

BCaP Fall 2021
Report Deck Assignment

Assignment Summary

The report deck assignment is the capstone project for BCaP. BCaP teams prepare a written report deck and deliver a final presentation. There may also be an annotated bibliography as well as additional graded prep assignments as determined by your professor (consult the syllabus for your section). Through this project, you will practice the skills you have developed over the course of the term: writing, speaking, designing (visually), and communicating with (and as) a team.

Report Deck Case Scenario

Your BCaP team is part of a student task force team charged by university administration to offer specific recommendations regarding how to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in student organizations and activities. Your team will be selecting a single UI student organization (e.g., Dance Marathon, Panhellenic Council, STAR (Students to Assist Recruitment), River Run) to audit current DEI practices in place and suggest a specific 2 year plan that would improve the UI organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion and bring it into better alignment with University of Iowa DEI goals.

Your team's task: Select a U of I student organization. Conduct an audit (i.e., an examination of what the organization is currently doing or says it is doing) of its DEI practices. Propose a DEI action plan for the student organization (or make an existing one better) ---identifying *specific, measurable, practical, and effective* practices that UI students in the organization can adopt to implement change.

Report deck planning and implementation:

- **Start with the UI DEI website to understand UI policy and goals regarding DEI.**

From [the University of Iowa's DEI website](#):

- o **Diversity** refers to all aspects of human difference, social identities, and social group differences
- o **Equity** refers to fair and just practices and policies that ensure all campus community members can thrive
- o **Inclusion** refers to a campus community where all members are and feel respected, have a sense of belonging, and can participate and achieve to their potential

These articles below should give you a general background regarding DEI issues and initiatives in organizations. Some of these articles specifically address DEI in the workplace and business environments. As student organizations and business environments will have some overlap regarding DEI concerns, articles relating to DEI in the workplace may be helpful in providing some ideas and concepts for enacting a DEI plan for a student organization.

- [Why Diversity Programs Fail](#)
- [What are your top DEI initiatives for the workplace?](#)
- [How to Check that DEI Efforts Are Working at Your Company](#)
- [How to Elevate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work In Your Organization](#)
- [The Why Behind DEI: How Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives Benefit Business](#)

There is no shortage of articles relating to DEI for you to consult. A search result for the terms: diversity, equity, inclusion in the Harvard Business Review from 2016 – 2021 resulted in 443 articles.

- **Use the following research question outline to get you started on your research and to help you determine what will be relevant to your team as you determine a strategy for your client.**

When your team puts together its report deck, do not structure your deck as answers to a numbered series of questions. It is up to your team to create a storyline for your project in which you use the information you gathered from “answering” those research questions to put together a coherent and unified recommendation for your client.

Select an actual U of I student organization:

- You must obtain approval from your BCaP professor for the organization you choose.
- No political or religious organizations.
- The UI organization selected must have been in existence at the UI for at least 5 years and have an active online presence (current website and social media presence)
- If you select an organization that any member of your team belongs to, then it is MANDATORY your report evaluate any existing organizational DEI plans already in place and propose a DEI action plan that critiques any existing plan and includes specific and measurable actions that would be the responsibility of student members of the U of I organization.
- If you select an organization that a member of your team belongs to, remember that for this assignment you are not representing the organization. Your BCaP team is taking the role of a consulting group task force that is preparing an audit of the organization’s DEI practices and recommending a DEI action plan for “senior management,” in this case, the Dean of Students and the faculty/staff advisers of the UI student organization as well as the organization’s student officers/leadership team.

Research your chosen UI student organization:

1. What is this organization already doing, or what has it done in the past, regarding meeting university expectations for DEI in its practices, membership, and retention?
2. How and to what extent have the organization’s past efforts been successful? Consider the individual components of diversity, equity, and inclusion (refer to the UI definitions of those 3 terms on p. 1 of this assignment) in determining which specific aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion are mentioned (or not) in the organization’s current DEI practices. If an organization is claiming success for its DEI efforts, note what evidence of success it has that substantiates any claim it is making with respect to DEI efforts.
3. In what specific regards might the UI student organization do better?

