Root challenge). For a consultant as with a doctor, a good root-challenge analysis yields insight that is actionable: actionability is crucial, since the rest of your presentation is going to focus on resolving this Root Challenge.

Note that organizations usually face multiple Issues, and for any one of these, there may be more than one Root Challenge. But you simply don't have time to address more than one issue and one root challenge in a short presentation. The burden is on you to "add value"—as much value as possible—for your client by identifying the most critical Issue and the highest-leverage Root Challenge.

Identifying a Root Challenge is often difficult—but it is immensely valuable for your client. In real life, your contribution will often be more appreciated by your colleagues and clients if you can help identify the right question than if you propose an answer, even if it turns out to be the right answer. Your diagnosis of this Root Challenge should be argued, not just asserted, using the relevant facts of the case and whatever analytic tools seem necessary. Some of the supporting analysis may need to go into an Appendix.

Note too that sometimes the client has a strong opinion as to the nature of their real problem, and this opinion may be expressed in the case, but you may think their analysis is not accurate. In this situation, you have to convince them that your diagnosis is more accurate than theirs. And sometimes the case describes a situation without explicitly identifying any specific issues at all, perhaps because the client organization is doing very well: here your task will be to identify the deep source of their success a key source of vulnerability in the future, and what they could do address that vulnerability.

In cases such as the ones we study in this course, there are typically multiple internal and external **Stakeholders** relevant to your client's decision-making, and these stakeholders have different interests, rights, and concerns. Stakeholders are any groups affected by the issue or decision the client is facing, or in a position to affect the client's decisions. Your analysis will be more useful if you focus on these actors' stakes in the decision issue at hand, rather than zooming further out to the whole field of action. Some stakeholders may not be obvious at first sight—they may be "downstream" or "upstream." You need to ask yourself: Who are the parties affected here? What rights or interests or concerns of theirs are involved? What is the nature of the client organization's economic and political relations to these stakeholders? Somewhere in the course of your presentation, you will need to consider these stakeholders. You should fold that discussion into your presentation wherever it adds most value for your argument. This may turn out to be in your characterization of the key Issue; it may be in defending your characterization of the Root Challenge; it may be in identifying and assessing your Options; or it may be in planning your Implementation plan. But it should contribute something to your analysis somewhere.

After defining the Key Issue and Root challenge, and perhaps after you have presented your Stakeholder analysis and the explained the insights that flow from that, you need next to identify the strategic **Options** – a small number (usually three or four) plausible candidates for addressing the Root challenge facing the client organization and thereby helping it resolve its key Issue. This is the USC-CT step: "*C: Create a multitude of potential solutions.*" These options represent alternative *compass headings*—overall directions the client could follow to overcome the Root Challenge. As such, they are stated in rather abstract terms, in contrast to the implementation plan which should be stated in more concrete terms so as to specify a detailed *itinerary* (see below). Your strategic Options should therefore not be a laundry list of things worth doing: Options should define the critical choice that the client must make among alternative possible directions. To be maximally useful to the client, these options should be (a) plausible, (b) fundamentally different, indeed mutually exclusive – just as one cannot simultaneously pursue two different compass headings, and (c) collectively exhaustive – you shouldn't

leave the client wondering if you have overlooked another major option that's comparable but better than the ones you have identified. In practice, you should make sure that your list of options includes the ones likely to be under discussion within the client organization: by explicitly addressing these options, you will be helping your client reach a reasoned consensus.

Having articulated these Options, your next task is to justify your recommendation of one of the over the others with reasoning that could convince a skeptical client. This is the USC-CT step: "*C: Choose the solution(s) that has the potential to be the most effective.*" The key to convincing the client is to recognize that there are lots of points of view in the client organization (and in the class) on how to overcome their Root challenge and thereby resolve their Key issue: your job is to convince us that the strategy option you recommend is the most likely one to achieve success. The best way to do this is as follows:

\* First you need to identify a common set of **Criteria** against which to evaluate the options. A broad range of strategic and operational considerations are potentially relevant, but it is up to you to come up with a small set of key criteria. Use as few as possible to avoid getting lost in the weeds. And make sure they are as independent as possible, otherwise you are implicitly double-counting. You need to justify your choice of criteria: you can often do that by referring to the priorities implied by the organization's basic mission and business strategy. In identifying the criteria, it often helps to consider what it is about each Option that makes it attractive to its proponents. On the other hand, however, if your argument is going to be convincing, your criteria should be ones that proponents of all the options will agree to. So, for example, if you were trying to choose a restaurant for dinner with your friends, and the options were China Wok, Sushi Dan, or Hamburger Hamlet, a criterion of "great Chinese food" would be less useful than "great tasting food."

