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SPA-362
16 February 2022

Spring Project Action Plan with Update Work

PROJECT UPDATE BRIEF: I am satisfied with the current state of my project and thus far my work is going smoothly. Though I had initially had issues in communication with academics and key stakeholders, I have built connections with several key allies in the business and government communities. Indeed, these resources in the Kogod School of Business and the United States House of Representatives will prove incredibly valuable as I finalize my memorandum. Further, I have read a great deal of literature (largely from the Kogod Center for Professionalism and Communication) that has emphasized the importance of clarity and conciseness to business writing. As my project is primarily intended for a business audience, I have taken these guidelines to heart and lowered the length requirement of my final product from six single spaced pages to two, as indicated in the TIMELINE section of this document. Beyond these updates, I have been rigorously drafting and editing the final version of the memorandum and hope to begin the review process in the coming days.

PROJECT TITLE: Corporate Social Responsibility and the Environment: Identifying Corporate Best Practices for Net Positive Environmental Contributions.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITY: My project consists of authoring a clear and concise memorandum/letter to be published openly discussing best practices for corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability. This consists of analysis of various stakeholders in a variety of industries and sectors. For further information, a comprehensive review of the project can be found in my Spring Project Action Plan.

SIGNIFICANCE: Unlike a fundraising campaign or short video documentary, this project will culminate in a final product that is tangible and can be shared with a variety of stakeholders in the issue. I believe this project will serve as an excellent resource as it is a combination of data and best practices ascertained from a variety of diverse sources.

CONTEXT: According to the Business and Human Rights Resource Center, 100 corporations have contributed to more than 70% of complete global greenhouse gas emission over the last 40 years. Furthermore, approximately 6% of American corporations account for more than 50% of total profits; a striking statistic considering the sheer volume of business enterprises in the United States. Concurrent with these indisputable facts, the world faces unprecedented challenges related to climate change and global warming. Indeed, the United Nations finds that corporate powerhouse cities such as New York and Shanghai may find themselves underwater in the near future if no changes are made. Climate change costs the global economy more than 550 billion dollars annually.

TIMELINE: A comprehensive project timeline including each action and steps for the spring semester project is included below.

1. JANUARY (Background Phase I)
 - a. The first phase of the project is to begin the comprehensive research for the letter. The components of this phase will establish the fundamental basis of the project. Subsequent to Background Phase I, it will become possible to proceed or alter the direction of the project considerably if necessary. The following key components are to be completed during Background Phase I.
 - i. Identify Specific Stakeholders (Weeks 1, 2)

1. The purpose of identifying specific stakeholders is to establish a list of scholars and practitioners to interview in order to establish a first hand perspective as to what policies and best practices work for corporations in their efforts to combat climate change and the climate crisis that faces the world and, specifically, the impact the crisis has on the global economy.
 - ii. Begin Comprehensive Best-Practice Research (Weeks 3, 4)
 1. The research portion is imperative in the construction of a letter in order to create a compelling and comprehensive piece that is clear, concise, relevant, and impactful to the reader.
2. FEBRUARY (Background Phase II)
 - a. The second phase of the project, Background Phase II, is the second and final research phase of the project. During this phase, the research will be concluded and formulated either in paragraph or bullet point form including a full review of interviews and research as well as citations relevant to the project.
 - i. Finalize Research (Weeks 1,2)
 1. Complete research and write summary with references and best practices, no greater than 1 page, single spaced.
 - ii. Interview Stakeholders (Weeks 3, 4)
 1. Interview stakeholders and synthesize key points and relevant takeaways into a comprehensive, researched based narrative. Highlight the best practices and identify overlap between stakeholders and research. NOTE: the interview component of this project may be substituted for additional research given the lack of success with interviews experiences in Fall 2021 and expanded upon in the subsequent Interview Update section.
3. MARCH (Drafting Phase)
 - a. The third phase, Drafting, is the time in which the project begins to take meaningful and comprehensive form. Importantly, this is when all the many aspects of the background research come concretely. Finally, this phase concludes with the final letter.
 - i. Begin Drafting Letter (Weeks 1, 2, 3)
 1. Combine the research and interviews into a detailed letter addressing stakeholders, including corporations and government officials, that lays out policy and management best practices related to the environment and corporate social responsibility
 - ii. Finalize Letter (Week 4)
 1. Finalize letter into publishing state. Include any relevant information, salutations, and conclusions. The final letter should not exceed 2 single spaced pages including the letterhead and name line.
4. APRIL (Publishing Phase)
 - a. The fourth and final phase of the project is the Publishing process. During this time, the letter will be printed and distributed and the project will be completed. Further, the list of recipients will be published along with the letter in order to raise awareness to who the recipients of the letter are and to establish their position as a stakeholder.
 - i. Establish Distribution List (Week 1)
 1. Establish a concrete list of stakeholders whom the letter will be distributed to via the United States Postal Service. The list should include name, title, organization, and address.
 - ii. Print, Publish, and Distribute (Week 2)
 1. The final letter should be printed, published as an open letter, and be distributed to the stakeholders established in the stakeholder list.

STATUS UPDATE: As of Sunday, February 13, I am extremely happy to report that I am on track with my aforementioned timeline. I have completed a great deal of productive research and identified key stakeholders as identified in January. Indeed, I have built a bibliography of fourteen sources from a variety of publications both academic and popular. Additionally, I have created a list of stakeholders both specific in nature (e.g. names) and general (e.g. subgroups). I am in the process of submitting interview requests. Unfortunately, as in the fall semester, I am having a difficult time securing interviews as I had previously hoped. Despite this, I am certain my project will still be extremely successful and relevant as I have had great success with my research. In the coming weeks, I anticipate submitting additional interview requests to stakeholders. By the end of February, I will have completed my research and plan on synthesizing this into a rough draft publication. **As of March 21, I have continued progress on my project, having kept in lockstep with my initial timeline. This in mind, I am deep in the middle of the editing and drafting process which has occupied much of my time. I anticipate that I will have a final project to produce by the end of the semester. Further, I had previously mentioned my difficulty with finding solid personal resources related to the concept, beyond a review of relevant scholarship. I was fortunate enough to have a brief conversation with Kogod School of Business Professor David Bartlett, who has extensive experience in CSR and sustainability management, and intend on reaching out to him in the coming weeks to gain his perspective on the issues that I mention in my open letter. Dr. Bartlett should be a strong resource to both my personal and professional development as well as the cohesive nature of my final project. While I had precluded the possibility of an interview and a professorial review of my open letter, this may not be out of the question given this exciting new lead.**

QUESTIONS: No questions at this time.