

# Alternative Delivery - Designing an Intensive Undergraduate Course

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Creating a course to be delivered in a one week intensive is a creative approach to teaching undergraduate students. The format creates a favorable opportunity for students, instructors and administration. This article delves into the advantages and concerns of the format as well as discussing best practices for designing and implementing the course.

**Development:** I developed this course, and the accompanying materials, to provide a more in-depth experience for students, to ease my semester workload, and to address room constraints experienced by administration. While the approval for the change in format was rigorous, I have received full support from the administration and very favorable feedback from students. All materials presented are my own.

**Implementation:** To get approval for this format change, it is important to be able to justify why the course works in this format. The format is best for courses where the emphasis is on application of materials. Highly numerical or formula-based courses would not do well in this format as the student typically get mentally saturated much sooner.

Through the multiple iterations of this course, I have designed a course that provides academic rigor while still addressing the physical and emotional demands caused by a one week course.

**Theory of Learning:** Hear - Apply - Reflect is the best way to explain the theories behind this format. Students hear about the content, are immediately asked to apply through role plays, case studies, or class discussion, and then they reflect on the material through daily assignments and a required journal.

**Student Response:** Through course evaluations and personal conversations, students have indicated many times that they feel they have learned more in this course than in any other. The course has also led to numerous students receiving job / internship offers.

**Limitations:** The intensive format works best in an application-based course. Students and the instructor must be committed to perfect attendance during the week of the course.

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## ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY – DESIGNING AN INTENSIVE UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

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### INTRODUCTION

Traditional delivery mechanisms for course content have been evolving for many years. The need for classroom space, accommodating distance learners, increasing faculty workloads, increasing enrollments in some courses and now COVID-19 have all caused educators to have to think creatively about providing meaningful course content in alternative fashions. This article will explain one instructor's approach to addressing these concerns.

For many semesters, BUS M426 Sales Management was taught on the IUPUI campus in the traditional format of two 75-minute class meetings per week. The course includes content delivery, role plays, case studies and guest speakers. Students in the class are senior marketing majors. There were two issues that became obvious with this traditional format: First, it was difficult to do in-depth role plays or case discussions because of the time limit and space restrictions. Secondly, students did not typically come to class prepared, quite possibly due to 'senioritis.' To address these concerns, and increase the value of the course, a new intensive format was developed. This course is offered the week before fall and spring semesters begin, so classroom space is not an issue. The class maintains its three credit hour assignment.

### DESIGN

#### CONTACT HOURS

While every school may be different, the minimum required contact time on the IUPUI campus is 2000 minutes per semester. Typically, the contact time in a course in the Kelley School of Business will be 2400 minutes. The week-long intensive format needs to honor the required contact hours. This course meets in the classroom Monday 8:00 – 5:00, Tuesday through Thursday 8:30 – 5:00, and Friday 8:30 – 2:00. Accounting for lunch breaks and a couple additional breaks leaves 31.5 hours of contact time, or 1890 minutes. An online quiz - given each day (except for Monday) - accounts for an additional 120 minutes which means the total contact time exceeds the campus minimum. In addition, there are assignments students must complete each evening.

#### CONTENT DELIVERY

The real advantage to this format is the variety of content delivery. Students expect to be bored coming in to the class and, instead, they continually comment on how interested and involved they were during the course. The strategy is to have two or three lecture segments a day that do not exceed 45 minutes each, at least one role play that allows students to move around in the halls or empty classrooms, a video, at least one guest speaker, time to work on a simulation, and usually an extra assignment that may involve researching a relevant topic or presenting to the class. The key is to change the format frequently and to give the students – and the instructor – plenty of opportunity to physically move around. In addition to the classroom material, a trade book is used as the text. It covers supplemental information to classroom material. Students are assigned daily readings.

#### CLASS SIZE

This is an ongoing battle between the instructor and administration. The bigger the class, the more difficult it is to encourage participation by every student. The instructor requested a maximum of 35 students but the administration set the limit at 45. The class has filled up every semester with a waiting list. The battle continues as the administration would like to increase the class size even more.

