



Comfort
Zone

Challenge

Capstone course info

Iris Saittakari
September 16, 2020

Today

15.15 – 16.15

What is Capstone about?
Course practicalities
GDPR

16.15 – 16.30

Break

16.30 – 18.00

Case company presentations
Q & A

Faculty

Teacher-in-charge: **Iiris Saittakari**

- Email: iiris.saittakari@aalto.fi
- Phone: 045 673 4631
- Room Y208



Business project experience as a student

- ITP project
- CEMS project



Teaching assistant: **Linyu Liu**

Faculty Facilitators



Marja Luukkonen
Business Law



Ari Kuismin



Greg O'Shea
Entrepreneurship
and Innovation
Mgmt



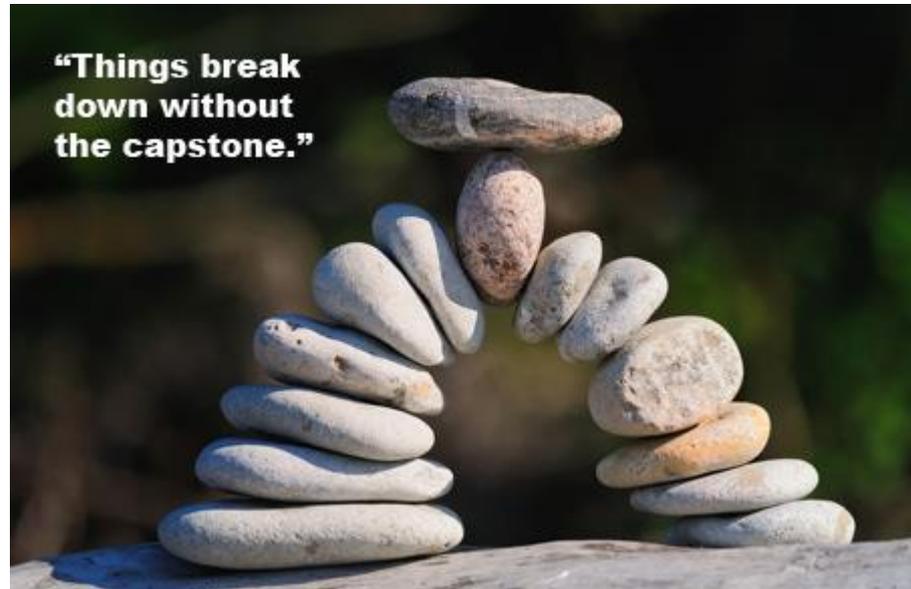
**Alexei
Koveshnikov**



Perttu Kähäri

Management and International Business

Capstone?



From: <http://www.capstonebranding.com/about/capstone.php>

Capstone = extensive team project

Each team works with one case organization on a current, multidisciplinary business problem / task:

- Calqulate x 2
- Deloitte
- EY
- Fennia
- Helsinki Business Hub
- Innokas Medical
- Kauko
- MuiFin (Kuntarahoytus)
- Posti
- Sowellus
- Stora Enso



Aspects of the project

Together with your team, you will be independently responsible for all aspects of the project

1. Identifying a critical task/problem in the case company
2. Defining an appropriate approach/concept to work on the task/problem
3. Providing a detailed and informative analysis of the situation
4. Delivering conceptual and hands-on recommendations for the company
5. Planning and managing a project
6. Presenting your recommendations both orally and in writing to the case company and fellow students.

What can I expect?



