

MMULTIDISCIPLINARY
ACTION
PROJECTS
2010
BA 553
SYLLABUS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The world's premier business schools share a common goal – to develop leaders that significantly impact business and society world-wide. Each strives to excel at teaching fundamental business concepts and tools for which their graduates are so highly valued. Most offer leadership development opportunities designed to help their graduates achieve superior placement, on-the-job performance, and advancement.

The Ross School of Business has developed a distinctive strategy for developing such leaders. We call our approach action-based learning. We believe it is the best way to achieve excellence in business education and leadership development. Put simply, when it comes to providing the best possible business education and developing future business leaders, we believe that experience is the best teacher.

Action-based learning enriches business education by connecting theory with practice. It deepens understanding of analytical concepts and tools, builds confidence in their use, and hones skills essential for their successful application. It goes beyond classroom problem-solving to build real-world critical thinking skills – how to sense opportunities and define problems; how to think creatively about actionable alternatives and solutions; how to arrive at fact-based decisions and reasonable judgments; and, once an action plan is determined, how to make it so.

Action-based learning provides a powerful context for developing and testing leadership capabilities. Students work together on high-performance teams to confront real business challenges with real stakes in real time. The team must create the best possible deliverables given limited time, resources, and data; overcome unexpected obstacles; successfully navigate organizations, perspectives, and cultures; and, in the end, communicate recommendations persuasively to sponsors requiring actionable, high-impact solutions.

The design of the Ross MBA Program is based on a school-wide commitment to action-based learning – offering world-class training in the fundamentals of business, a unique sequence of leadership development opportunities, and a set of distinctive practical experiences to augment and integrate the program's classroom learning and leadership lessons.

In the first year of the Ross MBA, students master fundamentals of accounting, economics, finance, management, marketing, operations, statistics, and strategy; develop and test their leadership capabilities through the Ross Leadership Initiative; and then bring together all that they have learned – and go beyond it – through the Multidisciplinary Action Projects (MAP).

MAP is the Ross MBA Program's flagship action-based learning experience. For two months at the end of their first year, teams of students work with organizations around the world on real business challenges – a capstone experience that augments and integrates student understanding of fundamental concepts and skills, provides perspective on how these concepts and tools apply in the real world, and builds the kind of real-world leadership capabilities increasingly valued by business and society as a whole.

This handbook is intended to provide student teams, project sponsors, and faculty advisors with a roadmap for how to conduct successful MAP projects. It describes the MAP program, provides guidance for its successful completion, and points the reader towards critical supporting resources. Our hope is that it will help ensure a great learning experience for students, high-impact recommendations for sponsors, and a valuable teaching engagement for faculty advisors.

Welcome to the 2010 MAP Program. We wish everyone involved all the best in making this year's MAP experience a truly exceptional one of which our entire community can be proud.

2. **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Course Description

The Multidisciplinary Action Projects core course (MAP) places first-year MBA's with organizations throughout the world to address pressing organizational challenges. Students work in teams with guidance from faculty advisors to develop actionable and valuable recommendations for sponsors.

For students, MAP provides a capstone course augmenting and integrating knowledge of fundamental business concepts and tools learned in classroom settings. MAP also offers opportunities to develop and test both critical thinking and leadership skills through practical experience with real business challenges.

For sponsoring organizations, MAP offers access to a high-caliber team of 4-6 students, the latest business concepts and tools, an external viewpoint, and rapid turnaround (7 weeks). The ultimate deliverable to the sponsor from a MAP project is a set of actionable, data-driven recommendations.

MAP projects are based on sponsor needs and address a wide range of business issues – from identifying new processes and improving existing operations to launching new products and targeting new growth opportunities. Sponsors come from many different industries – from alternative energy to business process outsourcing to consumer products to financial services to healthcare to real estate to telecom. Sponsoring organizations may be large corporations, small entrepreneurial start-ups, or non-profit organizations. A project may be based in the U.S. or abroad. Since MAP's inception in 1992, Ross students have completed over 1,300 MAP projects for more than 650 organizations in over 50 countries.

While each MAP project is different in context, all have essential features in common. All confront students with a real business challenge of significant importance and no existing solution. All require applying concepts and tools from multiple disciplines to successfully complete. All require dynamic sense-making, fact-based decisions, and high-performance teamwork. All unfold in unpredictable ways. All conclude with teams presenting actionable recommendations to project sponsors and faculty advisors.

MAP Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of MAP fall into three broad categories:

Core Business Knowledge

- Selecting appropriate core concepts and tools for application
- Adapting core concepts and tools to practical situations
- Integrating core concepts and tools

Critical Thinking Skills

- Dynamic opportunity-sensing and problem definition
- Collecting and analyzing data as an input to judgment
- Innovative problem-solving

Leadership Capabilities

- Developing and participating on high-performance teams
- Navigating organizations, perspectives, and cultures
- Communicating clearly and persuasively

MAP Learning Partners

The success of a **MAP project is dependent** on a successful partnership between the student team, the sponsoring organization and its liaisons, and the student team's faculty advisors.