#### ASSESSMENT

A large component of the course grade comes from **participation**. It is important to 'hold the line' and not just give everyone a high grade. This instructor posts the participation grade daily with the first day's grade being more rigorous. For students to see that participation assessment is important – (as most students feel if they are simply attentive they should receive full credit) - the first day's participation score is accompanied by a detailed paragraph

explaining the grade. That is the only day an explanation is given. With the wide variety of activities during each day, there are plenty of opportunities to receive participation points, even if a student is quiet and more reserved by nature.

Since the assigned reading is additional to the material presented in the classroom, **daily quizzes** are given over the readings. The first day of class starts with the first quiz given in the classroom on paper. For the rest of the week, the quiz is online. It's available beginning at 6pm that evening and it's due by 8:15 am the next day. In addition to that daily quiz, there is a **final quiz** available beginning the afternoon of the last day. It is online and available until 11:59 pm the last day of the class. The final quiz covers lecture material only, not the readings.

The course uses a computer simulation. Because the goal is not to increase the competitiveness of the class but rather to apply course concepts, the final rankings of the teams lead to bonus points. However, each individual student is responsible for maintaining a **daily journal** to assess how the team did with their decision. Students also respond in that journal to specific questions that force them to link course materials to their simulation decisions (see Appendix A – Journal Assignment, page 3.)

### **AREAS OF CONCERN**

Students enter the course apprehensively. They are concerned about stress levels, their ability to keep up, and how successful they will be navigating the course. Setting expectations is crucial to address these issues. The instructor communicates with students often before the course begins, shares the syllabus early (see Appendix B – Syllabus, page 4) and reiterates many times that students need to attend every class for the full class period and complete work in the evening. By the end of the first day, the students are more relaxed and have been heard discussing how the course is much better than they anticipated.

Energy levels for students are very good on Monday, Tuesday and Friday. Everyone, including the instructor, tends to experience a loss of energy on Wednesday and Thursday. The instructor tries to incorporate students' favorite exercises and speakers from past semesters on those 'down' days. For the instructor, physically teaching an intensive course is exhausting. The instructor is 'on' for 31.5 hours a week, with grading and prepping in the evenings. A plan must be created – and maintained – to allow for activities or rest to keep their energy level high. Also, it is difficult to do any prep work for the semester during that week so advanced planning is vital.

The biggest issue occurs if something happens, and class cannot operate Monday through Friday. This instructor has experienced that twice. In both situations, it occurred the week before spring semester began in early January. One time a class had to be cancelled due to weather. The interactive nature of the course prohibits moving the full day online, so the instructor moved the schedule down a day and had the class meet on the first Friday of the regular semester. It is important to acknowledge this possibility in the syllabus and on the first day of class. The second occurrence happened because New Year's Day fell on a Tuesday and the regular semester began the following Monday. In this situation, the class met Wednesday through Friday and then, the following Friday. Recorded lectures and added assignments were put online. While students understood the necessity of having online content, it was not well received.

### **REACTIONS**

While the week of the course can be exhausting, students rate this course among "the best" they have had in their college careers. The comments in course evaluations show the students feel they learn a lot, and they are well prepared for their 'next steps.' The instructor enjoys teaching the course because allows time and connection to get to know students at a deeper level than in traditional courses. It also completes a full class before the semester starts, which helps with time demands during the regular semester.

## APPENDIX A – CANTOPIA SIMULATION JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT

Your journal is to be uploaded on Canvas each evening. In your journal you should address, at minimum, the questions / issues described in the quarterly instructions below. You will also need to complete the chart at the bottom of these instructions each evening. At the end of the course, you are required to write a final essay addressing, at minimum, the questions / issues described below. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your senior-level understanding and application of course concepts. Meeting the requirements will result in a mediocre grade.

**Quarter 1** - Your first journal entry should examine how your group made your first quarter decisions. What were your priorities when choosing account managers? What concepts from the first day of class' lecture could have been / should have been considered?