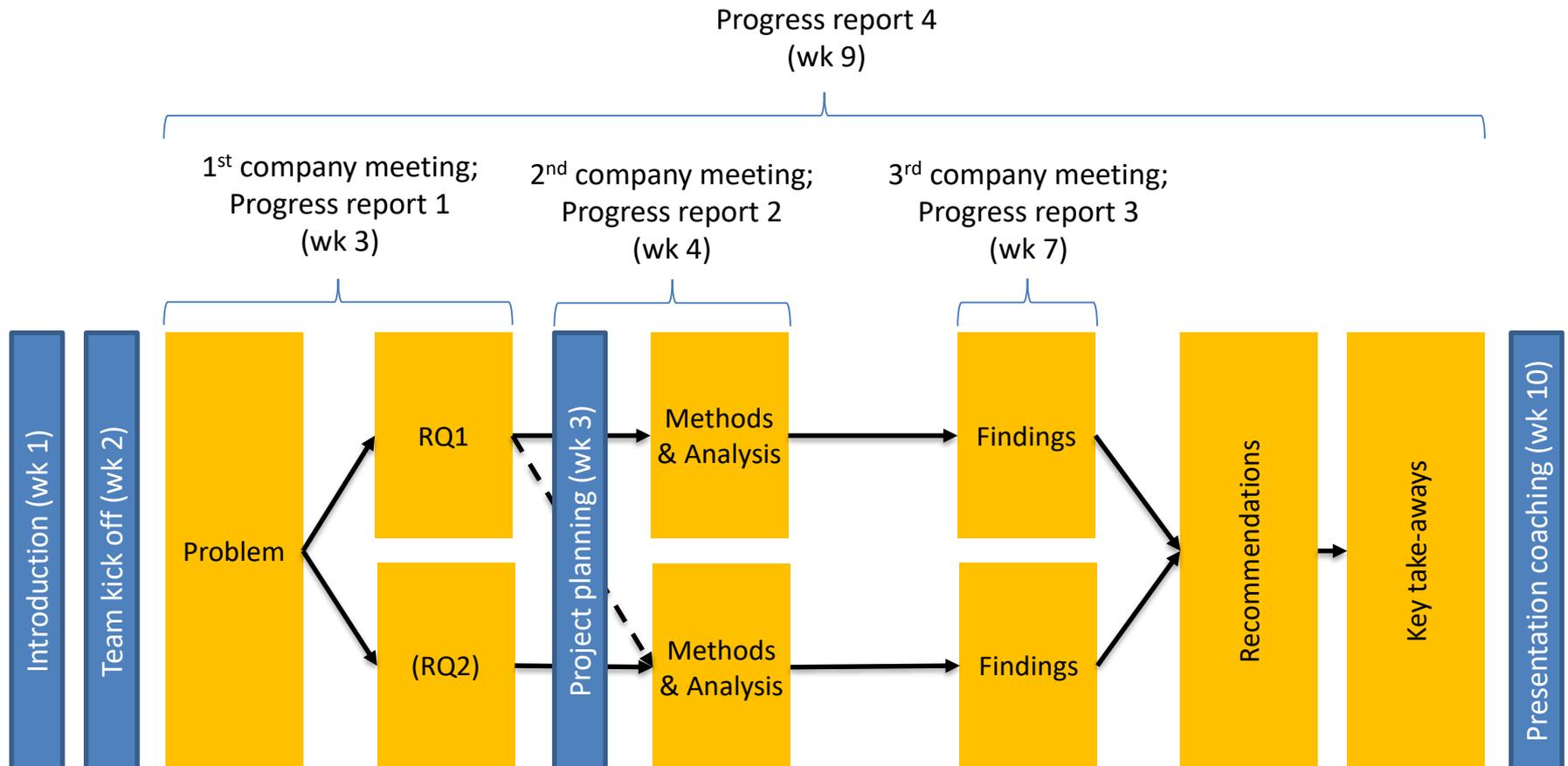
CHALLENGES!

- lack of time
- colleagues you can't choose
- problems unclear; limits and definitions need to be negotiated
- work outside your own comfort zone or specific interests

All these are common in business projects!

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Structure of the Capstone project



Wk	Date	
1	16.9	Kick-off
	17.9	Submit case preferences
2	23.9	Team kick-off meeting with facilitator
2-3	24 - 30.9	First meeting with the client company
3	30.9	Progress report 1 (problem statement, research questions, team rules)
	30.9	Project planning session
3-4	1 - 7.10	Second meeting with the client company and facilitator
4	7.10	Progress report 2 (project plan, planned methods & analysis)
6-7	21 - 28.10	Third meeting with the client company and facilitator
7	28.10	Progress report 3 (findings)
9	11.11	Progress report 4 (draft of the final report)
10	18-20.11	Presentation coaching session
11	23.11	Submit final report
	25.11	Final presentations
12	2.12	Submit individual portfolio

Three key deliverables

	Task		Weight	Deadline
A. 1	Written team case report	Team	50%	
	1a. Progress report 1			September 30
	1b. Progress report 2			October 7
	1c. Progress report 3			October 28
	1d. Progress report 4			November 11
	1e. Final report			November 23
A. 2	Case presentation (10-13 min)	Team	30%	November 25
	Presentation coaching session			November 18-20; one hour per team
A. 3	Individual student portfolio= 3A: reflection paper 3B: creative product	Ind.	20%	December 2



Final report (50% of the grade)

Business report where you present the problem, your analysis, and recommendations

