

# 790 Capstone Management Project

## Introduction

790 CAPSTONE MANAGEMENT PROJECT engages students in the conduct of a management project in an area of especial relevance to the student's current or prospective area of business focus. The subject is designed to integrate the knowledge and applied skills learned in the U21Global MBA programme in the production of project deliverables. Students are tasked to prepare a management consulting report, either as a solution to a problem internal to the participant's workplace, or as an external consulting project responding to a real-world situation or advanced case study. The project incorporates and integrates the major concepts and applied skills in an area of particular professional interest to the student.

### Assessment

Students will be graded in their participation in four ongoing discussion boards over the 12-week period. These discussion boards will cover the four broad areas of

- Problem Identification
- Data Collection
- Analysis
- Recommendation and Feedback

Research proposal 1,000 - 2,000 words (due end Week 4)	20%
Participation in discussion boards (ongoing)	20%
Management consulting report 5,000 - 6,000 words (due end Week 12)	60%

### Who should attend

- Executives wishing to enhance their skills and knowledge in research methodologies
- Managers seeking to apply global best practices to contemporary management challenges
- Decision makers in charge of formulating practical solutions and business strategies for organisations

### Learning objectives

Upon completion of this subject, students should be able to

- integrate theories learned in previous subjects to real business problems
- apply conceptual frameworks and global best practices to management challenges
- formulate practical solutions for companies through comprehensive analysis of an organisation
- use knowledge and skills learned in the core disciplines of accounting, finance, marketing, management, economics and data analysis
- demonstrate the ability to use electronic resources of the Internet effectively as a major business resource

### Delivery method

The subject is delivered online over a 12-week period, with an assigned Professor acting as mentor. The class will comprise students from different countries and industry backgrounds. Practical case studies and discussions help to stimulate learning and knowledge exchange, while an examination at the end of the subject will help students review and apply the knowledge and skills learnt.

### Prerequisites

Completion of 10 core plus at least 4 elective subjects.

# Syllabus

## Examples of Possible Projects

### Information Technology Consulting

### Strategy and Organisation Consulting

### Marketing Consulting

### Operations Management Consulting

### Human Resources Consulting

### Consulting to CEOs and Boards

### Globalisation Consulting

### Public Sector Consulting

### Merger and Acquisition Consulting

### Knowledge Management Consulting

### Online Consulting

Students are encouraged to integrate theories learned in previous subjects to real business problems that relate to their real-world responsibilities. To assist them with an overview of the practice of management consulting in major practicing areas, students can refer to their proposed text, Greiner and Poulfelt (2005). Examples of possible projects in various consulting areas include the following:

- Creating a strategy and plan for eBusiness in a real-world organisation
- Developing an IT proposal to support an organisation's international expansion plans
- The use of IT to support the development of an organisation's human resources
- The application of the value-driven consulting model to a real-world organisation
- Developing a comprehensive programme for culture change across the organisation
- Developing an integration programme for two merging companies
- Building a new organisational design to enter international markets
- A major headquarters cost-reduction programme in a real-world organisation
- Strategies for outsourcing in a real-world organisation
- Developing a programme of strategic alliances in R&D and branding
- Developing an integrated communication strategy for a new product/service
- Tailored marketing mix strategies for social and environmental marketing
- Market analysis, segmentation analysis, positioning analysis, channel studies, pricing analysis, marketing audits
- Managing the lifetime value of various segments of customers
- Audit of the assembly-line load balancing of a real-world organisation
- Improving the service encounter design of a real-world organisation via effective measurement, recovery planning and critical incident analysis
- Designing systems for mass customisation in the manufacturing/service sector
- Improving a company's human capital management as a source of competitive advantage
- The systematic tracking and evaluation of compensation awards and performance evaluation results for a real-world organisation
- Evaluating the compatibility, flexibility and analytical power of an eHR system
- Culture change and skill development in a real-life organisation
- Impacts of downsizing on efficiency and effectiveness
- Initiation and management of an active outsourcing programme
- Managing key staff members through a flotation, spin-off or divestiture
- The impact of trade unions on doing business nationally and internationally
- Proposal for the CEO/Board's role in crisis management and prevention
- Corporate-wide risk analysis and management programme
- Comprehensive strategy development and communication programme
- Structuring board and management committees
- Analysis of the global environment: Social-economic-political risks and opportunities
- Development of a global strategy for new market entry: The implications of cost, customer, innovation and competitive performance indicators
- Achieving balance in globalisation capacity and global paradox management
- Developing effective performance outcome training and evaluation processes by proposing alterations to existing civil service rules
- Customising government services for various segments of citizens
- Models of eGovernment to help shape state and local portal designs
- Planning and selection of strategy for inter-firm fit
- Assessment of business and cultural impediments to integration success
- The transference and combination of core competencies and best practices
- Achievement of synergies
- Managing human resources in an M&A environment
- Cultural diagnostic and integration programme
- Acquisition of a competitor
- Analysis and evaluation of an R&D pipeline
- Cross-border acquisitions
- M&A: Buying brands and distribution
- Corporate portfolio rationalisation programme
- Developing a blueprint for implementing a Best Practice Sharing initiative
- Developing an integrated knowledge management measurement model
- Analysing the process of knowledge creation in a high-tech industry
- Developing a strategy to foster knowledge stewardship in a virtual team
- Exploring cross-cultural issues in knowledge management
- Creating and sustaining competitiveness across time and space
- Developing a strategic proposal for project-specific extranets that enable organisations to monitor progress
- The integration of the Internet/Web services into an organisation's expansion and outsourcing activities
- The use of the Internet and real-time information systems in data-mining and decision support systems