Student Team

The primary objective of the student team is to demonstrate fulfillment of the MAP learning objectives while producing valuable recommendations for the sponsoring organization.

A student team consists of 4-6 MBA students with an average of 5 years of full-time work experience. Students receive 7.5 credits towards their MBA, equivalent to a full course load, and students are naturally expected to devote themselves to MAP full-time throughout the project.

The student team is expected to work collaboratively with the sponsoring organization and faculty advisors to define the problem or opportunity to be addressed, collect and analyze relevant data, and develop actionable solutions. At the end of the project, the team presents final recommendations and provides a detailed written report. The student team is accountable for managing the project and the quality of all deliverables.

Sponsoring Organizations

Sponsoring organizations are the Ross School's real-world partners in the MAP learning process. Sponsors provide MAP teams with challenging, multi-disciplinary projects that have no obvious or existing solution. In return, sponsors expect high-quality, actionable recommendations.

Sponsor liaisons work with the student team to frame the project, help the team access relevant people and information, provide feedback on project deliverables, and ensure availability of adequate workspace and other appropriate resources. Many sponsors also handle project-related expenses for the student team, such as travel and lodging.

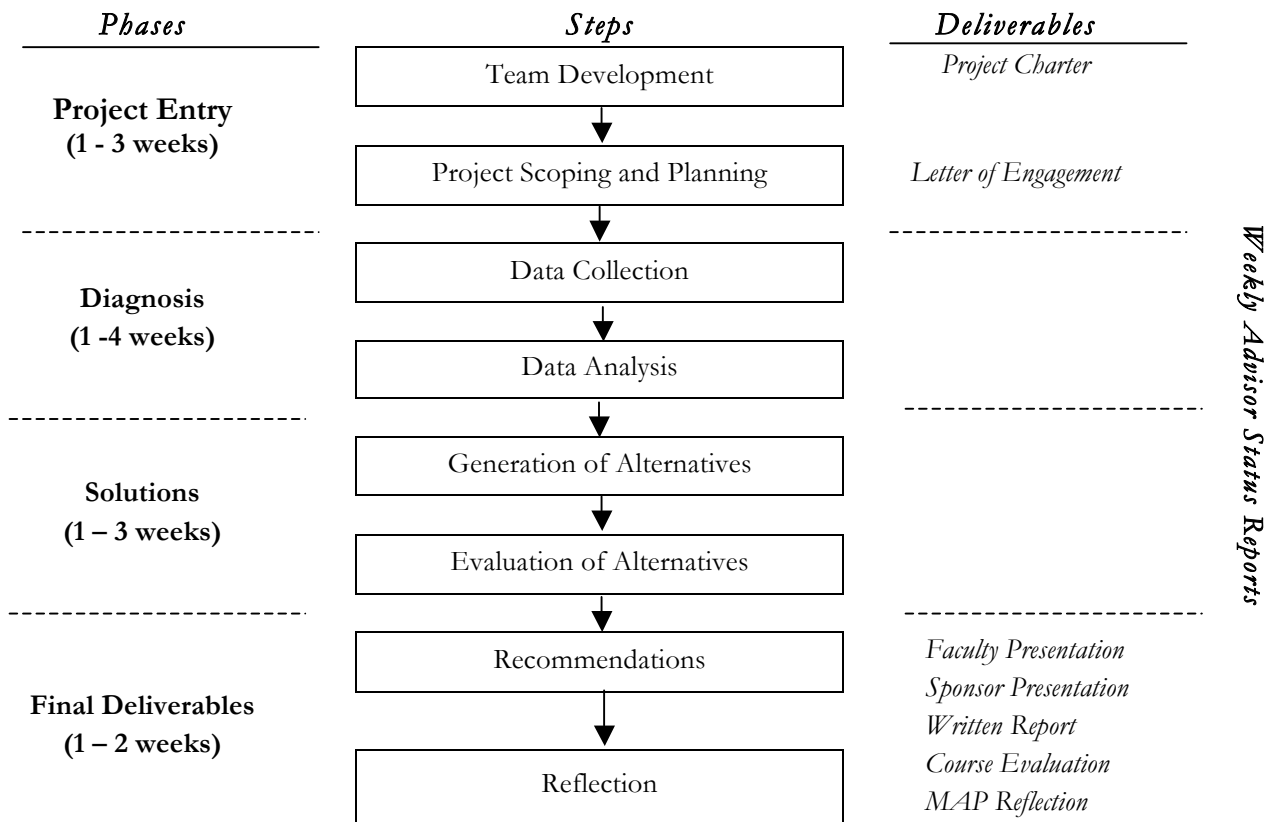
In addition to providing sponsors with a final presentation and report, student teams are expected to be proactive in ensuring on-going communication throughout the course of the project. Weekly contacts and a mid-term project review are strongly recommended. Student teams should discuss sponsors' communication preferences as early in the project as possible.

