



UVA in Argentina:
Systems Case Studies
SYS 2054/3054

Global Commerce Immersion:
IT Project Practicum in Argentina
COMM 4293

January Term 2020: December 29th, 2019 – January 11th, 2020

Prof. Stefano Grazioli
grazioli@virginia.edu

Prof. Ryan Nelson
rnelson@virginia.edu

By taking this course you will practice real-world problem solving in an international consulting context. You will do consulting work with winemaking companies in Mendoza, Argentina. Winemaking is a key economic activity in the region and a global industry which fuels worldwide exports, including Europe, China and the United States. You can even find products from Mendoza in Charlottesville! Working with a team of UVA students, you will be assigned to a real-world client and presented with real-world business challenges. Your team will identify problems and objectives, generate and evaluate alternative solutions, and present actionable recommendations. The solutions often involve developing proof-of-concept prototypes that gather, analyze and display data (spreadsheets, dashboards, web sites, and databases).

Learning Objectives

The primary goal of the class is to develop your *professional intercultural competences*, which we define as (1) an appreciation of the cultural differences in business and engineering practices in different parts of the world, *plus* (2) an ability to successfully cope with these differences.

1. Appreciation of cultural differences means that after taking this course, you will be able to:

- Explain broad cultural differences between Argentina and the United States. Based on your living in Mendoza and your experience with everyday Argentine life (going the grocery store, tasting the Argentine cuisine, meeting locals, etc.) you will be able to identify and describe differences and similarities between the cultures;
- Explain the differences in business and engineering practices between Argentina and the United States. This will be accomplished by working directly with clients at their workplaces and through daily interactions with managers, employees, and customers.

2. Ability to successfully cope with cultural differences in a professional setting means that after taking this course, you will be better able to:

- Identify the specific needs of foreign consulting clients through a variety of methods such as interviews, direct observation, and root cause analysis.
- Develop solutions that fit your client's specific needs and contextual situation, and that are sensitive to the specifics of their business culture, practices, and organizational capabilities.
- Present these solutions to foreign clients while overcoming communication barriers.

Learning Methods

The central pedagogy for this course will be a *practicum* that focuses on solving actual problems experienced by real-world companies. A *practicum* is a learning experience that involves the supervised application of previously studied concepts and theory. In other words, the focus of this class is on *learning by doing*. Your team will draw on concepts from a variety of business and engineering disciplines: strategy, industry analysis, financial analysis, operations research, modeling, and systems engineering. Your team will then apply these concepts to real-world situations.

The role of practicum faculty is also different from traditional courses. The main role of faculty is to supervise progress, offer high-level guidance, and to help you and your team to overcome obstacles. Faculty do not lecture, they coach.

Daily Agendas

Argentine culture puts a premium on seizing opportunity and adaptation. We will operate in the same way. For example, things will not always go according to the plan below. It will be up to us to make the most of unexpected changes.

We will send you a WhatsApp message every night, with an updated plan for the next day. That message supersedes the *draft* plan below.

Sun., Dec. 29

- Morning Arrival in Mendoza. The largest group arriving at MDZ will be picked up at the airport. Everybody else should take a taxi to the hotel.¹
- 1:00-2:30 Pizza & Empanadas, "Welcome to Mendoza" Orientation, El Portal, 4th floor. Casual.
- 5:00-6:15 Work session: "Getting ready for the first client meeting," 4th floor. Casual.
Introduction to stakeholder analysis and problem identification
- 6:15-7:30 "Consulting in Argentina," David English. Casual.
- 8:15-11:00 *Sharp*. Short walk to dinner at Anna Bistro – clients may be attending. Business casual.
Blogger for the day: Stefano Grazioli.

