

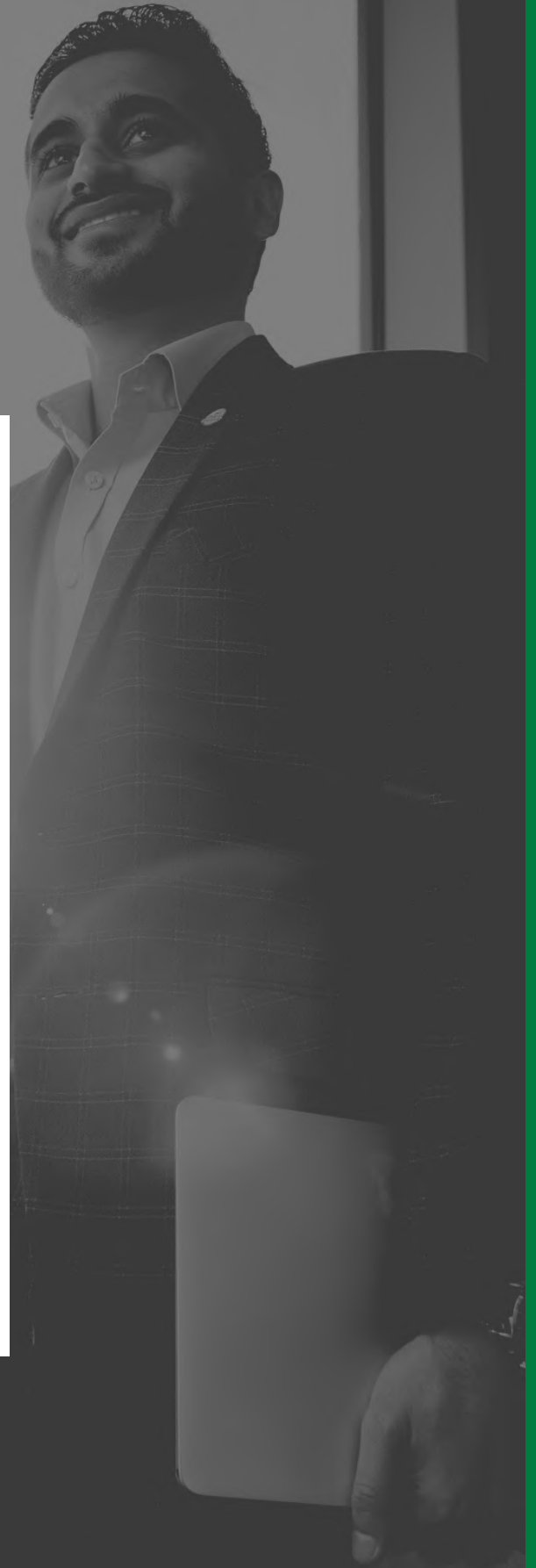
ALBERTA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MBA CAPSTONE REPORT



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
ALBERTA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

SMO 641: BUSINESS STRATEGY, MBA 2020



ABOUT

Dynamic learning involves application of theoretical principles. In the MBA program, one of the ways this is achieved is through our capstone projects. The capstone project is completed in the final year of the student's program and challenges students to apply what they have learned in their courses to a real world problem identified by the organization's proposal.

Capstone projects are where learning comes to life for many students and expands their skill development beyond the technical. Communicating with clients, active problem solving and managing a project as a professional are just some of the additional competencies learned through the process.



DR. ANTHONY BRIGGS

IS A FACULTY MEMBER IN THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT, AND TEACHES COURSES IN STRATEGY, TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION AND INNOVATION INCLUDING THE CAPSTONE FOR OUR MBA STUDENTS. HE IS ALSO A CO-FOUNDER OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP @UALBERTA AND EHUB PROGRAM.

