
CONSULTING METHODS in Spring 2021 (BA5019)

Course Code	BA5019	Professor(s)	Albert Cath
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-2A03
Class Schedule	M: 12:10-13:30 in G-207	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	2	Email	acath@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	N/A

Course Description

Two thousand five hundred years ago, Chinese strategist SUN TZU wrote his renowned strategic study 'The art of war'. In Greece, with Pericles (450 BC), strategy came to mean managerial skill (administration, leadership, oration, power) and by Alexander's time (350 BC) – consulted and taught by Aristotle - strategy referred to the skill of employing forces to overcome opposition and to create a unified system of global governance. Management consultancy is a very old profession, related to warfare, governance, and politics. In other words, how do you manage larger groups of people to act coherently to achieve objectives. When the hunter-gatherer started to settle down and urbanization took off, managerial issues (like how do you feed the city of Rome with its millions of inhabitants) needed attention. These issues became even more urgent starting around 1850 when industrialization took off, and management theory became a dominant societal discourse.

The professional identity of management (consultancy) is the result of a tradition that started over a hundred and fifty years ago. An important feature of the rise of the 'Management and Consultancy class' is the ongoing professionalization of university-based management schools. The maturation of the management discourse – among many other things – has resulted in a separation of owners (shareholders), stakeholders (employees, clients, other interest groups), and the upcoming and rise of the management class of organizations. Every such community of practice is characterized by a dominant discourse - the most acceptable way to converse, which reflects power relations supported by ideologies. The dominant management and related consultancy discourse are reflected in how managers usually talk together about the nature of their managerial activity, informed by their consultants. It is also reflected in the kind of organizational research that attracts funding from research bodies, the kind of papers that prestigious research journals will publish, and the kind of courses taught at business and management schools, in the textbooks they use and in organizational training and development activities. Most communities of practice are also characterized by some resistance to, or criticism of, the dominant discourse (Stacey & Mowles 2016).

In the past decades, a succession of management trends and fads - informed by influential consultants/management gurus - have risen, become dominant, and have fallen into disuse: in

the 1980's managing cultures (Peters and Waterman), in the 1990's Managing Knowledge and Learning (Senge), then Managing Innovation and Change (Lewin) and today Managing Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility, under the patronage of business ethics (Earhart 2011; Jones et al. 2005). These high and low tides of management recipes, supplied by management consultants are often paper tigers that show a gap between practice and theory. Books, writings, speeches, media appearances, experience in corporate consulting, and academic prestige are all employed to enhance the brand of the consultant for the circulation of ideas. Business schools, publishing houses, consulting companies, and media package the latest ideas and push the consultant/guru around the world through a succession of bravura performances. The only thing one needs to do is make sure to keep this cycle spinning" (Kantola 2013).

The course engages students with advanced themes and methods in management consultancy, both in theory and in practice. We will take a critical approach to understand how theory influences practice and how our perceptions of management consultancy evolve over time and circumstance. Furthermore, students will examine management consultancy in terms of specific cultural, international, and organizational elements given specific consulting frameworks.

Through readings, in-class activities, assignments, and cases, the course explores how management consultancy influences the direction of organizations and businesses and how theoretical and societal trends influence practices in these areas.

Simultaneously, students explore these themes through the completion of a management consulting project, working with a client in a professional context, that is grounded in the subject areas they are studying in other management courses. Students complete and furnish project deliverables to the client for the final course assessment. As a part of this process, students also furnish a report reflecting on the overall context of consulting practices considering their own experience with the project, as well as their personal and professional objectives.

Course Learning Outcomes

Evaluate conventional and critical approaches and frameworks of management consultancy in business practices and explore how they influence our current management perceptions.
Demonstrate problem-solving in an organizational context, including information gathering, data analysis, research methods, implementation and evaluation.

Analyze complex ("wicked") management problems, where uncertainty is present, and significant disagreement about the strategies and policies to be taken.

To apply mainstream and critical management theories and methodologies and apply them in case studies and a live-client consulting project.

Demonstrate practical experience in dealing with management consultancy issues with a high standard of professional and personal ethics.

