

Full Course Title: Conference Board: Development of an International Database for Labor Market Institutions

Course Title for Registration System: Conference Bd – Labor Market Database

Course Number: SIPAU9000.006

Faculty Advisor: Michael G. Silverman

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Meeting Date/s Times: Tuesdays 9:00A – 10:50A

Location: IAB 1401

Office Hours: TBD

Credits: 3

Course Overview:

Brief description of client:

The Conference Board, Inc. (TCB) is a global New York not-for-profit corporation that is well known for promoting the understanding of business practices and economic cycles and, among other activities, convenes groups to study and exchange information on particular subjects and supports and undertakes nonpartisan analysis and research.

Summary of project:

TCB intends to extend its knowledge capability in the areas of Human Capital, Economics and Governance by developing a unique database on labor market institutions in major economies at different development levels and across major regions in the world. At present, no comparable database exists, and such information tends to be scattered among (national) research institutes and international policy organizations, such as the International Labor Office (ILO). This new database should make it possible to compare various aspects of the structure of the labor market and institutions across several countries. These comparables may include arrangements concerning educational systems, unionization and wage bargaining, employment protection laws, wage flexibility, pensions and healthcare benefits, unemployment insurance, minimum wage laws, part time work, contractors versus regular workers, etc.

Deliverables to client:

The project team has three major deliverables for the client: 1) develop a categorization of components of the labor market structure and institutions that are most relevant for individual countries, and which can be compared across countries. The team is also expected to do some feasibility research to fill the database for 3 or 4 countries at different development levels; 2) develop a template which can be replicated by other researchers to fill the database further; and 3) develop an outline for one or more handbooks for business executives. The handbooks will explain the key elements of labor markets and indices, explore the ways in which understanding that data can be helpful, and serve as a useful guide for business decision making on business matters, such as wage bargaining, compensation packages, taxation issues, comparisons of investment plans, etc

The Project will have the following timeline for deliverables:

End of January 2012: Detailed work plan

Early March: Status report to TCB

Early April: Draft report outline

Mid April: Draft report

End of April/beginning of May: Final report

April/May: Presentation of key findings and recommendations both at TCB's office, including several internal and external key stakeholders (including TCB member organizations and third parties), and at SIPA.

Special skills/knowledge needed by team members:

Team Members are expected to have an interest in labor market issues across the globe (including advanced as well as developing nations), and an understanding of political, sociological and economic issues around labor market issues. Affinity with data mining and construction of databases for quantitative and/or qualitative information is recommended. It would be very helpful to have some multiple language skills on the team in order to analyze a wider range of information, in particular English, French, Spanish and Chinese, and if possible, also Arabic and German.

Initial meeting(s) with your student team in late November or early December: TBD

Logistics:

The project team will have periodic discussion with the client either via phone or in meetings in the client's mid-town office or another mutually convenient location. The client's specific schedule will be developed in consultation with the project team.

Student selection: [All eligible students may apply for up to five workshops through a special online application process from October 15th until October 31st. Assignment of students will be coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs, and relevant faculty will be consulted about team membership for their workshop(s).]

Grading (students receive an individual grade):

Grades for the workshop will be based on the following criteria:

Quality of individual written work (10%)

Quality of participation in class, Peer review (20%)

Feedback from the client (20%)

Overall professionalism, including timeliness, ability to work with team, etc. (20%)

Quality of team's final report and briefing (30%)

***Academic Integrity Statement*:**

The School of International & Public Affairs does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct will be subject to the Dean's Disciplinary Procedures. Cut and paste the following link into your browser to view the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct online.

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/deans_discipline_policy.html

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. The School provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research:

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html

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