Your research may involve interviews with members and/or leadership of the student organization, as well as researching the organization’s web and social media presence and any available historical membership data.

Research similar organizations at the University of Iowa and/or other schools:

4. What efforts are these other organizations making toward DEI? Have those efforts been successful? How/why or why not?

5. Does your client organization have chapters at other schools? What efforts have those other chapters made?
6. What are the opportunities for improvement in DEI practices and what are the areas of concern?

Using what you have learned from your research, propose a DEI action plan (or improve an existing one) for the U of I student organization:

7. What *specific, measurable, practical, and effective* practices can students in the UI organization adopt to implement and enact change?
 - (Do *not* propose changes at the level of university policy – i.e., in terms of targeted university recruitment, admissions, or funding – those considerations are important but outside the scope of this report.)
8. How should students operationalize the practices they identified in #7? What specific steps are involved in implementation? How will they measure success?

Your action plan should specifically address enhancing DEI with respect to any or all of the following (your research should suggest to your BCaP team which categories may be most applicable):

- Race and ethnicity
- Sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation
- Disability
- First generation college students
- Any other category that your team believes to be especially relevant to your chosen student organization

Action plans typically establish reasonable timeframes for putting the plan in place—aim for plans that will make a measurable impact within the next 2-3 years.

- **Finally, create a report deck: A written report deck should accomplish the following:**
- Synthesizes and presents the result of your research (approximately half your team’s slides)
 - Proposes and outlines a specific action plan, complete with timeline and measurables. (approximately half your team’s slides)

The audience for your report will consist of:

- The organization’s student leaders
- The organization’s advisers
- The Dean of Students

Remember in writing the report your BCaP team is a consulting student task force; you should not be using “we” in referencing the student organization as your team does not represent the student organization.

How does your team locate research materials?

Start with the official listing of student organizations at the University of Iowa:

<https://uiowa.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>
<https://leadandserve.uiowa.edu/student-organizations/>

Once you've selected a UI student organization examine its web presence. Does it have social media accounts? Can you interview organizational leadership? Find as much firsthand information as you can. Do the same for other, similar student organizations.

Think about who else, outside the context of student organizations, might be interested in the issue of DEI – public policy makers, academics, and business leaders. Consider what kind of material they might read, view, or listen to. Search terms in the business or academic press like “effective DEI,” “evaluating DEI,” and “developing DEI strategy” may generate useful leads.

In your research for effective strategies and practices that student organizations are already practicing in order to improve DEI, be sure to take the time to evaluate any organization's claims. An organization's own website can tell you what its leadership is doing to improve DEI; it is NOT a reliable research source for how effective the organization's strategy is (although in-depth interviews may give you information to help you better assess effectiveness).

Accessible (not overly academic) business journals (like the Harvard Business Review) may also be useful sources for evaluating strategies and obtaining a sense of what may or may not be currently effective. As you find good research sources, pay attention to citations and references contained in the source as those could also provide you with additional sources to answer your research questions.

Pomerantz Business Library staff, especially Willow Fuchs (willow-fuchs@uiowa.edu), can consult with you or your team via Zoom. These consultations work best if you've done some preliminary research on your own and have questions about how to locate a resource targeted to a specific research question. Be ready to begin any consultation with library staff, Frank Center consultants, or your BCaP professor by sharing what you've already done in starting your research.

How will your team present its findings?

This project has two main parts:

Written Report Deck: You will present to the organization's student leadership, faculty advisers, and Dean of Students a PowerPoint report deck, a document that this group of people will read before your final presentation. The report deck is where you will present your research and analysis in full detail. Even though you create this report with PowerPoint slides, it is a business document intended for *reading* rather than presenting.

As a written report, the report deck should feature polished, clear writing in complete sentences. The report deck should have at least 24 (max of 28) content slides (assuming a team of 4) plus the following team slides: a title slide, table of contents slide, executive summary slide, conclusion slide and references slide(s).

