

Team versus Individual Performance in Capstone Strategic Management Course

This paper will examine differences that may exist in team versus individual performance in an undergraduate capstone strategic management course. Typically most colleges of business require a team project in the undergraduate capstone strategic management course. There is plethora of literature suggesting that teams in organizations bring benefits such as more collaboration, differing viewpoints, new ideas, better problem solving, and so on. However, there is also literature highlighting the problems of team efforts, such as lack of coordination, slackers, one-person leadership and other intra team politics. While at most colleges of business the capstone undergraduate strategic management course mandates team effort, primarily due to Assurance of Learning efforts with respect to team skills, we had the opportunity to examine the differences in course performance that might occur given team versus individual performance.

In two spring semesters (2016 and 2017), and four sections total, we collected data on team versus individual performance in the capstone strategic management course at an AACSB accredited college of business located in the southwest United States. The professor was the same both semesters, as were the project assignments. Data were collected on two term project scores. In this analysis students were given the choice to work individually on the projects, or to work in teams in sizes of their choice up to four students maximum.

If students chose to work individually, the student had to choose two competing companies to analyze in a given strategic group in the industry. If students chose two-person teams the team had to choose two companies in the industry. If students chose three-person teams the team had to choose three companies in the industry. If students chose four-person teams, the team had to choose four companies in the industry.

While grading more projects resulted in an extensively higher number of projects, it will be interesting to examine the results. Data are now available for the following variables that will be included in the analysis: Major, Gender, Ethnic Background, First Generation College Student, Athlete, Veteran, Age, In-state Resident, Pell Grant Eligible, and possibly other variables.

The data from the two spring semesters (2016 and 2017) will be provided to us next week. This research will be completed for the SWDSI Proceedings deadline and conference presentation in Albuquerque. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to attending SWDSI.