

ExecMAP 23 – Multidisciplinary Action Projects Sponsor Guide 2017 – Ann Arbor

COURSE INFORMATION

The ExecMAP course is an integral part of the EMBA curriculum at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan. ExecMAP provides a vehicle for the application of multiple business disciplines by addressing a practical and important business issue for the sponsor. The project sponsors are corporations, non-profits, and entrepreneurial businesses; some sponsors could be an early stage venture or startup. Over the course of ten weeks, a team of four to six Executive MBA participants will thoroughly analyze a problem or business opportunity for your organization through a vigorous assessment, and strategic, marketing, or business planning process.

The goals of the projects are twofold:

- Help the organization address an important business issue, problem, or opportunity
- Offer an outstanding academic learning experience for the EMBA participants.

Nature of Projects

ExecMAP is designed to achieve the learning objectives for the participants and the business-building and problem-solving objectives of the sponsor. It is important to be sensitive to the fact that ExecMAP is a major part of the participants' business education. ExecMAP projects should be both multidisciplinary and challenging. The project can reside virtually anywhere within the organization but should have executive leadership, high organizational visibility, and purview.

The ExecMAP faculty is available to work with sponsors to develop projects appropriate for the ExecMAP course. Types of possible projects with enterprise-wide scope and high impact are listed below:

- **New Venture Plan** – Full situation analyses, business model selection, and market and business planning with financial modeling for a new venture
- **Acquisition Strategy** – Evaluate and assess the marketplace for potential acquisition candidates after initial process review, evaluation, valuation, due diligence, negotiation options review, of a targeted or recently-acquired company with detailed post-closing and integration planning
- **Strategic Branding Initiative** – A strategic branding plan that would analyze the potential for an expanding the brand
- **Strategic Plan** – Develop a strategic plan for a new venture or business unit
- **Corporate Innovation Program** – Assess what it will take to create a program for product and service innovation
- **Market Entry or Expansion Strategy** – A full situation analysis, business model and market entry model development
- **Operation evaluation and improvement** – Assessment, analysis, and recommendations for careful and timely improvement action plans
- **Marketing Plan** – Develop a comprehensive marketing plan with base case assessment, creating new solutions, products, and services, and launching them

Participant Time Availability

During the three months of the project, team members are expected to provide adequate time to work on their ExecMAP project. Much of the work will occur during evenings and weekends, as all EMBA participants are fully employed. Therefore, an individual's commitment to this project is more like that of a consultant, rather than a 40-hour-per-week employee. The overall time commitment for a team member is expected to be in the range of 10 to 15 hours per week, which includes individual research, interviews, group meetings, conference calls, and faculty interactions.

Faculty Roles

Faculty will work with the team members during ExecMAP. Faculty are not team members or problem-solving consultants, but rather facilitators of the educational process. The faculty member's primary role is to guide and assist the ExecMAP teams in performing a rigorous business analysis.

Confidentiality

The Business School is very sensitive to the need for confidentiality and will work with companies to ensure that projects maintain the necessary level of confidentiality. Participants will be instructed not to disclose project information to anyone not associated with the ExecMAP Program and are willing, at the company's request, to sign confidentiality statements.

Grading

The faculty determines grades for the team members. Program sponsors or liaisons do not determine project grades, but input from company representatives is very important to the faculty as they evaluate team progress throughout the three months and assess the project's final deliverables, value, and impact.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPONSORSHIP

Complete the Sponsor Proposal Form

Each company requesting an ExecMAP team needs to submit the attached proposal which describes the project scope, boundaries for the project, a set of goals, and the expected outputs for the ExecMAP team along with the support/resources that the sponsor will provide, and defines travel expectations. The Executive MBA faculty can assist you in defining your project.

The ExecMAP faculty will review each company's project scope and will often suggest refinements for the final project scope. The faculty request that sponsors provide useful websites and any other information such as annual reports, 10-K reports, product brochures, industry information, and business periodical articles to help participants gain an understanding of your organization, products and services, industry dynamics, customers, and markets served.

Duties of the Project Sponsor

Each project requires a designated sponsor. The sponsor is that individual in the organization who has championed the project and will be responsible for providing the overarching guidance and budget for executing the project. The sponsor must assign a liaison to work closely with the team.

Duties of the Project Liaison

Each project also requires a designated liaison. (The sponsor may also act as liaison, if desired.) The liaison is the day-to-day contact person for the team. The liaison will interact with participants on a regular basis and will facilitate participant access to company information and resources. The liaison will also be in periodic communication with ExecMAP administration to discuss planning details and communicate with ExecMAP faculty during the course of the project as needed.

Companies are encouraged to identify an alternate liaison in the event the primary liaison becomes unavailable during ExecMAP. **Liaisons are required to attend the initial ExecMAP kick-off function in Ann Arbor on Friday, September 29, 2017 as well as the final presentation held on either December 14 or 15, 2017.**

Allow Access to Information/Data and Personnel

To facilitate team member understanding of the sponsor organization and the particular problem being analyzed, team members need access to relevant information and personnel. Teams may find it necessary to analyze marketing and financial information, interview employees, and observe business processes. Participants will be required to support their recommendations with relevant data. Please ensure the availability of data to support the team efforts.

Provide Workspace, Resources, and Support during Site Visits

The Business School requests that sponsors provide the resources needed by the team to facilitate their on-site analysis and achieve success on their project. This includes providing a workspace as well as the use of such items as telephones, printers, and copying equipment.

Participate in Project Meetings

In addition to attending the kick-off meeting and the final presentation, the sponsor and/or liaison may want to also plan on meeting with the team during the second residency or via a conference call.

Reimburse Participant Expenses

Sponsors are required to reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by team members while working on projects. This may include such items as travel (airfares and/or vehicle mileage); out-of-town accommodations and meals; telephone; copying of final reports; and other project-related expenses. The sponsor liaison should provide guidance on acceptable expenses and discuss specific, required expense reimbursement policies and procedures with the team at the beginning of the project. Contact the EMBA Program Office for information on University reimbursement policies.

Final Presentation at the Sponsor Company Site

Sponsors can invite their ExecMAP team to present the project, findings, and recommendations at their sponsor site at the close of ExecMAP at a time convenient to all parties.

EXECMAP 23 ANN ARBOR CHRONOLOGY

July 10	Project proposal submittal deadline
July 21	Finalization of all project descriptions for potential team member review
August 1-7	Students' project selection period
Late-August	EMBA students and sponsors notified via e-mail of assigned project and their team composition. Sponsors notified as soon as possible if their project didn't receive bidding support.
Sept 18 – 27	Pre-work, team building, residency planning, and conference calls among team members and faculty
September 28-30	First Course Weekend
September 29	SPONSOR Day — team meetings with sponsor executives from 8:45 am to 5:00 pm
October 27-28	Second Course Weekend
November 16-18	Third Course Weekend
December 14-15	Final Presentations
December 14	Final Sponsor Presentations – half of the course presentations will be on Dec 14
December 15	Final Sponsor Presentations – half of the course presentations will be on Dec 15

NEXT STEPS

If you are interested in participating in an ExecMAP project, please **Contact Chris Tarnacki at ctarnack@umich.edu** or 734.647.7110 in the Office of Action Based Learning for more information and to obtain a proposal form.