



International Travel Company

Ongoing or Capstone Soft Skill Project Overview*

As an ongoing project:

This can be an ongoing integrated project where students are placed in teams to work on an assigned project using MS Office applications; Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint. The concluding task will be a formal presentation of the team project.

As a Capstone Project:

This can also be a project assigned near the end of the class that incorporates all of the skills and techniques learned up to that point. It can be used in conjunction with, or as a “final” exam. As a capstone project, the requirements can be reduced according to the time available and goals of the instructor.

For more information about this project and to get all of the files at NO COST to your organization, contact:

Hal Rutenberg, PMP
CATEP Project Coordinator
Arapahoe Community College
Phone: 303-797-5087
E-mail: hal.rutenberg@arapahoe.edu

or Donna Chrislip, Ed.D.
Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness
Arapahoe Community College
Phone: 303-797-5738
E-mail: donna.chrislip@arapahoe.edu

* Developed by the NSF Colorado Advanced Technological Education Partnership (CATEP) grant

Team Guidelines:

1. Teams consist of two to four students. At the discretion of the Course Instructor, team members may be reassigned or “appointed” to a specific team.
2. Students may be given time in class to meet, discuss, and work on the “team assignments”.
3. Students exchange contact information to continue working on the project outside of class.
4. Students incorporate and enhance soft skills while learning MS Office products

How will this online soft skill project help students get and keep a job? The soft (“employability”) skills referred to include:

- Verbal and written communication skills
- Critical thinking / problem solving skills
- Teamwork and collaboration skills
- Contextual knowledge of work responsibilities
- Self-management/motivation skills

NOTE: Employers are looking for people who:

- ✓ show up on time, or call if they are going to be late;
- ✓ have reasonable expectations for their roles as (entry level) employees;
- ✓ have a broad set of knowledge and experiences that allow them to relate to a variety of people and issues;
- ✓ have excellent problem solving skills;
- ✓ take initiative to get information and resources to solve problems;
- ✓ take charge of their own personal development;
- ✓ communicate well verbally and in writing;
- ✓ are culturally sensitive and work well with others in diverse groups.

In short, employers want people who can fit into their organizations and add value to their endeavors, in a harmonious, entrepreneurial way.



International Travel Company

Students are grouped into teams for this international travel project. The instructor grades on the team's use of the requested design tools for each of the MS Office applications, with a heavy emphasis on creativity.

Each team designs and develops a travel package on a country of their choice. This country is then incorporated into the name of their department within the company. For example, if a team chooses Germany, their department will be called "Germany Travel Department". Country choices are coordinated with the instructor to ensure that there are no duplications.

The travel team objective is to plan a minimum seven-day travel adventure somewhere in their chosen country. The travel package must be realistic: the team checks online for hotels and airlines for cost, check-in time, etc. Clients will be leaving from the closest major airport to your school, so they need round trip tickets from that location. The teams must reference the online sources in a bibliography.

Travel teams choose the time of year for their trip and this is reflected in their brochure and/or poster. The completed travel package (minus the presentation) is graded just before the team presentation because of the integration tasks within the project. For example, a graph from Excel will be integrated into the travel brochure produced in Word.

Grading

The presentation is designed, developed and presented with the aim of convincing the audience that each team has the best travel package. Presentation skills are included as a part of the project grade.

POINTS EARNED (suggested):

Word	20 points
Excel	20 points
Access	20 points
PowerPoint	20 points
Presentation	20 points
Conference Participation	20 points (includes R&D Conference)
Conference Team Leader	20 points

TOTAL 140 points



Conferences and Conference Team Leaders

The conferences allow the instructor and team members to gather information about and solidify the processes and requirements of the project. All team members have the opportunity to participate and share ideas at the conferences.

There is a Research and Design conference, and 4 application conferences (Excel, Access, Word, and PowerPoint) in which all members must attend and participate. At each of these conferences, each team is led by a chosen/elected Conference Team Leader (CTL). Each student participates as a CTL for at least one of the conferences.

The result should be a total team effort that is based on good design and development achieved by the interaction of all teams.



WORD

Teams create a brochure and a poster, plus a tourist table that will be imported from Access. This brochure is turned in for grading prior to the presentation.

Brochure

The design will contain a cover page, border, pictures, table, multilevel list, highlight, indent, WordArt, Drop Cap, header and footer, and page numbering. Since some data is imported into the Brochure, this product is produced over the remainder of the semester.

Poster

The design will contain pictures, WordArt, and SmartArt

At a minimum, pictures and a synopsis of each day of the tour is included on the 8 ½” by 11” poster:

Tourist table

A Tourist Table is created that contains demographic and personal information the travelers – in this case, all of the students in the class - are willing to share. This information provides insights about the travelers.

The table - at a minimum - contains the following columns: name, age, sex, languages spoken, phobias, and physical and medical limitations for each of the travelers. The students can invent information for these columns if they like.



EXCEL

Each team develops 4 worksheets: Cost Breakdown, Money Conversion System, Calendar of Excursions, and Summary.

Cost Breakdown worksheet

A cost breakdown sheet is produced. It includes 8% for administrative fees, and 10% for the “Refer-A- Friend” incentive. It shows the cost breakdown and daily cost for each day of the travel package using two charts that are moved to a summary worksheet and imported from the Brochure.

Money Conversion System worksheet

The country’s currency rate is compared to a minimum of three other country currency rates from the other teams’ tour selections. The worksheet should have the ability to refresh those numbers anytime and reflect them in a chart. The chart is placed on the summary worksheet and imported from the Brochure.

Calendar of Excursions worksheet

This is a chart that reflects the different excursions. For example, the chart will show a 3-day excursion at location A, 2-day excursion at location B, etc. A chart is produced based on this calendar. The chart is placed on the summary worksheet and imported from the Brochure.

Summary worksheet

This worksheet contains all the charts linked to their worksheets.

ACCESS

Teams will develop 3 tables: Tourist table, Daily Tour table, and Major Cities table.

Tourist table

The Word table that was created in the above Word section is imported.

- Teams create a report that contains the Team logo plus the records of each tourist.

Daily Tour table

A table that contains a more detailed activity for each day of the tour is included.

- Teams create a form with a logo that contains all the fields for this table. This is imported from the Brochure.

Major Cities table

This table contains information about the major cities of interest (minimum of 3) in the chosen country. Features of cities may include major industry, recreation, language, etc.

- Teams create a report with a logo that contains all the fields for this table in alphabetical order by city.



PowerPoint

Teams develop a PowerPoint slide presentation to convince the class and instructor that they have the best international travel package. Teams incorporate information from the Brochure that they feel will best enhance their presentation.

The presentation shows the schedule of the travel adventure through pictures/graphics and includes a synopsis.

Teams are graded on how well they can convince the instructor and other teams that their tour is the most appealing, and that it is worth the time and money. Presentation skills such as speaking quality and projection, eye contact, posture, and use of pointers are considered in the grade.

The slide presentation integrates at least one item developed in Word, Excel, and Access. There is a minimum of 20 slides that contain or utilize:

- Transitions
- Themes
- Tables
- Photos
- Headers/Footers



Presentation

- Before the formal presentation, teams submit their slides to the instructor.
- All students have a role in the presentation.
- The presentation should last between 10 and 15 minutes.
- Professional appearance enhances the appeal of the travel package.