

the TRULASKE EDGE

BA 3500: Advanced Professional Development - Leading Teams & Organizations
A project in partnership with MU Extension and the MU Office of Service-Learning

As part of the University of Missouri's land-grant mission, the Trulaske College of Business aims to serve businesses within our state. You are invited to work on summer term professional project with upper-level students at the MU Trulaske College of Business. Projects address a challenge or opportunity facing today's businesses, nonprofit organizations, and governmental/educational organizations. Students research the assigned topic and share findings and recommendations with their client in a presentation and written report at the end of the semester. Projects are part of the Advanced Professional Development course within the Trulaske Edge program.

The Trulaske Edge program provides students with professional development skills throughout their college experience. BA3500 is the advanced course in which students fine-tune their skills through an applied professional project. Clients will meet with your team approximately three times during the semester for three team meetings and a final presentation.

Final Deliverables

The goal of the professional project is to analyze the given situation/opportunity/challenge and provide the client with insights and recommendations through a professional presentation and written report, which are both delivered at the end of each semester.

Please discuss confidentiality with students and whether they may or may not share final deliverables as resume samples. Please also discuss with them the ways in which your organization may intend to share the work provided by the students.

Project Work

Each student spends approximately three working hours on the project each week over the 16-week term (6 working hours during the summer term over 8 weeks), with most of the hours invested in team meetings, project research and developing the final deliverables.

PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

Students from the academic areas listed below are matched with a client to complete their professional project. The project spans over 13 weeks during fall and spring semesters and 8 weeks in summer. Project groups evaluate the business problem, challenge, or opportunity identified by the client (through research, interviews, etc.), analyze research findings, and report recommendations in a written report and presentation.

Student projects focus on research and strategy recommendations and should not complete work that would typically be completed by volunteers or paid staff. If you are interested in hiring students for these purposes, our BA 4500 internship opportunity could be a good fit.

Student academic focus areas:

- **Management**: Entrepreneurial strategy, human resource management, human behavior in organizations, information systems and analytics, operations and supply chain management, business law, diversity and inclusion, and leadership and ethics.
- **Marketing**: Strategies, tactics, sales, market research/analytics, and business processes. *Most marketing majors are not formally trained in graphic design or video editing. Some students may have capabilities in this area, but it should not be the primary project focus (although strategy suggestions would be appropriate).*
- **Finance & Banking**: Commercial banking, corporate finance, financial planning, real estate (investment, property management, mortgage banking, etc.), insurance, investment banking, or money management. Analysis of financial information to forecast business, industry and economic conditions for use in making investment decisions.
- **Economics**: Analytics, mathematical models, investment, identifying optimal product mixes, budget allocations, locations and competitive strategies, internal and external forecasting.
- **International Business**: Similar emphasis areas as management, but with special considerations for foreign language, geography, and cultural environment.

PROJECT DETAILS

Most work is completed remotely. Site visits are encouraged and can be arranged based on availability.

Project Teams

Teams consist of approximately 6-8 students (in their 2nd through 4th year at Mizzou and admitted into upper-division courses) who are guided by the course instructors and a graduate student. The graduate student serves as the group's senior project manager.

Project Meetings

Students and clients will have three working meetings during the semester and then again for the final project presentation session (four meetings total). The client provides project parameters and resources. The course instructor and TA will supervise project progress throughout the semester.

Students benefit from receiving **clear and detailed guidelines and expectations** at the beginning of the project. Students and clients can communicate and meet additionally as needed throughout the semester to meet project goals and objectives. Expect that student/client collaboration will be more time-intensive at the beginning and the ending of the projects.

Communication

Students are expected to communicate using their official MU email address and university-supported technology (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) to ensure FERPA compliance and the security of your own organization's confidential information. We realize, however, every project is different, so please reach out to the course instructors if you have other collaboration needs.

Students take turns as the Team Lead each week. The weekly team lead will send you an update on project progress. There will also be a regular project correspondent who will manage any additional communication with you on behalf of the group. Please copy all group members on correspondence (including the graduate student project manager).

Student Evaluations

Clients are asked to evaluate each member of your project team at the end of the semester. A copy of the evaluation will be provided to each client when projects begin to familiarize you with areas you will evaluate for each student.

Questions? Please contact Dr. Lauren Brengarth at BrengarthLB@missouri.edu or 573-882-3106.