



Aalto University
School of Science

TU-C2040 Strategy Fieldwork

Session 1: Introduction and overview

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House keeping rules

- Please keep yourself muted if not talking
- Please raise your hand if you want to ask something
- You can also post your question to the chat
- Remember to lower your hand!

Agenda for today

- Introductions
- Course practicalities and general principles
- The project
- Group formation

Introduce yourself shortly (20-30s) in breakout rooms

- Your name and department
- Any one or two details / funny things about you
 - I am originally from Savonlinna
 - I have a dog named Reno
 - I am super interested in quantum computing
 - ...
- Do you already have a project group?
- Are you still looking for project members (you need 4)?
- If you want, you are encouraged to turn on your video or you can keep it off as well
- In the breakout room, please start introductions right away, e.g., in the order you are in the participant list
- You will return automatically here after 10min

I.

Course practicalities and general principles

A systematic approach to problem-solving

- Problem solving through research
 - using a systematic approach to generate knowledge about something about which we currently don't have (sufficient) knowledge
- Effective problem-solving requires
 - Understanding, defining and structuring the problem
 - An approach suitable to the problem at hand (research design, frameworks and methods)
 - Proper execution
 - Getting the facts on the table
 - Avoiding biases (e.g., representative sampling, multiple points of view, verify your intuition)
 - Actionable insights (answering the “so what?” question)



A short summary of the course

1. Find a client company from the topics proposed and agree on carrying out a project for that company
2. Together with the company identify a clear problem/opportunity
3. Set the project objectives and scope
4. Collect primary data
5. Analyze the data
6. Develop a business solution for the company
7. Write a report (a slideset) for the company
8. Present the report in class
9. Provide feedback on the work of other groups

Learning objectives

- How to translate a real-life business question or problem into a systematic study
- How to identify and apply relevant methods for studying the question or problem
- How to generate relevant data and analyze them to help solve the problem
- How to devise recommendations based on the analysis that are likely to solve the business problem
- How to evaluate and give constructive feedback on the work of others

Schedule for sessions

- Two initial sessions (in Zoom)
 - Introduction and overview Tue 11.1.2022, 10:15-11:45
 - Setting up and executing the study Tue 18.1.2022, 10:15-11:45
- Four guidance meetings
 - 30min/group
 - Get feedback from your instructor (Kimmo or Kaarlo)
 - 15.2., 15.3., 5.4., and 10.5.
 - see Schedule page at MyCourses
- Presentation
 - Groups present their reports on 24.5.
 - one ~3h session

Schedule

Note!

- Iterative
- Peer-review
- Keep on the schedule!

Phase	Week	Teacher feedback	Student deliverables
PROJECT PLAN	1	Tue 11.1. - Intro session 1	
	2	Tue 18.1. - Intro session 2	
	3		Mon 24.1. - NDA signed
	4		Fri 4.2. - Company & topic agreed
	6		Sun 13.2. - Draft project plan
	7	Tue 15.2. - Feedback session 1	Sun 20.2. - Final project plan for peer-review
		8	EXAM WEEK
DATA COLLECTION	9		Sun 6.3. - Peer-review
	10		Sun 13.3. - Draft report v1 (incl. data collection)
	11	Tue 15.3. - Feedback session 2	
ANALYSIS	12		
	13		Sun 3.4. - Draft report v2 (incl. analysis)
	14	Tue 5.4. - Feedback session 3	Sun 10.4. - Revised report for peer-review
	15	EXAM WEEK (Easter)	
RECOMMEN- DATIONS	16		Sun 24.4. - Peer-review
	17	Wappu	
	18		Sun 8.5. - Draft report v3 (incl. recommendations)
	19	Tue 10.5. - Feedback session 4	
	20		
	21	Tue 24.5. - Final presentations	Sun 29.5. - Final report for grading
	22	EXAM WEEK	

Mandatory attendance

- You will need to participate in all guidance sessions and the final presentation, so put them to your calendar immediately
 - The project is group work so all group members need to participate in all activities
 - All group members need to have the same information (avoid miscommunication)
- Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis if there is justification for absence
 - No extra assignments as a default, but instructors have the right to demand additional work if necessary

Overview of deliverables

- Project plan (draft and final)
- Project report (v1, v2, v3, and final)
- Peer-reviews (for plan and report)

- Note that **submission deadlines are strict!** Points will be deducted for late submissions.

Requirements and grading

- General evaluation criteria
 - Structured approach
 - Appropriateness of methods and presentation
 - Scope of analysis
 - Reflection and originality
 - Giving feedback and constructive criticism
- Division of points
 - Project plan – 15%
 - Project report – 60%
 - Presentations – 10%
 - Peer-review work – 15%



Overview of evaluation

Evaluation based on group performance

- Project plan – 15p
 - Student peer-review – 5p
 - Teacher grading – 10p
- Project report – 60p
 - Student peer-review after analysis phase – 5p
 - Teacher grading – 55p
- Presentations – 10p
 - Teacher grading based on all phases and emphasis is given to improvement during the course

Evaluation based on individual performance

- Peer-review work – 15p
 - How good peer-feedback you gave for the other teams for their project plan and analysis phase
- Peer and self-evaluation (textual)
 - Evaluate your own effort in the group work and give feedback to your team fellows

Late submissions and course feedback

- Deductions for late submissions (**-3p** per every new day)
 - Note! Being late for 3-4 days in total means in practice that you lose roughly one grade
 - For peer-review rounds, if submission is late for more than 3 days, you will also lose all peer-review points
- Course feedback (**+1p**)



Passing and grades

To pass the course

- your group needs to submit all the deliverables
- you need to get at least 50 points

Maximum points are 100p.