**Quarter 2** - This entry should focus on a discussion of your ability to handle the uncontrollable / unforeseen. Were you pleased with the results from the first quarter? Choose the appropriate set of questions to discuss.

\* If you were not pleased, what is your initial reaction? Did you have an extra occurrence (i.e. lawsuit)? If so, how did that impact your motivation? How did it impact your decision making for Q2? As a sales manager, the unexpected occurs often. There are things that you have to deal with that were out of your control and / or no fault of your own. Examine your reaction to the Q1 results in light of what would be expected of you as a manager.

\* If you were pleased, how did you, individually, contribute to that success? Did your group analyze the results and attempt to attribute what parts of your decision went well and which you still could have improved upon? What was the group attitude going into the decision making for Q2? What was your attitude? Did you have an extra occurrence (i.e. lawsuit)? If so, how did that impact your motivation? As a sales manager, how would keep your sales force motivated if they are already doing well?

**Quarter 3:** Discuss the leadership behaviors you are using in the simulation. Initially, why did you choose the ones you did? Was there anything in the profiles that intended which behavior might be most / least successful? Do you feel that these behaviors truly have an impact on real salespeople? Which behaviors would work best on you? Which would be least effective? Which would be easiest for you to do if you were the sales manager? Which would be the hardest?

**Quarter 4:** Today we discussed organization and territory management. Did this information change your approach to your 2nd decision of the day? What information would you have wanted that you weren't provided by the simulation to make that decision? What are three difficulties that you anticipate a sales manager would struggle with in 'real life' when engaging in territory management?

**Final Essay:** Answer the following questions in depth. In other words, be sure to explain your reasoning thoroughly.

What are the key sales management concepts that you learned from or applied to Cantopia?

How much does luck play a role in determining who wins? Is that realistic in the sales industry?

If you were giving advice to future students on how to do well in Cantopia, what would it be?

Include this chart, completed, in your final journal:

	The best thing our company did this quarter was	If we could do this quarter over, we would
<b>Quarter 1</b>		
<b>Quarter 2</b>		
<b>Quarter 3</b>		
<b>Quarter 4</b>		

**APPENDIX B – SYLLABUS**

**M426: Sales Management**

**January 6 – 10, 2020, (if needed: makeup day on Friday, 1/17)**

**BS 3006; 8:00a - 5:00p**

**Instructor Information:**

**Name:** Kim Donahue; Senior Lecturer of Marketing

**Office:** BS 4134

**Contact:** Using Canvas Messages is the most reliable method of contact; Voice mail messages can be left at 317-274-4760.

**Textbook:** 1) Cracking the Sales Management Code by Jason Jordan and Michelle Vazzana; McGraw-Hill, 2012

2) Cantopia Simulation will be purchased during the first day of class. Bring credit card and laptop (if possible) to class with you (approximately \$15)

**Course Objectives:**

	<b>Undergraduate Business Learning Goals (UBLG)</b>	<b>Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)</b>	<b>IUPUI+</b>
Students will be able to explain the sales process and adaptations that should be considered given various target markets and industries. This will be measured by in-class and online assignments.	<i>1a. Students will prepare and deliver written and oral messages that effectively express ideas and facts to others. Students will prepare and deliver effective oral and written persuasive arguments.</i>	<b>SLO 1a.2:</b> Critique, revise, and improve written communication for both self and others. <b>SLO 1a.3:</b> Express business ideas in writing, taking message structure, audience, and content into consideration.	Communicator
Students will be able to demonstrate the processes important for effective management of a professional sales force. This will be measured by in-class assignments, exam questions and case studies.	<i>2. Students will arrive at reasoned conclusions and make informed decisions in assessing current and predicted business situations by applying course concepts learned across the curriculum.</i>	<b>SLO 2.1:</b> Identify and describe the problem, issue, or dilemma in a given business situation. <b>SLO 2.2:</b> Gather, analyze, and evaluate information relevant to solving the business problem, issue, or dilemma. <b>SLO 2.3:</b> Articulate possible solutions to the problem, dilemma, or issue, supporting each with data or analysis. <b>SLO 2.4:</b> Select and defend the best solution to the business problem, issue, or dilemma.	Problem Solver
Students will be able to construct effective evaluation metrics for individual selling situations. This will be measured by in-class assignments exam questions.	<i>1b. Students will perform quantitative analysis and use the results to make business decisions</i>	<b>SLO 1b.1:</b> Identify the appropriate technique, tool, or concept needed to analyze and solve a business problem or make a business decision.	Problem Solver
Students will be able to articulate the importance of a strategic approach to sales management to achieve organizational goals. This will be measured by in-class assignments, exam questions and case studies.	<i>3. Students will apply substantial knowledge and understanding in their chosen major in the study of business.</i>	<b>SLO 3.1:</b> Explain how decisions in one business functional area affect other functional areas of business. <b>SLO 3.2:</b> Meet professional standards and demonstrate competence in important skills and knowledge in a chosen field of study.	Innovator

