

**School for New Learning  
DePaul University  
Course Syllabus: FA 220 Developing Consulting Skills  
Fall 2009**

**1. General Information**

Faculty: Thomas Nowak  
thomas.nowak@ama-assn.org  
312-464-4543  
Office Hours: available to students by appointment

Location: Oak Forest

Dates/Time: Thursdays, 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM from 9/10, to 11/12

Credit Hours: 4

Texts:

Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used, Peter Block, Jossey-Bass/  
Pfeiffer Pfeiffer, Second Edition, ISBN: 0-7879-4803-9

The Business of Consulting: The Basics and Beyond, Elaine Biech, Wiley, Second  
Edition, ISBN: 978 0 7879 9463 8

**2. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch:**

This course will help students learn how to start and operate a consulting business enterprise. The course will address consulting skills and techniques, proposals, contracting, client needs and expectations, needs analysis and evaluation, project planning, data collection and analysis, resistance, client relationships, change management, feedback, pricing, presentation and facilitation skills, and ethics.

Tom Nowak is the Chief Financial Officer at the AMA Foundation. He started at DePaul as a part-time faculty member of the College of Commerce in 1986 and has been a part of SNL's faculty since 1990. Tom earned his M.B.A. in Finance from DePaul and he is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Project Manager Professional (PMP).

**3. Competencies:**

- **F-X** Can apply consulting concepts and skills needed for starting and operating a consulting practice.
  
- **H-2-X** Can identify an organizational problem and design a plan for change based on an understanding of change theories or models.

**- H-3-D**

Understands change methodology, can plan change within a community, and assess its likely impact..

**4. Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:

1. Identified consulting competencies and best practices
2. Developed a project plan
3. Learned how to identify and meet client needs and wants
4. Learned how to manage project tasks and client expectations
5. Learned how to practice change management
6. Learned how to conduct a contract meeting
7. Created a pricing strategy and a marketing letter
8. Learned how to minimize resistance
9. Learned how to collect and analyze client data
10. Prepared and conducted a client feedback meeting

Through class discussions and exercises, readings, role plays, and homework assignments, students will learn how to create, organize, and operate an independent consulting enterprise which will increase their probability of reaching their business goals while minimizing risks and costs. By applying consulting and management concepts and practices, students will have the knowledge to start and run a consulting practice.

Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let me know ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to be your "tutor" for the missed session.

Students missing more than two classes of our ten week course will not have met the requirements for a passing grade.

**5. Evidence the Students will Submit:**

Students will complete weekly homework assignments to demonstrate that they understand that week's class material. Attendance and class participation are also a part of the evaluation process.

All work must be original and follow the University's guidelines on academic integrity as stated in the Addenda. Please refer to the DePaul Student Handbook for the definition of plagiarism. Non-original work will receive a grade of F.

Due to the need for role playing, attendance and active participation are crucial to meeting the course objectives. Missing more than one class will negatively impact your grade.

**6. Criteria for Assessment:**

All assignments are due the week after they are assigned. Incomplete or late assignments will receive a lower grade.

***Written Work Will be Evaluated As Follows:***

***A=*** designates work of high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; reflects a clearly identifiable thesis and argument that demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of idea.

***B=*** designates work of good quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of issues at hand; presents substantive thesis and argument with evident development and support of ideas.

***C=*** designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas but develops argument in superficial or simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or be otherwise incomplete.

***D=*** designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirements set forth in the assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that student has not done reading assignments thoroughly.

*Unfinished work or work requiring revision will be given an Incomplete (IN) grade. In order to qualify for the IN, students must have regularly attended class, and must have completed three-fourths of assignments.*

*In order for a student to have an incomplete (IN) grade granted in this course, there must be a significant extenuating circumstance evidenced by the student (e.g., medical and/or significant personal issues). The student will need to initiate and file an SNL Incomplete grade contract before the final session of the course to receive an incomplete grade. Students are strongly advised to review the university deadlines for withdrawal without tuition refund and the implications for financial aid and grades.*

**7. Class Schedule:**

DATE	CLASS	TOPICS/ASSIGNMENTS
9/10	1	Getting Started Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 1-2 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 1-2 Prepare a description of your consulting practice Prepare personal resume Prepare list of strengths and weaknesses
9/17	2	Skills, competencies, techniques Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 3

		<u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 3 Develop detailed education/development plan Develop a project plan Complete <u>BC</u> Ex 1.2, Ex 2.1, Ex 2.2
9/24	3	Flawless Consulting Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 4-5 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 4 Complete <u>BC</u> Ex 3.1, Ex 3.2, Ex 3.3 Develop and summarize pricing strategy
10/1	4	Contracting Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 6-7 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 5 Develop contract meeting detailed outline as consultant ( <u>FC</u> p98) and client ( <u>BC</u> ) Complete <u>BC</u> Ex 4.1 & Ex 4.2
10/8	5	Marketing Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 8-10 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 6 Complete <u>BC</u> Clarify Your Strategy Complete <u>BC</u> Marketing Letter Complete <u>BC</u> Proposal Letter Complete <u>FC</u> Checklist 4 (p105-106) Summarize feedback meeting as consultant
10/15	6	Resistance Diagnosis Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 11-14 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap.7 Evaluate types of resistance and how you handled it
10/22	7	Data collection and analysis Feedback Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 15-17 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 8 Develop a data collection questionnaire ( <u>FC</u> p190 3-5) Develop detailed outline for feedback meeting ( <u>FC</u> p231, 242)
10/29	8	Engagement strategies Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 18 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 9-10 Evaluate feedback meeting ( <u>FC</u> Checklist 8 p244-5)
11/5	9	Professionalism Ethics Assignments: <u>FC</u> : Read Chap. 19 <u>BC</u> : Read Chap. 11 Complete <u>BC</u> Ex 11.2
11/12	10	Tying it all together

## **8. Addenda:**

### **DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

### **DePaul University Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

### **For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLuS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

### **Chronic Illness Initiative**

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by chronic illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations. At SNL, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. Contact CII at [CII@depaul.edu](mailto:CII@depaul.edu).

### **Writing Help**

For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>.

[In addition, consider adding the Writing Centers' syllabus supplement available here <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/fac/supplements.html>]