Mon., Dec. 30

- TBD Site visit(s)
- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
- 8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
- 5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual.
Dinner on your own
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Tue., Dec. 31

- 7:00-9:30 Breakfast at El Portal
- 9:30-3:00 Excursion: Cerro Arco. You will have a choice of either hiking the foothills of the Andes, or learn to cook empanadas and asado. Casual. Bring hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and water.
- 6:00-8:00 **Initial engagement briefings, El Portal, 4th floor.** Casual.
- 10:00-2:00 Dinner and New Year's celebration at Club Regattas. Dinner and dancing attire.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

¹ Collect your baggage, walk out of the airport, and look for a person that dispatches taxis. Tell the dispatcher/driver: "El Portal Suite Hotel, Neocochea". The ride is about 15 minutes and USD \$10. If you don't have pesos, ask in advance whether you can pay in USD, or ask if you can use a credit card (unlikely).

Wed., Jan. 1

- 7:00-10:00 Breakfast at El Portal
Free day. Optional activities: Rafting, Ziplining, etc.
8:00-9:00 Project work at hotel. Prepare for the client meeting. Casual.
Briefing on cultural differences.
Dinner on your own.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Thu., Jan. 2

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual.
Dinner on your own.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Fri., Jan. 3

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual.
Dinner on your own
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Sat, Jan. 4

- Breakfast is served until 10am
10:30-5:30 Excursion at Cacheuta Spa, with buffet luncheon. Casual. Bring swimsuit, hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
Dinner on your own
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Sun, Jan. 5

- Breakfast is served until 10am
10:45-4:45 Tour and Gourmet Picnic at Zuccardi Winery. Casual. Bring hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Casual.
6:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual
Second conversation on cultural differences
Dinner on your own
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Mon., Jan. 6

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual.
Dinner on your own
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Tue., Jan. 7

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel and "Presenting to an Argentine audience" David English. Casual.
8:15 Group dinner at the Patio de Jesus Maria. Casual.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Wed., Jan. 8

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 Project work at hotel. Casual.
Draft of briefing deck due.
Dinner on your own. This is the best night for your own 'final' dinner.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Thu., Jan. 9

- 7:00-8:45 Breakfast at El Portal
8:45-1:30 Work at the client site if needed, otherwise work at the hotel. Business casual.
5:00-8:00 **Project Briefing rehearsals** and faculty feedback. Casual.
Pizzas, empanadas & ice-cream dinner at the hotel.
This will likely be an intense working night. Do not plan your 'final' dinner today.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Fri., Jan. 10

- 7:00-10:00 Breakfast at El Portal
TBD **Project briefings.**
Afternoon Free time.
8:00-11:00 Class picture and Farewell Dinner. Nice restaurant. Dress appropriately.
Blogger for the day: TBD.

Sat., Jan. 11

- 7:00-10:00 Breakfast at El Portal
Wrap-up, including final conversation on cultural differences.
12:00 Check out. You may leave your luggage at the desk.
TBD Bus to the airport for the largest group.
Departure home (arrival on Sunday).
Blogger for the day: Ryan Nelson.

Recommended Readings

- [A collection of articles and online resources](#) will give you a background on Argentine history, culture, business, and current events.
- English, David. *Expat Entrepreneurs in Argentina: Ten Success Stories*, 2013. This book covers the experiences of several entrepreneur expats who are currently running business in Argentina and will be given to you as a gift before departure.

Honor Statement

This class (including all time spent abroad) operates under the UVA Honor System.

The University of Virginia relies upon and cherishes its community of trust. We endorse and uphold the University's Honor principle that students will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor shall they tolerate those who do. We recognize that even one honor infraction can destroy an exemplary reputation that took years to build. Acting in a manner consistent with the principles of honor benefits every member of the UVA community.

Assignments and grading

Your grade will be determined by your performance throughout the entire course. Grading will be based on the following components.

Assignment	Type	Due	Weight
1. Predeparture meetings participation	Individual	TBD	5%
2. First call to your client and team bios	Team	Before departure	5%
3. Initial engagement briefing	Team	Dec. 31 st	5%
4. Daily blog	Individual	Two students daily	5%
5. Individual contribution to project and discussions	Individual	Throughout course	30%
6. Draft of briefing deck	Team	Jan 8 th	#6, #7, #8 (combined) 40%
7. Project Briefing rehearsal	Team	Jan 9 th	
8. Project Briefing	Team	Jan. 10 th	
9. Final deliverables to client and faculty	Both	Jan. 18 th	5%
10. Class surveys (UVA & ISO)	Individual	End of course	5%

