



# SYLLABUS

**Instructor** Dr. Carl Blencke

Email: [cblencke@bus.ucf.edu](mailto:cblencke@bus.ucf.edu)

- Direct E-mail is preferred contact method – ***do NOT post in the Webcourses drop box***
- Always identify yourself with the class title in the subject line and include your full name.
- Course Website: [www.sbdcorlando.com/sbiclass](http://www.sbdcorlando.com/sbiclass)

## **CASE SUPERVISORS**

FSBDC at the University of Central Florida  
3201 E. Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32803-5140

**Sharon Smith**

[sharon.smith2@ucf.edu](mailto:sharon.smith2@ucf.edu)

407.497.5933

**Steve South**

[steve.south@ucf.edu](mailto:steve.south@ucf.edu)

407.420.4859

## **PROGRAM COORDINATOR/CASE SUPERVISOR**

**Jessica Ali**

[Jessica.Ali@ucf.edu](mailto:Jessica.Ali@ucf.edu)

407.420.4868

## CLASS MEETING DATES

6:00 PM to 8:50 PM

In-Person Meetings: BA1: Room 212

**ENT 5946.0001**

Class Schedule	Date	Class Outline
First Class Meeting <b>IN PERSON</b>	05/13	Welcome and Introductions Review of Syllabus Introduction to Consulting– Lessons Learned/Best Practices Introductions and Finalization of Teams and Client Assignments Meet with Case Supervisor
2 <sup>ND</sup> Class Meeting <b>VIRTUAL</b>	05/20	How to Do Market Research SBI National Program Report Requirements Overview of Final Report/Sample Projects “Marketing 101” Case Studies Meet with Case Supervisor
Third Class Meeting <b>VIRTUAL</b>	06/24	Mid-Term Presentation of Client Activity and Update with Projected Recommendations Final Presentation and Report Review
Final Class <b>IN PERSON</b>	07/29	Final Presentation of Recommendations and Implementation of Solutions along with Submission of Final Report and Peer Evaluations

Other Important Dates	Date	Assignments Due
Letter of Engagement	05/20	Letter of Engagement should detail scope of the project and <b>signed by the client, each team member, and Dr. Blencke</b>
Action Plan Submitted	05/28	Submit for review and evaluation.
Cover Page and Table of Contents	06/03	Outline of the team’s final report.
SWOTT Analysis Section	06/10	Discuss the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, and Trends facing the business. Include chart and narrative description.
Market Research/Industry Analysis	07/01	Draft outlining client’s industry and relevant research being conducted by the team.

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. To document that you began this course, please complete the academic activity assignment in Webcourses by the end of the first week of classes. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

- *This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of any announced changes and to note those changes in the syllabus.*

## Text and Related Materials:

***The Experiential Student Team Consulting Process: A Problem-based Model for Consulting and Service-Learning.* Cook, Belliveau & Campbell Fourth Edition. Centage Learning, 2012.**

**Small Business Institute® Student Consultant's Manual:** This is a supplementary text which provides additional guidance that is essential to your performance as student consultants. In addition to the material referenced in this syllabus, there are sections devoted to team and client relationships, preparing for the initial client meeting, points for successful consulting, avoiding consulting pitfalls, tips for polishing the written report, and conducting the exit interview. Each of these sections are designed to help you successfully perform as consultants and to earn an outstanding grade in the course. **The Manual is provided on the Course Website at no cost to the student.**

## Prerequisites:

Prerequisites for this course are: 1) Graduate status in the College of Business Administration; 2) Undergraduate students of any major in the College of Business who are graduating seniors with a minimum 3.0 GPA, with permission from the Professor and the student's department chairperson; and graduate status in other UCF colleges with permission of the Professor.

