

UCCS Teams Class

Program Overview • Fall 2025

The opportunity:

Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Innovation™ degree program at UCCS are required to take a series of hands-on courses in leadership and project management. In these courses, teams work with clients to plan / execute a project over the course of a semester.

There is NO COST for you to have a team of students execute or help move a project forward.

Projects we have had in the past include web design, marketing plans and market research, app design, event production, software installation, software design, course design, video production, exhibit design and planning, on-campus research, gap analysis, surveys, organizing archives, patent application prep, brochure creation... the list goes on and on.

These projects have been for individuals, corporations, non-profits, and... **all over the world.**

Each team is comprised of sophomore, junior, and senior students who will have various roles in administering the project. The project team assigned to a client engages with all aspects of project management. The team meets with clients to develop a plan for the project and the deliverables attainable within the time constraint of a 16-week semester. Client engagement begins with learning about the organization, defining project scope and initiating a plan to communicate regularly.

During the semester, students will... meet with you (or another point of contact in your organization) as agreed at intervals throughout the semester to continue moving the project forward. At the end of the semester, they will present a summary of their work, challenges faced, and proposed next steps.

If the project requires more than a semester, another team will (or maybe the same team) can continue the work.

This is a great opportunity to address projects that are low priority or on the back burner but need to be completed. It is also great for projects that fall outside of your comfort zone or skill set. These students have a wide array of skills and life experience; don't assume the task is too challenging, too esoteric, too high or too low tech. Ask us! We will let you know if it isn't a fit. Our students come from over twenty different majors.

Lastly, **Context is everything.** These students are smart and talented. They are also first and foremost, students. They are in this course to learn firsthand the ins and outs of project coordination, conflict management, and effective communication strategies in a real-world situation. Your willingness to step through this process with them is invaluable.

Logistics

- **FALL SEMESTER 2025** • During the first week of the semester, students will review client projects and choose the ones they are most interested in.

If you are interested, and have not already submitted an application, please do so before AUGUST 18, 2025 We will get back to you ASAP.

- **SEPTEMBER 2025** • Student teams will reach out to their client point of contact in early September..
- Student teams will meet regularly with the client point of contact (virtually or in person as makes sense). This may be weekly, every other week, or on an as needed basis. You as a client and team will determine the frequency.
- This course meets in person every other week on Thursdays from 10:50 to 1:30, making that block of time during the weeks we do not have class in person a VERY convenient time to connect.
- You will work with the students define the scope of the project, timeline, and other parameters that form a project plan. These elements will be documented by the students and presented to you for approval.
- **EARLY DECEMBER** • At the end of the semester, the students will present a final summary of the project and how the experience unfolded. You will be invited to attend in person or virtually once we have determined format for that event.

Best Practices for Clients

The experience of fielding a client team from the UCCS Bachelor of Innovation is typically very rewarding and productive for all involved. That said, it can also be challenging. Here are **some best practices** to ensure a positive experience:

- **Finite parameters work best.** It's okay to think big, just keep in mind the project does not have to be fully completed in one semester. **Take one portion of a large endeavor and break it down into bite sized pieces or steps.** You might need in-depth research to even begin the actual work, and the work may require building a framework, writing a script, or identifying resources before actual works begins, and then a marketing campaign once it's finished.
- **Avoid scope creep.** Again, keep in mind the project does not have to be fully completed in one semester, and, that students are juggling additional classes and responsibilities outside of this class.
- **Identify ONE point of contact from your organization who will work with the student team.** Having multiple contacts, conflicting contacts, or changing contacts is inefficient, confusing, and frustrating for everyone. These scenarios are also ripe for misconceptions around the project expectations and priorities.

Dynamics

- **Instructors will check in with you directly mid-semester.** Anything more than this defeats the purpose and messes with the organic flow of the project experience. If you feel there is an issue that is not being productively addressed by the team, **we do want you to contact us** after speaking with the team. Our priority is giving students a chance to sort out the entire process. If you observe a significant concern that cannot be productively addressed by speaking with the team for any reason, we are always available.
- Despite the fact that we do not check in with you regularly, **we do meet with student teams frequently and we review all of their project documentation.** You may not see or hear us, but we are actively involved in the work to provide coaching, resources, advice and troubleshooting.
- **We do not orchestrate student team composition.** Students learn about all the client projects, meet with other students sharing their interest, discuss skill sets and priorities, then, self-form teams with three different grade levels represented. These students come from countless walks of life, cultures, experiences, and abilities.

Expectations for Clients

As the client for a team in our course, we ask that you review and acknowledge the following expectations for your involvement. They are simple, straight forward, but important and essential.

- Students will reach out to kick off the project in early September. We expect that you will **watch for the email and respond as soon as possible** to get a first meeting scheduled. After that you will meet as mutually agreed upon. We will send you a reminder when students are about to reach out in September.
- **Identify ONE point of contact from your organization who will work with the student team.** Ensure that this individual represents and is clear on the organization/CEO's/department's priorities and goals for this project and its scope.
- **If issues of any kind arise, we expect that you will address them directly and promptly with the team.** If there is a specific, compelling reason to not involve the team, contact instructors.
- **ONCE AGAIN, Context is everything.** These students are smart and talented. They are also first and foremost, students. They are in this course to learn firsthand the ins and outs of project coordination, conflict management, and effective communication strategies in a real-world situation. They won't always get it right.