Because of the full-immersion nature of the study abroad program, faculty may also look at your overall behavior as a representative member of UVA in a foreign country. Thus, being a *good citizen* of the program is factored into the course grades. Being a good citizen means displaying professional and respectful behavior towards your clients, team members, peers, faculty, staff, and the Argentinian people in general. Examples of factors taken into consideration: punctuality, dressing appropriately for group events, establishing a good rapport with peers and clients, being well-prepared and alert for client meetings, monitoring WhatsApp and email communications. By contrast, tardiness, unpreparedness, and engaging in undesirable or illegal behaviors are examples of poor program citizenship.

Faculty will make these determinations, and will also ask the opinion of your team members at the end of the class. The impact on your grade can vary widely, depending on the significance of your positive achievements, and the severity and frequency of negative behaviors.

1. Pre-departure Meetings

The class includes three mandatory 2-hour pre-departure meetings.

Meeting 1 – RRH 403

- Welcome and introductions
- Course overview
- Past project retrospectives

Meeting 2 – RRH 403

- The business of wine
- Consulting 101: Macro environment analysis (PEST), Industry analysis (Five forces), Business model analysis (BMC), Value chain analysis, Problem identification/formulation, Action plans, etc.

Meeting 3 – RRH 403

- ISO preparation for traveling abroad
- Roommates selection
- The first call to your client

Faculty will assess participation for every meeting in Cville and Mendoza using the following scale

Score	Definition
-1	Appeared distracted or unprepared; behaved in ways that negatively impacted the classroom experience
0	Absent
+1	Attentive, but did not engage in the discussion, or made repetitive or irrelevant comments that did not add much value
+2	Appeared engaged and prepared, as expected from a UVA student
+3	Stood out as an exceptional contributor to class dialogue. Made memorable, high quality comments

2. First call to your client and team bios

The time in Mendoza is limited, and it is therefore important to hit the ground running. To give you a head start we ask each team to ...

- email their clients before departure,
- send them a sheet containing the bios of the team members, and
- have an initial call (typically via Skype) with them.

A separate handout, called "*First call with your client*" describes how to contact the client, the content of the team bios, and how to run a successful initial call. A copy of the document will be also posted on Box. <https://virginia.box.com/s/dj04m76v73tv34l0yaorhh7feue08vn2> password will be distributed in class.

3. Initial engagement briefing

Very early in the program we will ask you to summarize for everyone in class the status of your client engagement.

Goal: update faculty and peers on your engagement, possible obstacles and next steps. Receive feedback.

Audience: the class, i.e., a group of 30 consultants and the faculty supervisors.

Format: 5-ish minute talk, optionally supported by a slide deck (note: there will be a projector available). Not every team member needs to speak.

Dress code: casual.

Content: below we list the desired content. We want a conversational story of what you and your team have learned so far

- Brief introduction of the client and its business
- Your initial understanding of the problem that the client has described to you in your first call
- Two biggest risks, and your mitigation and contingency plan
- Next steps towards exploring the problem. Do not identify solutions too early!

To prepare the engagement briefing, complete a Business Model Canvas (BMC) for your client's business. The BMC is covered in #1 above. During the briefing, do not mention the BMC analysis – that would be too time consuming – just summarize only what is most interesting. Use most of your time to describe as clearly as you can your understanding of the problem up to that point, with the stipulation that your understanding may change moving forward. Next, identify the two biggest challenges that may occur on your path to successful completion and what you plan to do to manage those challenges. Finally, tell us in some concrete detail what you plan to do in your first meeting with the client.

4. Daily blog

Each day, a couple of students will be assigned to write and post a blog entry describing what happened during the day.

Goal: update friends and family on your stay in Argentina.

Audience: This a public blog aimed at friends and family.

Format: A couple of paragraphs, a couple of pictures. See examples from the latest blog: https://pages.shanti.virginia.edu/Argentina_J-Term_2019_2/

Content: the blog is your reflection on the day and a means for your family and friends to stay connected. Keep that audience in mind. Content can be creative. Keep the style light and fun, or thoughtful and interesting: it is your choice. A short anecdote on something interesting that happened during the day is better than letting everybody know that in the morning we had orange juice for breakfast at the hotel.