Due dates in the written report deck project:

1st submission of report deck due Oct. 29 (40 points: 20 team/20 individual)

2nd submission of report deck due Nov. 19 (50 points: 25 team/25 individual)

Refer to the Grading Criteria for the Written Report deck for information on required team and individual elements for the 1st submission and 2nd submission

Online Presentation: Your team will condense your report deck findings for the purposes of a 12-minute online synchronous Zoom presentation featuring visual PPT slides (rather than the text-heavy slides of the written report deck).

The synchronous online presentation component will feature a Q & A segment in which senior management (leadership of the student organization, its adviser(s), and the UI Dean of Students), having read your written report deck (or skimmed it), asks you questions about your recommendations and your research. Each BCaP team will have the opportunity to serve as the “senior management” for another team’s presentation and will be evaluated on the relevance and critical inquiry of the questions posed to the team presenting its findings.

A presentation assignment sheet with associated grading criteria will be distributed after the first report deck submission. Presentations occur during the final week of classes.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

The work of each student should be the work of that student and be work completed for this particular course in this particular semester. Work completed in a previous semester or for another course, borrowed from another student, or taken from any other source without attribution will be considered plagiarized and subject to college penalties for academic misconduct.

The use of research, writing, or intellectual property from any source taken without providing appropriate documentation constitutes plagiarism and will be regarded as academic misconduct. **Do not cut and paste the exact language from a website for use in any of your assignments unless you do the following: provide quotation marks to indicate the language is not yours AND cite the source.** Otherwise, you have plagiarized.

Plagiarism of any kind will result, at the minimum, in a zero on the assignment for all involved parties and a drop of a full letter grade for the final grade in the course. Particularly egregious cases of plagiarism may result in a possible failure of the course. Students who are reported for academic misconduct in this class will not subsequently be allowed to withdraw from the class and may be required to submit all team assignments as individual assignments.

Students with questions about how to provide sufficient documentation or what constitutes collaboration should consult with the instructor or course supervisor **before** submitting their assignment. Claiming you did not know what you did was plagiarism will not be considered a valid excuse for academic misconduct.

The Report Deck and Plagiarizing Screening:

The written report deck has 2 submission phases—only the 2nd and final submission goes through plagiarism screening. If a student submits plagiarized material for the 1st submission and no one notices that does not mean the plagiarism is somehow “ok” or permissible. It is the student’s responsibility to insure that all language he or she produces for the deck is either original or is properly quoted and cited on the report deck slide.

Per the syllabus, assignments that go through Turnitin plagiarism screening through ICON are subject to a borrowed language penalty if they are found to contain phrases or sentence structures that are copied from other material. For the report deck, the borrowed language penalty would apply to the 2nd submission points. If the borrowed material occurs on a team slide then the team point category would be subject to the penalty, and the penalty would affect all 25 team points for the 2nd submission.

If the borrowed material occurs on the individual portion of a slide then the individual point category would be subject to the penalty, and the penalty would affect all 25 individual points for the 2nd submission. Depending on the extent of the borrowed language, the assignment may receive one of the following borrowed language designations:

- | | |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 1 | Minimal appropriation of language from assignment prompt or outside source. Points ceiling on assignment of 89% of total points |
| Level 2 | Minor borrowed language but does include at least one noticeable phrase/sentence taken from an outside source. Points ceiling of 82% |
| Level 3 | Borrowed language is evident: more than one noticeable phrase/ taken from an outside source. Points ceiling of 75% |
| Level 4 | Borrowed language is evident and more extensive; lower points ceiling may be designated depending on severity of borrowed language, and an academic misconduct penalty may be warranted. Points ceiling of 67% |
| Level 5 | Borrowed language covers most of the slide and merits failure; lower points ceiling may be designated depending on severity of borrowed language, and an academic misconduct review will be warranted. Points ceiling of 59% |

A single Level 5 violation or multiple level 4 violations detected on the final submission of the report deck will result in 0/25 for the individual (or 0/25 if violation is on a team slide) with the slides in question reviewed further to determine if an academic misconduct charge may be warranted.

The points ceiling means that an assignment may receive no higher than the ceiling designated, although it may receive lower for reasons unrelated to the borrowed language (e.g., errors in grammar/usage; poor organization; imprecise word choices).