OUR STUDENTS

Students in the capstone class come with a diverse set of skills developed through their 4 - 5 years of employment background before augmenting their knowledge with an MBA. Professional backgrounds include proficiency in data analytics, social media and finance to name a few. Over 50% of our students are from countries from around the world and can provide an intriguing perspective to the Canadian business landscape. The addition of business content from the MBA program to students' skill set makes for a robust capstone experience.

OUR CLASS

Class is led by an experienced professor with expertise in the entrepreneurial and business space. Business concepts and models for solving business problems are used as a foundation for projects and the professor provides oversight and guidance as the teams work through the problem. Students receive credit for the course and successfully completing the course requires the professor's evaluation that utilizes client's input.

OUR ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations (clients) who submit a capstone project will have an opportunity to experience a new perspective on their company and the issue they have outlined in their proposal. Within the MBA program, students are learning the most current information regarding business and infusion of that knowledge can lead to exciting and sometimes surprising recommendations at the end of the project. Time commitment for organizations varies depending on the project but averages 10 hours over the course of four months and business participants vary from nonprofits and government to start-ups and large corporations.

Organizations who submit and participate in a capstone project play a role in mentoring the next generation of business advisors and we appreciate organizations' commitment to the learning process by providing students an experience that would parallel that they would find in the real world. Many of the companies that participate have our alumni MBA on staff and recommend the capstone project as a way to research and find solutions for those "off the side of the desk" questions that would help move the business forward.

BOWHEAD CORP



"I think my MBA learning came to life with my practical knowledge, then adding a layer of formality over it really allowed me to start seeing my education and the real world come together with the consulting for Bowhead"

Bennett Douglas, MBA '19

THE COMPANY

Bowhead Corp. is a start-up business based out of Calgary, Alberta that produces three-wheeled, adaptive mountain bikes. The purpose of the bike – and Bowhead’s mission – is to get people with mobility challenges back to the outdoors.

THE PROJECT

Bowhead requested an in-depth analysis of the mobility scooter market with the understanding that the company may potentially design a mobility scooter. The team looked at potential markets and growth tactics to determine what would best fit the Bowhead organization.

THE IMPACT

The team worked with Bowhead to analyze their current strategy, assess different growth opportunities, and the steps required to realize them. Ultimately, the students created a report with high level tactics that Bowhead could use to shape their growth going forward and continue to expand.

THE MBA TEAM



Bennett Douglas: Bennet has a BCOM along with a Journeyman auto body certificate. He owns a collision centre and has been involved in family business most of his life.



Paul Edginton: Paul has 14 years of work experience - 7 years in management consulting & 7 years in public sector. He was also part of the MBAA and Net Impact during his MBA.



Alex Grams: Alex has a BEng in Mechanical Engineering and works as a specifier at DIALOG. He also participated in the MBA exchange program & spent two weeks studying in Toulon.



Craig MacNamara: Craig has a Bachelor of Arts in political science and has spent his entire career working in the utility industry. He is also an avid golfer.



THE COMPANY

The Edmonton Stingers is Edmonton's professional basketball team playing in the Canadian Elite Basketball League since May 2019.

"By working with a live case, it became more meaningful. It was not just theory that we learned in our classes. We were able to apply our models and were motivated by the possibility of seeing our strategy come to fruition. It became clear that our work in the program was authentic and meaningful."

Anhtu Huynh, MBA '20

THE IMPACT

The team developed a robust plan that gave The Stingers greater access to a significant market they had not been able to penetrate and were able to move forward towards the next seasons with clearer focus and more strategic marketing goals.

THE PROJECT

The Stingers had just had their first season and requested a comprehensive business and marketing plan with a focus on new strategies for increasing ticket sales and growing their awareness in the Edmonton sports scene.

THE MBA TEAM



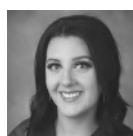
Anhtu Huynh: Anhtu has a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacology and has been a practicing physiotherapist for 21 years. Prior to entering the MBA program, he owned and operated two healthcare businesses.