## Course Description:

You will learn the practical knowledge, skills, and abilities of a consultant in this course. Working in a small team, you will first choose from among a select list of small businesses, and then complete a semester-long project to benefit your client. You will receive intensive coaching and guidance on consulting techniques from the professor and a case supervisor to provide you with an intensive on-the-job training experience. The conditions are established, through a long-standing relationship with the FSBDC at the University of Central Florida, to introduce you to an experiential learning practicum that will encourage you to comprehend disciplines that are outside of your normal "comfort zone" while fine-tuning your inherent skills and abilities. At the completion of the course, you will have gained the experience necessary to become an internal or external consultant.

UCF is one of about 250 universities and colleges across the United States that participates in this program. While one of many, the UCF Small Business Institute is unique because it offers an unusually broad range of services. It provides small businesses with custom tailored management assistance to insure the survival of their organizations. More than 500 Orlando area businesses have participated in the program since its inception in 1972. Participating students benefit from the program because they have an opportunity to actually apply academic knowledge to real business situations and to build confidence in the usefulness of their classroom experiences.

This course in small business consulting emphasizes four essential topics:

- 1) Applying your people skills as a team member and consultant;
- 2) Examining business issues from the viewpoint of several disciplines;
- 3) Engaging in real-world problem solving; and

- 4) Using analysis and creativity for business planning and problem solving.

**Bottom line:** The major course requirements are:

- 1) Securing a **signed Letter of Engagement** that specifies your team's obligation to the client;
- 2) A thorough **Action Plan** that details the scope of the project, who will do what, and when to complete the project;
- 3) Diligent **weekly progress report** updates regarding your team's progress;
- 4) A **midterm presentation** explaining the scope of the project, initial findings, and developing recommendations.
- 5) A minimum of **six (in person or virtual meetings)** with your client.
- 6) A twenty-minute PowerPoint **final presentation** to the small business owner, which summarizes the written report. **This will also be presented during the last day of class** which summarizes what you did for the small business;
- 7) A **detailed final report** that provides a thorough analysis of your findings and recommendations to your client. This report may be submitted to the National Project of the Year (Graduate Division) for SBI;
- 8) **Individual peer evaluations**. These requirements are further discussed below.

**ACTION PLAN AND LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT:**

Each team is required to prepare an ACTION PLAN based on how you will accomplish the objectives listed in the Letter of Engagement. The end of the semester weekly report should provide a comparison of what you actually accomplished during the semester versus the initial action plan. **All templates are available on the class website.**

**THE FINAL REPORT**

**The final report must include:**

- Title page with Team Members in Alphabetical Order.
- Executive Summary, no more than three pages long, that outlines the problem(s) and/or opportunities identified, methodologies used, conclusions reached, and recommendations made. **The Executive Summary must be addressed to the business owner, not the instructor.**
- Table of contents.
- A section discussing the industry in which the small business operates.
- A section explaining the problems and opportunities of the business (SWOTT analysis summary).
- A section describing the analyses conducted and the conclusions reached.
- A section describing the solutions recommended and implemented.
- A section describing the solutions recommended but not yet implemented.
- A summary statement, which should refer to the letter of engagement (LOE), i.e., related to your written commitment to the small business owner.
- Appendices:
  - a. Business or marketing plan, if applicable.
  - b. Signed copy of the letter of engagement (**Course Website**).
  - c. Confidentiality Agreement (Signed During First Class)
  - d. Thank You Letter (**Course Website**).

- e. Client acknowledgement/acceptance of report. (**Course Website**).
- f. Copies of the weekly progress reports
- g. Action Plan (**Course Website**).

**\*\*IMPORTANT: The Written Report also must use APA formatting and referencing style.**

Please see the following two sites: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/search.php>. In addition, written paper submissions guidelines include:

- \*100 pages limit all inclusive. (each page, including title, appendices, etc. count toward the 100 page limit)
- \*12 pt. font for report text
- \*1-inch margins
- \*Double-spaced report text
- \*Each page shall be numbered consecutively.

