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Reinventing the Wheel of Teaching Business? Learning in the Academic Classroom - The Case of the Business Consulting Course

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REINVENTING THE WHEEL OF TEACHING BUSINESS?
LEARNING IN THE ACADEMIC CLASSROOM - THE CASE
OF THE BUSINESS CONSULTING COURSE

by

FRANCESCO R. FROVA

A master’s thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal
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2017
Reinventing the Wheel of Teaching Business?

Learning in the Academic Classroom - The Case of the Business Consulting Course

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Francesco R. Frova

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT
Reinventing the Wheel of Teaching Business?
Learning in the Academic Classroom - The Case of the Business Consulting Course
by
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The purpose of this study is to use the case of the Business Consulting course to demonstrate and enhance the significance of the application of effective and experiential learning in the academic classroom.

Three Learning Theories are considered: Classical, Social, and Experiential Learning. Principles of effective learning and learning goals are described, and are looked at through the description of a Business Strategy and Business Consulting courses run in a US North-Eastern public university. The Business Consulting course is then compared with a standard lecture course and a course that uses case studies to demonstrate how the learning goals can be best achieved and validated in the context of the experiential learning involved in this course. Similar course’s design could be formulated and used as a template for the formation of effective educational experiences in other disciplines of business education. Advantages and limitations are offered.
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1. Introduction:

The learning and teaching world changes, like the world itself. Today’s business world changes at a faster pace, and theoretical knowledge about business becomes obsolete at a faster rate (Friedman, 2006). That is why it is important to prepare business students to adapt to unexpected situations and to change within an environment that is reshaping itself faster than before.

The purpose of this work is to analyze three different styles of teaching business strategy: namely, the lecture style; the business case model; and the real life real time consulting class, i.e. experience-based teaching. The work aims to employ the experiential learning theory to demonstrate that experience-based teaching of the consulting class leads to more effective learning.

This thesis looks at different measures of learning performance, developed in different institutions, to be used to assess whether students have learnt and developed certain kinds of skills. Subsequently, three different types of courses on business and strategy are introduced, namely, a standard lecture, the case study, and a business consulting one. The most significant components of curricula of the three are then analyzed. Afterwards, three main learning theories, namely, Classical Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Experiential Learning are employed and described in details as the intervening variables. Moderating variables are then referred to in a brief manner, since they are not the focus of this work, being this thesis centered on teaching methods, and not on individuals. Next, a model is proposed, describing how the independent and intervening variables...
concur to influence dependent variables – i.e. the learning performance. A method section is then outlined, describing how the data was collected, followed by the results. Finally, a discussion and conclusions are drawn based on the analysis, with recommendations for practitioners and scholars.
2. Dependent Variables: the performance measures.

Performance for a student or a learner is the actual learning that the student achieves. Of course, there are different ways and perspectives on how to measure or conceptualize learning.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science, a large scientific society, looks at six tenets for the conceptualization of learning and its evaluation (Rutherford & Ahlgren, 1991), and namely: (i) learning is not necessarily an outcome of teaching, (ii) what students learn is influenced by their existing ideas, (iii) progression in learning is usually from the concrete to the abstract, (iv) people learn to do well only what they practice doing, (v) effective learning by students requires feedback, and (vi) expectations affect performance.

1. Learning Is Not Necessarily an Outcome of Teaching. Because students may not understand the teaching(s) correctly, it is advisable to carefully select which skills and concepts to focus on – prioritizing quality of understanding over quantity of information.

2. What Students Learn Is Influenced by Their Existing Ideas.

Learners have to link new information to their prior knowledge – and the more these two are connected, the better the new teachings will be remembered. It is also helpful when a concept is learnt through different contexts and methods. At times, however, conflict with existing ideas arises – and students must be ready to challenge and change their own assumptions; they must be encouraged to do so, helping them realize if and how the new information allows a better understanding of reality.
3. **Progression in Learning Is Usually From the Concrete to the Abstract.** Unskilled learners need concrete examples and things, slowly acquiring the capability to abstract and generalize by means of experience. Problems in grasping abstract concepts may pass undetected due to learners’ capabilities to repeat technical terms, misleading the teacher to overestimate the actual learning.

4. **People Learn to Do Well Only What They Practice Doing.** For learners to apply ideas under new scenarios, they have to practice to apply in new scenarios, too, not just applying the teachings within predictable contexts or exercises. The exercise of skills that the learners are to acquire must be encouraged and permitted, constantly and across tasks.

5. **Effective Learning by Students Requires Feedback.** For effective learning to happen repetition must be accompanied by new opportunities to express ideas, with feedback by peers and teachers, with analysis of results, and time for students to reflect and internalize the feedback.

6. **Expectations Affect Performance.** The learners’ inner expectation for results and understanding will influence the learning. Therefore, teachers must, on one hand, give tasks that are challenging but attainable, and on the other hand, sustain learners’ self-confidence in their capability to learn. Furthermore, students understand the expectations of success or failure that others have - especially instructors. Therefore, instructors’ preconceived judgment may lead to a disheartening spiral, a vicious circle of decreasing confidence and performance; or, vice-versa, a virtuous cycle.

A seminal study by the Eberly Center at the Carnegie Mellon University (2014) has summarized the literature about learning at the individual level, and come up with seven
principles of Effective Education and Learning, namely: (i) Students’ prior knowledge, (ii) Students’ organization of knowledge, (iii) Students’ motivation, (iv) Students’ ability to practice the integration of their various skills and to apply them, (v) Students’ goal-directed practice coupled with targeted feedback, (vi) Students’ level of development that interacts with the social, emotional, and intellectual climate of the course, and (vii) Students ability to monitor and adjust their approaches to learning.

1. **Students’ prior knowledge.** Every learner has a baggage of information and behaviors, which influences the new learning and its interpretation. A solid, accurate, and appropriately-used baggage will provide a firm base for learning.

2. **Students’ organization of knowledge.** Learners create connections between different information they absorb. If these connections are built into ordinated, meaningful structures, learners will be capable of using the knowledge in an effective and efficient manner.

3. **Students’ motivation.** Learners’ focus, tenacity, and determination will shape their learning behaviors. Students are more likely to be motivated when they have a perception of value in the learning activities, of support from the setting, and that they will achieve their learning goals.

4. **Students’ ability to practice the integration of their various skills and to apply them.** For learners to know the appropriate application of the acquired knowledge and skills, so as to use them in a fluent fashion, they have to practice both combining and integrating skills.

5. **Students’ goal-directed practice coupled with targeted feedback.** Learners’ practice of notions to be learnt has to be directed towards specific goals, with an appropriate level of
difficulty, frequency and amount, so as to achieve the desired performance. All of the above must be accompanied by feedback, explaining some of the relationships between students performance and learning objectives; to be effective, this feedback dynamic must be provided in a timely and frequent manner.

6. Students’ level of development that interacts with the social, emotional, and intellectual climate of the course. The learning environment influences the learning itself, therefore we can and shall shape the social, intellectual, and emotional interactions of the classroom or other learning environment so as to favor learners’ development.

7. Students ability to monitor and adjust their approaches to learning. Learners’ capability to consciously reflect about the learning process in a metacognitive way so as to control their learning: by evaluating the learning objectives, own capabilities, deciding on a plan that incorporates different strategies, while being aware of the effectiveness of their approach.

The Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College has established seven learning goals for BBA, which can be used to measure learning performance, similarly to the principles established by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, or the principles by the Eberly Center at the Carnegie Mellon University.

According to the School Program officially-stated learning goals, there is a set of goals that should be achieved by means of courses, namely: analytical skills; technological skills; written communication skills; oral communication skills; civic awareness and ethical decision-making; global awareness; and business knowledge/integrative abilities
(Zicklin Learning Goals, 2016). Here are the definitions of these goals (Zicklin Learning Goals, 2016):

1. *Analytical Skills.* They refer to the analytical and critical thinking skills to evaluate issues faced in business and professional careers.

2. *Technological Skills.* They refer to the technological skills needed to analyze problems, develop solutions and convey information.

3. *Oral Communication Skills.* They refer to the oral communication skills necessary to convey ideas and information effectively and persuasively.

4. *Written Communication Skills.* They refer to the written communication skills necessary to convey ideas and information effectively and persuasively.

5. *Civic Awareness and Ethical Decision-Making.* They refer to the knowledge base and analytical skill to guide learners when faced with ethical dilemmas in business, i.e. an awareness of political, civic and public policy issues affecting business.

6. *Global Awareness.* They refer to knowing how differences in perspectives and cultures affect business practices around the world.

7. *Business knowledge and integrative abilities.* They refer to the working knowledge of all functional areas in business and their application in a holistic, analytical, and integrative manner to effectively understand and recommend solutions to business problems.

Next, we continue with the description of three different types of courses on business and strategy.
3. Independent Variables: the teaching methods.

Classic teaching at MBA level: the lecture style.

A classical business strategy course taught in lectures uses the traditional approach. An instructor covers the course content during the lecture, with little interaction with the students, which is usually limited to questions and answers either at the beginning or end of the lesson, with fewer questions during the lecture itself. Even when case studies are used, the teacher is the one presenting the solutions to the class, explaining the desired reasoning and analysis technique for the case at hand.

Certainly, this method has somewhat evolved over time, taking into account the technologies and methods available for teaching: for example, PowerPoint slides can be beneficial for student learning, and are today often used to integrate content absorption and retention by students (Bartsch & Cobern, 2003). Team teaching or guest lecturing, which can reduce lecture fatigue and increase students’ interest, are also employed (Quinn & Kanter, 1984). There is obviously learning resulting from standard lecture method, and students do acknowledge that, reporting of being stimulated to independent thinking and problem solving (Covill, 2011).