Faculty Advisors

Faculty advisors provide suggestions and advice to enhance the team’s degree of success, evaluate team performance and provide feedback to the team, and advocate a structured approach to MAP and its learning objectives. The primary function of the faculty advisors is to help the student team bring their MAP project to a conclusion that is successful in the eyes of the sponsors, the faculty advisors, and the student team itself. A student team will have two advisors, one of whom will act as “liaison advisor” to the sponsor, team, and other faculty.

It is expected that teams will take initiative to seek out faculty advisors for input and keep them apprised as the project progresses. MAP teams should meet or contact the faculty team at least once per week to report on project progress; discuss problems and opportunities; receive faculty advice, feedback, and suggestions; and reflect on course learning objectives. Final responsibility for the success of the project, of course, lies with the student team.

MAP Learning Process



MAP Learning Process

There is a flow to MAP that is common to all projects. The figure below illustrates the main phases of project flow, the steps of the learning process associated with each phase, required deliverables, and their approximate timing. Detailed descriptions of each deliverable are provided later in this handbook. Please note that phases may overlap with one another and that timing is dependent on the nature of each individual project. Of course, as MAP begins following Winter Break and finishes prior to the end of the semester, all phases must be completed within those 7-8 weeks.

In the Team Development phase, students are assigned projects, develop team and personal viewpoints on project needs and goals, and determine how they will work together as a team. A Project Charter is required that defines project goals and how the team will work together towards successful completion.

During the Project Entry phase, teams assess project context, needs, and anticipated output; engage in opportunity-sensing and problem definition; develop a project scope statement; plan their work together; and establish an agreement between the team, faculty, and the sponsor regarding the project's goals, boundaries, work plan, and nature of the final deliverables. Teams are required to develop a Letter of Engagement that formally captures this shared understanding among the parties.

In the Diagnosis stage students collect primary and secondary data, analyze the information gathered, and begin identifying relevant findings – including preliminary conclusions and recommendations. Teams should discuss their preliminary findings and diagnosis with faculty advisors and the sponsoring organization's liaison.

During the final phases of the MAP process, teams work to generate and evaluate alternative solutions to address the issues identified, as well as how to persuade faculty advisors and the sponsoring organization regarding their final recommendations. It is highly recommended that teams discuss draft outlines of their report and presentations with a communication coach. Required deliverables include a final oral presentation to the team's faculty advisors, a final presentation to the sponsor organization, and a written report. In addition, reflection is an important element of any action-based learning experience and MAP is no exception. The final required deliverables are the confidential peer and course evaluations.

MAP Chronology: Timeline of MAP Events and Deliverables

While the exact timing of the MAP learning process is project-dependent, other aspects are more predictable. The following table lists these events and deliverables. Each is briefly described on the following page. Detailed descriptions are provided in the 'Events' and 'Deliverables' sections of this handbook.

Week	Event	Deliverable
1	MAP Kickoff	
2	Advising Session	Advisor Status Report prior to advising session Project Charter prior to advising session
3	Advising Session	Advisor Status Report prior to advising session Letter of Engagement prior to advising session
4	Advising Session Team Coaching Session	Advisor Status Report prior to advising session
5	Advising Session	Advisor Status Report prior to advising session
6	Advising Session	Advisor Status Report prior to advising session Presentation Schedule Confirmed
7-8	Faculty Presentation Sponsor Presentation	Written Report (By 3PM on 4/29) Peer and Course Evaluations (By 5PM on 4/30)

MAP Kickoff – A required event that provides students teams with an orientation to MAP. Initial meetings with faculty advisors, team coach, and communication coach will occur during Kickoff.

Project Charter – The project charter is a living document that summarizes the project scope and how the team will work together towards its successful completion.

Advisor Status Reports – Provides team members and faculty advisors with a high level summary of the team’s progress.

Advising Sessions – A weekly meeting with faculty advisors to discuss the team’s progress, challenges and issues the team is facing, and how they are planning to move forward. Teams are responsible for setting the agendas for these sessions.

Letter of Engagement – A formal agreement between the team and the sponsor describing the problem/opportunity to be addressed, goals, boundaries, expected deliverables, and work plan.

Team Coaching Session – A mid-project status meeting with a team process coach to review the team’s process and discuss any adjustments the team can make to enhance team functioning.

Faculty Presentation – A presentation of the final recommendation made by the team to the faculty advisors. It is expected that students will present to faculty before presenting to the sponsor.

Sponsor Presentation – A presentation of the final recommendations made by the team to the sponsoring organization.

Written Report – A written report describing the team’s research, analyses, and recommendations (maximum of 30 pages plus appendices).

Peer Evaluation – Each individual student is required to submit an evaluation of the quality and extent of each team member’s contributions.

Course Evaluation – Each student is required to fill out a comprehensive course evaluation to help the MAP faculty and administration better understand your experience in the program.

