

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

Student Name(s): Rodney Dawson

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. John Willems

Abstract: “Investigating Purchase Card Usage and Developing a Model to Promote Program Growth”: The objective of the research project is to discover the connection between organizational attributes and choices that drive the utilization of a new technology designed to increase to the efficiency of international financial processes. The basic theory that will be used to hypothesize connections between organizational choices and attributes and utilization of new technology is the long-standing model posited by Everett Rodgers in the Diffusions of Innovations (2003). Other research articles focused on adoption and use of new technologies will also be reviewed. (Fall, 2009)

Student Name(s): Anthony Zipparro

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Crystal Lin

Abstract: “Predicting Equity Pricing”: This project will consist of three separate learning objectives that combine to come to a single conclusion as pertaining to financial markets and the prediction of investment in option instruments. The three parts are: continuing study of the topic of maximum pain, modeling and writing VBA that looks to complement and simplify the research methods and initial study of a concept known as Open Interest Option Outlook. The concept of Maximum Pain is an anomaly known throughout the option markets and refers to an event that is thought to occur every expiration date. As institutional option investors are the primary sellers of any given option contract, and they are the “smart” money, it can be concluded that following their lead will result in alpha profits. The study has already been established by which the point where institutional sellers of options make the most money is referred to as Maximum Pain. This point is easily calculable and can be found on any equity with an active options market. The following study is established to test the validity of this concept and the real compounding variables that lead to a price to be drawn to this point of “Maximum Pain”. (Fall, 2009)

Student Name(s): Rodney Dawson

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Richard Palmer

Abstract: “The Usage of Commercial Cards within United States Governmental Agencies”: This study investigates the different types and functionality of commercial cards used by the U.S. Government including purchase cards, travel cards, and fleet cards. The cost savings associated with using commercial cards promotes more efficient use of taxpayer dollars by the U.S. Government. This study examines trend data based on spending transactions, and cardholder factors. This study presents a screening procedure for converting this data into useful information. Finally, the study discusses the benefits that the U.S. Government gains by using commercial cards including administrative cost savings and rebates from a total cost savings perspective. (Spring, 2009)

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

Student(s): Christoph Heeren

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. David Boggs

Abstract: “Corporate Social Responsibility in Sin Industries”: This study compares “sin” industries to determine if their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approaches vary across cultures. Previous research has shown that CSR approaches differ between countries and among industries. U.S. organizations normally justify their CSR initiatives using economic arguments. Studies of European organizations have shown that they typically justify their CSR activities using sustainability and financial arguments, but these studies do not refer to specific industries. Although different industries employ different CSR strategies, “sin” industries tend to be unique. Their economic activities focus on products or services that can be addictive, thereby highlighting social responsibilities concerns. Further, this study investigates differences in CSR strategies between “sin” and non-sin industries. (Spring, 2009)

Student Name(s): Amy Pendle

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Richard Palmer

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to explore the impact and importance of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology within a variety of business settings from the perspective of the accounting function when implemented for asset management. Through researching currently published articles and talking with those involved with RFID, this research project will infer the impact of RFID technology on the business unit. The paper will discover the role RFID will have in the future for accounting specific functions. Currently, RFID’s use is misunderstood by many in the non-business community, and security concerns have been elevated from a consumer and employee standpoint. By exploring RFID and sharing information with professionals, one major outcome will be accomplished through this paper-informing more people on the benefits of RFID in the business community. (Summer, 2008)

Student Name(s): Robert Schlanser

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Denise Smith

Abstract: “The Influence and Impact of Illegal Immigration”: This project addresses Hispanic population statistics; the impact of illegal immigrants on the U.S. and local communities; contributions of illegal workers; Federal laws governing immigration, reasons for failure of federal reform legislation, and current bills under consideration in Congress; the economic effects of illegal immigration; state initiatives to control immigration and whether the laws being passed are in violation of the U.S. Constitution; and other current issues concerning illegal immigration. (Summer, 2008)

Student Name(s): Caleb Freeman

Faculty Mentor(s):Ms. Jeanne Dau

Abstract: “Sister City Business Exchange”: The purpose of this project was to identify possible “sister cities” for Charleston, Illinois, to facilitate economic development and prosperity. The comparison was based on eleven variables pertaining to demographic and economic data; each

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

will be specifically discussed in the presentation with the outcome to determine what types of businesses/services are present and have been successful in a similar economic environment. After evaluating the potential cities, a proposal was constructed of how this "sister city" program could be beneficial to not only Charleston, but the selected "sister city," Macomb, Illinois. (Spring, 2008)