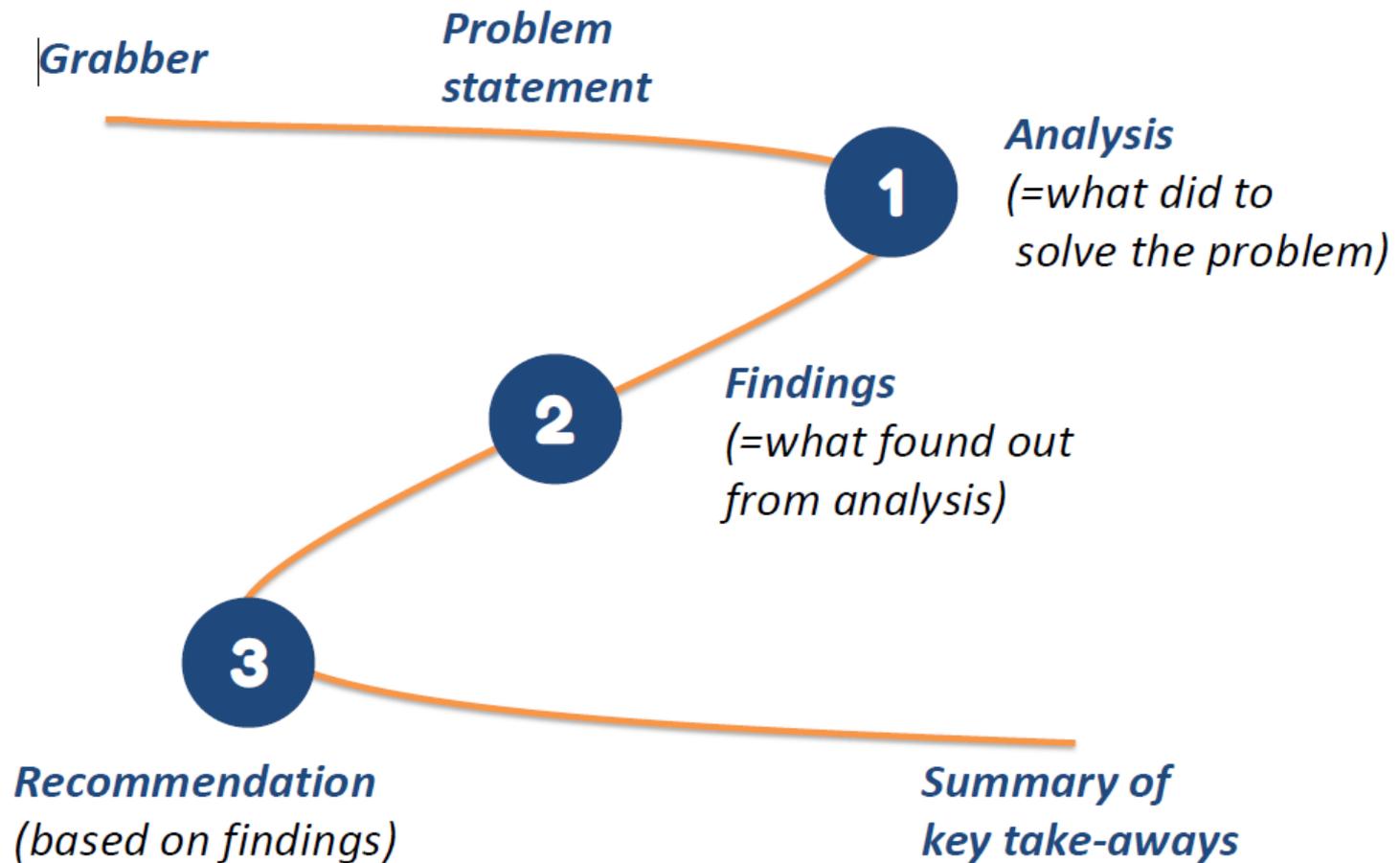
Although you are writing a business report, your academic expertise as soon-to-be MSc graduates should show! (research methods to some degree and refer to theories, research reports and academic articles to back up your plan and implementation)

Include:

- Executive summary
- Brief statement (one paragraph) to clarify how the work was divided and tasks allocated in your team, i.e. who contributed what data/knowledge/information and how you put the report together
- 5,000 words + appendices and references

Upload to MyCourses by midnight, November 23

Typical presentation structure



Final case presentation (30% of the grade)

- **Your presentation should be engaging, credible and persuasive!**
- 10-13 min (not shorter or longer!) followed by 10-15 min Q&A
- Case presentation slides: Upload to MyCourses by midnight, November 25

Individual portfolio (20% of the grade)

a) Reflection paper

1. Reflection on learnings in the Master's program
 2. Reflection on learning in the Capstone course
 3. Reflection on the teamwork in the Capstone project
- approximately 2,500 words

b) Creative presentation of your learnings

- express your key learnings and take-aways from both the Master's program and the Capstone course in a more out-of-the-box way (in the Aalto spirit!)