MAP Grading

MAP grades are based on faculty advisors’ overall assessment of team performance – including final recommendations and supporting analysis, required deliverables, and the team’s conduct of the project.

In terms of process, each faculty advisor submits an overall team score. Team grades are then determined based on the average team score. MAP is a core course with an upper limit of 25% on the ‘Excellent’ category, so teams must score in the top 25% of all teams in order to receive a grade of ‘Excellent’. The remaining teams receive grades of ‘Good’, ‘Pass’, ‘Low Pass’, or ‘Fail’ as warranted.

An individual student’s MAP grade may differ from the team grade if faculty evaluations of individual contributions and performance support such an adjustment (e.g., as indicated by peer evaluations).

For the purpose of selecting students for graduation with distinction or high distinction, two GPA calculations will be used – one that includes a student’s MAP grade and one without. If a student qualifies for honors under either calculation, they will be eligible.

MAP and the Statement of Community Values

Students are expected to observe the letter and spirit of the Ross School’s Statement of Community Values throughout their MAP experience. Within our community or beyond its walls, students should exhibit conduct that reflects the values of the community they represent. Students participating on MAP teams are representatives and ambassadors of the School as a whole. Everyone in our community depends on MAP students conducting themselves appropriately in all of their activities and interactions.

Of course, as in other courses, alleged violations of the Statement – such as misrepresentation when collecting data, irresponsible or unfair use of facilities and equipment, failure to cite sources appropriately – are subject to investigation and potential sanction by the School’s Community Values Committee.

The Statement of Community Values is reprinted here for reference:

We, the members of the Ross School of Business community – students, faculty and staff – shall work together in striving for excellence in every aspect of our School’s activities. We seek to be a model of how members of an academic community can combine their spirit and talents to achieve such institutional excellence.

We understand that in striving for excellence, our personal and institutional integrity is our most precious asset. Accordingly, we accept accountability for our behavior and will not knowingly act in ways that might damage that integrity.

We commit ourselves to performing our work and fulfilling our responsibilities honestly and professionally. In particular, we will not tolerate cheating of any sort by any member of our community in any situation.

We shall treat each other with respect, honoring the dignity and value of each member of our community. We will cooperate with each other and fulfill our mutual commitments. We will extend these same courtesies to our guests.

We pledge to share community assets, such as facilities, library materials and information technology resources, in ways that are responsible, that comply with established policies and that reflect the principle of fairness.

We accept adherence to these values as a condition of membership in the Ross School of Business community.

3. MAP EVENTS

Initial Meeting with Advisors

Your initial meeting with your advisors is your opportunity to discuss MAP and the administrative details for the project. The specific content of the meeting will be determined by your advisors, but will generally include a discussion of:

- The goals of MAP
 - The Team's
 - The Sponsor's
 - The School's
- Advisors and coaches and their roles
- Keys to having a successful MAP experience
- Working in Teams
- Communications
 - Weekly status reports
 - Weekly advising meetings
 - Best way to communicate (email, phone, etc.)
- How to prepare for you first meeting with the sponsor

As communication among all participants in MAP – team, sponsor, faculty advisors, and coaches – is crucial for success, this meeting is a good time to start that process.

Initial Meeting with the Team Coach

In this initial meeting you will be introduced to your team coach and the coaching process explained. The purpose of this session is to help you develop an effective team process, know how to recognize if your team is getting off-track, and when to engage the help of the team coach. In addition you will be introduced to:

- Individual and team processes that enable a team to achieve extraordinary performance.
- Frameworks that you can apply to your future leadership roles.

Initial Meeting with Communication Coach

This is your opportunity to establish a working relationship with your coach and explore the communication resources that are available to you. At this session you will meet the coach assigned to your team and discuss how to best to engage their expertise and services.

Initial Meeting with Sponsor

The initial meeting with the sponsor is very important in building a foundation for a successful project. You will want to use it to begin to clarify the scope of your project, identify key issues, and decide what data you might want to collect. This meeting is an excellent opportunity to discuss:

- The problem or opportunity the project addresses;
- Why the issue is important to the sponsor;
- What kind of information is available from the organization;
- The audience to whom your recommendations will be provided.

It is also a good opportunity to begin discussion of the project scope – the goals of the project, its boundaries, and expected deliverables.

For this and subsequent meetings, plan your roles and set an agenda. Summarize orally to the sponsor your perception of the sponsor's expectations. This will help keep the team and sponsor expectations appropriately calibrated.

Your liaison will be your primary point of contact for the project. This is an opportunity for the liaison to learn more about the goals of the MAP program and your personal goals for the project. As a start, some of the issues you can discuss at the first meeting are:

- Backgrounds, both personal and professional, of the team and the sponsor liaison;
- Learning goals of everyone on the MAP team;
- Liaison's roles and responsibilities in the organization;
- Questions anyone might have about the project.
- Project budget and expense reporting.

Your initial contacts with the sponsor are very important for getting a solid start on your work. If any significant issues or questions arise from your first discussions, you should communicate them as soon as possible to your faculty advisors.