Student Name(s): Caleb Freeman

Faculty Mentor(s): Ms. Jeanne Dau

Abstract: "Critical Skill Shortages Initiative": Eastern Illinois University's Business and Technology Institute along with the assistance of Crossroads Workforce Investment Board is conducting a Community Audit and Critical Skills Shortage Initiative to determine the differences between the supply and demand for significant work skills in the Southeastern Illinois Economic Development Region. With input from the regional community, skill shortages will be identified, along with the root cause of the shortages. The final report will serve as a roadmap for the Crossroads Workforce Investment Board and their partners to develop a plan of action. (Spring, 2008)

Student Name(s): Ivana Milosevic

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: "Benefits and Challenges of the Expansion to the South East European (SEE) Markets": International expansion is a growing trend among companies today and it will most likely continue into the future as a result of the increasingly saturated western markets and scarce resources. The main objective of this paper is to introduce the SEE markets as potentially very beneficial for western companies in terms of both growing demand and resource availability. However, as with any international expansion, the activity holds a certain degree of risk that needs to be managed in order to achieve the benefits. The paper examines the major challenges companies face in their expansion to the region and offers alternatives that can provide insight to manage them. In addition, the privatization process, as the main mode of entry, is examined together with the opportunities and constraints it carries. (Spring, 2008)

Student Name(s): Robert Schlanser

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Denise Smith

Abstract: "State and Local Immigration Laws Versus Federal Regulation: Who Should Be Taking the Lead on Immigration Reform?": Courts have consistently held that Congress has the exclusive authority to regulate immigration. While state law enforcement agents have some authority to enforce federal laws, some attempts by states to control immigration have been struck down on the basis of the Supremacy Clause and the Equal Protection Clause. However, in response to increasing numbers of undocumented immigrants and the seeming inability of the federal government to enforce federal immigration law, an increasing number of states have undertaken the task of regulating immigration. As of November, 2007, 46 states had enacted 244 bills dealing with immigration issues related to employment, public benefits, health, education, and other areas of concern. This paper will discuss states' attempts to control employment of undocumented workers and the challenges that multi-state employers face in their efforts to

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

comply with different and sometimes conflicting state requirements. It will advocate federal legislation that will address immigration issues and pre-empt state efforts to regulate in this area. (Spring, 2008)

Student Name(s): Friederike Kemper

Faculty Mentor(s):Dr. Dean Elmuti

Abstract: "Measuring Effectiveness of Supply Chain Management in the Health Care Industry": Supply Chain Management is a well documented topic in the literature. In today's business organizations with increasing globalization, it is important for organizations to differentiate themselves to accomplish a competitive advantage. The supply chain management approach is one opportunity to increase efficiency and to decrease costs. Several large companies integrated supply chains to generate extensive cost savings and therefore a competitive advantage. The purpose of the article is to investigate the impact of supply chain management in the health care industry. A framework is developed, which provides a roadmap how to address the supply chain management issue in the industry. This study gives evidence for the use of supply chain management in health care and stresses the positive impact on the effectiveness of this approach. (Summer, 2007)

Student Name(s): Benjamin Tueck

Faculty Mentor(s):Dr. Dean Elmuti

Abstract: "Analyzing Cross-Cultural Adaptability among Business Students: An Empirical Investigation": Cross-cultural adaptability is a crucial point in gaining a competitive advantage in the global market. This paper provides both an empirical study and a conceptual discussion of cross-cultural adaptability and the impact on American business students (domestic) and international business students in the United States, with further implications on students, but also on global managers. The paper compares the two student groups using the cross-cultural adaptability inventory and different statistical tests. An unpaired t-test identifies statistical differences between both groups and stresses the area where cross cultural training is needed. The survey was conducted at a Midwestern university in the United States. The sample is a random selection of 100 international students and 100 domestic U.S. students. (Summer, 2007)

Student Name(s): Benjamin Tueck

Faculty Mentor(s):Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: "Metrics and Measuring Supply Chain Management Implementation: An Evaluation of Academic and Practical Approaches": This work addresses the shortage of clearly defined frameworks for the area of metrics and measurements in supply chain management. The area of supply chain management is well-researched and sufficiently described. However, the area of metrics and measurements of supply chain activities lacks clear definition and frameworks. The purpose of this paper is to show several frameworks for the purpose of achieving useful metrics and measurements. Academic and real life sources are combined to reach the best validity. The SCOR studies of the supply chain council are combined with other approaches. Conceptual terminologies are defined to get access to the topic. Subsequent to the various frameworks, challenges, pitfalls, successes and failures for the implementation of metrics are presented. The

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

use of metrics and measurements is common, whereas frameworks for the implementation are rare. The conclusion addresses this problem and recommends further studies in this area. (Summer, 2007)