Daniel Kamau: Daniel worked as a professional structural engineer for 7 years prior to pursuing his MBA. He also volunteers for a non-profit called Kids on Track as an acting treasurer on the board.



Ania Miklas: Before attending the MBA program Ania was a full-time artist as well as a co-director and co-owner of Bella and Bello Dance Movement, an Edmonton-based Latin dance company.



Nicole Visser: Nicole is a structural Engineer in Training and is pursuing her combined MBA/MEng degree. She also volunteers for Go Eng Girl introducing young females to the STEM industry.

BLINDMAN BREWING



"This capstone team was definitely a highlight of my University career. Each member of the group brought a very different set of skills and experiences to the table, allowing us to see these complex business issues through a variety of lenses."

Peter Keith, MBA '20

THE COMPANY

Blindman Brewery is a local craft brewery established in Lacombe in 2015. They are one of Alberta's leading craft brewers, known for their high-quality product and locally-focused brand.

THE PROJECT

Working with co-founder Kirk Zembal, the students were asked to create a project scope that included a five-year strategic plan and a review of Blindman Brewing's current organizational structure. In addition, the team investigated marketing blindspots and established a strategy including digital marketing.

THE IMPACT

After extensive market research and internal analysis, the team concluded that one of Blindman Brewing's greatest strengths is their ability to showcase the quality of their product in the Blindman Taproom in Lacombe. They put together a plan for launching an Edmonton taproom to strengthen the local brewery's awareness, including a detailed comparison of potential locations, an operational plan, a startup budget, and a marketing campaign for the grand opening.

THE MBA TEAM



Dylan Bredo: Dylan is an MBA student with a focus on finance and business analytics and has professional experience in the sports industry.



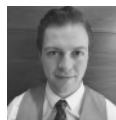
Osric Dhoubhadel: Osric is an MBA student with an engineering background and diverse interests. He has experience working with startups as well as fortune 500 companies.



Braden Jeremy: Braden has experience in business development & consulting. During his MBA, he participated in case competitions, MBA games, and the MBA volleyball & soccer teams.



Peter Keith: Peter is a red-seal chef and business owner with deep roots in YEG's food industry. He serves on the board of directors for Canada's National Chefs Association.



Mark Scorgie: Mark is a hospitality operations professional experienced at leading multiple business units & improving efficiencies. He also has an interest in data analytics & consulting.

CONSIDERATIONS

FOR SUBMITTING A CAPSTONE PROJECT

IDEAL PROJECT PARAMETERS

Perfect projects integrate materials from across 2 to 3 functional business areas (strategy, accounting, finance, marketing, human resource management, economics, etc) and provide enough depth so students can deep dive into each area for analysis to solve the business problem.