The report will be graded based on the factors provided on the attached evaluation form found on the class website. Please be sure to follow its guidance for a higher grade. **For example, the report should be written in third person (e.g., he, she, it, they, their).** **A hard copy of the written report should be provided to the client. A digital copy also must be submitted to the Program Coordinator, Instructor, and Case Supervisor.**

#### FINAL PRESENTATION TO CLIENT

- 1) Think of yourselves as “facilitators.” You present your information and then facilitate the discussion which follows, which can include how to best integrate implement your recommended actions into their current routine.
- 2) Remember that it is a common human reaction to resist change. Try not to have any surprises! Remember you are consultants and as such you should be consulting with your client throughout the semester.
- 3) The best way to have them accept your recommended changes is to have them participate in the changes. Ideally, at the end of the presentation and following discussion, the clients will feel as though they have ownership of the changes.
- 4) If the primary client cannot attend the entire presentation and discussion, be sure to have him/her at the beginning and end of the meeting to provide you legitimacy. Otherwise, reschedule the meeting.
- 5) Be sure to have an agenda for the meeting, with a handout for all attendees, which includes a listing of your recommendations.
- 6) Have written goals and objectives for the meeting. For example, your goals might be to explain each recommendation. Your objectives for each goal could be your suggestions on how you believe the recommendation might be implemented.
- 7) **Be prepared to discuss, not insist.** Try to use words such as “We suggest..., Based on what we learned...” “it appears to us...” Be positive, but not obdurate.

#### MIDTERM AND FINAL CLASS PRESENTATIONS

**There will be two team presentations (each approximately 20 minutes in length).**

The first will take place at the midterm and will be used to solicit feedback from the class, case supervisors and faculty as to how you may fulfill your requirements for the client and the course.

- At this time, share the research your team has been focused on up to this point. Share with the class your initial findings and how you plan to use what you have discovered to begin developing recommendations.

The final presentation will take place on the last day of class. It will be a condensed overview of what you presented to the client, which will include the recommendations made by your team and the reactions of your client.

- Now that you have had your final meeting with your client and presented your findings, how did your client respond? Have they implemented, or plan to implement, the recommendations your team provided?

## WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORTS

The weekly progress report, to be sent electronically to your **Instructor, Case Supervisor, and Program Coordinator, is an essential element to your success during the semester. Please include the company's name in the weekly progress reports.** It also must clearly discuss what has occurred during the week, preferably by each student's accomplishment for that week. Several sentences or more may be necessary to depict the situation and what you are accomplishing.

**Too much information is better than too little!** It also ensures that both your Instructor and Case Supervisor are able to monitor your efforts, share your week-to-week endeavors and provide your team with the necessary support and guidance whenever deemed appropriate or requested. If your report lacks details, your Case Supervisor cannot provide you with the guidance necessary to help you help your client, and your grade will suffer.

## GRADING

Another important factor in grade determination is the regularity and faithfulness the students display in visiting the client and in reporting steady progress from week to week. The student team will report progress on a weekly basis via email. A report of "no progress this week" is unacceptable. Some progress, if only of a research nature, should be achieved.

Punctuality and reliability are other variables which determines student grades. Submitting the required report on time and with sufficient information so the reader will understand what is occurring is an indication of diligence on the part of the student team. The following issues are considered during grading:

- (1) As stated above, were weekly reports on time?
- (2) Was there rapport with the client?
- (3) Did the client trust the counseling team and listen to recommendations of the team?
- (4) Did counselors present a final report so that the client had the opportunity and desire to discuss the merits or recommendations and ask questions of the consultants?
- (5) What degree of competence and professionalism was exhibited in the report? **Please review the Written Report Evaluation guidelines on the Course Website.**
- (6) Were recommendations made by the counselors actually implemented? (I.e. were the recommendations useful? Was there effort and initiative shown by students? How much tangible help did the client receive?)
- (7) Did the recommendations implemented prove valuable as reflected in comparative financial statements or other criteria?