Student Name(s): Kathryn Acker

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Melody Wollan

Abstract: "Motives and Targets of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors": The topic of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) has been studied for nearly 20 years. However, previous research has focused on mainly five factors – job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived fairness, leader support, and employee mood. The present research seeks to test the motives, as outlined by Rioux and Penner (2001), of organizational concern, pro-social values, and impression management. Additionally, interaction is tested based upon the target of such behavior (interpersonal vs. organizational) as well as organizational setting (quick-service, small business, or corporate). Survey data was collected from respondents in each organizational setting. These results are analyzed and compared with previous research. (Spring, 2007)

Student Name(s): Sajeel Qureshi

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Dean Elmuti

Abstract: "Factors contributing to the Success of Canadian Pharmaceuticals to Penetrate U.S. Markets Using the Internet": The purpose of this paper is to investigate and identify factors leading to the success of e-Pharmaceuticals, web-based Canadian pharmacies, to penetrate the U.S. market. This study uses a combination of exploratory empirical and primary research. Actual organizational data was derived from secondary sources including previous publications, corporate websites and news articles. Follow-up interviews were conducted with various stakeholders involved in this industry. U.S. based organizations can implement a similar model and cycle examined in this paper to penetrate and improve their position in a foreign market. Furthermore, this study depicts an effective avenue for foreign market penetration without a major physical presence. U.S. firms can learn how to use the Internet to export a product and improve their foreign trade deficit. This exploratory empirical study provides tentative avenues for increasing the probability of success in Internet trade by examining the success factors used by e-Pharmaceuticals and identifies areas that need further investigation. (Spring, 2007)

Student Name(s): TK Harris

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: "It's All Inside—JC Penney's Quest for a Turnaround: A Case Study": Allen Questrom stood at the window of his office, staring out over the four hundred plus acre campus of JC Penney's Texan headquarters. He had spent the previous three months immersing himself in the notably insular culture of what had once been the nation's second largest department store chain. An outsider brought in for his reputation of successful retail turnarounds, Questrom had made his observations and was ready to start implementing the changes that would right this sinking ship.

Almost a century old, JC Penney had weathered Black Thursday and the Great Depression. They were truly a national department store chain: operating stores in all fifty states under one name

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

plate. The retailing landscape began to change tremendously in the 1970's. Discount retailers, such as Wal-Mart, Target, and Kmart were starting to emerge en force. Kohl's – a department store chain operating off-mall sites – was slowly growing in the Mid-West. By the mid 1990's, department store chains were consolidating under various parent companies.

James Cash Penney would not have recognized the retail landscape, much less the business landscape, when Allen Questrom took the reins as CEO. Penney founded the company on the Golden Rule and the Penney Way. Both men would have to agree that the iconic JC Penney Company had lost its way over the past century. (Fall, 2006)

Student Name(s): Michelle Leisten

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Christie Roszkowski

Abstract: "Meeting the Unique Needs of International Medical Graduates in Hospitals in East-Central Illinois: An Introductory Study": As a result of increased demands on the U.S. medical system caused by the aging of the 'Baby Boomer' generation, among other factors, hospital and health center administrators are more concerned than ever with the recruitment and especially the retention of necessary physicians - and as a growing percentage of this group is composed of 'international medical graduates', or doctors who have received their M.D. degree outside of the United States, human resource attention is increasingly turning towards the management of the unique needs that may accompany this population.

Through a combination of literature review and interviews conducted with local hospitals employing 'IMGs', this report concludes that unique issues related to the employment of international medical graduate physicians are a valid concern for medical institutions in east-central Illinois. However, certain applications of the core functions of human resources appear to be able to mitigate this threat. (Fall, 2006)

Student Name(s): Darin Bowers

Faculty Mentor(s): Mr. Dave Arseneau and Dr. Cheryl L. Noll

Abstract: "A Start-up Business in the Pest Control Industry": Professional pest control is a \$7 billion industry in the United States. Today's entrepreneur can profit from this opportunity by implementing sophisticated ideas into their business model. A requirement of any start-up company is the development of a detailed business plan. From marketing to finance, and human resources to accounting, all areas of business theory must be addressed in the business plan. The outcome of this project was an exploration of the pest control industry and a detailed business plan of a future start-up company. (Spring, 2006)

Student Name(s): Amanda Hamel

Faculty Mentor(s): Ms. Darlene Riedemann and Dr. Cheryl L. Noll

Abstract: "Developing a Successful Market Entry Strategy While Maintaining Confidentiality": The purpose of this project was to assist a startup company in developing the most successful market entry strategy without sacrificing the confidentiality of a revolutionary new product. This project investigated not only possible market entry strategies, but also prospective domestic business customers. The in-depth analysis of prospective customers was conducted to aid the

