

# Spring 2012 Consultancy in the Arts AMGT 780 3 Credits

## Course Rational and Description Thursday, 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm

The primary objective of this course is to provide the arts administrator an understanding of aspects of consulting to, for and with arts organizations: creating an arts consultancy with a workable business model in a rapidly evolving economic climate, how to find and serve clients, and from the other side, an arts administrator how to work effectively with consultants.

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**Office Hours:** 1 hour before class, by appointment; email, text or call me days, nights, and weekends, after 8 am, before 9 pm.

Students will learn the business of establishing a consulting practice, providing consultations and determining an appropriate client relationship. Ethics, legal responsibilities, and tax issues will be considered, as will quality and philosophy of work, working relationships, contracting, marketing and sales, and the typical pitfalls of consulting practice.

Students will work independently and in trios to:

1. determine the service they can offer to a client, individually;
2. determine how to create a nonprofit consultancy, including the thinking required for a business plan;
3. find a real client or create a fictional one;
4. develop a scope of work with the client, including all components of a contract and pricing.

Findings will be presented to the class, possibly with the client(s) in the room.

Good arts administrators understand when to hire consultants. They do this for a variety of reasons:

1. they lack in-house expertise;
2. time is short;
3. they are looking for fresh ideas and energy;

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4. in-house attempts to solve the problem have failed or stalled;
5. the issue is contentious and leadership has decided to invite outside facilitators to help reach consensus;
6. an outside organization demands/strongly recommended a consultant be brought in;
7. leadership wants a consultant to lend credibility to a decision already made.

There are three agendas in every work place. The first agenda is the focus of the mission work of the nonprofit, including value creation and delivery, marketing and sales, administration, research and development, production, revenue generation, and constituent loyalty – 90% of the work of boards, leadership, managers and staff deliver and where most consultants find work, too. These are usually technical and tactical consultants.

The second agenda focuses on the organization and the mechanisms that bring people together with the resources to accomplish the mission. This agenda includes plans, strategies, structure, delegation, management and communications systems, coordination and control, resource allocation methods, rewards and recognition systems, and culture. Here, consultants are trainers, executive coaches, organizational planners, and strategic thinking partners to leadership and teams.

The third agenda addresses individual development and transformation. A consultant involved in this work is trained in psychology and aims to help the individual employee improve, personally. Personal transformation can be supported by team work and consultants working on second agenda issues.

The summary goal of this course, MAM 780 Consultancy, is to show students a variety of ways to think about how to help nonprofit arts organizations achieve their mission. The class will achieve this by constituting itself as a virtual consulting practice, determining what services we will offer, finding or creating clients, contracting with our clients, and by the end of the course, being prepared to conduct the work determined. Moreover, we will have spent time understand where arts administrators look for consultants, what they expect consultants to achieve, and how they might best integrate the work of the consultant into the nonprofit environment.

### **Readings:**

Primary Text: *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*, Peter Block, Third Edition, Pfeiffer/Wiley, 2010.

*An Outline for Building A Successful Consulting Practice for Nonprofit Clients*, Will Phillips and Mary Case

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Qm2 Associates Agreement

Critical Response Process, Liz Lerman

Handouts, as provided by classmates and professor

## **Grading:**

25 percent of the Grade will come from the trio project of creating a consulting practice area as determined by the students in the class. The perimeters of this project will be determined in class.

25 percent of the Grade will come from two class individual presentation or preparations, to be chosen by the student, in consultation with the professor, regarding some aspect of consulting practice.

25 percent of the Grade will come from a demonstrated understanding of the nature of consultancy and how it is a vital resource in the fine and performing arts. This understanding will be defined by the class, mid- semester.

15 percent of the Grade will come from class attendance and participation.

10 percent of the Grade will come from work decided by the class/teams/individual and the professor by midterm. This 10 percent is intended to allow for creativity, flexibility, and contribution to the work of the class.

## **My expectations**

Missed exams – don't – but, if you must – be sure to contact me;

Absenteeism – don't – but, if you must, have another student contact you with notes and follow-up. This is part of the class participation grade.