On-Site Visits

Although each MAP project unfolds differently, most projects involve meetings with representatives of sponsoring organizations either on-site at the organization or another remote location.

Planning the Visit

An important key to success in MAP is preparation – whether for an advising meeting, interview, or presentation. A trip to visit with a sponsor is no exception. Understand the sponsor's expectations for the visit – especially what kind of preparation or pre-reading would be most useful, whom you will be meeting, and what type of interactions can be expected. Carefully lay out the team's goals for the visit – information to seek out during the visit, individuals the team would like to meet, etc – and use these goals to set priorities for how the team can best use the limited time on site. Lay out specific individual responsibilities within the team for how these goals will be achieved.

Of course, it is also important to ensure a good understanding of relevant details prior to the visit. For some projects, sponsors may handle logistics of travel, lodging, and related expenses for the team. In such cases, the team should inquire regarding policies and procedures the sponsoring organization would like the team to follow. The team should also identify expectations in terms of scheduling meetings and events, as well as how best to fit in with the organization's culture (e.g., salutations, dress codes, etc.).

Getting There

MAP team members are expected to travel and lodge together as a group. Traveling together to remote locations and staying together on site represent an important opportunity for the team to work together and coalesce. It is also beneficial in terms of coping with travel difficulties, as well as safety. Making separate travel arrangements other than for an emergency will not be supported by the MAP office or the sponsor. It is also worth noting that while students should not expect business class travel and lodging, they should expect travel arrangements conducive to achieving the project's goals, as well as accommodations that are clean, safe, and reasonably convenient.

While On-Site

First and foremost, of course, students are ambassadors for the School and represent all of us in everything they do. Naturally, it is expected that all of our students will act accordingly at all times. In the first meeting with the sponsor it is also important to make a good impression and gain the sponsor's confidence in the team.

The on-site visit is often a pivotal learning opportunity for the team. If the site visit occurs early in the project, teams are often working on refining their project's scope and plan. At later times, the team may be collecting data from key informants or providing the sponsor with a mid-point update. In all cases, the site visit is a time to learn as much as you can. Teams are strongly encouraged to be curious, ask many questions, listen carefully, observe, and ask more questions – not only about topics that directly relate to a current issue the team is trying to address, but also more broadly. It is not always easy to know what will be valuable later on.

Students that wish to provide service to the School by meeting with prospective students or alumni during their travels should contact the Admissions or Alumni Relations offices with their itineraries.

Upon Return

Carefully de-brief the visit – both within the team and with faculty advisors.

Weekly Faculty Advising Meetings

When your team and faculty is in Ann Arbor, you will meet for a weekly advising session with your faculty advisors. If you are elsewhere, you may arrange phone conferences at the discretion of your advisors. The advising session is an opportunity for you to present what you have accomplished, ask for guidance on challenges or opportunities the team is facing, and discuss relevant project issues. Your team is in charge of the meeting and should come prepared with an agenda, preferably sent in advance along with any pre-reading materials. Consider rotating team leadership for the advising session and encourage all team members to participate actively.

The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Report on project progress
- Discuss significant challenges and opportunities
- Receive faculty advice, feedback, and suggestions
- Reflect on the course learning objectives

Faculty advisors will expect the team to set the agenda each advising meeting, send any pre-reading material well in advance, and to manage the meeting effectively and efficiently.

MAP projects move at different paces, but the following topics are typically addressed at each of the five weekly advising meetings:

- Week 2 – Project Charter
- Week 3 – Letter of Engagement
- Week 4 – Mid-point Review
- Week 5 – Preliminary Findings
- Week 6 – Preliminary Recommendations

At each meeting, the student team should expect faculty advisors to:

- Offer informal and formal feedback on the team's progress
- Advocate the MAP learning process and objectives
- Advise, question, and challenge the team

Overall, advisors seek to help teams have the best possible learning experience and produce the best possible deliverables for the sponsoring organization. Please be aware, though, that advisors must coach teams without becoming actively involved in the work of the team itself or acting as advocates for the team's work to sponsors or other faculty advisors.

Examples of agendas for weekly advising meetings can be found on the MAP website.

4. MAP DELIVERABLES

Project Charter

The MAP project charter sets forth what the team is going to accomplish and how the team will work together towards a successful MAP experience. It is intended as a living document ensuring shared understanding about the nature of the project, team responsibilities, and operating guidelines.

The three main components of the Project Charter are:

- Project scope statement
- Team roles and responsibilities
- Collaboration guidelines

Project Scope Statement

The project scope statement is a brief summary of the problem/opportunity to be addressed, and the goals, boundaries, and expected deliverables for the engagement. It is strongly recommended that the statement be no longer than one page. For information on project scoping refer to the Project Management document on the MAP student website.

For most teams, the project scope will evolve and change throughout the Project Entry Phase. The team should prepare a preliminary project scope statement to be submitted as part of the Project Charter prior to the first weekly meeting with the team's faculty advisors.