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

startup company in determining the optimal customers based on both the success of the product and maintaining confidentiality in the marketplace. (Spring, 2006)

Student Name(s): Ned Lunt

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Karen Nantz

Abstract: "Finding Value in a Regional Retailer's Data": Smaller companies often overlook the valuable knowledge that is hidden in their databases. To these companies, the term "data mining" can conjure up visions of complex process and expensive tools. Retailers can be further intimidated by the sheer volume of data they accumulate, particularly in their point-of-sale and inventory-management systems. The purpose of this project was to help a regional specialty retailer use simple planning and implement readily available tools to harvest some "low hanging fruit" from its data. (Spring, 2006)

Student Name(s): Marek Marciniak

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. James Jordan-Wagner

Abstract: "Characteristics of European Companies Issuing American Depository Receipts": The purpose of this project is to review the ADR literature and to search for common characteristics of European companies that issue ADR's. The project will search for common threads running through European ADR-issuing companies as reflected in their financial information. The findings could also be used as a benchmark for further study to see if the same patterns withstand the passage of time. (Fall, 2005)

Student Name(s): Robert Otis

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: "Application of Six Sigma to Achieve Quality Improvement in Healthcare Organizations": According to a 2000 Institute of Medicine study, between 44,000 and 98,000 people die annually from preventable hospital errors. Additionally, healthcare organizations are under continuing pressure to reduce costs. Six Sigma, a process improvement methodology initially developed in the manufacturing environment, is gaining popularity in healthcare as a means of achieving dramatic improvements in quality of care and cost reduction. This study describes Six Sigma, how it is applied in healthcare, and offers evidence of its growing success. This study will answer the following questions: Can Six Sigma be successfully applied in a healthcare setting? If so, what factors are involved in effectively implementing a Six Sigma quality improvement program? (Fall, 2005)

Student Name(s): Heather Hartke

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. William Minnis

Abstract: "Considering Graduate Student Perceptions of Stress: Can Opportunities Be Identified to Improve the Academic Experience?": This project investigates parallels among similar regional MBA programs to determine if patterns exist among student perceptions of stress, and to determine if stressors can be attributed to certain demographic groups. This study is an effort to

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

examine the nature, characteristics, and potential opportunities associated with graduate student stress in an MBA program. (Spring, 2005)

Student Name(s): Jared Mathey

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Cheryl Noll

Abstract: "Re-designing the MBA Web Site": Based on survey data, the MBA web site will be re-designed to better meet the needs of current and prospective students. The site will be developed in accordance with the design templates (integrating .php files) provided by Eastern Illinois University's Information Technology team. The re-designed MBA web site will allow for easier and more reliable navigation and maximum effectiveness. A training manual developed for the site will provide a guideline for adding, modifying, and deleting transient features and information in order to successfully maintain the web site. (Spring, 2005)

Student Name(s): Chetan Mehta

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: "Landscaping the Outsourcing Models: Issues, With Emphasis to India": The purpose of this project is to study the various factors governing the trend of mergers and acquisitions among top information technology Indian firms, to study the impact of this trend, and to study the strategy of the second and third tier firms to counter the present consolidation trend. Conclusions would provide a better understanding of the impact of globalization, development and restructuring of business models, strategic issues like developing counter-attack strategy, investments in a foreign country, and strategic alliances. (Spring, 2005)

Student Name(s): Irina Kostova

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Cheryl Noll

Abstract: "Communication Audit in the School of Business at EIU: Its Relevance to Job Satisfaction and Morale in the Organization Culture": The purpose of this project is to explore all organizational communication in the School of Business with the main focus on the internal, downward, upward, and horizontal communication, and to find out the direction the faculty, staff, and administrative team would like the School's communication to go in the future, in order to present recommendations in reference to the gap between the current and aspired communication networks. (Fall, 2004)

Student Name(s): Mirko Plass

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. William Minnis

Abstract: "An Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship Activities in the Rural Area": This study examines the long term sustainability of non-profit organizations in rural areas. Due to economic development and government policy changes, many non-profit organizations are required to develop new ways of revenue to support their social purpose. Social entrepreneurship potentially provides non-profit organizations with new tools and ways for long-term strategies on becoming more sustainable. The survey will examine the hypothesis that non-profit organizations in rural

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

areas with existing social entrepreneurship characteristics are more successful than organizations without existing social entrepreneurship programs. (Fall, 2004)

Student Name(s): Andreas Geier & Sharat Vasani

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Richard Palmer

Abstract: "Evaluating the Costs and Benefits of Purchasing Cards: The Case of the U.S. Federal Government." was awarded first place in the 2004 IMA Research Paper Presentation Competition, Spring 2004. The competition was sponsored by the Sangamon Valley Chapter of the IMA. The purpose of this paper is to present facts about purchasing card use and misuse by U.S. Federal Government agencies that will help both government and private sector decision makers to determine the net benefit of purchasing cards. This paper encompasses the history of Federal Government card usage, analysis of patterns of purchasing card spending and review, and application of recent findings on purchase card misuse.