## Required textbook

Greiner, L and F. Poulfelt. *The Handbook of Management Consulting: The Contemporary Consultant: Insights from Leading Experts*. Ohio: South Western, 2005.

Zikmund, W. *Business Research Methods* (7th ed). Ohio: South Western, 2003.

# Global Faculty

## Subject Author

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## Subject Reviewer

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**U21Global subjects are created by acknowledged experts in their field, usually senior academics who have strong understanding of postgraduate requirements. The subject content is further reviewed by academic specialists who appraise the subject from an independent perspective, ensuring a high-quality, professional product.**

790 CAPSTONE MANAGEMENT PROJECT was created for U21Global by **Amy Wong**, Assistant Professor and Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs at U21Global. She previously taught at the Department of Marketing and International Business, Lingnan University, Hong Kong. Dr Wong has published in several international refereed journals, such as the *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *Market Intelligence Planning*, *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, *Journal of Services Marketing* and *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*. Her research interests include relationship marketing, services marketing and consumer behaviour. She is a member of the Australian Institute of Management, the Golden Key National Honours Society and the Association of Consumer Research. She earned her PhD in Management from Monash University.

Professor **Jeremy Williams** is Chief Academic Officer at Knowledge Universe Education. An award-winning professor with 20 years of experience in the higher education sector, Jeremy has held the positions of Dean of Corporate Programmes and Director of Research at U21Global, and Teaching Fellow and MBA Director at Queensland University of Technology, Australia. A pioneer and specialist in the field of online education, Jeremy has won the recognition of his peers, having publishing widely in this area, and acted as a keynote speaker at numerous international seminars and conferences. Dr Williams earned his PhD in Economics, Economic History and Politics from the University of New England, New South Wales, Australia.

## Professors

**Students' progress will be guided by dedicated Professor Facilitators based around the world. They provide an international perspective and impart knowledge through a wealth of experience in their field of specialisation. Our Professor Facilitators will help students make sense of the information to enable students to transform the information into knowledge and creative solutions.**



Subhrendu RATH

Subhrendu Rath is Associate Professor at the Department of Finance and Banking, Curtin University of Technology, Australia. He headed the department from 2001 to 2004 and from 1996 to 1998. He held a visiting position at Kansas State University from 1998 to 2000. His teaching and research interests are in international finance, corporate finance, financial markets, market microstructure and corporate governance. Dr Rath co-ordinates a seminar series in Finance and Banking and serves on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Entrepreneurial Finance and Business Ventures* and *Australasian Journal of Business and Behavioural Sciences*. He received his PhD in Finance and his MBA from Washington State University, US.



Sununta SIENGTHAI

Sununta Siengthai is Associate Professor at the School of Management, Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand. She teaches courses in organisational behaviour and structure, human resource management in multinational companies, performance management, strategic management and comparative industrial relations. Her current research projects and activities focus in the area of human resource management and development as well as industrial relations in the New Economy. Dr Siengthai earned her PhD in Labor and Industrial Relations from the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the US.