The scope should be finalized by the end of the Project Entry Phase and a final version of the project scope statement should replace the preliminary version in the team's Project Charter. Please see the section of this Handbook on 'Letter of Engagement' for more on project scoping.

Team Roles and Responsibilities

Identify roles you believe will contribute to successful completion of your MAP project. Examples of team roles include sponsor liaison, faculty liaison, project manager, financial manager, meetings manager, and so on. Some roles may be permanent; other roles may exist for only a short time or be rotated among team members. All should serve to support the team and successful achievement of project goals.

Collaboration Guidelines

Develop a set of guidelines for how the team can best work together. These guidelines should establish expectations for individual team member's participation and contributions. Guidelines may include agreements about things like coming to meetings on time, asking for help, addressing conflicts directly, carrying a fair share of the work, encouraging contributions from everyone, and listening carefully before disagreeing with ideas. Work with your Communication Coach to establish specific guidelines for collaborative work on presentations and the final report. Teams often find it useful to review these guidelines periodically with one another, revising old ones and creating new ones as needs arise.

The charter discussion should take place as soon as possible after MAP Kickoff and the initial charter should be sent to faculty advisors and posted on your MAP team CTools site prior to your first weekly advising session. Please post revised MAP charters on your CTools site whenever you make substantial changes.

Weekly Status Report

Each team is required to provide a weekly status report summarizing each of the following:

- Progress made since the last meeting;
- Significant challenges and opportunities the team is facing;
- Issues on which faculty input is desired.

The weekly status reports should be helpful to the team in monitoring progress towards the project's goals, as well as identifying next steps and setting priorities for the project's successful completion.

Faculty advisors use status reports to prepare for weekly advising sessions, so reports should cover each of the above areas in appropriate depth. The weekly status reports also provide advisors with a record of the team's progress over time.

A status report form is also available, but teams may use whatever form best suits the team and project, as long as it provides sufficient information for the advisors to understand and track the team's progress. Sponsors may also establish a contact schedule via phone or email and seek a status report, although such practices vary widely across project and sponsors.

Status reports should be sent to both faculty advisors at least 24 hours before each weekly advising meeting beginning in the 2nd week of the program. Each status report should also be posted on the CTools website.

Sample status reports are available on the MAP Student Website.

Letter of Engagement

During the Project Entry Phase, the team works towards developing a clear understanding of project goals, boundaries, expected deliverables, and a summary work plan for completing the project successfully. The team develops a formal Letter of Engagement to be signed by both the team and the sponsor. The purpose of the Letter of Engagement is to ensure shared understanding between the team, sponsor, and faculty advisors about the nature of the project and expected outcomes. The Letter of Engagement also serves as a contract to which all of the parties can refer over the course of the project.

The main components of the Letter of Engagement are:

Project scope statement

- Problem Definition/Opportunity Identification
- Project goals
- Project boundaries
- Expected deliverables

Summary Work plan

- Schedule
- Milestones

The project scope statement is a brief summary of the problem/opportunity to be addressed, and the goals, boundaries, and expected deliverables for the engagement. It is strongly recommended that the statement be no longer than one page.

Determination of the project's scope is a top priority for teams during the Project Entry Phase. Teams should begin the process of scoping the project immediately after MAP Kickoff. The team should carefully assess the project proposal and begin analysis of the project context – significance of the project to the organization, parties affected, decision-maker involved, resources required, and so on. The team should work towards clearly defining the problem/opportunity, what the goals of the project should be, what is and is not part of the project scope, and the nature of expected deliverables. The objective is to craft a project scope statement that clearly articulates these elements and ensures the project can be completed successfully given the time, resources, and support available.

The summary work plan should provide all parties with a high-level overview of how the project scope will be successfully completed. The work plan should provide a schedule for the remaining stages of the project and what needs to be accomplished to complete each one.

Detailed guidance on what needs to be considered in determining and managing the project's scope can be found on the MAP student website, along with background on project management and planning.

In terms of process, the team should begin by developing a preliminary project scope statement early in the Project Entry Phase to review with the sponsor. The preliminary scope statement should also be included in the team's Project Charter and discussed with faculty advisors at the first weekly advising meeting during the second week of the project.

The team should continue to work on the project scope and refine the project scope statement for inclusion in the Letter of Engagement, as well as develop a summary work plan for how the project will be executed. A draft of the Letter of Engagement should be given to both faculty advisors and sponsors for review. Once there is general agreement among all parties, the Letter of Engagement should be signed by the team and the sponsor. Copies of the final version should also be sent to faculty advisors and posted to CTools.

Examples of the Letter of Engagement can be found on the MAP Student website.

Final Presentations

The final presentation is the team's opportunity to demonstrate to faculty that they have successfully fulfilled the course's learning objectives and to persuade sponsors to adopt the team's proposed recommendations.