General Education

Course Outline

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentation. AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. Professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the Language Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, when completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Graduate Course Plan: BA5019 – Consulting Methods

Spring 2021

DR ALBERT CATH

Mondays: 12.10-1.30 pm in Room G-207

*** This course plan is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard ***

TEXTBOOK & ARTICLE READINGS & FILMS & CASES & ASSIGNMENTS

DATE	CHAPTER	FILM	CASE	ASSIGNMENTS
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Week 1

18 JAN Course Introduction + History of Consultancy. Stradabella Case in class next week.

Week 2

25 JAN Exercise 1: Prepare and discuss the Stradabella case in class. Lecture Origins, Management
This will not be graded. Formation of teams.

Week 3

01 FEB Prepare Team Exercise 2: Man Gulch Case in Class + Sensemaking by Weick. Submit team
presentation. This will be graded. Lecture Methods in Consultancy.

Week 4

08 FEB No Classes

Week 5

[15 FEB](#) Prepare Team Exercise 3: the Siyah Dag Telecoms. Case about losing confidence in the
discussion about presented ideas. This will not be graded.

Read/Prepare Midterm Case on Resisting resistance in your team: Counter-resistance, consent and control
consultancy firm Magnum Consultancy and resistance 2018. McKinsey in Asia.

Read/Prepare **Discourse Analyses Chapter**

Week 6

22 FEB SOMO Big Pharma Report: execute a discourse analyses with your team. Write a paper v
present your ideas in class.

Week 7

01 MAR Read/Prepare Article on Branded Revolutionaries by Kantola. Class discussion. Starting ABE
the Scope of work document.

Week 8

08 MAR MID TERM GROUP PAPERS DUE BY EMAIL AT NOON. Class presentations and discus

Week 9

15 MAR Preparing the ABES/MSIM Case: topics and issues you want to address;

19 MAR Midterm grades are due

Week 10

22 MAR Monitoring the ABES/MSIM Case; Lecture Methods and Philosophy in Consulting part 1. Rea
If possible the remote session with iArts.

Week 11

29 MAR Preparing ABES/MSIM Case. Methods and Philosophy in Consulting part 2. Readings to be d
the remote session with iArts.

02 APR **Last day to withdraw from a course; last day to choose credit/no credit option**

Week 12

05 APR No classes

Week 13

12 APR [TBD: if possible the remote session with iArts](#). Class discussion about the ABES/MSIM teamwork drafts. If possible remote session with iArts. Lecture on Consulting Methods 3.

Week 14

19 APR TBD: Class discussion about the ABES/MSIM teamwork drafts. If possible remote session with iArts.

Week 15

26 APR LAST CLASS: Discuss ABES/MSIM report. Feed-back on personal papers. Scoping lecture on the final personal papers.

Week 16

10 MAY Final Exams, 6.30 pm: presentation and discussion of the ABES/MSIM final sustainability strategy of ABES and iArts.

Week 17

18 MAY Degree candidates grades due

Week 18

26 MAY ALL GRADES DUE

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

AUP ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes.

A maximum of four (4) *excused* absences per semester may be requested for all 4-credit courses. Two semester per 1-credit course may be requested.

The French Department has its own attendance policy. Students are responsible for compliance.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

Student Affairs will *recommend* that a professor excuse an absence for the following reason only: Involuntary illness or personal emergencies, upon presentation of documentary proof of illness or emergency.

Religious and National Holidays:

Due to the large number of nationalities and faiths represented at the University, religious and national holidays (on the academic schedule) will not be excused by Student Affairs.

Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Lateness to course meetings:

If a student arrives at course meetings more than 10 minutes late without documentation for one of the above reasons, it is considered an *unexcused* absence. All documentation must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs following the first day of the absence.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence (excused or unexcused) is accepted or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the p department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of exces unexcused absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an “ instructor may recommend the withdrawal of a student whose absences from any course, **excused or n** to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. The professor may consult with Student Affairs for addit

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and **especially during t**
Periods.

Grading Policy

GRADING:

Student Performance will be evaluated based on the following factors:

Class Participation

Based on attendance and participation with (group) presentations, discussions, and in-class projects, as well as group peer evaluations.