Lecture classes’ learning is evaluated through exams – midterms and/or finals, with students being tested on theory and its application, mainly by means of written exams.
Contemporary teaching at the MBA level: the case study approach.

Business Strategy, or Business Policy, studies executive management roles, their decision-making and responsibilities, as well as the issues that impact the success of a company as a whole. Business Policy revolves around the choice of a goal and an identity that the organization has to embrace, with constant reassessment of results and needed actions, so as to achieving in goals in spite of adversity or competition.

The contemporary Business Strategy course looks at the company primarily from the top management perspective, looking into how the organization mutually interacts with its strategy and the environment, in fluid, ever-changing and complex scenario.

Top managers, by means of strategic decisions involving the various functional areas, shapes these interactions, the organizations capabilities, and in which competitive environments it is situated and which place it occupies there. Fluency in this top-management perspective, as opposed to one centered on one functional area only, is the objective of the contemporary Business Strategy course.

For this fluency to happen, the class breaks into teams that compete in an interactive business simulation, changing the strategy of their companies inside a virtual competitive environment. Furthermore, case studies and situations of real companies are analyzed and discussed in class; for such effort to be effective, students are required to come to class well prepared, even though there is no single best answer; then, during class discussion the teacher acts as moderator and instructor, to clarify the insights of a decision-making process for effective strategy. When students participate meaningfully, they improve their
individual and classmates’ understanding alike; therefore, the analytical process of strategic management becomes even more important than the course content itself.

**Components of the course:**

The conventional Business Strategy Course unfolds over the span of a semester. Classes are usually scheduled twice a week with sessions of 1.5 hours each, for a total of 28 sessions. From the beginning, students are required to read the methodology of analyzing strategic management cases. The teaching and learning happens through a mix of tools: book chapters and journal articles to read, explanation by the instructor, discussion in class, and working in teams on business simulations and case analysis. Students form teams, groups, with other students at the beginning of the semester. The grade is comprised of individual and team components. Individual components are based on contribution during class, on two examinations regarding the theory, individual performance during group oral presentations, and peer appraisal. The group component of the grade is uniform for all members of a group, and is comprised of the case analysis written report and oral presentation, and on the performance in a computer-mediated business simulation and follow-up presentation.

**Application of learned concepts: the business simulation and the case studies.**

The computer-aided business simulation (CABS) is an online, PC-based exercise where the student groups run a digital camera company in head-to-head competition against companies in the same industry, run by other class members. Teams make decisions, choosing from a number of options, regarding the products, the operations and workforce
management, pricing and marketing, corporate social responsibility, and financing. Since the CABS is a computerized environment, teams are competing with one another, and their actions mutually influence themselves. Monitoring the environment and rival companies’ actions is what allows a company to grow its market share, maintain high profitability margins, good image and credit ratings, and has its shares price increase.

The case studies are for the students to select among a pool of 8 different studies, given at the beginning of the semester. They illustrate a few different industries and companies, typically in sectors such as fast food restaurants, television entertainment production, diversified manufacturer pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods, grocery shopping, online shopping, air carriers, toys manufacturing, and healthcare services. Students are provided with companies’ background and mission, income statements and balance sheets, details about geographical locations, streams of revenues, and operating data, and information about the competitive environment and customer preferences. Furthermore, students are trained to use library data bases to research additional detailed information regarding companies and industries.

Students are expected to identify the strategic issues and problems in the case, use whichever tools and techniques of analysis are called for, and develop an appropriate action plan and set of recommendations. In particular, the case analysis should address identification and description of alternatives, rationale for selection of best alternative, description of implementation plan, and clear, detailed definition of costs and benefits.
Each team is expected to address the strategic management issues described above in a written paper, in formal style, as if they were presenting the case before the management team in a firm, to gain approval of the plan.

In terms of style, students are instructed to pay careful attention to the flow and clarity of the presentation, to practice and time the presentation before presenting it; also, groups are encouraged to make creative use of presentation time, with PowerPoint slides and elicitation of audience participation to generate and sustain interest in your topic.

**Experiential learning and teaching at the MBA level: the business consulting course.**

With the foregoing as a point of reference, a description of the course, its objectives and dynamics support the underlying theses of the Eberly Center analysis and Kolb’s six characteristics of experiential learning. Moreover, this thesis will demonstrate that the Consulting Course satisfies students' desire for experiential learning, and at the same time, provides important life lessons that universities can only offer from the pedantic perspective on such subjects as ethics, social responsibility, relationship building and integrity. As explained by Banai and Tulimieri (2012), the fundamental rationale for a Consulting Course is simply to provide students with a real world experience during their tenure in the academic environment. The course exposes students to the rigor, the frustrations, the rewards and challenges that virtually everyone currently employed experiences on a daily basis, and from which academia shelters students until the day after graduation. On a practical level, a consulting course brings together all the previous course work, seminars and academic exercises of the past semesters into play. Analytic
methods, logic systems, team exercises and presentation skills, heretofore confined to a classroom, must now be utilized to uncover and to resolve real world issues confronting real clients. The stakes are not only a grade for the students, but also mean the difference between profit and loss, and even success or failure of a Client’s business.

The Consulting Course is something of a misnomer in that it creates a false impression of the nature and intensity of this activity. It suggests to students, and equally to prospective clients, that the activity is more an academic exercise than a business initiative. This program endeavors to dispel that notion by eliminating the word “course” from the title of the activity in any communication with Clients or contacts outside the school.

The course instructors employ immersion as a means of quickly acculturating the students to their new status as consultants. From the first day, the students are placed in an environment that recreates a mid-level, global consultancy. They are introduced to each other as Consultants or Senior Consultants, to their “Partners,” i.e., the two professors managing the program, to the organization of the consultancy, and to its policies and procedures. The students-cum-consultants are advised that upon entering the room, they are for all intents and purposes entering the consulting offices, and are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. The word, “student” is another designation that is also avoided. In all written communications, the Partners refer to the participants as Consultants.
From the first meeting of the student-consultants, the instructor-partners begin an orientation of the consultants that in many respects is similar to the orientation that a consultant would receive upon employment by a management consulting firm. In the first meetings, consultants are introduced to such concepts as client-relationship management, organizing meetings with Clients, the role of consultants and Partners, teamwork, time constraints and pressures, managing Client expectations and conflict resolution with Clients, to name a few. On the practical level, the consultants are taught the fundamentals of process analysis, value chain analysis, creative and analytic problem-solving, issue identification, preparation of engagement letters and negotiating project scope. Equally, in this preliminary stage of their training, there is significant time and emphasis placed on ethics, the professional obligations of consultants and appropriate behaviors when meeting with a Client and working at a Client site.

**Consulting Course Principles**

The student consulting course is divided into five major components:

1. *Continuous Learning.* The continuous learning of the analytic tools, methods and processes necessary to undertake the project is one of the most important components as this is a key expectation of the Clients. The student consultants are required to understand both the basic and more sophisticated methodologies to complete the specific project. Perhaps, the most distinguishing feature of the school's business consulting activity is that the student consultants have access to the wealth of knowledge available in the University both in terms of the multitude of data bases but also of the resident faculty.
2. Guiding Principles. Fundamental to the program, and indeed to every management is establishing the guiding principles of consulting, including ethical responsibilities, integrity, the importance of teaming and inter-relationships. Students at the undergraduate and graduate level are exposed throughout their courses to ethical considerations. However, this exposure is explored only in textbooks and case studies, whereas in the consulting program, student consultants come face to face with ethical dilemmas in real time. Many of the issues that they confront entails, for example, issues of disclosure, transparency, adherence to professional principles by the Client and the Client's team. Any issue that arises between the consultants and the Client are subsequently presented to the entire student-consultant group for discussion and resolution.

3. Client First. Student consultants learn to understand that the underpinning of management consulting, indeed all consulting, is an unequivocal commitment to Client service; to developing a trust relationship; to identifying with the Client's needs, but remaining sufficiently detached in order to act as an objective contributor. Student-consultants are helped to develop a mindset of ‘Client First’, putting the Client's issues above all else, and from which flows all other project activities.

4. Structure. Many of the student-consultants in the course have not had the experience of working in a structured environment where professional personal appearance, demeanor and decorum are of critical importance. They come to understand that they are the ‘face’ of the practice; Clients and their teams make judgments about capabilities in no small part based on their impressions of the consultant. The course endeavors to recreate such an environment.
5. **Quality.** Finally, at every stage of the project, students are impressed with the importance of delivering a quality project. From the initial emails introducing the team, to thank you notes, weekly reports up to the final deliverable, the emphasis is on quality. Documents must be formatted properly, error free, grammatically correct and visually pleasing.

*Structure of the Consulting Course*

In the course of the first two weeks of indoctrination, the students are introduced to their respective assignments. This entails several pre-engagement activities on the part of the Partners. First, prior to the commencement of the course itself, the Partners receive the CVs of all the participants. The CVs are reviewed by the Partners to determine skill sets, majors, prior work experience, and any other relevant facet that would help in determining the best ‘fit’ for a project. Once the projects have been determined, the Partners assign the consultants to a project team.

It is important to note here that, as a general rule, the student-consultants are not necessarily given a choice of their team assignments. As with most consulting firms, practitioners at the entry level are assigned to projects primarily based on the needs of the firm. Every effort is made to match skills and experience with project requirements, but in the end, an assignment is driven by the manpower needs of a particular project. The benefit of this approach is twofold: the workload of a larger project is more evenly distributed, and the consultant is exposed to a project, to a Client, to service and to other team members despite the consultant’s misgivings about a particular assignment outside
of her skill set. Experience has shown that after such initial misgivings, the consultants have expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to have been exposed to "something new, different, and outside of my comfort zone."