Some ideas for the creative presentation

- Visual representation or a model of your key learnings and take-aways
- Short, 2-minute video clip in which you present yourself and the key learnings and take-aways to prospective employers
- Song that you have composed in which the lyrics are about the key learnings and take-aways

Evaluation & Rubrics

1. **Case Report** evaluated by your team's **Faculty Facilitator**
2. **Case Presentation** evaluated by the **Faculty Facilitators** listening to your presentation at the closing session
3. **Individual Portfolio** evaluated by your **Program Representative**

All **four RUBRICS** (see MyCourses/Materials) will be applied in the evaluation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes

Manage complex projects and work in diverse teams

Handle uncertainty associated with real life projects

Identify

Analyze

Solve

real-life business problem from a multi-disciplinary viewpoint

Present a case report both orally and in writing

Critically reflect on your learning process and outcomes

Apply the knowledge and skills gained during your studies to real-life business tasks and challenges

Manage complex projects and work in diverse teams

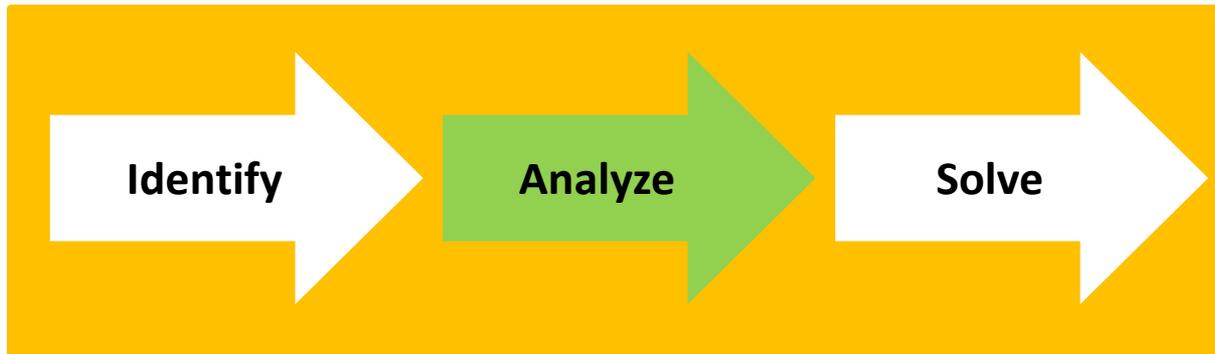
Handle uncertainty associated with real life projects

“The most important issue I learned during the course was that not every project would go the way we expected. It was a repetition of revising the problem statement, adjusting our research and analysis, altering our methods and deriving our solution to better serve our primary customer - the company.”

“In the beginning of the project I had some expectations on how it might turn out, based on my earlier experiences in similar projects and courses. However, since my teammates were in a different Master’s program and had different ideas, in some aspects the project turned out differently from what I expected.”



- **1st meeting:** Discuss and define the scope of the project, and agree how you will proceed with your investigation of the problem areas finalized in this meeting
- **2nd meeting:** Discuss plan and progress (based on Progress Report 1). Confirm shared understanding of the direction and expectations. **Invite faculty facilitator to this meeting!**



- Define an appropriate approach/concept to work on the task/problem.
- Support your recommendations by solid, compelling evidence (quantitative or qualitative) from relevant and respected sources, e.g.
 - Interviews
 - Surveys
 - Data provided by company
 - Secondary data
 - Literature



- Provide a detailed and informative analysis of the situation
- Deliver conceptual and hands-on recommendations for the company

Apply the knowledge and skills gained during your studies to real-life business tasks and challenges

problem solving

data analysis

giving feedback

scope definition

communication

critical thinking

writing skills

teamwork skills

project management

interviewing

subject specific knowledge

presentation skills

Present a case report both orally and in writing

- Present your recommendations both orally and in writing to the case company and fellow students
- You can choose who will present (not all team members need to present at the final presentation)

