SFU FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**FACULTY OF
GRADUATE STUDIES**

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MEMORANDUM ———————————————————————————

ATTENTION	Senate	**DATE**	September 18, 2025
FROM	Mary O'Brien,
Chair of Senate Graduate Studies
Committee (SGSC)		
RE:	New Course		

For information:
Acting under delegated authority at its meeting of **September 9, 2025**, SGSC approved the following curriculum item, effective **Summer 2026:**

Beedie School of Business
   1) New Course: BUS 731 Applied Consulting Project

Senators wishing to consult a more detailed report of curriculum revisions may do so on the Senate Docushare repository at https://docushare.sfu.ca/dsweb/View/Collection-12682

Memo to SGSC

To: **Senate Graduate Studies Committee**
From: **Sudheer Gupta, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs**
Re: **BUS 704 Course Changes and BUS 731 New Course**
Date: **Friday July 25, 2025**

The following curriculum revisions have been approved by the Beedie School of Business and are forwarded to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee for approval. These curriculum items should be effective for Summer 2026

Please include them on the next SGSC agenda.

- ~~BUS 704 Course Changes~~
- BUS 731 New Course

Thank you for your attention herein. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

_____
Sudheer Gupta
Associate Dean, Graduate Programs, Beedie School of Business

NEW GRADUATE COURSE PROPOSAL

Course Subject (eg. PSYC) BUS	**Number (eg. 810)** 731	**Units (eg. 4)** 3

Course title (max. 100 characters)	Applied Consulting Project

Short title (for enrollment/transcript, max. 30 characters)	Consulting Project

Course description for SFU Calendar (course descriptions should be brief and should never begin with phrases such as "This course will..." or "The purpose of this course is..." If the grading basis is satisfactory/unsatisfactory include this in the description. Max. 50 words)

Provides an opportunity for teams of students to apply management concepts and problem-solving techniques on behalf of a client organization. The projects are generally multidisciplinary in nature and require students to apply concepts and tools from multiple courses to successfully complete their work.

Rationale for introduction of this course (if more space is required, add a separate page)

This course has been run as a special topics course in the Management of Technology MBA for multiple years. Moving to a dedicated course number allows for use across multiple graduate business programs.

Term of initial offering (eg. Fall 2019)	Summer 2026	**Course delivery** (eg. 3 hrs/week for 13 weeks)	3.5 hrs/week for 10 weeks
Frequency of offerings/year 3		**Estimated enrollment per offering**	50

▶ EQUIVALENT COURSES

Courses that replicates the content of this course to such an extent that students should not receive credit for both courses. Please select the one that is most relevant.

☐ **SEQUENTIAL COURSE** [is not hard coded in the student information management system (SIMS).] Students who have taken (place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 603)) first may not then take this course for further credit.	☐ **ONE-WAY EQUIVALENCY** [is not hard coded in SIMS.] (Place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 603)) will be accepted in lieu of this course.	☒ **TWO-WAY EQUIVALENCY** [is hard coded and enforced by SIMS.] Students with credit for (place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 603)) may not take this course for further credit.
		BUS 780 (ST-Industry Consulting Project) BUS 784 (ST-Industry Consulting Project)

Does the partner academic unit agree that this is a two-way equivalency? ☐ YES ☐ NO
Please also have the partner academic unit submit a course change form to update the course equivalency for their course(s).

Prerequisite and/or Corequisite

Criminal record check required? ☐ Yes (if yes is selected, add this as prerequisite)	**Additional course fees?** ☐ Yes ☑ No

Campus where course will be taught ☐ Burnaby ☑ Surrey ☑ Vancouver ☐ Great Northern Way ☑ Off campus

Course Components * ☐ Lecture ☑ Seminar ☐ Lab ☐ Capstone ☐ Practicum ☐ Online ☐ Other: _____

Grading Basis ☑ Letter grades ☐ Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory ☐ In Progress / Complete

Repeat for credit?	☐ Yes ☑ No	Total completions allowed?		Repeat within a term? ☐ Yes ☑ No
Required course?	☐ Yes ☑ No	Final exam required? ☐ Yes ☑ No		

Combined with an undergraduate course? ☐ Yes ☑ No   If yes, identify which undergraduate course and the additional course requirements for graduate students. Please include a copy of the undergraduate course outline and fill out the Equivalent Courses section above.

▶ RESOURCES

If additional resources are required to offer this course, provide information on the source(s) of those additional resources.