Upon selection, student-consultants are immediately assigned to teams with a professor-partner who acts as the team leader after which the teams experiences Tuckman's (1965) four-step process of team development: forming, storming, norming and performing. Within a short period of time, particularly after overcoming the trepidation of first contact with their respective Clients and determining the Client's issues, the student-consultants exhibit a growing sense of confidence. They increasingly begin to see themselves as consultants who possess the current knowledge and skills to add value. They combine their academic skills with their youthful energy and exuberance - similar in every respect to their counterparts working in an external management consultancy.

Once the consulting team has been formed, again, prior to any contact with the Client, the Partners immediately develop and conduct exercises to promote a sense of team and shared mission. These exercises have proven to be quite effective in generating the cohesion necessary in a short period of time that would have otherwise been accomplished by a firm over a longer period. One of the noticeable benefits of this team building exercise has been the growing sense of excitement by the team to start their projects.
Finally, with the teams identified and developed, the consultants are introduced to their projects by the Partners. The identities of the Clients and their respective businesses are disclosed, and a summary of the issues that gives rise to the project is provided. The consulting teams are then directed to undertake an extensive background study of their respective Clients, and to make direct contact with the Client's project sponsor to make an appointment to discuss the issues that gave rise to the project.

After the initial contact with their Clients, the consultants return to the school’s project office to de-brief the Partners and the other consultants in the program. (All project briefings are conducted in open forum unless otherwise requested by the team or the Partners). The briefing consists of a summary of the information about the Client's company and the issues as the consultants have determined them. The Partners assist the consultants in refining each of the issues with a view to assisting the consultant to define the scope of the project, perhaps the most significant challenge confronting the young consultants.

It should be noted that throughout the course of the projects and until the conclusion of the term and the projects, the consultants are continuously being taught the various quantitative and qualitative tools necessary to manage their projects. The Partners are also available to work with the teams on an individual basis in the event that a particular team requires specialized knowledge. It is here that the sponsoring academic institution plays a unique role, i.e., access to a virtually unlimited wellspring of industry and functional knowledge that is unavailable to all but the largest management consulting
firms. In addition to client relationship management, another key success factor in a consulting course is the school's providing unfettered access to the academic talent for the student consultants. This unfettered access consists of publicizing the program to the various departments by the administration, and by recognizing this activity as an important gateway to future job placement.

In the next stage the consultants prepare letters of engagement. The consultants are challenged to bring writing, organization, analytic and creativity skills in preparing the letter of engagement, which is essentially the contract between the consulting team and the Client, defining the project, its scope, and the approach the team takes in reaching resolution of the issues. The Partners play a key role at this point. As a typical consulting project is limited in time, so it is with the Business Consulting course, perhaps more so as the consulting course is generally offered on a semester basis. It is the negotiating a letter of engagement, which experience has shown is often the most difficult phase of a consulting project both in the academic setting and in the commercial firms.

Much the same in a management-consulting firm, little is left to chance throughout the project. The consultants come to understand the importance of their work to their Clients; their effect on the Client's business; and the pivotal role they play professionally, and very often personally, in the lives of the Client and her employees.
It is important at this point to discuss the role of the two course instructors, and the essential role they play in the success of both the course itself and the Client's project. The course requires two Partner-instructors: one whose background is academia with secondary experience in consulting; and the other who is an experienced consultant, preferably at the partner level in a first or second tier management consulting firm, and secondarily with teaching experience. Beyond the professional qualifications of the two Partners, the key to success is the ability of the Partners to work as a team and project an image of unanimity both personally and professionally. Partners must acknowledge each other as professionals, and defer to each other's expertise not only in private, but also in the class, as they are in the room very often at the same time. As with external firms, disagreements between Partners must be resolved in private. They must be able to convey a relationship based on mutual respect, close collaboration and commitment to success to the students. The balanced combination of the foregoing qualities is indispensable to the success of the course by establishing credibility and integrity in the eyes of the students and the Clients alike.

*Teamwork and hierarchy in the Development of the Consulting Course:*

One of the most significant developments in the consulting course is the integration of undergraduates into the consulting course, a graduate level course of instruction. It is apparent to the instructors that students at the undergraduate level are equally interested in experiential learning, and desirous of an opportunity to obtain an experience similar to that of the graduate students. From the standpoint of an external management-consulting firm, integrating undergraduates is not a challenge, as many such firms hire consultants
with only an undergraduate degree. From the academic perspective, integrating undergraduates is more challenging. First, academic institutions have historically fiercely maintained the hierarchy of degrees. As a result, there is almost a visceral antipathy to the concept of a class that offered credits that satisfy degree requirements for both undergraduates and graduates alike. Questions have been raised regarding undergraduates taking graduate classes without the necessary graduate pre-requisites that are a requirement for MBA students. Another issue is the capability of undergraduates to take on a course of study that required a higher degree of personal and academic maturity. Performance expectations of MBA candidates are decidedly higher than from undergraduates. From the MBA point of view, is not this integration devaluing the MBA program? These and other questions had been raised in the course of considering the integration of graduates and undergraduates.

The dilemma confronting the instructors is how to put these two groups in the same classroom with the same requirements for course fulfillment without disrupting the MBA program and without overwhelming younger and inexperienced undergraduates. The instructors relied on their previous experiences with large management consulting firms to resolve the issue. In management consulting firms, recent BA graduates with minimal or no work experience were started at the level of ‘Consultant’, whereas graduates with an MBA were hired generally as ‘Senior Consultants’ or, depending on work experience, as ‘Managers’. In this hierarchy, Consultants would work in a team based environment with a Senior Consultant or Manager as the team leader based on the theory that the Seniors generally had more education, training, maturity and experience, and as a result
could help their more junior colleagues. Consultants would be given very specific assignments; senior consultants or managers would be responsible for team leadership, including client relationship management, adherence to the terms of the engagement, for coaching junior members and for a quality deliverable. Utilizing this framework for the academic program, the course instructors went to the undergraduate honors program to invite those students to join the graduate consulting program. The response by the undergraduates, and subsequent take-up for registration was predictably very high.

Accordingly, the academic model was constructed in all respects on the external management consulting firms. The MBA student senior consultants were charged with all the same responsibilities as their counterparts in the commercial environment. The undergraduate student consultants took up similar roles as commercial consultants. The roles and responsibilities were thoroughly explained to the students; and the grading reflected the differences in the roles - just as they would be in performance evaluations for the external providers.

Next, we discuss the three intervening variables, i.e. the three main learning theories: Classical Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Experiential Learning that have the potential to explain the relationships between the teaching methods and the learning results.
4. Intervening Variables: the learning theories.

In the context of this study, intervening (or mediating) variables are explanatory, non-measurable variables, which are only described. In the case of business strategy and business consulting courses, the intervening variables are the three main learning theories of the last century: Classical Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Experiential Learning Theory.

Classical Learning Theory.

Classical Learning Theory (CLT) is also known as classical conditioning, and its main initial supporters are Ivan Pavlov in 1903, and the author of studies in infants, John B. Watson, in the first half of the 20th century. CLT refers to a learning that becomes akin to an automatic reflex, where a certain stimulus triggers a response, even though such response was initially initiated by a different stimulus.

“Classical learning theory predicts that learning will occur whenever a stimulus is paired with a reward, and this seems intuitively sensible.” (Jones, 2001)

Classical learning theory is defined as a learning process that alters how human beings consider certain stimulus factors. Classical learning theory involves two types of stimulus factor, conditioned and unconditioned, to bring a revolution on undefined behavior. The unconditioned stimulus factor naturally triggers the undefined behavior; as a result, the individual discovers the consequence of being away from such behavior.
As far as conditioned stimulus is concerned, it does not trigger any learning practice automatically but its effect will be on the type of association involved with it. It cannot regulate the changes of the undefined behavior but if the person gets associated with the value of conditioned stimulus then it may bring a great change with it. Though it is true that the stimulus factors cannot create any miracle instance to remove such undefined behavior on an immediate basis, still gradual consultation or training have the potential to contribute to the development of a desired behavior.

Operant learning theories (Pavlov et al., 1927) include certain kind of reinforcement factors, and punishment or reward activities, aimed to bring a change to the individual’s behavior by measuring his undesired activities. Reinforcement is considered as a strengthening factor for any kind of activity or behavior process. The reinforcement involves two attributes, such as positive and negative reinforcement to strengthen the learning.

According to Skinner (1968), learning is the outcome of reinforcement or punishment of learners’ behaviors, happening within an environment controlled by the teacher. Therefore teachers may design their teaching in a way where desired behavior is rewarded and undesired behavior is sanctioned.

Pavlov influenced the research conducted by many people, including Skinner. His ideas have been built upon and practiced in schools nowadays, and positive and the provision of negative reinforcement is a common practice seen in the classroom. Many teachers make their students aware of what is expected of them from the beginning of the year so
that there is a clear indication of what good behavior is; actions that break these expectations are often considered to be undesired behaviors. In order to encourage behavior, teachers provide rewards for the students: these may include stickers, games the students like and other attractive things. The aim of this is to motivate the students to behave normatively and work hard in the hope that they will receive a reward. At the same time, teachers will also employ punishments to discourage undesired behavior. Examples of punishments may include the removal of free time, a telling off or excluding a student from an activity they enjoy, or negative marks. Punishments are used to weaken a particular behavior whereas rewards are used to strengthen or reinforce a particular behavior.

There are many recent scholars, however, that see a change in how the paradigm of CLT operates, due to the impact of technology on education, including distance education (cfr. Shana, 2009; Brown and Thompson, 1997; Thompson, 1999). “The teacher/learner dichotomy should disappear at this point with a shared discourse. To provide alternative ‘authorities’, elements of the forum are structured specifically to introduce the students to thinkers with an ideological/political perspective distinctly converse to that of their set reading and course coordinator” (Thompson, 1999). CLT foresees a controlled environment, preferentially with a unidirectional relationship between the student and the teacher. However, college classrooms are typically including several students at once, reducing the possibility that the teacher is the only entity providing feedback to students. This criticism is in line with that of Bandura onto CLT’s “inability to demonstrate
learning processes applicable to natural settings”, since "the importance of social agents as a source of patterns of behavior continues to be essentially ignored” (1962).