Grade boundaries for each grade will be decided during the final evaluation. The reason for this is because for this year the course teachers and evaluation criteria have changed, and we want to ensure fair grading.

Principles for group work

- Commitment to the other group members
 - Everybody does their fair share
- Groups work independently
 - Solve problems internally, in case of persisting problems discuss with instructor
- Principles
 - Quality
 - Effort
 - Constructive criticism
 - Support

Course communication

- The course MyCourse site contains the latest information
- Relevant news will be communicated through Announcements board
- Please use Discussion board for any general, non-personal and non-confidential questions
 - either of the teachers can react to your question
 - any of your fellow students can also answer the question
 - your question and answer is visible to all other students who might be wondering the same question
- If you have a personal question, please contact either of the teachers
- If you have a specific problem concerning your project, please contact your instructor directly
 - Kimmo Karhu (kimmo.karhu@aalto.fi)
 - Kaarlo Väisänen (kaarlo.vaisanen@aalto.fi)

Confidentiality and NDA

- All students will have to sign a confidentiality agreement (NDA) before the project work starts. This is to ensure confidentiality of the material that companies share.
- However, confidentiality issues cannot impede the assessment of the project plan and project report. Confidentiality covers all projects in the course so that peer-review can be conducted.
- If there is any issues or questions regarding the confidentiality from the company side, please be immediately in touch with your instructor.

Confidentiality and NDA

- [Confidentiality commitment](#) can be found under Material section in MyCourses
- Print, sign, scan, and then submit it by Jan 24 using the [Assignment box](#) under Deliverables section

Ethics and fair play

- Commitment to fair play with companies, informants, instructors and other students
 - Open communication about issues
 - Keeping promises and schedules
 - Keeping confidentiality
 - Informing informants about purpose of research and use of data
 - No misinterpretation or misrepresentation of data
 - No plagiarism



II.

The project

Guidance and communication during the project

- You will have one of us as instructor
- The role of the instructor is to provide guidance on carrying out the project, on proper scoping of the project, and on selecting literature, frameworks and methods
- There are four feedback sessions during spring
 - See schedule

Project topics

- Focus on study of market, customers, users, partners or other external parties
 - typically related to launching new or improving existing business model / product / service, or entering a market
 - typically involves analysis of customer or market characteristics, assessment of business potential, and/or identification of value for customers or partners
 - no internally-oriented or process improvement projects
 - no generic study of trends or current topics
- Includes collection and analysis of primary data (usually through surveys or interviews) from sources external to the company
- Is feasible within the time and resource constraints

Over 30 companies are offering a project

- Project description and contact details on the course website

Contacting the company

- Do your homework before contacting the company
 - Get familiar with the company (e.g., website)
- Provide background and show you're interested
 - Send brief bios for each group member
 - State why you find the project interesting
- Think about the problem before meeting the company
 - Form an opinion, hypotheses
- Be open and fair
 - In case you have several options decide quickly and inform the company
 - Likewise a company might have to decide among several groups

Setting up and scoping the project

- Make sure that the topic is feasible within the time constraints
 - Some projects offered are already well scoped, others will still need some thinking about the proper scope
- Make sure that the company agrees to provide support
 - Especially if company-internal information is needed or the project concerns the company's customers or partners the company should commit to provide or help you with access
- If in doubt your instructor will help you set the proper scope

Aligning expectations with the company

- You will be responsible for communicating with the company
 - There is no regular contact or coordination between the instructor and the company
 - Direct contact can be made if needed during the project
- You can agree on deliverables with the company that are different than what is required for the course
 - Don't agree on deliverables for the company that go much beyond the deliverables agreed with your instructor!

Inform instructor about topic

Once you have found a company and a topic (and agreed with the company about it), please send an email to your instructor

- Should include the name of the client company/organization and a short description of the project scope
- Company contact person regarding the topic
- Instructor for a project topic is decided by the group alphabet
 - Kimmo: A, C, E, G, ...
 - Kaarlo: B, D, F, H, ...

Deadline for informing your instructor about the topic:

- 4.2.2022
- But the earlier the better

Guidelines for report and peer-review

- Detailed guidelines will be published on the course website
- Make sure that all submissions follow the guidelines!
- There are guidelines for
 - Project plan
 - Project report
 - Peer-review
- All submitted documents must be written in English

III.

Group formation



Group formation

- Use the tool in project groups section for forming the groups
- Each group must have four members
- Please stay in this session until we have found a group for you
- Instructors are assigned automatically
 - Kimmo: Project group A, C, E, G, ...
 - Kaarlo: Project group B, D, F, H, ...

Questions?