Teams are required to give a final presentation to both their faculty advisors and the sponsoring organization. These presentations may be given separately or jointly, depending on the nature of the project and the availability of both the sponsor and faculty advisors. If the student team presents to both audiences separately, it is highly recommended that students present to faculty before presenting to the sponsor whenever possible. The faculty presentation should be approached in the same manner as the sponsor presentation and should not be considered as a practice presentation.

The team should determine early on what preferences, if any, the sponsor has for presentations in terms of style, content, and other relevant attributes. For example, many sponsors desire a presentation 'deck' that is self-contained and can be easily disseminated throughout the organization. Others may prefer a very different style.

For particular projects, sponsors may be able to come to Ann Arbor, faculty may be available to travel to the sponsor's location, or the presentation to the sponsor may be made from Ann Arbor using distance technology to reach the sponsor. For these projects, both the faculty and sponsor presentation requirements may be satisfied simultaneously through a single final presentation. Please work with your faculty advisors and sponsor liaison to schedule final presentations by the date indicated in the Timeline of MAP Events and Deliverables (MAP Chronology) found earlier in this handbook.

Please note that on some international projects, sponsors may request a presentation before the team's return to Ann Arbor. The need for this should be determined as quickly as possible to stay ahead of your project deadlines. In this case, the team would present to faculty advisors upon return to Ann Arbor.

It is strongly recommended that teams work closely with their assigned Communication Coach to develop their final presentations.

Detailed guidelines for final presentations and a variety of examples can be found on the MAP student website.

Written Report

The written report is the team's opportunity to provide a comprehensive and detailed support for their recommendations. It is important to the team as its writing helps students reflect on their work, integrate what they have learned, and deepen their understanding of how to successfully define and execute initiatives in a business setting. The written report is also of value to sponsors as it provides more comprehensive and deeper analysis and support for the team's recommendation, as well as a written record that can be drawn on in the future. The report also provides faculty with the best opportunity to understand the team's project and recommendations as they evaluate the team's performance in MAP.

The outline and content of the report is up to the team. In terms of parameters, the body of the team's report should be at least 25 and no more than 30 pages in length. Additional information may be provided in appendices or companion documents, including versions of the final report tailored to meet the needs of the sponsor based on the agreed upon project scope.

Detailed guidance on the written report can be found on CTools. Teams are strongly encouraged to consult with their communications coach as they develop and prepare the report.

Please deliver one copy of the final report to each of your faculty advisors no later than 3:00PM by the date indicated in the MAP Chronology found earlier in this handbook.. Two bound copies should be given to the MAP office for archival purposes. Check with your sponsors to find out how many bound and unbound copies of the final report they would like to receive. Post the final report and presentation, and any other key project outputs to the team CTools site in the standard Word, Excel, and PowerPoint formats. PDF formats are fine but only as supplements.

Peer Evaluation

At the end of the course, you will be asked to fill out a peer evaluation form regarding the extent and quality of each group member's contributions to your group. Peer evaluations may be used to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions or to identify individuals who have had a negative impact on group learning and project success.

Peer evaluations must be electronically submitted to MAP administration by April 30th. Failure to submit your peer evaluation by that time may result in a grade of Incomplete for you and possibly also for your teammates.

Course Evaluation

At the end of MAP, you are required to fill out a comprehensive course evaluation to help the MAP faculty and administration better understand your experience in the program. The Course Evaluation is due to MAP administration by April 30th.

The course evaluation is comprehensive and covers all aspects of the MAP experience – team, project, sponsor, advisors, administration, and satisfaction. Full participation by all students is required and highly valued as the findings from the survey are reviewed carefully each year with an eye towards improving the MAP experience for all involved. Faculty advisors and sponsoring organizations also fill out similar questionnaires regarding their experience with the program.

5. MAP PROJECT SUPPORT/RESOURCES

Communication

Each MAP team is assigned a communication coach who is available to answer communication-related questions and provide feedback on the communication components of deliverables. Teams are responsible for soliciting feedback and arranging appointments on an as-needed basis. Take advantage of the communication coaching opportunities at all major checkpoints, including drafts of your letter of engagement, your interim and final presentations, and your written report. Teams are strongly encouraged to have an outline conference and final presentation practice session with your communication coach.

Communication coaches send out reminders about upcoming deliverables and resources available to help teams to complete them. The MAP student website has documents with detailed guidelines for collaborative communication and preparing the final oral and written reports. If there is sufficient demand, communication coaches will provide workshops on selected topics. Although the greatest learning occurs during discussion of the materials to be reviewed, of necessity, some feedback will be provided over email and by phone.

Team Performance

A successful MAP team – one that achieves results and appreciates working together - is a diverse group of MBA1 students with complementary skills and mutual respect who are committed to meaningful common goals and high performance standards. A successful MAP team also has a clear strategy for working together that enables them to achieve high-quality results with limited resources within a short time frame -- often in an ambiguous situation with multiple stakeholders.