In today’s classrooms, the students, often with a number of digital tools at hand, will be seeking other information to validate or disprove the teaching coming from the instructor; therefore, positive reinforcement and punishments may have a lesser convincing impact on students, since they may regard other sources as just as authoritative as the instructor. Furthermore, every student will –in smaller or greater extent – look to how other students act and interact with the teacher. And this social interaction hints to the importance of the next model, Social Learning Theory (SLT).

The number of usages of the term classical learning theory in books and publications over time, as retrieved via Google Books (Michel et al., 2010; cfr. graph 1), seem diminished, indeed, with a peak when SLT came around, in the late 1970s. It is plausible to believe that the surge in usage of “classical learning theory” in that time represents the nail in the coffin, i.e. that it is being cited as a base for developing Social Learning Theory.

Graph 1: The Usage of classical learning theory (and “Classical learning theory”) in books and publications from 1950 until 2008 (Michel et al., 2010)
Social Learning Theory.

According to Bandura (1971), social learning theory (SLT) is based on observing and modeling behaviors, attitudes, and emotions displayed by others. Bandura (1971, p. 22) states "learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action". The observation of role models engaged in prosocial (desired and/or positive) behavior, people who are loved or respected such as parents or authorities, demonstrates how individuals can and should behave pro-socially (Sproull, Conley, & Moon, 2005).

Social learning goes beyond observational learning, because the observation of another individual inside a social context is just at the base of it. Furthermore, social learning theory suggests that the environments can affect not only individuals, but also entire social groups. Within a group context, social recognition, not just private reward, increases prosocial (i.e. desired, positive) behavior (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998).

Social Learning Principles

The principles of Bandura’s Social Learning are that (1971):

- The highest observational learning is achieved by rehearsing the modeled behavior, and then reproducing it; best retention happens when modeled behaviors are coded with words, labels, and images (Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Lim et al., 1997).
- Learners will more likely embrace a modeled behavior if the consequence of given behavior is something they give significance to.

- Learners will more likely embrace a modeled behavior when there is a similarity between the learner and the model, the model has high status, and the behavior has practical significance.

**Social Learning Processes**

According to Bandura (1971), the processes by which social learning occurs are:

- Attention, both of events and observer characteristics and feelings;

- Retention, including coding, organizing ideas, and rehearsal of behaviors;

- Actual reproductions, including observation of actions and their accuracy, and of feedback; and

- Motivation, internal and external, and vicarious and self-reinforcement, i.e. the desire to replicate behaviors for which others (vicars) or the self are being rewarded.

When the learner receives a gratification of sort (i.e. vicarious reinforcement) while observing a role model engaging in a specific behavior, then such learner is more likely to adopt that specific behavior or a similar one. A simple example could be a teenager playing a musical instrument due to admiration of a famous musician; if consequently the teenager is admired or appreciated, their behavior is altered.

However, individuals develop personal standards for behavior and a sense of self-efficacy, i.e. becoming more selective in what they imitate, and believing that own
abilities and characteristics will help them succeed; that implies that the need to imitate external behavior is reduced. Furthermore, we can divide behaviors acquired through social learning as antisocial (or aggressive) and prosocial behaviors (Bandura, 1971).

Prosocial behavior

Prosocial behavior is said of behaviors benefitting another member of the society, be it a group or an individual; it includes cooperating, helping, sharing, and consoling others, and it can be learned (Bandura, 1971; Bandura & McDonald, 1963; Batson, 1998). An example could be children learning from their parents how to respect the environment and recycling; such children are more likely to continue such behavior into adulthood, in a prosocial behavior that is positive for the environment and the society in general.

Antisocial behavior

Antisocial behavior is behavior that is destructive to others or to society, and, potentially, also to the individual perpetrating the behavior, e.g. displaying verbal and physical aggression (Caprara et al., 2000). An example could be a kid vandalizing neighbors’ property or pick pocketing; that is an antisocial behavior, destructive to the kid’s surroundings and to other individuals alike (Zimbardo, 1995).

Current Research and relevance of SLT:

The relevance of SLT has increased steadily since the early 1960s; it began with Bandura’s work on Social Learning and personality development (1963), and its importance continues today (cfr. graph 2).
A number of studies on social learning at college level have been published, highlighting a number of social learning types, displayed through pro-social and anti-social behaviors. Examples of pro-social behaviors are related to: college mentoring (Barsion, 2002), budgeting and financial stability (Gutter, Garrison, & Copur, 2010), probability of college graduation (Youse, 2013),

It is interesting that, at college, the range of pro-social behaviors is more limited than that of anti-social behaviors: an intuitive explanation is that there’s only few ways of behaving appropriately in college, but many ways to misbehave.

Current studies showing anti-social behaviors at college include: non-medical use of prescription stimulants for academic purposes (Ford & Ong, 2014); alcohol use (DeMartino, Rice, & Saltz, 2015); dating violence (Jennings et al., 2011), college crime (Payne, & Salotti, 2007), cyber plagiarism (Sandridge, 2005), and software piracy (Higgins, 2006).

**Experiential Learning Theory**
Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) defines the learning as the "process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984).

Experiential education integrates students' academic studies with opportunities for direct learning. Through experiential learning, the student must make decisions that are real rather than merely think about a situation or case. McCarthya and McCarthya (2006) make the case for mandatory experiential programs in all major areas within the business curriculum.

ELT is not a new concept, and not quite as popular as social learning - which is used significantly more in publications, or about 30 times more often (cfr. graph 3); yet, ELT is experiencing a resurgence, particularly in business school programming (cfr. graph 4).

Graph 3: The Usage of SLT and ELT theory (all-case search) in books and publications from 1945 until 2008 (Michel et al., 2010)

Kolb (1984) has offered six characteristic of experiential learning: (i) learning not as a conjoint of outcomes, but rather as a process; (ii) learning as an constant experience, based upon experience, and happening as a continuum; (iii) this process needs different
ways of adapting-to and interpreting the world to come to terms; (iv) learning is a comprehensive process of interpretation of the world; (v) learning entails exchanges between the environment and the individual; and (vi) learning the process through which knowledge is created.

Kolb’s (1984) ELT model posits two different ways of gathering experience, namely Abstract Conceptualization and Concrete Experience, and two different ways of transforming such experience, namely Active Experimentation and Reflective Observation. According to Kolb, in order to gain knowledge from a new experience, a learner needs: a will or desire to learn; the capability to reflect on the experience; the analytical skills to understand conceptually the experience; and the decision-making skill to use the ideas gained through the new experience.

Recently, Igor Kokcharov (2015) described three types of level of learning retention: Receiving, Participating and Learning by Doing. As one can see from the graphic below
(cfr. graph 5), the Learning by Doing is by far and away the most effective way to retain learning.

A variant of a proverb, attributed to Confucius, which was adopted by early proponents of experiential learning succinctly makes the case for experiential learning: “I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand” (Gentry, 1990).

Experiential learning (EL) can be participative, interactive, and applied, depending on the degree of involvement of the learner (Gentry, 1990). A number of researches have been carried out on the fruitful usage of ELT for higher learning, on many subjects and methods, such as English (Lawrence, 2014), Geography (Healey & Jenkins, 2000), Medical training (Goldstein, Storey-Johnson, & Beck, 2014), Mathematics (Lee & Lee, 2013), and methods like Conversational Learning (Atif, 2013), online learning (Chandler, 2012), and Travel Experiences (Stone, & Petrick, 2013).
For more information on research using ELT, a comprehensive review is published periodically by Kolb and Kolb (cfr. Experience Based Learning Systems, 2015)

Kolb and Kolb (2005) have presented principles to improve experiential learning within the context of higher education; thus they proposed how experiential learning can be ingrained within the entire educations environment by the learning institutions through development programs; these could be encompassing the development of students, faculty, and curriculum, and envision longitudinal assessments of learning.

**Obstacles-to and Problems-in ELT adoption**

With this perspectives as a starting point, experiential learning model is an objective that can certainly be achieved in virtually every business school, but only by overcoming three challenges, nested inside institutional development: inertia, ignorance and implementation (Kolb and Kolb, 2005).

Both research and the authors’ personal experience teaching at college level suggest that many instructors tend to resist experiential learning (Steinke, 2012). This resistance can be attributed to simple inertia and fear of change because it runs opposite to the standard didactic learning model (Steinke, 2012) and learning path most of today’s educators, and indeed, today’s students have taken.
The second obstacle is based on ignorance of EL, and its variants, such as “action learning, adventure learning, free choice learning, cooperative learning, service learning, and many others” (Chen & Chuang, 2011).

A great example to overcome resistance to change involves the Case Western Reserve University’s program that requires faculty members across the university to undergo an intense development on how to develop a particular course or other educational experiences based on experiential learning over the period of 5 years (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Having a 5 years program for teachers comes to show the length of the step to be taken for updating the current teaching system, where a portion of the educators have little idea, and less exposure to the concept of experiential learning, and its value-add to student learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

The third obstacle is really the result of the previous two obstacles: based on inertia and ignorance of this learning methodology, implementation or incorporation of a real experiential learning program into a syllabus becomes problematic at best (Kolb and Kolb, 2005). As Kolb and Kolb (2005) point out, the implementation process can only be accomplished by a faculty that understands the underlying need for the program, a true commitment to its success, and an unreserved participation in the change process. Furthermore, the teaching curricula are structured in a bureaucratic fashion: to change the teaching style, not only the teacher, but also the academic director in charge of the subject must agree, as more senior academic professionals may be less inclined to experimenting. In the words of Kolb and Kolb (2015), “one can develop a state of the art
learning-focused curriculum that is doomed to failure if faculty members are not on board with it philosophically and technically.”

