



ISENBERG UNDERGRADUATE CONSULTING GROUP

SEMESTER REVIEW | SPRING 2016



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT: Signing On



The Isenberg Undergraduate Consulting Group has been one of the most rewarding parts of my involvement at the Isenberg School of Management, and I could not be more excited to lead this team.

Through active engagements like client-facing projects, specialized workshops and personalized feedback, IUCG enables undergraduates to extend their classroom knowledge into real-life, real-time applications. Offering hands-on experience for career exploration was a core mission at IUCG's founding 3 years ago and as we move into our sixth semester, that mission will continue to be front and center.

For example, in the upcoming semester, in addition to regular case studies and logic practice, IUCG members will participate in case competitions with other area universities. Along with providing hands-on experience, these ac-

tivities imitate the management consulting recruitment process by forcing members to leave their comfort zones.

IUCG will also be adapting to a new internal leadership structure this semester. We have streamlined the executive team to include only a President and two Directors. This has allowed a better allocation of tasks and has returned many members to client-facing roles, increasing the group's efficiency.

IUCG continues to attract strong interest among students. From the more than 50 applications we received this spring, we are happy to welcome 4 new Junior Analysts to our Junior Analyst Development Program. JADP is an intensive, semester long program that prepares new analysts for client-facing projects through a combination of development workshops, case studies and analytical problem solving. This semester, having developed the confidence and knowledge to deliver quality work for clients, our previous 4 Junior Analysts will be promoted to the Analyst level.

We will also be saying goodbye to 6 of our members as they move on from the Isenberg School of Management. I want to personally thank all of the graduating seniors for driving me to realize my abilities and aspirations. Your dedications to the group and personal interests in my success have motivated me to discover my potential. I found the best mentors in all of you.

Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to all of the alumni, clients, faculty, staff and other supporters that have been such an important part of IUCG's success. We could not have made it this far without you. I hope you enjoy the Spring 2016 Semester Review and appreciate your interest in our organization.

Best wishes and happy summer!

Sara Clemente

WHO WE ARE

- 1** UNIVERSITY
- 5** OPERATIONAL SEMESTERS
- 1** PRESIDENT
- 2** DIRECTORS
- 5TH** OPERATING CYCLE
- 21** STUDENT CONSULTANTS
 - 2** ADVISORS
 - 1** PROJECT MANAGERS
 - 8** ANALYSTS
 - 4** JUNIOR ANALYSTS
 - 1** MARKETING ANALYST
 - 5** MAJORS
 - 4** CLASS YEARS

OUR MISSION

The Isenberg Undergraduate Consulting Group (IUCG) provides a venue for students to gain the academic and practical knowledge to pursue careers in management consulting while giving back to the local community in a meaningful way. Through pro-bono consulting engagements, IUCG brings a new level of analytical solutions to address the operational and technological problems faced by local businesses, non-profits, and other registered student organizations at UMass Amherst. From hosting corporate speakers and recruiters, to developing both the hard and soft skills necessary to succeed, we aim to help our members get to and ace the interview with top tier firms. We are passionate about solving challenging problems, finding rewarding career opportunities, and bringing our school to its highest potential.



Spring 2016 IUCG Group Photo

COLLABORATE. SOLVE. ACCELERATE.

SPRING 2016 CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

IMPLEMENTING MARKET RESEARCH TO IDENTIFY POPULATION PREFERENCES

By Nick Gorius

Project Manager: Nick Gorius

Student Analysts: Karen Li, Deirdre Martyn, and Matthew Scarpelli



Client's Challenge:

IUCG partnered with a local nonprofit economic development organization that is concerned about the drop in revenue among retail businesses in downtown Amherst over the past few years. The client consists of "local property owners dedicated to providing programs and services that serve the town's residents and businesses." The client wanted to understand the current status of retail in downtown Amherst, the developing market trends, and the consumer preferences of the area. To understand the future of retail in downtown Amherst, IUCG was tasked with identifying the current retail environment, researching similar communities, and analyzing the current student travel and spending habits in correlation with business spending.

IUCG's Solution:

The team focused on a three-pronged approach to fulfill the client's needs. First, the team conducted secondary research on the downtown area and similar communities. Breaking this down further, we focused on the potential effect of Amazon on the area in conjunction with the website capabilities of

each business downtown. The main considerations included whether or not the business has a website, the purpose of the business (informing, shopping, etc.), and if the store offered shipping on products ordered.

In addition, we researched the history of retail businesses in the area based on physical cluster location and business type. From this research we discovered that the town has had a significant increase in its number of restaurants over the past decade. We also utilized the Middlebury Report to find key takeaways the client could use for Amherst. The Middlebury Report is a case study by a consulting firm that was hired by Middlebury, VT, who recently experienced a similar drop in retail revenue.