\* Then you should take each criterion one at a time, and show how your options compare on that criterion. Start by qualitatively each option's **pros and cons** on this criterion. The evidence you need to make this assessment is probably scattered in the case study—it's not "pre-digested" for you like it would be in a textbook. Then you should be able to **score** the options relative to each other for this criterion. Usually a scale of 1-4 suffices if you have three Options. (If you use a wider scale, such as 1-10 or 1-100, you risk (a) giving a false impression of the precision of your analysis, (b) encouraging unproductive debate over minor differences, and (c) implicitly giving one criterion more effective weight than others because it has a great variance of scores.) Keep in mind that you are not trying to conduct a real quantitative analysis: you are just using numbers to make your qualitative arguments more explicit. **Note:** if your options are all genuinely plausible, then you should not end up with scores for one option that are inferior to another option on *all* your criteria: that would imply that the first option is, in reality, not a serious option at all.

\* To add up these scores in a convincing way, you need a set of **weights** for these criteria that reflect their relative importance to the organization. You need to explain why these weights are the most appropriate. To preserve the qualitative nature of the reasoning in that analysis, use simple weights: 1-4 should suffice if you have three Options, and 1-5 should suffice for four Options. Again, you are trying to maintain the qualitative nature of the reasoning and avoid having to justify small differences that you can't defend (e.g. between a weight of 25% and 30%).

\* Multiplying scores by weights, you can create a **weighted score** for each Option and use these to rank-order the Options from best to worst. **Note:** putting numbers to these weights and scores is a great way to clarify your thinking; but the numbers will not convince your client: you need to explain in more intuitive, qualitative language the rationale for your conclusion, and the numbers are here only to help make more explicit your reasoning.

\* Finally, you should **test the sensitivity** of the resulting Option-ranking to plausible alternative estimates of the weights. (I recommend you focus on alternative *weights* rather than alternative *scores*, because in principle it should be easier to get consensus on the scores, and the real disagreements in the client team are more likely to be over the relative weights of different criteria.) Here is where the benefits of a formal, quantitative decision-analysis reveal themselves: it can show whether reasonable people using reasonable but different weights would reach different conclusions. If your solution is not “robust” against such disagreements, close scrutiny of the analysis will help you differentiate between the “real issues”—where disagreement would change the final conclusion—and the “non-issues”—where disagreement doesn’t matter to the final ranking. The best way to do this is to ask: what weights would proponents of the other Options (the ones you are *not* recommending) propose if they were making their best case? Then you can discuss the relative plausibility of these weights compared to your preferred weights. This analysis should be summarized on a slide—but I recommend you find a way of presenting your results qualitatively, i.e. without recourse to quantified data: here too, numbers rarely convince anyone, so you should use them only (a) to clarify your own thinking and (b) to buttress the credibility of your qualitative reasoning: leave the quantitative analysis itself in an Appendix slide.

Now, having described and justified the “compass heading” you are recommending, you can move to implementation planning, where you provide your client with a detailed “itinerary” that will enable them to implement your recommended strategy. This is the USC-CT step: “*T: Translate your solution(s) into an effective implementation plan.*” Depending on the case, you may not have enough data to develop this part of your presentation in much detail, but here is what this section would ideally address:

\* First, you should identify the likely **hurdles**—the factors within the control of the organization—that would face your client in pursuing your proposed strategy, and suggest some **counter-measures** your client could use overcome these hurdles.

\* Second, you should also identify the **risks**—the factors outside the client’s control—confronting your strategy, then show the **counter-measures** that could mitigate these risks, and if they can’t be mitigated, how the client should proceed if these risks do materialize.