The process of establishing a syllabus with a focus on experiential learning, or, at the very least, a balance between the didactic and the experiential learning, requires something of a sea change. For the foregoing reasons, an experiential learning program requires strong leadership to provide guidance, encouragement and practical support in order to succeed.

Gentry (1990) explains the shortcomings of some of the methods used for experiential learning: “Approaches such as computer-assisted instruction or simulations may fall short on the “experience” criteria (limited contact with environment, variability, uncertainty, interactivity, etc.). At the same time, approaches such as internships are strong on the experience criteria but may yield highly variable learning due to the lack of structure and to the difficulty associated with providing process feedback”, i.e. feedback needed for the student to complement and possibly supersede the process-outcome feedback received by the student; therefore, “approaches such as live cases would appear to meet most of the criteria easily” (Gentry, 1990).

**Elements for stronger ELT curriculum**

Business courses start from a theoretical standpoint supported by case studies, and for many, this approach satisfies the need to expose students to the practical side of
education. The other approach – experiential learning - utilizes real experience as the starting point for learning with the theoretical as an adjunct to this process.

Gentry points out that business is an applied discipline: “Business education involves studying applications of mathematics, economics and behavioral sciences to problems in the production and distribution of goods and services” (1990). Thus, the applied nature of business education might be a more appropriate discipline for the use of experiential learning pedagogies than one with a stronger theoretical orientation. Therefore, the question is, how to enhance the presence of Experiential Learning (EL) inside business education.

The path forward lies firstly, in getting buy-in from the teaching and supervising faculty to see the merits of the program, and secondly, in both developing courses de novo, almost from scratch, and incorporating an experiential learning component into current courses. A Business Consulting course is perhaps the best and easiest place to start the experiential learning experiment, because it has been an accepted course at CUNY Baruch for the past 12 years, and can serve as a model for the development of future courses. The course material is presently available, and can be used as the starting point to roll this course out to demonstrate the feasibility of the program. It can also serve as a demonstrable win.

The ultimate objective of an experiential learning program is to impart to the students practical skills, experiences and understanding of the realities of the world outside
academia. The Business Consulting course is an excellent starting point to achieve that objective.

Studies of Business Consulting Courses

There are a number of studies that used Business Consulting courses as examples of how to improve the delivery of better education to students. For example, Adams and Zanzi (2004) have conducted a survey of business consulting course offerings among the members of the Management Consulting Division of the Academy of Management and provided some recommendations for course offerings that would meet developmental needs by consultants’ career stages. Adams (2005), went one step further and used the stakeholders approach to analyze the relationships between the students who perform the consulting projects, the academic institution, the client organization sponsoring the project, and the faculty supervisor (instructor).

A group of studies focused on consulting courses aimed at one organizational function (e.g. Marketing, Accounting, etc.) at a time. Tubbs (1984) describes the use of consulting teams in not-for-profit human services as a mechanism to provide students with skills rather than knowledge. Ramocki (1987) assessed the effectiveness of applied marketing research projects from the perspectives of students and clients by evaluating the impacts of the procedure, both cognitive and behavioral, upon the students learning. Hunter (1999) has described how HR consultants are developed in the Andersen Consulting firm. Bryant (2001) has provided practical guidance to educators on how to design and administer a consulting course in the accounting information systems (AIS) program. Buller (1992) has presented similar recommendations for the small business area.
Dallimore and Souza (2002) proposed theoretical frameworks and pedagogical strategies for the design of a consulting course in Business Communication. Rosenfeld (2002) has analyzed the prerequisites for the development of awareness, conceptual understanding, skills and competencies in instructional consultancies. Recent studies looked into the roles, and consequently, the ethics expected from university students. Allen and David (2005) employed a sample of business consultants in the United States (N=207), to assess how consulting behavior is influenced by professional ethics and individual values. Allen and David’s results hint that there might be no significant correlation between consultants’ professional ethics and their behavior in business consulting.

Friedman (1990) has described a Human Resources Management MBA consulting course where the project’s mission was to both educate students and provide consulting service to executives. Each party in the exercise played at least two roles that sometimes conflicted with each other. Class members played the roles of students and of consultants; instructors played the roles of course instructors and of consulting group managers; and host organization representatives played the roles of providers of educational opportunities and recipients of consulting service. Friedman (1990) suggested mechanisms such as management of expectations of all three groups of players; structuring teams of consultants in a way that would mitigate internal conflicts among team’s members; empowering students to make decisions even at the cost of providing a poorer service; and designing a students’ rewards system that include assessments of both process and product. This set of recommendations is useful in
solving the students and instructor’s dilemma but it does not answer to the final clients’ (the executives) expectations and to their corporations’ needs. Moreover, it does not provide a set of standards for the decision-making process where both instructors and students could refer whenever facing a dilemma in providing the consulting service to the clients.

A general debate about the role of students in the educational process in the business school has taken place between Ferris (2002) and Ferris et al (2001; 2002) who have argued that the educational objectives of students are better served when they become partners rather than clients; and Armstrong (2003) who has challenged this view and suggested that students achieve their educational objectives best by playing the traditional ‘students as clients’ role.

In the absence of a theoretical framework the studies described here have failed to provide a set of standards that could be used by both instructors and students to solve the conflicts and to provide a first class service to their clients while maintaining the course learning objectives.

Next, we consider moderating variables that may influence (mitigate or enhance) the relationships between the teaching methods and the learning performance.
5. **Moderating Variables: individual characteristics.**

There are a number of variables that influence the learning for each and every individual. Personality, maturity, age, language, previous experience, and others, just to mention a few (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000). However, the scope of this work is not on the individual, rather on the teaching method and its relation with learning theory. Of course, the individual plays a fundamental role, since it is the individual who will learn. But, again, in this work the focus is rather on teaching methods, and not on individuals.

Next, a model is proposed, showing the relations and how the independent and intervening variables concur to influence the dependent variables – i.e. the learning outcomes.
6. A New Model.

In this model, the posited relation between the Independent, Intervening, Moderating and Dependent Variables is graphically displayed. The Independent variables are mediated by means of some or all the intervening variables. Subsequently, by means of moderators, the dependent variables, i.e. the learning outcomes, are affected.

Table 1: Variables and relations between.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Classical Learning</td>
<td>Individual characteristics</td>
<td>Learning Goals:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>Social Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consulting Class / Experience on the Job</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
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<td>2 ...</td>
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<td>7 ...</td>
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</table>

**Respondents.**

The method for data gathering consisted of semi-structured in-depth interviews with students and instructors, personal experience, document analysis, and observation of classes. No questionnaires were used, and the courses’ curricula that were considered and analyzed were gathered with the consensus of the instructors.

The people interviewed and with whom the conversations were held are 8 instructors of Business courses; the instructors were 3 females and 5 males, with teaching experience ranging from 1 to 20+ years of teaching; their title was doctoral students, tenured professors, and adjunct lecturer.

The two instructors that run the Consulting course are professor Moshe Banai and Mr. Philip Tulimieri, senior instructors at the Business School of a US North-Eastern public university; as per Business Consulting course’s requirements, one instructor, Prof. Banai, had a stronger background in academia, with secondary experience in consulting; and the other instructor, Mr. Tulimieri, was an experienced consultant, with secondary teaching experience.

The author of the current work was the instructor for the Business Strategy course, following the stream of research that considers active membership of the researchers in
the fieldwork (Adler & Adler, 1987).

The students in the courses taught by this work’s author were senior college students majoring in business over the course of 3 semesters; the feedback received from the students was constantly positive, increasing from a 3.9 average instructor rating to 4.2 average instructor rating over the three semesters of teaching.

**Instruments.**

Interviews and conversations were all individually made, ranging from 30 minutes to an hour. Respondents were encouraged to and welcomed to add additional comments beyond the initial conversation.

The documents collected, i.e. the two syllabi of the Business Strategy course and the Business Consulting course (see appendix 1), were collected directed from the instructors. The syllabi describe the Course Description and Objectives, as well as the course requirements and evaluation method.

The learning objectives, or learning goals, adopted for the analysis are the seven goals established by the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College (Zicklin School of Business, 2012).
In order to measure the extent to which each learning goal was achieved by each learning method, the author judged according to the interviews and conversations held with the respondents.

**Process**

Interviews and conversations happened in person, between Fall 2013 and Spring 2015, at the institution of teaching, a business school in a US North-Eastern public university. This, however, represents a possible limitation to this work, since all the instructors and students were belonging to a single institution.

**8. Results.**

The results of the research are presented here as a table with three horizontal dimensions: the Lecture Course, the Case Study Course, and the Business Consulting Course. On the vertical dimension we have the seven learning goals, broken down into values, attitudes and behaviors, i.e. levels where learning occurs. Values are held as belief systems that guide our behavior; attitudes are our preferences towards things, people and objects, and are, in part, a result of our values; behaviors are visible, tangible manifestation of our values, attitudes, and decisions.
### Table 2: Teaching Methods impact on Learning Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>Lecture Course</th>
<th>Case Study Course</th>
<th>Business Consulting Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Method</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Analytical skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Technological skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Written communication</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4. Oral communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
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<td>Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Civic awareness and ethical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values</td>
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<td>Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Global awareness</td>
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<td>Values</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Business knowledge / integrative abilities</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: 1= to a small extent; 2= to some extent; and 3= to a great extent
According to the model described in Table 1, we see that the types of teaching methods are differently mediated through the various theories of learning.