Using this secondary research, the team was able to begin conducting primary research through student and business surveys. The team researched best practices for conducting surveys for both students and business owners. Following the research, we developed two surveys using the Qualtrics platform and sent them to the client for review. After approval, we distributed the student surveys to various on-campus groups and professors to forward to their students, leaving the distribution of the business surveys to the client.

To begin analyzing the student surveys, the team drilled down into the data to find trends based on identifying factors such as gender, age, and residence. Deliverables regarding student trends based on primary and secondary research are in development and will be presented to the client before the semester comes to a close.

"The project with Amherst Business Improvement District went really well. It was a great experience for me because it gave me a look into marketing research and strategic planning, which I haven't been exposed to before in prior projects. Also, I got to practice my presentation skills in front of clients multiple times which is a rare opportunity that I am grateful for!"

- Student Analyst Deirdre Martyn

JUNIOR ANALYST DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

By Jake De Medeiros

I remember walking into the Isenberg suites for my IUCG interview like it was yesterday. My hands were shaking, my feet were tapping, and my mind was racing. If anyone had seen me that day, they would have described me as a nervous wreck, but the reality was that I was far more eager than nervous: eager to challenge myself with real-life business problems and to work alongside some of the best minds Isenberg has to offer. I did not want to miss out on an opportunity to better myself beyond the scope of my classroom studies. Thankfully, I was one of the four Junior Analysts chosen to serve for the Spring 2016 semester.

With no time wasted, my fellow Junior Analysts and I were placed into teams for a Market Basket Case Study focusing on organizational culture as a source of competitive advantage. Having never before approached a case study of this magnitude, I initially felt overwhelmed and underprepared, but that is the beauty of IUCG. It creates an environment where individuals are challenged and are actually encouraged to struggle (with plenty of experienced support, of course.) Whether I had a question on how to format a professional slide-deck, or how to implement statistical analysis in Excel, veterans in my group always lent a helping hand. Ultimately, the Market Basket case was a success for all involved and us Junior Analysts were able to apply what we learned from the experience to two subsequent cases which spanned the remainder of the semester.

When it came to professional development, IUCG leadership invested a great deal of time into a wide variety of developmental workshops for us Junior Analysts. Within IUCG, there are members who have direct experience in the consulting world that can offer invaluable knowledge for students interested in the field. One workshop that resonated particularly strongly with me pertained to producing professional slide-decks. I'll be honest, I wasn't initially excited to hear a "thrilling" presentation on how to write a good title for a slide, or how to format bulleted ideas; however, I have to say that the workshop truly helped me hone in on my ability to effectively create and communicate my ideas, skills so pivotal to any business career. We even had the opportunity to video tape our slide show presentations and then analyze them to reflect on presentation skills. My use of the word "ummm" and light speed speech became readily apparent, but I now know what exactly I need to work on to perfect my public speaking skills.

Passion. That's what it's all about, right? Members of IUCG are passionate about consulting and solving real-world business problems. As a business and pre-medical student, I am passionate about healthcare consulting, and how hospitals and other healthcare institutions are coping with some of the most dynamic regulatory changes ever seen in the industry. When I was told that as a Junior Analyst I could give a presentation on healthcare consulting and trends, I was lost for words. Not many people get the opportunity to share what they are passionate about with those who will not only listen, but also engage and react. Following the presentation, my colleague, Brian and I were able to lead a discussion that lasted over 30 minutes, only to be cut out by our meeting's end. Where else can you receive that level of attention and engagement as an undergraduate student? I would argue in not many places.



Our Director helping a new Junior Analyst during one of our workshops

"The Junior Analyst Development Program has provided me with the opportunity to hone the skills that I don't learn in the classroom. Solving ambiguous problems, working with others on group projects, and learning how to best take advantage of the resources around you are all integral parts of the program that I know will serve me well in my future career."

- Junior Analyst Brian Campbell

As my college experience is nearing its inevitable end, I can wholeheartedly say that I have learned just as much (if not more) from my experiences outside of the classroom as I have from those in class. The IUCG Junior Analyst Development Program has, in the matter of a semester, developed me into a budding business professional eager to take on business problems wherever my career may take me. I would like to thank senior members of the group, especially leadership, for supporting my development as a Junior Analyst in IUCG.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

Spring 2016 Accomplishments

Launched Junior Analyst Development Program

Introduced consulting industry research presentations

Hosted UMass alumnus & BCG Managing Director

Collaborated with IUCC alumni on client projects

Launched new 'request for proposal' process



Members attended the "Moving the Future" Conference at the Harvard Business School



Students wait to hear from a Managing Director at Boston Consulting Group

Fall 2016 Initiatives

Execute at least two client engagements

Solidify new group structure & team documents

Participate in case competition at nearby university

Reinvigorate mentorship program within group

Continue to encourage alumni engagement

WHERE WE WENT

Interview with former IUCG Director of Case Materials Louis Higgins,
Consulting Associate at RSM

Describe your overall role as a consulting associate at RSM. What does your day look like?