Critically reflect
on your learning
process and
outcomes

In your individual portfolio you get to reflect on your learnings in the

- Master's program
- Capstone course, and
- Capstone project

**CHANGES BASED ON STUDENT
FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS YEARS**

1. CASE SELECTION

Forming the teams after the case pitches

The teams used to be formed before the pitches but now they are formed after the pitches

- Select **your** three most preferred cases (including short justifications - limited to 300 characters)
- Submit case preferences through MyCourses by tomorrow midnight
- You can also select the least preferred case (optional)

Pros: You get to list your own preferences

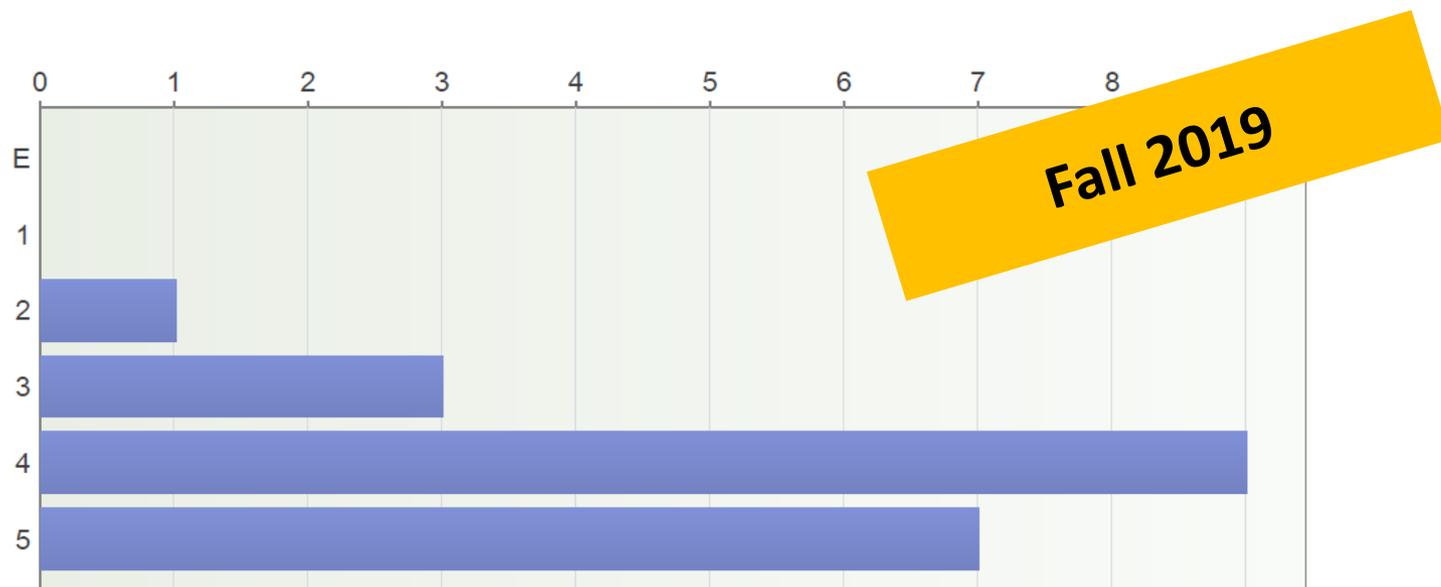
Cons: Teams may not be as heterogenous as before

2. WORKLOAD

Student feedback shows that workload is way too heavy!

4. According to the guidelines, one credit (ECTS) requires 27 hours of student work. Compared with this, the completion of the course required E=Not applicable, 1= Considerably less time, 2= Slightly less time, 3= The right amount of time, 4= Slightly more time, 5= Considerably more time