The lecture style conduces to learning mainly through classical learning, i.e. through a series of stimuli, with reinforcements or punishments, and, to a minor extent, through social learning, observing the limitedly displayed student and instructor behavior and interactions.

The case study approach does, in turn, lead to learning both through classical learning and social learning. Students are able to observe the behavior of their peers in simulations and case studies, witnessing the performance and how the instructor publicly praises or chastises learning behaviors by fellow students, during case studies analysis and business simulations.

The consulting class offers the broadest type of learning, occurred by mediation of classical learning, social learning, and, experiential learning alike, i.e. real time experience, while working for a real client in real time, with real colleagues, yielding measureable results, such as client’s satisfaction with the consulting project, client’s attitudes and behavior change and improvement in organizational performance.
Looking at the results table, too, we can use CLT, SLT, and ELT theories to explain or predict the table results – taking up theories role of describing, explaining, and predicting (Lewin, 1935).

The first Learning Goal, Analytical skills, is impacted by all teaching methods. Analytical skills values are gained through all methods, since theory is always explained by the instructor or by textbook assigned. Also, the analytical attitudes change, with preferences for certain types of business behaviors, as a consequence of the new analytical skills. However, the behavior changes only with the case study and consulting methods; by means of simulations or real experience, students have a real opportunity to exert the analytical capability, acting it out – a possibility that lacks in the lecture course. That changes their state of acquaintance with this skill.

The Technological skills are influenced only by the case study and consulting methods; the students are able to express their ideas and concepts through visual, graphical, and numerical ways, affecting the learning of values, attitudes and behaviors; whereas the lecture course, with the written examinations, offers limited possibilities to develop or showcase technological skills. This is especially true in the case of written midterms and final exams with multiple choices and open answers, done in a classroom setting.

Written communication skills are enhanced by all methods, but in a different manner. The need to write in formal business language, mimicking the texts seen throughout the course, inevitably changes the attitudes and behaviors of students. However, the values,
the belief systems behind how an individual shall write to a customer or a client, are only influenced by means of real-life interaction and experience. Hence, the values of written communication are influenced, and learning happens, only by means of the use of the business consulting course.

Oral communication skills are impacted only by the case study and consulting methods. The lecture course requires only limited oral expression, and provides only little evaluation based on it; given the lack of exercising done in this area, the lecture course does not ensure at all that the model of oral communication displayed by the instructor are absorbed by students. Conversely, the case study and consulting methods force the students to present in front of a fictitious board of directors or real customers, and simultaneously force the students to be more aware and pick up more of the modeled behavior, influencing their values, attitudes and behaviors.

Civic Awareness and Ethical Decision-Making, the skills to be guided by through ethical dilemmas in business, are impacted by all methods as for values and attitudes. Exposure to ethical dilemmas and instructor’s explanation of different aspects of the decision-making impact students’ values and attitudes. However, the mere theoretical repetition of this in an exam, as is the case in the lecture course, does not warrant a change in behaviors.

Global Awareness values are affected by all teaching methods, since students have to learn some of the differences in perspectives and cultures that affect business practices.
However, the change in attitude is more likely to happen when there is a real case or situation that the students have to face and consider. As for behavior, though, a real interaction with human beings, such as clients and consulting partners, with different personal and professional cultural background, is the only element that assures a change in behaviors.

Business knowledge and integrative abilities, i.e. the working knowledge of all functional areas in business and their application in a holistic manner to solve business problems, is achieved in different measures by the different teaching methods. The learning of values, the idea that different business functional areas have to be integrated for finding adequate business solutions, is achieved through the explanation of and exposure to different concepts and examples. However, the change in attitudes occurs only when real cases are presented to students for analysis, and choices are made as to where to place the focus of the analysis itself. In terms of behavior, only the business consulting course can lead to a real change, i.e. learning: the awareness that the client will be looking at the solution suggested by the student-consultant forces the students to display the desired integration.

**Conclusions.**

It seems clear that learning can occur through all teaching methods, especially when it comes to teaching values. However, attitudes, our preferences towards things, people and objects, and values, will not be developed as much in the lecture course. The exposure to simulation and real examples forces students to pick sides, forming a preference. As for
influencing behaviors, the business consulting course is the one that ensures the most complete learning, by means of the real time experience provided.

Also, the current generation of millennial students is acutely aware of the fierce competition in the job market and of the changing nature of the current business environment. Therefore, the more possibilities students have to practice their own skills, the more they are aware of gaining meaningful professional skills, starting a virtuous cycle of internal and external expectations.

**Limitations and suggestions for future research.**

A few limitations are present in this study. It is not empirical, and the observation is limited to only one school, and one Business Consulting course. Further studies should increase the observation to a number of Business Consulting courses, in a variety of schools – and, potentially, even to other types of consulting, when possible.

Also, the dyads comprised of the instructors for the Business Consulting courses may provide different, imperfect synergies, with potential for disservices for students’ learning that go beyond the individual instructor’s potential shortcomings. Future studies should delve deeper into the synergies and measuring the added value stemming from the instructors’ partnership – measuring it qualitatively at different levels, and analyzing its impact onto students’ learning. Also, by increasing the duration of the observation, the same instructors’ dyad may be observed while working with different types of students-
consultants and clients, allowing to observe whether a particular set of instructors leads to better learning for certain types of students.

Some limitations of the consulting course may involve students’ circumstances: for instance, full-time students may have more of the resources needed for the learning process, whereas part-time students may have more stringent time constraints both for studying, as well as meeting internally and with clients. Future studies should control for this, involving both part-time and full-time students, as well as considering the employment status at the time of the course, and factoring those circumstances in the analysis of students’ learning.

Furthermore, the Business Consulting course has the time limit of the semester to complete the project, an often-unrealistic constraint for a broad-enough scope of work. Often times, analyses and assessments have to be truncated to meet the semester deadline, leaving issues which could not be explored, and recommendations which could not be thoroughly evaluated. One possible solution might be to consider extending the program to two semesters, taking on longer and more complex engagements with clients, with obvious learning benefits for the student consultants.

The evaluation of the measures, i.e. the judgment on the level of achievement of learning goals, was made only by one rater, the author. This is certainly a weakness that should be corrected in further replications and expansions of this study, with multiple raters, if possible not involved in the research – also looking into different measurements, as well
as more general or more specific theories and explanation of learning.

Also, being carried out in a single institution presents possible bias: future studies should consider samples from different student populations, in different institutions and geographical locations.

Also, this study used arbitrarily a set of goals because relevant to the observed population. For future studies, the development of standardized, objective instruments to be used across schools may be advisable. Certainly, researchers and future studies should consider extensive observation of teaching in classroom. The current system of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business requires recurring testing of meeting the school-set learning goals for maintenance of accreditation (AACSB International, 2013). Therefore, business schools may use the data gathered in the maintenance of accreditation process to test which kind of classes and teaching methods yield which level of learning, according to school-set learning goals.

Practitioners and school administrators could use the existing data for showcasing the incremental validity for effecting teaching and learning through experiential learning, pushing others to follow the lead, in a win-win situation for educators and students alike.
10. Appendixes.

Appendix A: Course Syllabus for Business Strategy Course, undergraduate level, Spring 2014.

Appendix B: Business Consulting Course Syllabus, undergraduate and graduate level, Fall 2014.
Appendix A: course syllabus for business strategy course, undergraduate level.

COURSE SYLLABUS FOR BPL 5100 (BUSINESS POLICY)

City University of New York [Instructor's information removed]
Baruch College
Zicklin School of Business
Department of Management
Spring 2014

Required Course Materials
Dess-Lumpkin-Eisner-McNamara, Strategic Management, 6/E, Value Edition. (Referred to as DLE)

GLO-BUS Simulation. (Referred to as GLO-BUS)
may be purchased online via http://www.glo-bus.com or through the bookstore

Additional materials available on Blackboard (Referred to as BB)

Course Description and Objectives
Policy is the study of the functions and responsibilities of senior management, the crucial problems that affect success in the total enterprise, and the decisions that determine the direction of the organization and shape its future. The problems of policy in business, like those of policy in public affairs, have to do with choosing purposes, molding organizational identity and character, continuously defining what needs to be done, and mobilizing resources for the attainment of goals in the face of competition or adverse circumstances.

This course is designed to study the firm primarily from the perspective of top management. Of
principal concern to top managers are the relationships among the organization, its strategy, and its environment. These relationships are complex, uncertain, and subject to change. Top managers shape and guide these relationships. It is they who make strategic decisions that change the organization’s capabilities, shift its position in the environment, or lead the firm into a new business. Such a focus upon the tasks of the top management will draw upon the interactions among the different functional areas that you have already been introduced to in earlier courses (e.g., management, marketing, finance, accounting, information systems). Unlike other courses that tend to focus on a single functional area of business, this course will concentrate on the total business situation.

We will use several methods to accomplish the goals of this course. First, via involvement in an interactive business simulation, we will have the opportunity to analyze, develop, apply, and revise strategic decisions in a competitive environment. Additionally, we shall tackle the complexity and ambiguity of strategic decision making through discussions of case studies that provide rich descriptions of situations faced by real companies that either fail or succeed. In order to obtain the full benefit of the case approach, it is necessary that everyone come to class well prepared. This does not mean that you must have solved the case, or are expected to have all the answers to the case. Invariably, given the complexities of the real world, there is no single best answer. However, it does mean that you should have thoroughly read the case and any other assigned materials and that you have intelligently thought about the issues raised by the case. In class, I will act as a moderator, questioner, and lecturer to help you gain a better understanding of the strategic decision making process. By actively participating in class discussions, you will sharpen your own insights, and those of your classmates. Thus you will not only become familiar with the content of the course, but perhaps more importantly, you will also learn to master the process of analysis that is a central aspect of the effective strategic management of organizations.