I don't really have a typical day. All of my work is client-centric so my schedule—and where I am working—often depends on the particular project I am on. A career in consulting will give you exposure to many clients, industries, projects and places—one thing it will not give you; however, is a repetitive 9-5 schedule.

How did IUCG help build the skillset that you use in your current role at RSM?

Often I get assigned to a project and need to learn a lot of information about the client and the project in a short period of time. This ability to absorb large quantities of information quickly is a skill that I developed out of necessity during my time in IUCG. Whether I was planning a development workshop or working on a project, there was always a steep learning curve which was naturally accelerated by the need to squeeze everything into a 10 week semester.

Was there a particular project/experience that you worked on during your time in IUCG that prepared you for the work you do today?

I spent the summer of 2013 working with the other original members of the group to launch what is now IUCG. We were working at least 40 hours a week at our respective internships and we spent our nights building the infrastructure of the group—which was a lot more difficult than it sounds. In 8 short weeks we launched the IUCG website, created an organizational structure, set up Microsoft 365 tenancy for email and collaboration, launched a social media campaign, prepared for recruiting and just about anything else you could imagine. That experience helped me learn how to successfully juggle competing priorities and manage my time in the most effective manner possible.

What is the biggest piece of advice you would give to someone who wants to break into management consulting?

I would tell someone who wants to break into any type of consulting to research the role, company and alumni/friends/family who work in an area you are interested in. Speak with as many people as you can to learn which area of consulting, which firm, and what industries fit naturally with your experience and aspirations. Once you figure out exactly what you want to do, find a way to display your value to potential employers. Consultants are hired by clients for their expertise and ability to solve problems—employers want potential consultants whose value they can easily sell to clients. Find ways to quantify your value and express that to your potential employers.

Also make sure you want to be in consulting for the right reasons. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of great aspects to working in consulting but there are also some aspects of the job you should consider before taking the leap.

- Travel: Depending on the type of consulting and the firm, you may not be home very often. This is something to pay attention to when doing your research.
- Billables: You need to keep track of the hours you work. Consultants don't work simple 9-5 jobs—you are evaluated based on the hours of work that you can bill to clients not the hours you worked. Remember you are the firm's revenue driver.
- Closure: You are often there to evaluate, roadmap, recommend and sometimes implement, but there is always a point where you will be walking away from the project. You invest a lot of time and energy into a project and then move on to the next one; regardless of how invested you are in a client's initiative's success, you may not always get to see it through to the end.

What led to your interest in consulting?

I was interested in consulting because I wanted a career where every day came with new and interesting challenges. I wanted to get exposure to a wide variety of industries and learn new things every day. I always enjoyed trying to improve processes and systems rather than work within them; consulting gives you the chance to help businesses improve the areas the most need it and help solve the problems that keep them up at night.

What hard/soft skills did you develop during your time with IUCG that apply to consulting?

I mentioned this earlier, but it's a big one so I will mention it again—the ability to absorb a lot of information very quickly. The ability to balance multiple competing priorities. Getting IUCG off the ground was a full time job...ask anyone who was there during the initial summer before we launched it. Balancing that with summer internships and then with a heavy course load was not something I had ever done before. This helped me learn to balance competing priorities and juggle everything in my life without dropping anything.

How important is feedback for continuous improvement and developing high quality deliverables?

No recent graduate is going to be an expert in anything. They are going to make plenty of mistakes along the way—some of which must be pointed out to them. Learning from one's mistake is at the center of self-improvement and is fundamental to growing both personally and professionally. If left to their own devices, most driven people will eventually learn from the majority of their mistakes; however, feedback from colleagues, supervisors and friends expedites the learning process. In order for feedback—or any improvement effort—to succeed, the person must be willing to take the information they are given and incorporate it into their work product. Recent college graduates will be expected to make mistakes; the way to stand out as a top performer is to ensure you never make the same mistake twice.