Student Name(s): Muhammad Naveed Baqir

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Abstract: Strategic view of Knowledge Management considers the synergy between technological and human issues necessary for organizational survival. This synergy is based on the distinction between the 'old world of business' and the 'Global Knowledge Networking'. Technological infrastructures, "SECI" Knowledge Creation/Conversion cycle and "Ba" shall be important points of discussion.

Student Name(s): Paul D. Brown

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Karen Nantz

Abstract: This project focuses on the conversion of an existing computer inventory database created in Microsoft Access to a relational, web-accessible Oracle database. In addition, property inventory procedures for the School of Business were made more efficient by implementing a handheld collection terminal and barcode tagging system. The presentation will include a demonstration of the inventory collection system, generated reports, and possible implications of the system.

Student Name(s): Andreas Geier

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Richard Palmer

Abstract: Theoretically, the concept of business cards offers potential advantages for both lending institutions and small businesses. However, most small business owners use personal credit cards for business expenses either exclusively or in tandem with business cards. After a description of the current market, further growth possibilities will be described. At the end, a further research outlook of the independent study will be given.

Student Name(s): Ren Zhang

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Norm Garrett and Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

Abstract: Following the information technology development, supply chain management has experienced a big change. The paper will explore this change by describing supply chain management principles, the impact of information technology on supply chain management, and the effect on US and China trade. This paper analyzes the US and China trade relation (Trade Deficit) from supply chain angle and aims to demonstrate that US may need to re-examine trade policies.

Student Name(s): Camille James

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. William Minnis

Abstract: A great story can turn a ho-hum business lesson into a life-or-death struggle. Its symbolism works to resolve conflicting emotional dynamics and create a unique interpretation of reality. Though doubtless organizationally biased, it imparts deeply needed meaning to members. This sense making occurs because emotion draws cognition along with it, motivating desired actions and behaviors. This project involved both primary and secondary research and was published in Business Horizons, Vol. 47, No. 4, July-August 2004.

Student Name(s): Eric Thornburg

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. William Minnis

Abstract: This study focused on assisting the Coalition against Methamphetamine Abuse (CAMA) located in Clark and Edgar counties with the formation of a not-for-profit corporation. The student's role was participating in the steps leading to the formal development of an organizational structure and to the submission of a federal funding proposal to the Department of Justice for \$198,000.00. The presentation will focus on the developmental process of forming this new entity along with the involvement and contributions made by the student.

Student Name(s): Marco Nicolosi

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Dean Elmuti

Abstract: The Kyoto Protocol was implemented by the United Nations to reduce the risks of global warming by reducing the worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. The brief introduction of the Kyoto Protocol follows an analysis of the flexible mechanisms, which reduce the costs of the emission reduction by enabling the reductions to take place in the most efficient areas.

Student Name(s): Henry Beverly & Martina Beverly

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Tim Mills

Abstract: The recent stock market crash, trends of creative earnings management, and the Dot.com bubble inspired this research. The goal of this analysis is to evaluate if the insurance industry might be representing the next bubble on the financial horizon. We used financial information available through research databases to evaluate economic performances of these publicly held insurance companies.

Student Name(s): Marc Nettesheim

Independent Research Projects by MBA Students at EIU

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Ingyu Chiou

Title: "Retail Stock Valuation in the German and U.S. Stock Markets"

Student Name(s): Amie Janssen

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Patricia Graves and Dr. Cheryl Noll

Title: "Evaluating Performance in Team Learning Activities"

Student Name(s): Andrea Winter and Josh Hayes

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Cheryl Noll

Title: "A Communication Audit of University Housing/Dining Services"

Student Name(s): Tatiana Britto

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Yunus Kathawala

Title: "Translating Strategy into Balanced Scorecard Measures"

Student Name(s): Amie Janssen

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. William Minnis

Title: "A Study of Industry Needs for a Hotel Facility in Paris, IL"

Student Name(s): Nathan Englehardt

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Jane Wayland

Title: "Marketing Research Study of New Portable Basketball System for Schutt Sports Manufacturing"