**BBA Learning Goals Addressed in this Course:**
The faculty of the Zicklin School of Business has adopted seven (7) “Learning Goals” for BBA students. The purpose of these goals is to create a common understanding between students, faculty and potential employers of the core objectives for a business education. The seven goals, together with assessment criteria, can be viewed at http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/assessment/Learning_Goals.htm. The following Zicklin Learning Goals will be addressed in this course: analytical and technological skills; written communication skills; oral communication skills; civic awareness and ethical decision-making; global awareness; and business knowledge/integrative abilities.

Some Guidelines for Classroom Behavior

(1) **Arriving late** interferes with other students' learning and is not acceptable. Subway delays and other problems are unavoidable on occasion, but it is each student's responsibility to plan carefully to arrive on time.

(2) **Leaving early** is disruptive and unfair to other students' opportunity to learn. Please minimize this.

(3) **It is not appropriate to leave and return during a class meeting.** Plan ahead. Anyone with a medical problem that affects his or her presence in class should discuss the matter privately with the instructor in advance.

(4) **Please turn off cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices** before class.

(5) Course assignments and performance expectations are well documented in this syllabus and will be discussed in depth during the first few class sessions. Consequently, **it should not be necessary to request extra credit assignments to raise grades at or near the end of the semester**. Manage your performance while you have the opportunity to do so.

Blackboard

We will make use of Blackboard this semester as a means of communicating with one another about a variety of issues. The syllabus, and any necessary updates, will be available on Blackboard. Consequently, you should become familiar with how Blackboard operates and visit our Blackboard
**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to know and adhere to the Baruch College Academic Honesty Policy, found at http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html. It states, among other things, that

> Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the college's educational mission and the students' personal and intellectual growth. Baruch students are expected to bear individual responsibility for their work, to learn the rules and definitions that underlie the practice of academic integrity, and to uphold its ideals. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for disobeying them. Any student who attempts to compromise or devalue the academic process will be sanctioned.

**Students with Disabilities**

Baruch College provides reasonable accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities to ensure that no student with a disability is denied the benefits of, is excluded from participation in, or otherwise is subjected to discrimination under the education program or activity operated by the College because of the absence of educational auxiliary aids for students with disabilities. Arrangements for adapting class procedures without compromising course content and standards may take time. Therefore, students who require accommodations or modifications should speak with me as soon as possible. I am available for you to talk with me before or after this class or during my office hours described above.

In order to receive services, you must register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. Documentation is necessary for every disability. For more information concerning services for students with disabilities, please contact Barbara Sirois, Director of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, Vertical Campus Building, One Bernard Baruch Way, 2nd floor, Room 2-270, phone number: 646-312-4590.
**Grading**

The following scale will be used to assign course Grades based upon the total number of Points earned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>475-500</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>415-434.9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>350-364.9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>305-319.9</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450-474.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>400-414.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>335-349.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>290-304.9</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435-449.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>365-399.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>320-334.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Below 290</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Summary of Course Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution (Individual)</th>
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<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1 (Individual)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2 (Individual)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Analysis Written Report and Oral Presentation (Team)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLO-BUS Simulation Performance (Team)</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLO-BUS Assessment Written Report and Oral Presentation (Team)</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Appraisal (Individual)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Details of Course Requirements**

*Contribution* accounts for 20% of the final grade. Note that the word used is “contribution,” not “participation,” let alone “attendance.” Much of the learning in this class will take place in the classroom. Class discussion provides an opportunity to develop oral communication skills, to present your ideas concisely and persuasively, and to respond effectively to the comments of others. Students are expected to have finished all readings and other work assigned for each class period, and to be able to offer informed and thoughtful comments in class discussion. Each member of the
class should be fully conversant in the material—expect to be called on in class. You should be able to outline the problem that readings address, describe the core points of the reading, and, most importantly, offer your analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the reading’s central argument. For cases, you should be able to identify key issues, problems, and opportunities, articulate and evaluate alternative approaches to the problems and opportunities, and describe courses of action that you recommend and the reasons for your recommendations. If for some reason you are not prepared, please let me know before class starts to save us both the embarrassment of my calling on you.

Case analysis requires that preparation for class be of consistently high quality. Most cases do not have “right” answers. Consequently, being “right” or “wrong” should not be your concern when contributing to class discussion. Your point of view is important and if there is a later consensus that differs from your viewpoint, that in no way diminishes the value of your earlier comments. You should also strive to be a critical listener to the comments of your fellow students. If you disagree with what someone has said, speak up and explain how and why your viewpoint differs.

Contribution is graded on quality, not just quantity. Speaking too much while not adding value will be as detrimental to your grade as not speaking at all.

Because attendance in this course is such an important part of the learning experience, much of the material we cover in class through lecture, case discussion, and exercises cannot be made up through reading materials and, therefore, the material is essentially lost. Consequently, under normal circumstances, a maximum of four absences will be allowed, and there may be contribution grade penalties for each absence up to and beyond this level.

Examination 1 accounts for 20% of the final grade. It will be administered in class and covers concepts drawn from the text [DLE Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5] and class lectures/discussions.
Examination 2 accounts for 20% of the final grade. It will be administered in class and covers concepts drawn from the text [DLE Chapters 6, 7, 9, 10, 11] and class lectures/discussions.

Case Analysis Written Report and Oral Presentation accounts for 20% of the final grade. Each team will be responsible for preparing a written report and making a formal oral presentation of their analysis and recommendations for one of eight cases. Students are expected to identify the strategic issues and problems in the case, use whichever tools and techniques of analysis are called for, and develop an appropriate action plan and set of recommendations. In particular, the case analysis should address:

- **Statement and description of central issue (1 page; 2 minutes)**
- **Identification/description of alternatives (2 pages; 4 minutes)**
- **Rationale for selection of best alternative (3 pages; 6 minutes)**
- **Description of implementation plan (1 page; 2 minutes)**
- **Conclusion (1/2 page; 1 minute)**

Each team will address the strategic management issues described above in a written paper that must be no more than 8 pages of text. All papers should be thoroughly proofread; write a rough draft, and then edit and polish this draft. The papers must be typed (12-point font), double spaced, with one-inch margins. Put your names, date, and company name or number on a separate title page. Do not put your names on the remaining pages.

Each team will have between fifteen and twenty minutes to present its analyses and recommendations. All members of a team are required to participate in the Case Analysis Oral Presentation. Prepare your presentation carefully. You should pay careful attention to the flow and clarity of the presentation. You should practice and time the presentation before you present to the class. You are encouraged to make creative use of your presentation time. You are expected to use PowerPoint slides and elicit audience participation to generate and sustain interest in your topic.
You should prepare the presentation as if you were presenting to a management team in a firm. Thus, you should be concerned about keeping their interest and communicating clearly and effectively. Although it is perfectly appropriate to refer to prepared notes during your presentation, do not read your presentation directly from a prewritten script. At the start of class, the team should submit to the instructor a copy of the slides to be used for the presentation. Please number the pages clearly on the bottom of the page and staple all pages together.

Those students not participating in a presentation on any given day are responsible for reading the case and coming to class prepared to participate in case analysis discussions. To encourage attendance and active participation by audience members, Contribution will count double for these days on which Case Analysis Presentations will occur.

**GLO-BUS Simulation Performance** accounts for 10% of the final grade. As performance is a multifaceted construct, the performance of each team in this simulation will be determined using a variety of measures as described in the GLO-BUS Participant’s Guide. Additionally, this will include individual student performance on the GLO-BUS Online Quizzes 1 and 2.

**GLO-BUS Assessment Written Report and Oral Presentation** accounts for 10% of the final grade. Each team will create a PowerPoint presentation to be made orally to the class documenting how the team has applied strategic management concepts to operating its simulated company. In particular, the assessment should address:

1. **Mission Statement**
   - Identify the mission and major goals of the company.
   - State its formal mission statement, articulating the major goals and corporate philosophy.

2. **Stakeholder Identification**
   - Identify the main stakeholder groups for your company.
   - What claims do they place on the company?
   - How is the company trying to satisfy those claims?
III. External Analysis: Identification of Industry Opportunities and Threats

- Apply the five forces model to the industry in which your company is based.
- What does the model tell you about the nature of competition in the industry?
- Are there any changes taking place in the macroenvironment that might have an impact, either positive or negative, upon the industry in which your company is based?
- If so, what are these changes and how will they affect the industry?

IV. Internal Analysis: Resources, Capabilities, Competencies, and Competitive Advantage

- Identify whether your company has a competitive advantage or disadvantage in its primary industry. What are the distinctive competencies of your company?
- What role have prior strategies played in shaping the distinctive competencies of your company?
- Do the strategies currently pursued by your company build on its distinctive competencies?
- Are they an attempt to build new competencies?
- What are the barriers to imitating the distinctive competencies of your company?
- Is there any evidence that your company finds it difficult to adapt to changing industry conditions? Why?

V. Functional-, Business-, and Corporate-Level Strategy

- Characterize and describe the functional-, business, and corporate-level strategies your company is pursuing.

VI. Organization Structure

- Identify the type of organization structure used by your organization.
- Explain why your company has selected this form of differentiation and integration.

VII. Performance Assessment

- Evaluate your company's success or lack thereof at implementing its strategies.

VIII. Implementation of Strategic Change

- How would you improve your company's position if the simulation continued for additional periods?
• What changes would you make?
• How would you implement these changes?