Each MAP team is assigned a Team Coach who will meet with team members individually early during MAP, as well as with the whole team at the kick-off and midway through MAP. The goal of the Team Process Coach is to help team members reflect on and enhance their team process so that they can achieve a successful MAP experience. The Team Process Coach will contact team members directly to schedule these meetings. The Coach will also be available as needed throughout MAP.

Your Team Process Coach will be a valuable resource who can help you achieve these goals by providing you with frameworks, feedback, and team process coaching as needed throughout MAP.

Library

Each MAP team is assigned a librarian who can assist you in finding and using resources for your project. The librarian's name and contact information will be listed in your team's CTools site.

Your librarian will serve as a guide through Kresge Library's vast resources as well as those available through the main University Library at Michigan. The Kresge Librarians can help you identify the best places, especially in Kresge's databases, to find data, articles, reports, and other information that you will need. They can also help you research more effectively in the Kresge databases.

It is best to reach out to the team librarian when you have a good sense of the nature of the project. While many teams will meet with their librarian during the first two weeks, meetings that take place after (or during) your visit to the sponsors will often be the most fruitful.

Besides helping with finding information among Kresge Library resources, the librarian will also be able to direct you to information critical to your work. These include obtaining older MAP reports (available at Kresge Library), determining which documents may be shared with your sponsors, and other issues that might arise during the project.

Data Collection/Research/Surveying

Many MAP projects benefit from primary data collection in the form of interviews, focus groups, or surveys.

It is important to recognize that all data collection efforts must be conducted with full disclosure. That is, teams must identify themselves as Ross students working with the MAP sponsor (e.g., Microsoft).

The first step is to identify the goal of the data collection effort. In general, the goal should be to collect data that will help the team provide support for their recommendations. The team should make explicit specific information sought and how it will be used.

Next, the team should select an appropriate method for ascertaining the desired information. In the case of primary data, students will usually need to select between one-on-one interviews, group interviews/focus groups, or more formal surveys. Each of these approaches has specific strengths and weaknesses to consider. In addition, teams must carefully consider the cost of the data collection approach in terms of team time and effort, as well as any financial costs that might be incurred.

Interviews and focus groups are qualitative approaches well-suited to discovery learning and the development of hypotheses. For in-depth interviews, the goal is to get the respondent to talk freely and at length about an issue. Typically, a small number of questions can be asked, but the ability to interact with the respondent allows the interviewer to obtain richer data than would be possible via a survey approach. Interviews can yield rich insights, albeit insights that should naturally be treated as exploratory and preliminary.

Surveys are best when there are specific hypotheses to test. A survey allows for a structured approach to gathering information on a broader set of questions than interviews and, dependent on response rates, can be a more efficient method of collecting data. Survey design is critical and the development of a survey is usually a very intensive, time-consuming process – often preceded by exploratory qualitative research. Questions must be carefully written and ordered. Detailed plans for how the data will be coded and analyzed must be laid out.

As a rule, teams are strongly discouraged from attempting extensive formal quantitative surveys during a MAP project due to the short cycle of these projects. Rather, teams are encouraged to conduct exploratory interviews and focus groups. They may also wish to design surveys as one of their deliverables, leaving it to the organization to implement the survey and analyze the resulting data at a later date.

To assist you in developing surveys a consultant will be available to teams on an “as needed” basis. General background on setting research goals and collecting primary data, as well as guidelines for designing surveys and conducting interviews, can be found on the MAP student website. In addition, external sources addressing these issues can be found at www.knowthis.com and www.socialresearchmethods.net.

MAP Student Website

The MAP Student website (www.bus.umich.edu/map/studentwebsite) has many supplementary resources, including articles, tools, and summaries of best practices. The website includes electronic versions of materials, such examples of Letters of Engagement, Communications Handbook, Diagnostic Interviewing, and information on Project Management. Students should also check the website regularly for announcements.

6. MAP ADMINISTRATION

Confidentiality Agreements

All projects are confidential unless permission to release is obtained in advance from the sponsor. Non-disclosure agreements are arranged at the sponsor's request.

Safety and Security

Students traveling abroad and domestic should travel in pairs and be safety conscious at all times and carry sponsor contact information with them – including home telephone numbers, if possible. It is also a good idea to have the address and telephone number for the U.S. embassy or consulate in your project country. Make extra photocopies of your passport and put them in different places in your personal belongings. Also, carry extra passport pictures. It will make it much easier to obtain another passport if you have extra passport pictures and a photocopy of your current passport. For more information go to <http://www.bus.umich.edu/MAP/Studentwebsite> and click on International Projects on the sidebar.

MAP Office

The MAP Office is here to assist with general administrative issues such as room reservations, equipment, and scheduling concerns. These requests should be directed to Kathleen Johnston of the MAP Office (rsb.map@umich.edu or 763-3647). Please email the MAP Office email address (rsb.map@umich.edu) for all room reservations and other requests as opposed to individual staff. This ensures that your request will not go unanswered in the case of any staff absence from the office. Questions regarding International travel and health insurance as well as immunizations should be directed to Keven Burchfield (647-5951) of the MAP office.