

Selecting and Developing IMC Projects

As described in the syllabus, projects are either provided by faculty or developed by students. Project Nomination Forms are required from each group. The Nomination forms provide an advanced look at the project so faculty can determine if it is viable for the course, and provides a list of the students on each project team. A project nomination form is provided below.

When a project has been successfully nominated, the team begins work on the Charter/ Prospectus, and timeline.

What is a Charter/Prospectus?

A Charter or prospectus is a written agreement defining what your team is to accomplish and how success will be measured. The Charter is used to focus the team's work and to set expectations as to what it will accomplish. A signed Charter indicates the formal beginning of a project.

Project Description & Scope

The first section of the Charter is a short description of the project.

The description should make clear the scope of work, any assumptions about the project that influence the project definition. The Charter becomes an agreement between the client and the team being chartered. A charter is complete when:

- The scope and success criteria are stated in a way the team understands and accepts as focusing on the essence of what it needs to accomplish.
- The team believes the success criteria are achievable with the resources available and in the required timeframe.
- It represents the issues, scope, and success criteria that will meet the necessary business objectives, i.e., result in a useful and usable product.
- The client concurs with the Charter.

Success Criteria/Objectives

Success criteria are the measurable characteristics that will define the successful of the projects Charter. Success criteria are used to determine the extent that the project met its goals. These measurable characteristics help prioritize tasks.

Part of your success criteria is an agreement between all members of how the project should be managed. These items should be discussed immediately after your group is formed. How will decisions be made? Examples:

- How will you handle group members that are not carrying their own weight?
- How many members are required for a quorum?
- How will work be divided?
- How fast will members respond to messages?
- At what point will the group decide to "out place" students that aren't carrying their part of the project?

Dependencies

Is there part of the client organization that is depending on your results? Identify activities that are dependent on the work of this group, and those that the group is dependent on for success. Dependencies are external to the project team.

Project Initiation Sign-Off

All team members, your client and instructor must sign the Charter. This signifies everyone's agreement that, based on what we know at the beginning of the project, the Charter defines what you are expected to accomplish. You may discover things as the project proceeds that indicate a change is required in the Charter: in that case, change the Charter and get signatures to indicate agreement with the change.

Information in the Charter

- Project title and client organization name
- The names and signatures of all members of the team
- A name for your team
- Project start date; Projected finish date
- Client Contacts: Include complete contact information for the client (name, title, phone, physical address, email address).

Timelines/Work Plans/Schedule

The timeline is simply a schedule of when you will complete different parts of the project. The creation of this schedule forces you to anticipate the time necessary to complete portions of the project and see any dependencies. Timelines are most easily created using a spreadsheet or the table function of your word processor.

In the sample below, task 4 is dependent on the successful completion of task 1. If task 1 is not completed on schedule, the entire project is in danger of being late. While this is the simplest of examples, it should give you an idea of what is expected. You would insert the name of each task (there are likely more than the 5 shown) and the time period when each must developed. Shade the cells that represent the period of time you will work on each task. Your time periods are likely to be more refined than this example.

Task	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Task 1							
Task 2							
Task 3							
Task 4							
Task 5							

A Project Nomination form is provided below. This should be given to your instructor early in the semester (as soon as possible). This may seem to contain the same information as the charter, but this is the initial view/nomination of the project at the time you are proposing it. Your complete charter is due as part of IMC 1.

Business 134B IMC Project Nomination Form

Check One → (1200-1315) (1330-1445)

(please print this information clearly. Attach additional pages as necessary.)

Group Name: _____ Date _____

Project Name: _____

Team Members:

Name _____	Name _____
Name _____	Name _____
Name _____	Name _____

Client Organization Name: _____

Organization Contact: _____ Title _____

Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Address: _____

Contact City, State, Zip: _____

Brief Project Description: _____

What will be the measurable deliverables? _____

Which group member has had primary contact with the client? _____

What is the basis of the relationship? _____

Are there any special considerations that the team or instructor should take into account? Are there any confidentiality, legal, security requirements that the team must meet?

Client Agreement:

We are greatly appreciative of the clients/organizations that work with our students to bring experiential learning to the classroom. The relationship between the client and the students is one of client - student consultant. In that regard, clients should understand that this is an academic exercise conducted by mostly students without real-world experience. Significant portions (if not all) of the materials and plans generated by the student team may be successfully implemented by the client. However, there is no guarantee of this. Results are variable, impacted by many factors, including the information provided by the client and the client understanding of the IMC concept (which students should be able to explain). Students are not expected to implement the plan; but deliver, to the best of their ability, a plan that is designed to accomplish the objectives. Students are instructed that they are not to act in a sales capacity. While there isn't any direct compensation to the students, it is appreciated if clients cover out-of-pocket expenses, such as duplication of final reports, any long distance communication expenses incurred, and so on. Thank you for your interest in our students. Your effort better prepares our students for the real world and also can provide you with a fresh look at your Integrated Marketing Communications needs.

Signature of client primary contact

Date