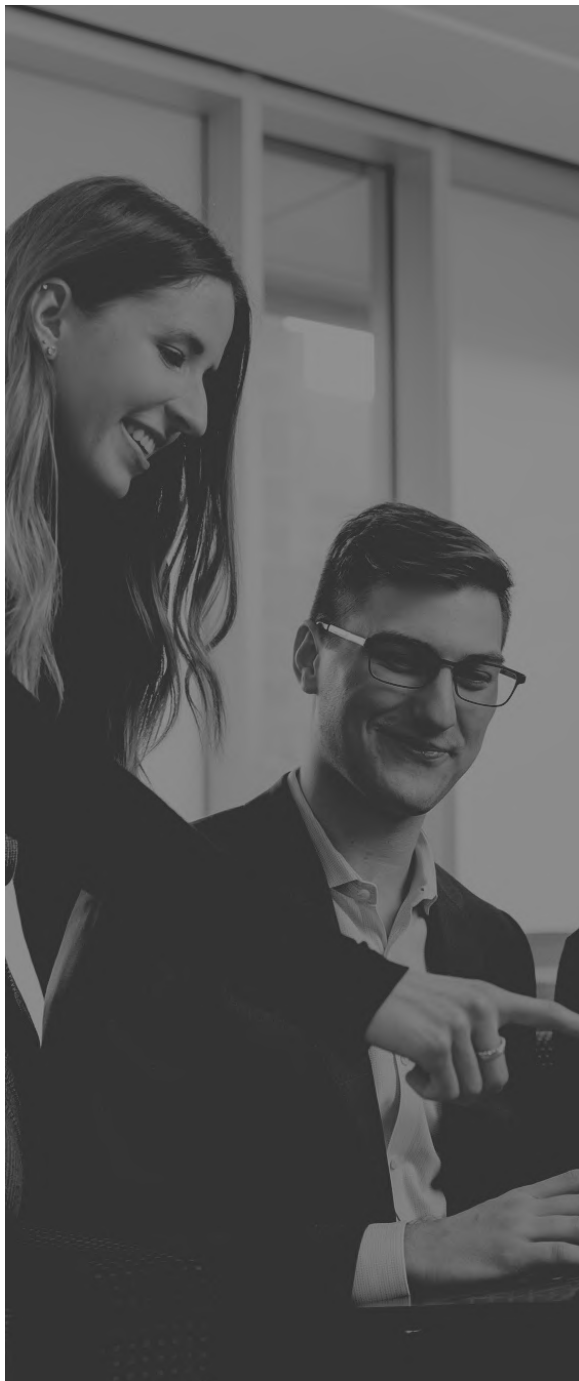
DURATION AND SELECTION

Chosen projects are required to be completed in a 3-month time frame and are sufficient in scope to provide an average of 10hrs/week commitment from a 3-5 person student team. Once the proposals have been selected by the students, the assigned team will reach out to their successful organization to arrange the first meeting. If your proposal is not successful, you will be contacted to see if you are willing to move your project to the following term for consideration of a new group of students with different areas of interest.

We collect capstone projects twice per year. Once for the Fall term and once for the Winter term.



COMMUNITY PARTNER EXPECTATIONS



- Provide a 1-page project description to students by completing this Google Form, which includes:
 - Organization description and/or company background
 - A project overview
 - Expected project deliverables
 - Contact information for students
- Commit to meeting with their student group at least 3 times during the 3-month period
 - Initial meeting at project outset
 - Progress meeting roughly halfway through the 3-month time period
 - Final meeting before the project due date
- Sign off (along with SMO 641 instructor) on student project plan after initial meeting
- Attend a student presentation of final project results (on or off campus)
- Debrief project outcomes with students after receiving the final report
- Complete an after-project evaluation questionnaire
- Provide appropriate financial information (if projects involve financial aspects)
- Submit a maximum of one Capstone proposal per term

SUMMARY OF KEY DATES

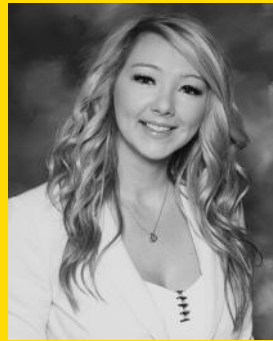
FALL TERM	
Call out for proposals and submission for Fall Term	August 20, 2020
Students review proposals and choose project	First week of September, 2020
Organizations notified by students or Career Centre of project status	Second to third week of September
Capstone Final Presentations	First week of December

WINTER TERM	
Call out for proposals and submission for Winter Term	December, 2020
Students review proposals and choose project	First week of January, 2021
Organizations notified by students or Career Centre of project status	Second to third week of January
Capstone Final Presentations	First week of April

MEET THE CAREERS TEAM



**CORI
FOGED**



**ALYESHA
DYCK**



**PAUL
TAYLOR**



**LEANNE
ANDERSEN**

The Edmonton business community and the School of Business working together create growth for the future and participating in the capstone project class is only one of many ways we can continue to benefit one another. For more opportunities to engage our students, visit the Career Management Centre's student engagement page and thank you for being a partner in education!

MBA CAPSTONE REPORT

**FOR
MORE
INFO**

PLEASE CONTACT:
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MBA 2020