\* Synthesizing this analysis of hurdles and risks and their respective counter-measures, you should propose a **sequenced and timed Implementation plan** that answers the questions: what are the key steps to be done today, next week, next month, next quarter, and next year, and who should be responsible for these activities. This plan will be far more useful if you support it with some reasoning—i.e. explain why you recommend this sequencing and timing rather than another.

\* Note that your Recommendation will be relative to a certain timeframe. Your implementation plan will focus naturally on what the client needs to do *within* that timeframe. But the Implementation section is also a section of your report where you might want to address longer-term issues, *beyond* that timeframe, that you believe the client will need to address.

\* Finally, to convince the client that your recommendation is practical, you should consider the overall “bottom-line”—the **costs** as well as the **benefits** of your plan of action. Reports often forget this elementary consideration! It’s a nice way to wrap up the presentation.

Note: you may not have enough information to ground all the details of your Implementation plan in the case data. In that eventuality, it is often helpful to work with some plausible assumptions and show us what the plan would look like. At a minimum, you will have provided the client with a template (“straw-man”) that they can build on.

Note too: your Implementation plan probably has many facets, and it is often useful if you devote a slide to one particularly high-leverage component. The goal here would be to pinpoint the main challenge facing implementation of your recommended Option, and then to propose a way of

addressing it. Obviously, you won't have time to argue in any detail for this analysis, let alone to discuss alternative ways of addresses it; but even without that, this slide can considerably augment your presentation's value. If the plan of action involves, for example, a new reporting structure for the organization, you might include a detailed organization chart for the new structure. Or perhaps effective implementation involves training: in that case, you might show us a course outline for the training module. Or perhaps it involves a leader explaining to this organization the rationale for a new strategy: you might include a video that you create with your team, where one of you acts the CEO articulating this message. In this way, you can make more concrete the implications of your plan, and show that you have anticipated some of the detailed action planning that it will require.

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Your goal is to deliver to your client as much "value" as possible—that is, deep insights that they will not have had themselves. So this project is about "peeling the onion"—going deeper into the underlying causes and thereby identifying action recommendations that are more likely to have more substantially positive effects.

To achieve this goal, your team's work will need to proceed in a highly iterative way. You will typically find that you need to revisit and revise your characterizations of the key issue and the root challenge when you get into the strategic options and implementation. Plan on working through several iterations of your presentation, since each time you work through it, chances are good you will uncover new ways to define the Critical Issue, different Options, other Criteria to consider, new Implementation hurdles.

As a result of the need for this iterative process, you will not be able to neatly divide up the work of preparing your report among your team members. Whereas in other classes you can often delegate specific parts of a project to specific team members, here team members will need to work collaboratively, in face-to-face discussion. You will be able to divide up the work of laying out the Powerpoint slides, but the content will need to be developed collaboratively. Organize yourselves and plan your work schedules accordingly.

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As concerns the **oral presentation** itself, here are some guidelines:

- \* I will hold your presentations to a **15 minute time-limit**. This may sound draconian, but it is not unlike many real-life situations where the time accorded you to make your case is typically very short. More importantly, this time limit forces you in your preparation to get to and keep the focus on the most critical issues.
- \* In analyzing the case, please rely **only** on data included in **the syllabus materials** (case, readings). This will put your team and the rest of the class on an equal footing. You may, however, use whatever conceptual or analytic tools you choose, wherever they come from. (Note however that if you want to introduce these other tools, you will need to explain and justify them to us, your client.)
- \* It is often interesting to see what actually happened after the case time-frame (e.g. what the company did and how it worked out): you will have up to **5 extra minutes** if you want to summarize the results of research you have done on that. But remember: the body of your presentation (the first 15 minutes) needs to be convincing to your client (the class) knowing only what we know in the case time-frame. What actually happened is unknown to them at that time. So do not include that "what happened" material in the main presentation – later in the class session, you can tell us about it.
- \* You should work to ensure that your presentation develops its arguments in a logical sequence. You will need to make each slide "count"—making a clear point that contributes to the line of argument leading to your recommendations.