To post an entry you need to go to Collab and navigate to WordPress from there. Ask previous bloggers if you have trouble connecting.

5. Individual contribution to project and discussions

A key difference between this class and many other classes is that “doing the work” does not equate to an “A”. Faculty will assess your overall contribution to the project and the course throughout the pre-departure meetings and our entire stay in Mendoza.

A “B” is assigned to a student that performs in a competent manner. S/he is conscientious, diligent, and hard-working; participates in class discussions, does solid work, but relies on others (e.g., other team members and/or faculty) to figure out what s/he should be doing and/or to set the bar for quality.

An “A” is assigned to a student that does all that a “B” student does, but in addition demonstrates an ability to move the project forward. S/he not only does solid work, but also helps the team to define what work should be done, draws clear connections between work activities and the business value delivered to the client, makes sure that the delivered project is completed with high quality and is well-documented. An “A” student is driven by internal standards of quality, not by trying to pre-determine the faculty members’

standards of quality. There are many ways to exercise leadership, and an “A” student finds meaningful ways to lead.

Grades below a “B” are earned for work that is below that of a competent student.

6. Draft of briefing deck

On the day before the rehearsal we will ask each team to give us a draft of their briefing deck. We understand that it might not be complete. It is an opportunity for us to offer feedback and help before the rehearsal.

Goal: receive feedback from faculty before rehearsal.

Audience: the client.

Format: a PowerPoint briefing deck (not .pdf)

Language: the final deck will have as much Spanish as your team skills allow. You may also ask the SAM people for some help. For this draft, if you have an English version, then we will accept that, however, if the deck is already in Spanish we do not want you to do any extra work for us and translate back in English (you can leave it as-is).

Content: see instructions for the briefing below.

Delivery: in the Box folder for this class, by or before p.m.

<https://virginia.box.com/s/dj04m76v73tv34l0yaorhh7feue08vn2> password will be distributed in class.

7. Project briefing rehearsal

This is an opportunity to receive help and feedback in a safe, friendly environment.

Goal: receive feedback from faculty, staff, and peers. Coordinate with the other team at the same location.

Audience: the client. Make sure that you know exactly who will attend the final briefing. You might need to adjust language, amount of background information (e.g., problem description), and explanation of benefits contingent upon the attendees. Knowing the audience composition in advance will give you a substantive advantage.

Format: deliver a polished, well-choreographed, 10-15-minute talk + a few minutes of Q&A, supported by a PPT deck (there will be a projector available). Not every team member needs to speak. Immediately after the Q&A there will be feedback.

Language: For this rehearsal there is a tradeoff between using as much Spanish as you plan to use for the next day, versus speaking in English to maximize feedback from faculty and peers. It is your call. However, if you plan to employ a translator we advise to employ him/her in the rehearsal, too.

Content: see below.

8. Project briefing

The course culminates when each team delivers the final project briefing to their Argentine client. The suggested content of the briefing is outlined in a separate document called “*Delivering a successful project briefing*” that will be posted on Box.

9. Final deliverables to client and faculty

Do the following to close the course in a timely manner and on a high note.

Check when done	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get the “green light.” Do not send anything to a client until a professor explicitly tells you that you have the “green light.” Keep working with faculty through revisions of your deliverables until you get this notification.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once you got the green light, write your client a warm thank you message and attach to it all the project materials (briefing, code, data, appendices, manuals, etc.). Copy your entire team, both professors, and your guide (i.e., David, Jose, etc.). If the attachments are larger than 6mb, post them in an easy-to-access location and include a link in the email.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Post all materials in your team folder in the course BOX
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the course survey that UVA emails you
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the “Peer feedback form” that you will find in the <i>Documents</i> folder in the course BOX and send it to grazioli@virginia.edu

To get to BOX: <https://virginia.box.com/s/dj04m76v73tv34l0yaorhh7feue08vn2> password will be distributed in class.

.... and you are done! *Felicidades on completing the “UVA in Argentina” course!*