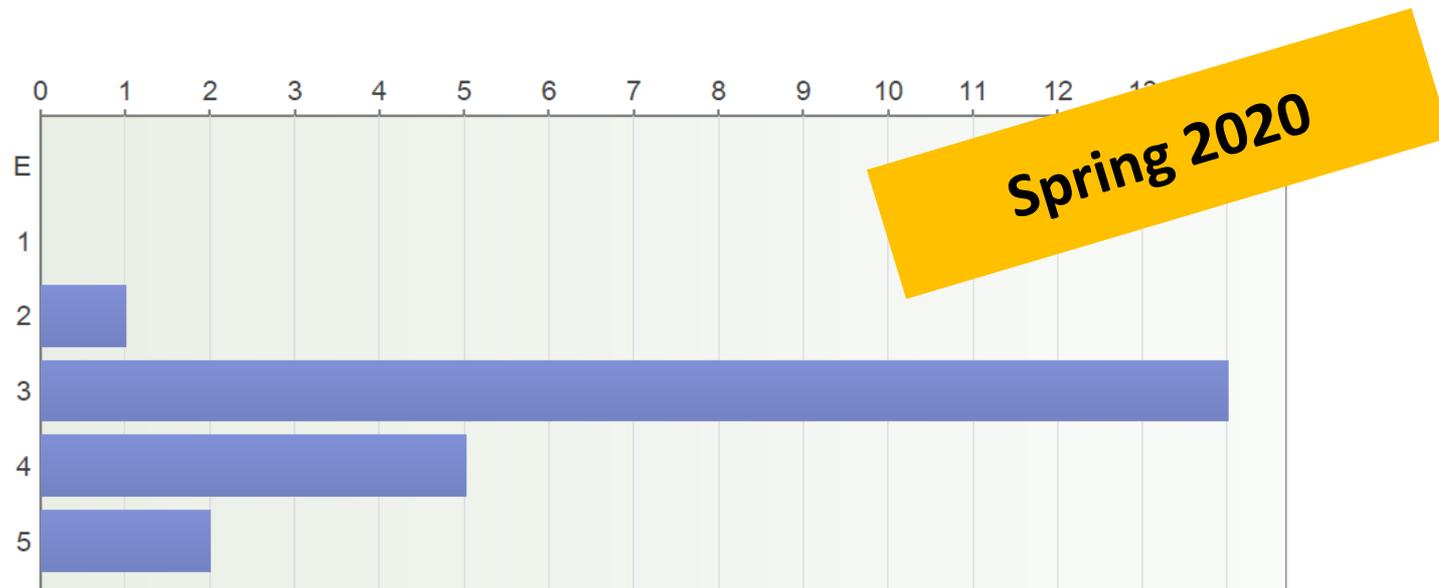
Number of respondents: 20



Workload was somewhat better in Spring 2020 but still it can be improved

4. According to the guidelines, one credit (ECTS) requires 27 hours of student work. Compared with this, the completion of the course required E=Not applicable, 1= Considerably less time, 2= Slightly less time, 3= The right amount of time, 4= Slightly more time, 5= Considerably more time

Number of respondents: 22



What would you change in the course and how?

Student feedback

“The overall course was great. However, the amount of hours required to complete the course was much less than the hours I had to put on the project. Since is a real project, the amount of hours and resources put into the project exceeded the hours written in the syllabus.”



Solution

- Define the project scope so that it is narrow enough
- Create a detailed project plan in order to plan and manage your project properly
- See support material -> *Project planning and management* at MyCourses

Define your project scope narrow enough to make sure it's doable in 122h/ student

Your first task is to define the project scope together with the case company. It is not pre-defined because it depends on:

- How many students are in the team
- What are your study backgrounds: **It is your responsibility to consider the problem from your disciplinary perspective**
- What are your personal interests
- .. and it's good to practice problem scoping!

Don't be afraid of the undefined project scope
– it's an opportunity, not a threat!

Tips for creating a project plan

- Use excel, power point or any other tool that you are comfortable using
- Structure the timeline based on the deliverables and meeting times of the project (see Capstone - course introduction and instructions for dates)
- Fill in the project plan (See Videos I and II at MyCourses)
- Plan your work also according to other commitments outside the Capstone course (other courses' deliverables, exams, Master's thesis, work, etc.)
- Remember that the hours allocated for the project are 122 per student so adjust your plan accordingly if the project becomes too big

Allocate project manager to do the project plan

3. TEAMWORK SKILLS

Teamwork skills and communication are crucial for the project to succeed

“The biggest challenge in this group work was precisely the poor quality of communication. The team members' different communication skills and habits led to frustration...”

“Based on this group work, I learned that communication skills are highly valuable.”

“I consider those learnings on teamwork to be the most valuable learnings during the course.”

What would you change in the course and how?

Student feedback

“I would also guide the teams a bit more by giving a few templates on team-work available, so that students that are less accustomed to working in teams would also have some sort of frameworks.”



Solution

Added Support material / Teamwork skills section to MyCourses

4. PRESENTATION AND REPORT EXAMPLES

What would you change in the course and how?