Class preparation/participation – do (participate) – often – I do count it.

Attendance in class is expected. There is no substitute for attendance. If you will not be in attendance, please text or email me and a classmate (in your trio) who can assure that you will receive notes from the class.

Assignment due dates, quality, adherence to specifications, etc. – this is a graduate level course. The expectation is professional – characteristics such as compliance, neatness, organization, proper spelling and grammar, etc.

Late assignments: you lose a partial grade for each day late – no matter what the excuse (except for an “extreme” emergency – e.g. death, accident, etc.)

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**What follows**, is required for inclusion in GMU Syllabus:

Grading reminders: Once final grades have been recorded, faculty are not to accept any work to change a grade. Grade changes can only be approved when they are due to a calculation or recording error on the part of the faculty.

GRADING SCALE A+100-97 A 96-94 A- 93-90 B+ 89-87 B 86-84 B- 83-80 C 79-70 F 69-

An incomplete grade (IN) should be used only if the student requests it in writing. An IN counts as a failing grade until completed, and it automatically turns into an F if a grade is not turned in by the deadline in the Schedule of Classes. Some students may prefer a C to an IN, and faculty shouldn't assume that the student wants an IN rather than a grade or that it is in the student's best interest to get an IN.

In addition, faculty may assign an IN only if the student has a very limited amount of work to complete and there is a non academic reason they can't do so within the semester and if, in their best judgment, the student actually stands a good chance of passing the course by finishing the work satisfactorily. Typical situations for giving incompletes involve a final exam (missed due to illness) or a final paper (not completed because of a family emergency). Faculty are not to assign incompletes if the student has missed a substantial portion of the work of the semester and wants extra time to do it; faculty are not to assign incompletes to give a student time to improve on work already completed.

Faculty are not to agree to give incompletes unless they will be available to grade the work and submit a grade by the official due date. If the faculty will be going on leave or leaving George Mason, this might not be possible. Faculty may set an earlier due date for the unfinished work; it is best to have in writing a description of the work that is outstanding and the date by which it is due. Faculty are not ever obligated to give an IN. Since I am an adjunct, and will not be teaching again immediately, I cannot agree to give an incomplete.

### DISABILITY

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

The need for accommodations should be identified at the beginning of the semester and that the specific accommodation has to be arranged through the Office of Disability Resources. Faculty are not to provide accommodations to students on their own (e.g. allowing a student extra time to complete an exam because the student reports having a disability).

Federal law (a law known as FERPA) requires us to protect the privacy of student information. Faculty should not speak about a student's record with anyone other than the student. The record includes how a student is doing in a course, whether a student

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has attended class, information about performance or grades, whether a paper has been turned in, etc. This prohibition includes parents, siblings, spouses, anyone. If faculty have questions about whether to respond to an inquiry about a student, please refer them to Linda Miller, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs.

According to the University catalog, all students and faculty are to use their GMU.EDU email address. Some commercial email addresses may be filtered out of the GMU.EDU system. No official information can be sent to students unless on the Mason email system.

GMU Honor Code: <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/index.html#Anchor12>

Honor Code: To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. GMU student information and resources: <http://www.gmu.edu/mlstudents/>

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference* has been recommended.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

### **Writing Improvement and Writing Center**

CVPA 505 – Academic Writing in the Arts (a one credit course for 5 weeks). In the Fall of 2010 – offered on Wednesdays from 4:30-7:10PM in Fairfax.

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Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

**University and Departmental Policies:** Each student is responsible for knowing Mason's rules, regulations, requirements, and academic policies. The catalog is the normal repository of policy statements but corrections, changes, or interpretations can be promulgated by other means, including electronic publication. When the university or one of its academic units makes changes in course requirements, grading procedures, or the level of qualitative performance expected of its students for acceptance into particular programs, academic standing, or graduation, the changes apply to all students enrolled at the time of implementation of the change and thereafter.

**Official Communication with Students Web:** [www.gmu.edu/email](http://www.gmu.edu/email)

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and faculty feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.