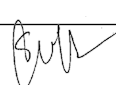| **Faculty member(s) who will normally teach this course** |
|---|
| Nilesh Saraf, Andrew Von Nordenflycht, Melissa McCrae |
| **Additional faculty members, space, and/or specialized equipment required in order to offer this course** |
| |

▶ CONTACT PERSON

Academic Unit / Program	Name (typically, Graduate Program Chair)	Email lesley_mckay@sfu.ca
Beedie Grad Programs	Lesley McKay	

▶ ACADEMIC UNIT APPROVAL

☑ A course outline / syllabus is included

Non-departmentalized faculties need not sign

Graduate Program Committee	Signature	Date
Department Chair Sudheer Gupta	Signature	Date July 22, 2025

▶ FACULTY APPROVAL

The course form and outline must be sent by FGSC to the chairs of each FGSC (fgsc-list@sfu.ca) to check for an overlap in content

Overlap check done? ☑ YES

This approval indicates that all the necessary course content and overlap concerns have been resolved. The Faculty/Academic Unit commits to providing the necessary resources.

Faculty Graduate Studies Committee	Signature	Date

A library review will be conducted. If additional funds are necessary, Graduate Studies will contact the academic unit prior to SGSC.

▶ SENATE GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Senate Graduate Studies Committee Mary O'Brien	Signature	Date September 18, 2025

BUS 731: Applied Consulting Project

Instructor:	Semester:
Email:	Class:

Course Description

The Applied Consulting Project course provides an opportunity for teams of MBA students to apply management concepts and problem-solving techniques on behalf of a client organization. The projects are generally multidisciplinary in nature and require students to apply concepts and tools from multiple courses to successfully complete their work. Upon completion of your analysis, your team will present your recommendations to representatives from the sponsoring organization, and deliver an executive summary.

Course Objectives

The learning objectives for the course include:

- Further develop critical thinking skills, such as: Problem definition and project scoping; data collection and analysis as inputs to judgment; effective adaptation of theory and methods to practical situations; integration of multi-disciplinary knowledge; and fact-based decision-making and problem solving
- Learn consulting techniques and business analysis frameworks that are applicable to multiple contexts, and practice using those techniques by applying them in the context of a real business question or issue
- Further develop important personal skills such as critical listening skills, the ability to handle ambiguity, and effectively manage relationships with colleagues
- Develop project planning and project management skills
- Create persuasive, succinct messages that can be adapted and delivered to multiple audiences
- Gain advanced practice with team process techniques and skills

Books and Materials

Friga, P. (2008). The McKinsey Engagement: A Powerful Toolkit for More Efficient and Effective Team Problem Solving. McGraw-Hill.

Course Structure

This course involves class sessions where the instructor will introduce concepts and weekly team meetings with the instructor for project-specific support, but the majority of the work will take place in teams outside of scheduled class time. Teams will submit a variety of interim deliverables over the course of the project, leading up to the final presentation.

The course is modeled after the problem-solving process used by McKinsey & Co., a leading global consulting firm. There are three key components:

- An efficient team management approach
- A hypothesis-driven problem-solving methodology

- Structured communication of recommendations to the client

Assessment Summary

Team:	Team Charter	10%
	Engagement Letter (aka Scoping Agreement)	2.5%
	Process Map	2.5%
	Content Plan	2.5%
	Issue Tree / Hypo Tree	5%
	Baseline Client & Industry Research	2.5%
	Story Board (aka Ghost Deck)	5%
	Final Presentation	20%
	Client Report	20%
Individual:	Peer Evaluation #1	2.5%
	Final Peer Evaluation	2.5%
	Individual Reflection	20%
	Class Participation	5%
Total	**Team (70%) + Individual (30%)**	**100%**