Student feedback

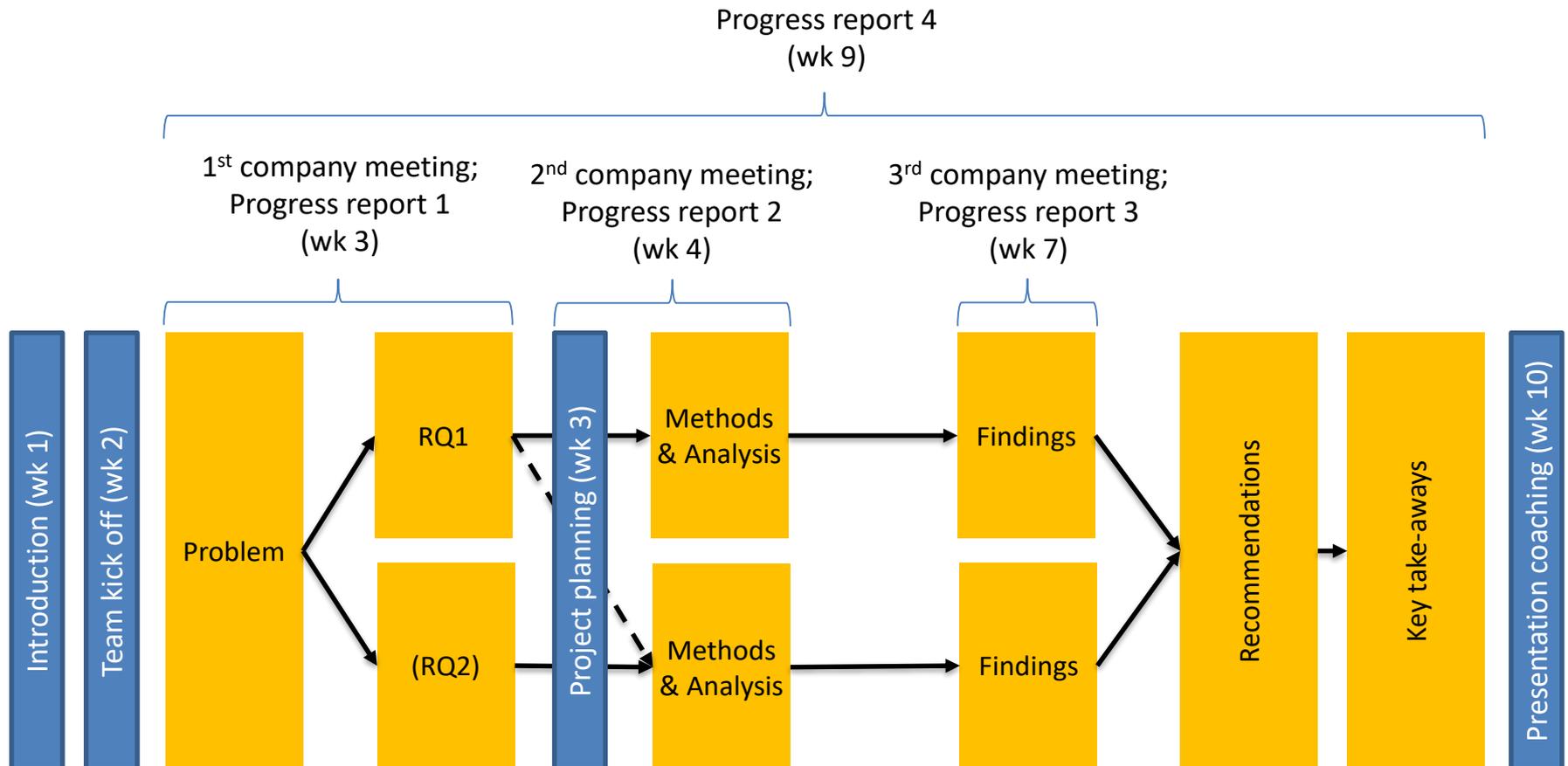
“[There] could have been clearer report forms or even an example model. If the main purpose for this course was to create stress, uncertainty and frustration, the target was accomplished.”



Solution

- Added deliverables to follow the project structure
- See slide 15 for presentation structure
- Provide examples of existing reports and presentation from last year

Structure of the Capstone project



5. INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO DEADLINE

What would you change in the course and how?

Student feedback

“The individual student portfolio deadline could be a bit later (now the final written report and the individual portfolio were to be submitted within two days from each other). This way students could have more time to do the individual portfolio as all other courses one might simultaneously attend also have deadlines in the last few weeks.”



Solution

Postponed the deadline for the individual portfolio so that it is a week after the final report

6. PEER ASSESSMENT

Should individual effort be evaluated through peer assessment and have an influence on the student's grade?