(8) Were the reports, both oral and written, professional in content and presentation?

**GRADING CRITERIA**

<b>*Deliverables</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
<i>Letter of Engagement to Client</i>	75 (10 points per day late penalty)
<i>Action Plan to be Submitted to Case Supervisor</i>	75 (10 points per day late penalty)
<i>Mid-Term Presentation of Client Activity and Update with Initial Recommendations</i>	100
<i>Final Presentation of Recommendations and Implementation Steps</i>	100
<i>First Submission of Final Report Table of Contents</i>	50
<i>First Submission of SWOTT Analysis</i>	100
<i>First Submission of Market Research/Industry Analysis</i>	100
<i>Final Compilation and Review of Project Report (Electronic and Hard Copy)</i>	200
<i>Confidential Peer Evaluation by Team</i>	100
<i>Evaluation by Case Supervisor</i>	100
<i>Attendance Penalty</i>	20 points per each class missed.
<i>Late Report Penalty (applies to ALL team members)</i>	10 points per occurrence for late weekly reports.

**PLUS/MINUS GRADE CALCULATION**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Required Points</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>930+</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>900+</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>870+</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>830+</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>800+</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>770+</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>730+</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>700+</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>670+</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>630+</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>600+</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>Less than 600</b>

**PEER EVALUATION**

A copy of the peer evaluation form can be found in the **Course Website**. The peer evaluations will be used while determining final grades. Peer Evaluations are due on the last day of class. Each student is responsible for completing a peer evaluation, which will be submitted individually to the Instructor. Your Peer Evaluation scores will determine the percentage of the team's project points that will be awarded to you. Half of the 100 points for this grading component will be determined by the Case Supervisor's

evaluation and the other half by your team members. Typically, your grade will be lower or higher than the team grade, based on how your peers rate your contribution.

You are encouraged to complete a mid-term peer evaluation that you share with your teammates, but do not turn in for review. It is important to provide constructive feedback to each other. Experience has shown that this action improves student performance, increases team productivity, decreases team conflict, and improves the chance of positive scores on peer evaluations.

### **Class Policies and Expectations:**

1. If a submitted assignment does not meet requirements, it will be graded accordingly. If you have any questions regarding an assignment prior to its due date, contact Dr. Blencke (**preferably by e-mail**) or visit during office hours.
2. Submissions that are greater than one page must be stapled in the top left corner or spiral bound as is the requirement for some submissions. Folded pages and “dog ears” will not be accepted.
3. Submissions should list the **FULL NAME** of the student as it appears on the roster. Write legibly and please do not submit under a “nickname”.
4. All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. If either you or the assignment are not present when the assignment is collected at the beginning of class, the assignment is considered late and will not be accepted. The only possible exception to this would be if a student e-mails me with a request for an extension prior to the assignment being late. If the request is granted, the student must submit a copy of the reply email granting the exception attached to the top of the assignment.
5. **ALL GRADES** are non-negotiable.

**Attendance is not equal to class participation.** Attendance/Absences – Since there is a high correlation between regular attendance and high grades it is recommended that you attend all classes. As you will find in the workplace, attendance policies are a foundation of good business practices. Having to work is not authorized as an excused absence. **For each absence you will lose 20 points of your accumulated point total.** Your attendance is tracked and will be reported to you regularly.

- Excused absences will be granted only under the following conditions:
  - \* An absence is deemed to be “excused” e.g. major sustained illness or serious health condition such as an illness, an injury, an impairment, or a physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing medical treatment directly under a Doctor’s supervision for at least three consecutive days; death of an immediate family member, or required travel with an authorized UCF organization with **sufficient documentation** provided.

Immediate family refers to a person's parents, spouse, children, and siblings and will also include the parent's spouse. ... It defines immediate family as follows: An immediate family member is defined as a parent; sibling; child by blood, adoption, or marriage; spouse; grandparent or grandchild.