Course and Reading Schedule

Dates	Topics	Readings & Classes	Assignments
Week 1	**Introduction & Team and Project Selection Process**	**Reading:** Project Descriptions **Class:** Applied Project Course Overview, Projects & Selection Process	Complete Student & Preferred Projects Survey for team creation
Week 2	**Team Processes & Problem Definition**	**Reading:** Chapters 1 – 6 **Class:** Effective & Supportive Team Processes, Problem Definition, Issue Trees & Hypothesis Trees	Team Charter Engagement Letter
Week 3	**Client/Industry Research & Content Planning**	**Reading:** Chapters 7 – 8 **Class:** Data Collection & Analysis, Research & Library Resources, Giving & Receiving Feedback	Process Map Content Plan
Week 4	**Team Work Time**	**Class:** Team meeting with Instructor re. Issue Trees & Hypothesis Trees & Initial Research	Issue/Hypothesis Tree
Week 5	**Team Work Time**	**Class:** Team meeting with Instructor re Baseline Client & Industry Research	Baseline Client/Industry Research Peer Evaluation 1
Week 6	**Synthesis**	**Reading:** Chapter 9 **Class:** Ghost Decks & Reports Presentation Best Practices	Ghost Deck
Week 7	**Team Work Time**	**Class Time:** Team meeting with Instructor Ghost Decks (optional, can also be scheduled during week)	
Week 8	**Team Work Time**	**No Class:** Teams work independently	
Week 9	**Team Work Time**	**Class Time:** Team meeting with Instructor Reports & Draft Presentations	Draft Presentation
Week 10	**Project Summaries & Presentation Practice**	**Class:** Projects summaries to class, Team presentation support to prepare for client presentations with instructor	
	Client Presentations	**Scheduled with client and team**	Final Presentation & Client Report Peer Evaluation Individual Reflection

Assignment Descriptions:

Team Charter: Agreement on how team will collaborate, coordinate and resolve conflict; provides contact information for each team member; sets time and platform for team meetings.

Letter of Engagement: This letter sets specific expectations with the client. It includes the problem statement, scope and overall timeframe for the project. It includes contact information for stakeholders and for client team members who will provide data to the team. Final version with client approval is uploaded to Canvas.

Process Map: A high-level map of your process plan, what will be done, by who, by when. This will change and flex as you move through your project.

Content Plan: This plan lays out what information will you need to analyze, and what data do you need to go find in order to get that information? It helps you to be more efficient and only look for relevant data.

Issue Tree and Hypothesis Trees: These give structure for your analysis. It provides a logical way to review the issues that need to be considered to successfully answer the core question of the project (project objective).

Baseline Industry/Client Research: This analysis requires teams to familiarize themselves with the industry, competitive advantage, customers and broad issues to consider. Present to instructor at team meeting.

Ghost Decks: This is a PPT in which you lay out your ideal form of presentation. It helps you to organize your content even before you have finished collecting your data.

Final Presentation: You will deliver a presentation to your client sponsor based on the findings of your project and answer questions. Both your client and instructor will provide feedback on your presentation.

Client Report: This is a final report, summarizing your research, analysis, and recommendations to be delivered to your client. Length and structure will vary depending on project, but the report should contain a succinct executive summary, report body, references, and appendices.

Peer Evaluations: You will complete 2 peer evaluations during the term to give your teammates mid-term and project close feedback. This is intended to be an opportunity to support team functioning, give teammates feedback (both positive and constructive), and allow grades to better reflect individual contribution to team work.

Individual Reflection: You will complete and individual reflection on the team process, your role, and your reflection on the integration of course and program concepts in the project.

Class Participation: You be assessed on your presence, preparation, and participation in class discussions.

More detailed descriptions of assignments available in Canvas.

Academic Honesty

The use of technology to produce content for your assignments that is not specifically listed in the syllabus as permissible is strictly prohibited. All submissions for grading must be your own work. This specifically includes a prohibition on artificial intelligence writing software such as ChatGPT and translation software as it will interfere with the learning objectives outlined for this course.

You are expected to complete all assignments for this course on your own. When assigned individual work, it is unfair to collaborate and gain an unfair advantage over your classmates who complete their work on their own.

Do not misrepresent yourself or your work. The following are examples of prohibited behavior:

- Making up sources or facts
- Misrepresenting your identity by asking someone else to complete any portion of a course
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctors notes in order to gain an academic advantage

Sharing exam/assignment questions is strictly prohibited as this material is the intellectual property of the instructor and should not be shared in any format. Furthermore, beware of uploading your own completed assignments/essays as you could be assisting other students to cheat using your material. Assisting others to cheat is strictly prohibited in the SFU student academic integrity policy.

Note sharing sites expect their users to comply with the Honour Code of their organization. Their own policy mandates that they cooperate with an investigation of academic dishonesty. The SFU Academic Integrity Office routinely monitors these sites for evidence of cheating and will initiate discipline proceedings against students who violate the SFU Student Academic Integrity policy.

Inclusiveness and Accommodations

Read the Diversity and Inclusion Community Guidelines and operate from these guidelines while in class, tutorials and any team meetings outside class. All of us have different access needs; some of these may be readily apparent, while others may not. If a student has an accommodation requirement, please notify the Centre for Accessible Learning (https://www.sfu.ca/students/accessible-learning.html) as soon as possible. The Centre for Accessible Learning exists to ensure that fair and reasonable accommodations are made for students who need them.