Student feedback

“Yes, especially now that all work was done online, the amount of work was not equal to all in the team.”

“Maybe somehow, but not sure if peer assessment is the right way. Especially now when we are working remotely, it's hard to say who is doing the most etc.



Solution

Added a **contribution table** to be filled in together with the team throughout the course

Contribution table: Please fill in the contribution form together with your team throughout the project to make sure the workload is evenly divided among the team members.

Name	Task 1 (e.g. managing the project)	Task 2 (e.g. defining the project scope)	Task 3 (e.g. conducting literature review)	Task 4 (e.g. conducting interviews)	Task 5 (e.g. analyzing data)	Task 6 (e.g. writing report)	Task 7 (e.g. creating presentation slides)	Task 8 (e.g. Presenting the slides and preparing for it)	Total contribution
Student 1	Major responsibility	Minor contribution		Minor contribution		Major responsibility	Major responsibility		Average
Student 2		Minor contribution	Major responsibility	Minor contribution	Some contribution	Some contribution	Minor contribution		Average
Student 3		Minor contribution		Major responsibility	Some contribution	Some contribution	Major responsibility		Average
Student 4		Minor contribution	Minor contribution	Minor contribution	Major responsibility	Some contribution	Minor contribution		Below average
Student 5	Major responsibility		Major responsibility		Some contribution		Major responsibility	Major responsibility	Average

Should individual effort be evaluated through peer assessment and have an influence on the student's grade?

Student feedback

“I definitely think it's unfair when the team members do not have the same goals for the course (eventhough we talked about them in the beginning)”



Solution

Agree on team rules and submit as part of the progress report 1.

MEET THE FACILITATORS

Faculty Facilitators



Marja Luukkonen
Business Law



Ari Kuismin



Greg O'Shea
Entrepreneurship
and Innovation
Mgmt



**Alexei
Koveshnikov**



Perttu Kähäri

Management and International Business

Facilitators are there to coach and help you to:

- Get organized – meet with your facilitator next Wednesday, September 23rd (or as agreed)
- Make sure that the workload is not too heavy (scoping of the project)
- Discuss if there are different ambition levels and expectations within the team
- Make sure the project progresses as planned
- Assist with theories and methodologies

Please contact
us when you
need help!

GDPR

How to handle personal data in the project (if conducting interviews/surveys)?

- The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is applied as of 25 May 2018 in all of the EU member states → the GDPR is applicable legislation as such and it applies to all processing of personal data.
- Personal data is all data relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, such as name, social security number, home address, telephone number, e-mail address, video image or voice of a person, IP-address, location data of a person or a combination data from which a person can be recognized (e.g. occupation and place of residence).

How to handle personal data in the project (if conducting interviews/surveys)?

- Anonymised data are no longer considered to constitute personal data and are not subject to data protection regulations.
- Whether an individual data item can be considered anonymous or not requires case-by-case evaluation.
- **Individuals can be identified by other data than their names**
→ Thus, simply deleting the names and other identifying data will not always render all data in a personal data file anonymous.
- If you are conducting interviews/surveys and collect data from or of persons, **plan what data you need!**
 - **Think about what data you need and also what data you do not need. Is it necessary to collect personal data?** Think of how you can design your study so that your data is least identifiable while still accomplishing your goals.
- **If you collect personal data, you need to follow certain steps, e.g., draft a privacy notice and document all the data processing activities.**

If you are conducting interviews/surveys and collect data from or of persons, do the following:

1. If you collect personal data, OR
 2. If you assume that the data could be personal data, OR
 3. You don't know if the data is personal data
- Contact your facilitator and liris (liris.Saittakari@aalto.fi) BEFORE you are conducting any surveys/interviews, and we will tell you how to proceed and help you further 😊

TIPS

Five steps to successful projects

1. Define project scope
2. Break objective into sub-objectives
3. List the tasks, task owners and deadlines
4. Visualize task flow and schedule
5. Work hard to complete the tasks and project by their deadlines

Three pieces of advice

- ✓ Read "Capstone - course introduction and instructions" available on MyCourses
- ✓ Be active – with your
 - team members
 - faculty facilitator
 - company contacts
- ✓ If there are issues, address them immediately!

What will I learn?

- listen to the client and identify their problem
- manage a multi-stakeholder project
- work at the limits or outside your comfort zone
- manage tensions and challenges in a team
- identify and utilize different skill sets

Questions about what you need to do?

“If it doesn't challenge you,
it won't change you.”

Fred DeVito



15.9.2023

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