[Immediate Family Law and Legal Definition | US Legal, Inc.](#)

### **Academic Integrity**

Students should familiarize themselves with [UCF’s Rules of Conduct](#). According to Section 1, “Academic Misconduct,” students are prohibited from engaging in

1. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.



2. Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
3. Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
4. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.
5. Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
6. Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
7. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.
8. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements.

### **Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating**

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, [\*The Golden Rule\*](#). UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc. Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

### **Protocols**

Participation – includes your active participation in class activities and exercises. You can demonstrate these skills in many ways, i.e. demonstrating a high level of professionalism and making valued contributions to discussions. Regular attendance and constructive contributions to class discussions are a requirement of the course. Conversely, students who are late, leave before the end of class, act unprofessionally, are disruptive, or are unprepared for class will be subject to a loss of up to 20% of their total points (two letter grades) at the instructor's discretion.

Professionalism – You are expected to act in a professional manner in all of your interactions related to this course; both with your fellow students and myself. Professional behavior, in terms of what is considered correct, is critical as you will soon realize upon entering the business world. In the event of a

disagreement or misunderstanding, students must carefully follow conflict management processes with the intent of clarifying issues instead of exhibiting anger and impatience.

Expectations For All Written Assignments – Your communication skills, both oral and written will most likely contribute greatly to your success in the business world. Unfortunately, I often find these skills to be somewhat deficient in terms of my expectations for upper-level college students.

To assist you in achieving error-free written assignments I have included some important information about The University Writing Center (UWC) which is a free resource for all UCF students. As a Doctoral student, I have relied upon the skills of the UWC and worked with the UWC for my 150 page, 35,000+ word dissertation. The UWC's most popular service is the individualized writing consultation. A qualified writing consultant will usually spend time with each student and discuss recommendations for revision. If students are drafting a paper together as a group project, it is best to schedule two group appointments back to back. All students can bring their work to the UWC at any point in the process—even if they have not started writing yet. Consultations will be most helpful if students take the time to:

- prepare: identify specific issues on which they want feedback, participate: actively discuss their paper with the consultant,
- reflect: decide which of the possibilities raised during the consultation are most helpful,
- act: revise their papers.

### **How the UWC can Help**

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to UCF students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Trained peer consultants provide help at every stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, researching, drafting, revising, incorporating sources, and learning to proofread and edit.

University Writing Center

Colbourn 105

Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library & Online

407-823-2197 <http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu/>

### **Course Accessibility**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need access to course content due to course design limitations should contact the professor as soon as possible.

Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <<http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/>> (Ferrell Commons 185, [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu), phone 407-823-2371). For students connected with SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SAS, faculty and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

### **Campus Safety Statement**

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <https://centralflorida-prod.modolabs.net/student/safety/index>.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <https://ehs.ucf.edu/automated-external-defibrillator-aed-locations>.
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to [www.getrave.com/login/ucf](http://www.getrave.com/login/ucf) and logging in. On the "My Account" tab, fill out the information, including e-mail address and cell phone number.
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>).

### **Title IX Policy**

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu> and <http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/>.

### **Religious Observances**

Students must notify the instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the [UCF policy](#).

### **Make-Up Assignments for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities**

Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied.

### **Deployed Active Duty Military Students**

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

### **COVID-19 Policies**

I recognize and understand the difficult times we are all in. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts us all in many ways, including physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, academically, and professionally. I will work with you on challenges you may be encountering and to provide support to help you succeed. However, please keep in mind that I will hold you accountable, especially in terms of class attendance, participation, and contributions.

**Notifications in Cases of Changes to Course Modality**

If the instructor falls ill during the semester, there may be temporary changes to this course, including having a backup instructor take over the course or going remote for a short time. Please look for announcements or mail in [Webcourses@UCF](mailto:Webcourses@UCF) or Knights email for any temporary alterations to this course.