BEYOND THE GROUP

INTERNSHIP AND JOB PLACEMENTS

SENIORS

IUCG Member	Company	Position/Program
Davies Decesare-Fousek	IBM	Business Analytics & Strategy Consultant
Aaron Wojtaszek	Wayfair	Operations Process Innovation Associate
Nicholas Gorius	Bose	Systems Analyst I
Emily King	Deloitte Services LLP	Marketing Specialist
Hayden MacDonald	Smith and Wesson	Logistics Analyst

JUNIORS

IUCG Member	Company	Position/Program
Sara Clemente	EY	Advisory Consultancy Program – Risk Advisory
Alexander Blohm	Liberty Mutual	Product Management Development Program
Holly Furner	Grant Thornton	Business Advisory Services Intern
Daniel Harris	PWC	Financial Risk Analytics Summer Intern
Emma Kelly	Pratt and Whitney	Materials Management Intern
Kara Knights	Grant Thornton	Business Advisory Services Intern
Bill Sennott	PWC	Financial Services Assurance
Joshua Zeff	KPMG	Audit Intern
Deirdre Martyn	Tufts Health Plan	Member and Provider Services Intern
Andrew Petricone	Consolidated Concepts	Data Analytics Intern
Jake De Medeiros	Guitar Pedal Shoppe	Inventory Management and Builder Acquisition
Karen Li	Rehab Institute of Chicago	Summer Research Intern
Harold Hodge	Grant Thornton	Business Advisory Services Intern
Jessica Murphy	Greater Ohio Food Bank	Operations Intern

SOPHOMORES

IUCG Member	Company	Position/Program
Cole Gladstone	Zurich	Distribution & Regional Management Intern
Stephanie Lopez	PwC	Client Facing Audit Intern
Lauren Katz	The TJX Companies	Merchandising Intern
Matthew Scarpelli	EY	Emerging Leaders Program

FRESHMAN

IUCG Member	Company	Position/Program
Brian Campbell	MassMutual Financial Group	Enterprise Research Assurance Intern
Matthew Doheny	Old Cove Oyster Company	Manager

Connecting with the Group – Alumni & Firms

Recruiting Opportunities

IUCG has begun to provide a platform for students to navigate the recruiting process, through both individual and group mentorship. We can improve our placement with the help of Alumni. We hope that some of you are interested in reviewing resumes, providing career guidance and speaking with members of the group about opportunities at your company.

Project Mentoring

Each semester we work with new and existing clients on a pro-bono basis. This semester we launched our project mentoring initiative in partnership with recent IUCG alumni. Acting as project advisors, they were able to provide valuable feedback and advice to analysts on how to structure and manage the project. The program was immensely successful and we hope to continue it for future semesters.

Feedback

It's important that you are enjoying this edition of the semester review and our other publications. Additionally, if you have input on a project we'd love to hear it! Please send us your thoughts and ideas.

Networking Opportunities

We are seeking networking trips to Boston and New York City. Isenberg & UMass Alumni have been extremely supportive thus far and we'd like to expand our trips to visit more.

Case Studies & Social Media

We have started to publish case studies on our client engagements, broken down by the client's challenge, our solution and the subsequent impact. These provide an excellent example of how we work with our clients. If you're interested in viewing more of what we do, these items are published on our website and social media.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT: Signing Off



When I first visited UMass as a prospective student in the spring of 2011, it was not of my own volition, but that of my mother. I came here to UMass because it was the best option financially of the schools to which I was accepted. This should prompt an interesting question for many who attended UMass: Why did you choose UMass? Was it the school name, an image of UMass Maroon, or the price tag?

When I toured UMass, neglect was apparent in some of the facilities. Academic standards were reputed as second rate compared to top tier flagship state schools. Today, over 4 years later, I challenge the perception I had on my first tour. UMass has slowly overcome its rap as a second-rate state school. More incoming students are now choosing UMass for multiple reasons besides the price tag.

Five years after my first campus tour in the spring of 2016, I worked with a team of 8 others to recruit students who had been admitted to UMass for fall 2017. Personally, I specifically targeted those admitted to both the honors college and the business school. While price was certainly a consideration, I found the prospective students were chiefly evaluating schools to which they had been offered admission on their facilities, academic rigor, and the overall brand. Most significantly, I didn't feel the need to sell UMass because of the price tag. When prospects tour campus today, there are impressive new arts and sciences buildings, a self-contained honors college campus, an integrated learning center and new athletic facilities.

An important element if this campus-wide improvement has of course been internal. A vitally important way students have been helping the school to improve is through groups like IUCG. In bolstering the strength of career placements out of UMass, IUCG efforts have improved the value of our degrees, our school and our network. Since working with our first and only client during the spring 2013 semester, IUCG has developed many service offerings for our clients of both research and process documentation, improvement, and implementation work.

This has been made possible by the tireless effort of dedicated members of the group. I have the utmost confidence in the next generation of IUCGers and eternal gratitude for those who have contributed to IUCG's success.

Thank you,

Davies DeCesare-Fousek '16

CONTACT THE GROUP (Fall 2016 Leadership)

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Alexander Blohm (Director) - ablohm@umass.edu

Cole Gladstone (Director) - cgladstone@umass.edu

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