- Attendance: this is not simply a matter of being present, but also involves arriving on time and being prepared for each course session.
- Course Presentations: Students (groups) will be selected to present their analysis of a short case assignment intermittently during class. These presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes, although the specific duration will change based on the presentation assignment. There will be no student presentations during the first week of class. Please refer to the course calendar for due dates.
- Course Discussions: Various activities, full class, and small group discussions are an essential part of the learning experience in this course. Students are expected to actively participate by providing input and feedback to other students and by listening when other students are speaking.
- **Be aware that during the semester we may have to switch between in person and remote teaching. Also, some students may not be capable to attend the classes remotely in a synchronous frame, because they are situated in a different time zone. The attendance policies will be maintained during remote teaching. Of**

course, exceptions to this will be considered in each case. See also the attendance paragraph below.

Individual Assignments

Individual essay assignments are due throughout the course, this counts especially for the personal midterm assignment and the final assignment. These must be submitted on the due date.

Midterm Exam

The midterm assignment will cover readings, lectures, and class discussions through the course sessions until the midterm exam.

Final Paper

The final essay will cover a topic of the student's choice, incorporating the cases and readings covered during the course. These papers must be a minimum of 2500 words (approximately 8-10 pages at 300 words per page). Criteria for these papers will be discussed following the course midterm.

Grade Allocation

Final grades will be weighted based on performance within the various criteria as follows. These calculations may be adjusted as we progress through the semester:

Class Participation and Attendance	10%
Case Presentations	40%
Mid-Course Analysis Paper	15%
Final Analysis Paper	35%

Grading Scale

Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
100-95 A (4.0)	89-87 B+ (3.4)	79-77 C+ (2.4)	69-67 D+ (1.3)
90-94 A- (3.7)	86-84 B (3.0)	76-74 C (2.0)	66-64 D (1.0)
	83-80 B- (2.7)	73-70 C- (1.7)	60-63 D- (0.7)
			Under 60 F (0)

To give you a better understanding of what the grading scale means, let's take a quick look at the typical student profile for each category:

Excellent: Reserved for students that display superior quality and outstanding performance throughout the course, including the extensive use of resources other than the textbook and assigned readings to complete assignments and presentations. It also means that the student participates fully in course discussions and group activities, maintains excellent attendance, and performs extremely well on course exams and assignments. An 'A' student is highly motivated to learn the material and completes the course readings in advance of the lecture, showing strong skills in critical thinking, global learning, and exceptional informational literacy on all of the assignments, projects, and exams. The student also takes a proactive role in group projects and consistently responds to the presentations of other student groups. My goal is to see every student perform this well.

Good: The student provides work that is above average in quality. Maintains good performance on exams and in-class discussions, including the effective use of assigned readings and above-average course participation. Assignments are turned in on time and to a good level of quality. There is some evidence of additional research and critical thinking on core topics. Attendance, while not perfect, is still good. The student shows evidence of critical thinking, global learning, and information literacy through their engagement in the course.

Satisfactory: Adequate and acceptable work in meeting course requirements and average performance in assignments, exams, and projects. There is little use of external resources beyond the required texts. The student shows some engagement with the course but participates at a minimal level. Meets the minimum attendance requirements. Displays some critical thinking, global learning, and/or information literacy in assignments and group projects.

Unsatisfactory: Failed to meet basic course requirements, below-average performance and attendance. The typical profile for such students: they often show up late to class, are often unprepared for class, and/or are frequently absent. The student is rarely prepared for group presentations or discussions. Assignments are missing, late, or copied or paraphrased directly from general sources that can be found on the internet. The student probably spends an inordinate amount of time in class on their smartphone. Such students are encouraged to withdraw and try again when they have improved their academic skills or they decide to put more effort into their studies.

A significant amount of studying outside of the course meetings is expected from all students who expect a 'B' grade or higher in the course. This means AT LEAST three hours of reading, and research outside of class for every hour you spend in class - much more if the expected grade is an 'A'. I expect students to use resources other than the required materials to complete assignments. Outstanding and good performance will be awarded to those students who go beyond the required and suggested readings in their final projects, assignments, and presentations.

Students with unsatisfactory performance will be notified at the midterm point so that we may mutually assess the likelihood of successful course completion. If I contact you for a meeting at the midterm point, please do not ignore my request. Often, we can work out an academic study plan to get you back on track. However, please be reminded that excessive absences are often the cause of poor performance and this is difficult to remedy.

Other
