

Part-Time MBA

Multidisciplinary Action Projects

Sponsor Guide 2012-13



The Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan is a pioneer of action-based learning. This approach to business education continuously creates relevant, challenging ways to connect students with the world of practice. For Ross MBA students, the cornerstone of action-based learning is the Multidisciplinary Action Project (MAP). Through MAP, teams of four to six students work closely with a partner company to address a high-level, wide-ranging issue of importance to that company. Projects are sponsored by private corporations and other institutions around the world, including the employers of Ross students.

MAP fulfills a dual mission:

- Delivers data-driven solutions to the sponsoring company's complex business issue; and
- Prepares students for successful careers by providing valuable professional development.

The MAP Process

Since 1992, MAP students have completed more than 1,500 projects at more than 700 organizations worldwide. MAP is a 14-week course for Part-time MBA students. Students conduct six weeks of preliminary research and analysis, gather primary data on site for one week, and continue with seven weeks of further data collection and analysis. At the end of the engagement, the team provides an oral presentation and submits a written report detailing their recommendations along with the data and analysis to support them.

What Makes a Good MAP Proposal?

Each year, we accept MAP proposals from sponsors looking to solve problems, identify new processes, or target opportunities for growth.

Successful MAP proposals:

- Address a real challenge or opportunity that has no existing obvious solution;
- Demand a set of actionable recommendations;
- Are important to the company and have strong support from senior-level management;
- Require a multidisciplinary approach; and
- May be completed in 14 weeks.

Types of Projects

- Business strategy formulation and/or competitive analysis with industry
- Market entry, product line extension, or global expansion strategies
- Joint venture, merger, or acquisition process
- Business plan development
- Financial modeling and analysis
- Operations management and/or performance review
- E-business strategies
- Marketing plans
- Product launch and distribution
- Customer relationship management

Selection of Recent MBA MAP Sponsors

- **Dow AgroSciences** – Seek opportunities to improve flexibility and customer responsiveness within the supply chain to maximize growth within the markets
- **Salokaya Health Sciences** – Assess the potential & make recommendations for entry into the telehealth business in India
- **Guardian Industries** – Develop a market entry and growth strategy for product penetration into a new segment
- **Syngenta** – Develop a comprehensive branding plan for the company’s innovation initiative
- **Henry Ford Health System** – Develop a business plan for a corporate product line in alignment with the launch of a new center of excellence
- **John Deere** – Develop a strategic plan including analysis of regional manufacturing and supply operations in a non-U.S. market

Selection of Recent MBA MAP Sponsors

- **Medtronic** – Identify & recommend partnership and/or acquisition opportunities in a specific business unit

Sponsor Benefits

Sponsoring organizations enjoy tremendous gains from participation in MAP including:

- Unbiased findings and recommendations from a team of MBA students at one of the world’s leading business schools;
- A strengthening of the relationship between the sponsoring organization and the Ross School;
- An opportunity to work closely with future business leaders who have diverse skills, backgrounds, and experiences;
- Exposure to the latest business tools, techniques, and theories; and
- An action-oriented learning process for the team and the sponsoring organization.

MAP Timeline 2012-2013		
Evening MBA	Weekend MBA	Team Activity
July 2, 2012	Nov. 1, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of sponsor proposals are due
August 15, 2012	Dec. 15, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams are formed; sponsor notified of team assignments
Saturday September 8, 2012	Saturday January 12, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team meeting with sponsor to outline goals and expectations • Letter of engagement drafted and agreed upon • Travel identified and visa process begun as required • Begin research phase and identifies interview subjects • Develop interview outlines • Team may begin conducting local and/or telephone interviews
October Travel: Oct. 22- 26, 2012	February Travel: Mar. 4-8 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research continues • Conduct travel portion of the project including in-person interviews and primary research
November	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate research, begin analysis and identify initial conclusions • Identify gaps in research and follow up appropriately
No later than Dec. 8, 2012	April 19-20, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize research and complete analysis • Team presentation to the sponsor toward the end of the month • Final report due the last Wednesday of the semester

Sponsorship FAQ

Project Summary Form

Sponsors are asked to submit 1) a brief description of the company background and how this project fits with the long term goals of the company and 2) a project summary describing the business issue or problem and the location of team travel (if known). The summary should contain a set of objectives and goals for the project that can be made publicly available. The form is located on the following page.

Project Scope

The student team will work with the faculty adviser and organization liaison to further refine the project scope prior to starting the engagement.

Confidentiality

All projects are confidential unless permission for release is obtained from the sponsor. Non-disclosure agreements may be arranged at the sponsor's request.

Sponsorship Costs

In recent years, expenses have varied from below \$5,000 and up to \$15,000 per team. Actual expenses depend on the size of the team and travel destinations. MAP costs include team travel, lodging, per diem, documentation, and communication expenses.

Sponsor Responsibilities

- Identify a dedicated and engaged project liaison
- Supply relevant data, which may be proprietary, to the MAP team
- Arrange for the MAP team to interview key personnel in the sponsoring organization
- Reimburse project-related expenses, including required travel for the MAP team

Final Deliverables

The team provides an oral presentation at the sponsor's location or via audio/video conferencing. The written report is provided at the end of the term.

Faculty Role

Each team is assigned a primary faculty adviser. The faculty determines the student's grades with consideration of the sponsor's viewpoint.

Contact Information

For additional information about becoming a sponsor and to request an electronic copy of the project summary form, please contact the Part-time MBA Program Office.

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