- \* Your presentation materials (slides) should be clear—neither too wordy nor too sparse. Consult the standard references on how to lay out visually intelligible and pleasing presentation slides. Ideally, your slide titles should consist of assertions (not just describe the topic of the slide).
- \* Please also include **Notes** (using the Notes page option in PowerPoint): these should not be your entire voice-over script, but should explain in bullet point form whatever is necessary beyond the slide itself to make the meaning of the slide clear to a reader who was not at your presentation (or who was at the presentation but, reviewing the handout later, finds they have forgotten the point you were trying to make).
- \* You will probably find it useful to prepare some **Appendix** slides. These might explain some of the details of your analysis, or show your analysis of some issues that are interesting but not quite important enough to include in your 15-minute presentation itself. It is good to have these ready in case they are useful in responding to questions.
- \* At the start of class, you need to provide me with a **printout of your Slides, Notes pages, and any Appendices**. B&W printing is fine—no need for color.
- \* Please **number your slides**: this will greatly facilitate our discussion.
- \* These Guidelines are particularly effective for ‘facilitation’ consulting rather than “subject-matter expert” consulting. Your team should engage with the class in that role—as process facilitators, attempting to bring the client team (the class) to a consensus about how to move ahead. Your goal is to lay out a chain of reasoning that you think the client can buy into—not to “sell” them on your recommendation. In the Q&A session, you should try to surface the key issues that remain to be resolved rather than defending your recommendation.

## Grading Sheet for Case Notes and Consulting Reports

Each component is worth up to 4 points.

**Case:**

**Team:**

### Stakeholder analysis

- \* Have you identified the relevant stakeholders?*
- \* Have you identified their main concerns relative to the client's critical issue?*
- \* Have you identified their ability to influence the client's decision?*
- \* Have you drawn a usable conclusion from this analysis and explained how it informs the rest of your analysis and/or recommendations?*

Score:

### Root challenge analysis

- \* Have you clearly identified a critical issue facing the client?*
- \* Have you identified an actionable root challenge that underlies that issue?*
- \* Have you made a compelling case that this is indeed the root challenge?*

Score:

### Strategic response

- \* Have you specified the time horizon you are focusing on?*
- \* Have you identified a good set of alternative solutions ("compass headings") for the root challenge? Are they plausible, mutually exclusive, and collectively exhaustive? Have you made each of them clear enough to permit their evaluation?*
- \* Have you made explicit and justified the criteria you propose to use in evaluating these alternatives and the relative importance (weights) you assign to each?*
- \* Have you analyzed these alternatives' pros and cons using these criteria, and justified the evaluation (scores) of each alternative on each of the evaluation criteria?*
- \* Have you done a sensitivity test on this analysis to see if reasonable people would reach different results using plausibly different weights? Have you used this analysis to pinpoint where the key underlying disagreements might lie?*

Score:

### Implementation plan

- \* Have you identified the key risks in pursuing your strategy?*
- \* Have you proposed specific counter-measures to mitigate these risks?*
- \* Have you identified the internal and external hurdles facing your strategy?*
- \* Have you proposed specific counter-measures to overcome these hurdles?*
- \* Have you laid out a timed sequence of actions that integrates these counter-measures and maximizes the likelihood of success and have you explained why you recommend this sequence and timing?*
- \* Have you identified a particularly important implementation issue/solution and offered some insight into that aspect of your plan?*

*\* If there are important issues that need to be addressed either in the shorter-term or the longer-term, have you identified them and proposed resolutions?*

*\* Have you assessed the overall costs of implementing the plan and compared them to its benefits?*

Score:

### **Presentation**

For oral presentations of Consulting Reports:

*\* Does the argument flow in logical way?*

*\* Is the oral presentation engaging?*

*\* Are audio-visual materials used to good effect?*

*\* Are the Slides accompanied by Notes that adequately and succinctly explain any meaning that is not apparent on the Slide itself?*

*\* Were you prepared for questions with Appendices that you could use in follow-up comments?*

For written Case Notes:

*\* Is the expression clear?*

*\* Is there a clear line of argument?*

Score:

**OVERALL score:**

## Grading engagement

Class engagement has three components: pre-class preparation, in-class contribution to discussion, and post-class postings on Blackboard. They are weighted per the Grading scheme shown earlier. Here is how I will grade each component:

### Pre-class preparation: Case Notes

These Case Notes must be posted to Blackboard's Assignments page before the beginning of the class session. Each CN earns you up to 3 points, based on my assessment of quality and thoroughness. Late submissions will not be graded.