**GLO-BUS** Assessment Oral Presentations will be conducted during the scheduled **Final Exam Period**. Each team will make a formal presentation of its strategy and performance assessment. All members of a team are required to participate in the GLO BUS Assessment Oral Presentation. You should pay careful attention to the flow and clarity of the presentation. You are encouraged to make creative use of your presentation time. Moreover, you should prepare the presentation as if you were presenting to a group comprised of multiple stakeholders. Thus, you should be concerned about keeping their interest and communicating clearly and effectively. Although it is perfectly appropriate to refer to prepared notes during your presentation, do not read your presentation directly from a prewritten script. **At the start of class, the team should submit to the instructor a copy of the slides to be used for the presentation.** Please number the pages clearly on the bottom of the page and staple all pages together.

**Peer Appraisal** comprises evaluations of the contributions of your team members to team efforts. The class will be divided into teams of three or four students, depending on the size of the class. It is expected that all team members participate equally in team assignments. While peer appraisal should encourage students to participate, remember that the grade to be given on your team assignments will still be affected by the behavior of other team members. Therefore, you are required to take responsibility for efforts to motivate team members to do their part. You need to learn to work within teams and manage the process because much of the work in organizations today is moving towards teamwork. Thus, the responsibility for ensuring equal participation lies with the team members. I cannot arbitrate disputes on this issue. However, you have two forms of recourse. First, I will discuss with a team any issues or concerns they have about their project or their ability to work together. Second, during the course of the semester, each team member has the opportunity to evaluate the contribution of the team members via peer appraisals. The performance appraisal examines each member’s contribution to the team in several areas: attendance at meetings, teamwork,
knowledge of company operations, contribution of ideas and suggestions, and leadership. These evaluations will be used to make modifications, if necessary, to individual students' point allocations for team assignments.
# Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
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</table>
| 1       | *Orientation and Course Preview*  
  
  *Read and review* Course Syllabus |
| 2       | *Introduction to the Case Method*  
  
  *Read DLE Chapter 13 Analyzing Strategic Management Cases*  
  
  *Form teams for GLO-BUS and Case Analysis* |
| 3       | *Strategic Management: Creating Competitive Advantages*  
  
  *Read DLE Chapter 1* |
| 4       | *Strategic Management: Creating Competitive Advantages*  
  
  *Re-read DLE Chapter 1*  
  
  *Read BB Forced Retrenchment at Atkinson Overview* |
| 5       | *Analyzing the External Environment of the Firm*  
  
  *Read DLE Chapter 2* |
| 6       | *Analyzing the External Environment of the Firm*  
  
  *Re-read DLE Chapter 2* |
| 7       | *Analyzing the Internal Environment of the Firm*  
  
  *Read DLE Chapter 3* |
8  *Analyzing the Internal Environment of the Firm*

   **Re-read DLE Chapter 3**

   **Read BB Instructions for PaperScape Exercise**

9  *Application of Concepts*

   **Read BB Case Edward Marshall Boehm, Inc.**

10  *Business-Level Strategy: Creating and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*

   **Read DLE Chapter 5**

11  *Business-Level Strategy: Creating and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*

   **Re-read DLE Chapter 5**

12  *Application of Concepts*

13  *Examination 1*

   **Covers DLE Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 14      | *Introduction to GLO-BUS*  
Read GLO-BUS Participant’s Guide |
| 15      | *GLO-BUS Working Session*  
Complete GLO-BUS Online Quiz 1  
Complete GLO-BUS Practice Round Decision # 1 (Year 6) |
| 16      | *Corporate-Level Strategy: Creating Value Through Diversification*  
Read DLE Chapter 6 |
| 17      | *Corporate-Level Strategy: Creating Value Through Diversification*  
Re-read DLE Chapter 6  
Read BB Growing for Broke  
Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 1 (Year 6) |
| 18      | *International Strategy: Creating Value in Global Markets*  
Read DLE Chapter 7 |
| 19      | *Strategic Control and Corporate Governance*  
Read DLE Chapter 9  
Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 2 (Year 7) |
20  Case: Read DLE Case 25, Weight Watchers

21  Creating Effective Organizational Designs
Read DLE Chapter 10
Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 3 (Year 8)

22  Strategic Leadership: Creating a Learning Organization and an Ethical Organization
Read DLE Chapter 11

23  Strategic Leadership: Creating a Learning Organization and an Ethical Organization
Re-read DLE Chapter 11
Read BB Plastico, Inc. Overview
Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 4 (Year 9)

24  Examination 2
Covers DLE Chapters 6, 7, 9, 10, 11
## Tentative Schedule (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 25      | **Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations**  
Submit/Present Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations—  
Teams A & B  
**Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 5 (Year 10)** |
| 26      | **Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations**  
Submit/Present Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations—  
Teams C & D  
**Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 6 (Year 11)** |
| 27      | **Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations**  
Submit/Present Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations—  
Teams E & F  
**Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 7 (Year 12)** |
| 28      | **Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations**  
Submit/Present Case Analysis Written Reports and Oral Presentations—  
Teams G & H  
**Complete GLO-BUS Decision # 8 (Year 13)**  
**Complete GLO-BUS Peer Evaluation** |
| Finals  | **GLO-BUS Assessment** |
| Period  | Submit GLO-BUS Assessment Written Reports and Oral Presentations |
Appendix B: Business Consulting Course Syllabus, Fall 2014

Monday/ Wednesday 7:30 - 8:45 PM

[Instructors’ Contact information removed]

Welcome to Baruch Business Consulting (BBC)

BBC was established by two Partners, P.T., JD (a seasoned consultant and a US Army Officer) and M.B., PhD (a scholar and world traveler), in 2003. The company’s mission is to apply up-to-date knowledge and expertise to provide world class consulting services to enhance clients’ organizations value. BBC focuses on tackling business and organizational challenges and issues and turning them into opportunities. The challenges may range from a market’s segmentation, to production problem, to analysis of a new financial instrument or a financial product, to developing firm’s human resources, to identifying new international markets or clients.

BBC selects the best Senior Consultants (MBA candidates) and Consultants (BA candidates) from the Zicklin School of Business and provides them with intensive training to prepare them for the demanding job of ethically and professionally serving clients’ consulting needs. The duration of the projects is limited to fourteen weeks, during which the partners develop relationships with the clients, define the project’s content and scope, oversee the deliverance and
bill the clients. The consultants meet with the clients, collect and analyze data, write a project report and present a summary to the client at BBC headquarters at Baruch College. The consultants’ rewards and promotion are contingent on the quality standard of the service applied by the consultants as judged by the client’s and by the partners.

BBC has gained reputation over the last twelve years, demonstrated by retuning clients. The stakes are high and failure may mean losing a client, reputation and money. Hence, all consultants are expected to be fully engaged in the projects, follow BBC ethical and professional guidelines, and put the client’s needs ahead of their personal needs.

**Scheduling**

**Training**

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Welcome, introduction and projects assignments</td>
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<td>9/8</td>
<td>Nature and purpose of consulting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Professionalism and ethics in consulting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>Seven practice essentials</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>The engagement letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>Client communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>Solving problems creatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Business process analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The action plan
Business plan
Presenting to the client
Industry and personal implications
A Case Study

**Project's engagement**

Consultation
Consultation
Consultation
Teams’ interim reports
Consultation
Consultation
Consultation
Finalizing Teams’ reports

**Projects Deliverance**

Client
Client
Client
Client
Training printed materials (Project report should follow this citation style)


Andreas Werr and Alexander Styhre. 2002


**Engagement Objectives:**

- To turn clients’ impediments into opportunities.
- To train consultants in current concepts in business consulting, including integrity and client relationships.
- To develop consultants’ analytical skills, creative problem-solving and writing and presentation skills, and prepare them for a career in consulting.

**Engagement management:**

**Teams:** The consultants will group into teams of 3 members. Each team will be assigned to solve a current organizational or management problem or dilemma in a client’s organization. Consultants are expected to search the professional literature and find supportive theories or models to substantiate their analysis.
Consultants are expected to attend all meetings and to be prepared to actively participate.

**Sponsor:** The team will meet with the client’s sponsor who will present the problem to the team, coordinate between the team and the client organization’s other members, read the draft of the consulting project, attend the team presentation at BBC headquarters, and contribute to the assessment of the project’s quality and the team’s professionalism.

**The Engagement Letter:** The team will draft an engagement letter based on the following elements:

- Our Value Proposition
- Our Understanding and Project Background
- Project Goals, Objectives and Scope
- Project Approach
- Project Deliverables
- Project Assumptions
- Project Staffing
- Timing and Professional Fees (not applicable)
- General Business Terms (not applicable)

Please consult with a sample proposal posted on BBC e-board (Blackboard)
Engagement deliverable

A project report

The team will present the project in a written report of up to 20 pages (not including bibliography, appendix, attachments, and acknowledgements).

The written document include the following parts:

- Cover page with the project’s title, client organization’s name, sponsoring manager, team’s members
- Executive Summary
- Project Background
- Project Goals, Objectives and Scope
- Project Approach/ Methodology
- Project Findings
- Project Conclusions
- Project Recommendations
- Bibliography
- Appendix

The project report should be typed, double space, and with one inch margins all around. Please number the pages, staple them on the upper left hand corner,
and put them in soft report covers. Copies of the reports should be provided to
the Clients and the Partners.

An oral presentation

The team will make an oral presentation of the report at BBC headquarters at
Baruch College. The recommended structure of the presentation is as follows:

• Use Power Point
• Limit the number of items presented
• Allow around 45 minutes for presentation and 30 minutes for discussion
  and feedback from clients and partners
• All team members should take part in the presentation
• Apply presentation skills acquired in the training program

Confidentiality

Each team will sign a confidentiality in the form of a non-disclosure agreement
(NDA) with the client organization.

Performance evaluation:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partners’ evaluation of deliverable</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client’s evaluation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Reference List.


Steinke, S. L. (2012). Experiential learning to influence faculty resistance and motivation when developing science-with-lab online courses. Doctoral dissertation, Capella University, Minneapolis, MN.