### In-Class Contribution

Each class session earns you up to 2 points under this heading. I will use the following "anchors" as a way of evaluating your contribution to our discussions. I will also give you an opportunity to evaluate yourself using the same criteria both mid-way and at the end of the semester:

**Excellent** (2 points): Contributions reflected exceptional preparation and an enthusiastic commitment to our learning experience. Had always read the assigned material and had thought about it carefully. Embraced the opportunity to learn in our time together, brought out the best in others, and was open to subsequent conversations. Brought up questions that need to be further explored. Added considerably to the quality of the course experience for others.

**Good** (1.5 points): Contributions reflected an adequate preparation for class and commitment to our learning experience. Comments helped the discussion move forward, but did not open new topics or pose difficult issues. Had read the material before class and given it some thought. Took advantage of the learning opportunities presented here. Added something to the quality of the course experience.

**Barely satisfactory** (1 point): Attended class and attempted to contribute occasionally, but contributions often reflected either weak preparation or an apathetic orientation to the learning opportunities presented here. Comments did not build on or relate to flow of class discussion. Had read the material, but without much effort to engage it. On balance, added nothing to the experience of the class.

### After-class postings to Blackboard: "Take-Aways"

Given that most of our case discussions will be on Tuesdays, TAs must be posted by 6am Thursday of that same week. Each TA earns you up to 2 points, based on my assessment of quality and thoroughness. Late submissions will not be graded. My grading criteria are:

**Coverage:** The best TAs synthesize the key ideas that emerged during the discussion and from the readings. Weaker TAs focus on just a subset of those ideas.

**Insight:** Weak TAs list the topics we addressed. Good TAs pinpoint the lessons learned about those topics. The best TAs also suggest new questions that are raised by these lessons.

**Connections:** The best TAs link the lessons of this discussion to others earlier in the course. Weaker TAs don't make such connections.

**Point of View:** The best TAs reveal how the discussion has enriched your own thinking. Weaker TAs lack that personal engagement, or simply reiterate a pre-formed personal opinion.

## Case Notes Template

Please fill in this template with your (succinct, point-form) responses and *post* it (do not *paste* it) as a *Word* document on the Assignments page of BB before the start of class.

<b>My name:</b>
<b>The case:</b>
<b>1. Who is your client?</b>
<b>2. Of the various issues facing the client, which is the critical issue you will address?</b>
<b>3. Relative to this key issue, who are the main stakeholders your client must consider? What concerns do they have relative to the critical issue? How much influence can they exert in shaping to the client's decision?</b>
<b>4. What overall conclusion do you draw from this stakeholder analysis and how does this conclusion contribute to your argument?</b>
<b>5. What is the root challenge the client must overcome in order to resolve this critical issue? Justify this diagnosis, succinctly.</b>
<b>6. What plausible, mutually exclusive, strategic options should the client consider for overcoming this root challenge? Describe them succinctly.</b>
<b>7. Which of these options do you recommend, and why is it superior to each of the others?</b>
<b>8. What implementation issues should your client anticipate? How should they address them?</b>

## Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form

This form is to be completed after each of your three Consulting Reports. Each time, they should be emailed to your team-mates and submitted via BB Assignments to me.

The first and second of these evaluations will alert your team-mates and me of any possible issues. The second and third will help me decide if there is any need to adjust individual grades up or down from the team grade.

Please use the following scale to grade your team-members **and yourself**:

- F: Seriously deficient
- C: Weak
- B. Good
- A. Excellent

		(self)	Team-member #2	Team-member #3	Team-member #4
	Name:				
<b>Overall</b> , I like the way you...	Comment:				
<b>Overall</b> , I wish you...	Comment:				
<b>Preparation</b> : had completed the necessary assignments on time, had read the related material, was ready to contribute to the team	Grade:				
	Comment:				
<b>Input</b> : provided valuable input of ideas towards the team's work.	Grade:				
	Comment:				
<b>Diligence</b> : took on the roles necessary to complete the team's work, was timely in completing and distributing work, and created high quality material.	Grade:				
	Comment:				
<b>Facilitation</b> : helped the team maintain a positive climate and work together effectively.	Grade:				
	Comment:				