**Course Requirements:**

- This course is geared towards marketing majors who are anticipating graduation within a year. This class will attempt to prepare students for their entry level positions with an eye towards promotion preparation. As such, attendance and participation is required as is respectful, challenging and professional dialogue.
  - **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY: all day, every day.**
- Students will adhere to the KSBI honor code.
- While electronic devices will need to be put away during the majority of the course, please bring laptops / tablets to class, if already owned. They will come in handy during some in-class exercises and group time to work on the simulation. **However, cell phones are not permitted during class.**
- There are a number of campus-wide policies governing the conduct of courses at IUPUI. These can be found at [http://registrar.iupui.edu/course\\_policies.html](http://registrar.iupui.edu/course_policies.html). Students needing accommodations because of a disability will need to register with Adaptive Educational Services (AES) and complete the appropriate forms issued by AES before accommodations will be given. The AES office is located in Taylor Hall, UC 100. You can also reach the office by calling 274-3241. Visit <http://aes.iupui.edu/> for more information.

**Course Components:**

Final grades will be determined on the traditional 90%, 80%, 70%, etc. with the top 3% and bottom 3% receiving +/- respectively. Due to bonus points available, grades will not be rounded.

GRADED ITEM(S)	Points		BONUS POINTS	
Class Participation	200		Industry: 1 <sup>st</sup> place Cantopia finish	30
Assignments	200		Industry: 2 <sup>nd</sup> place Cantopia	20
Quizzes (5 @ 50)	250		Industry: 3 <sup>rd</sup> place Cantopia finish	10
Simulation Journal	200		Industry: 4 <sup>th</sup> place Cantopia finish	5
Final Quiz	150			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>			

**Class Schedule: WILL CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK!**

	Daily Quiz	Lecture topic(s)	Guest Speaker	Assignment
<b>Day 1 (1/6)</b>	Foreword and Chapter 1	Sales Industry Recruiting	Mike McGourty <b>Pratt Industries</b>	1) Group outline due Tues. 8:30am 2) Quiz #2 due Tues. 8:30am 3) Cantopia: Q1 – LT decision due
<b>Day 2 (1/7)</b>	Chapters 2, 3 and previous day's lecture	The Sales Process Selection Training	Corey Litten, Commercial Acct. Representative Jared Bostelman, Area Manager <b>Sherwin Williams</b>	1) Quiz #3 due Wed. 8:30am 2) Cantopia: Q2 – LT decision due Wednesday 8:30am
<b>Day 3 (1/8)</b>	Chapters 4, 5 and previous day's lecture material	Compensation Motivation Organizing	Scott Mymar, Area Sales Manager Matthew Zurface, Assistant District Manager <b>Penske Truck Leasing</b>	1) Essay due Thurs. 8:30am under 'Assignments' 2) Quiz #4 due Thurs. 8:30am 3) Cantopia: Q3 – LT decision due
<b>Day 4 (1/9)</b>	Chapters 6, 7 and	Motivation Organizing Evaluation	Kati Sevier, Retail Business Development Rep. Joe Ku, Manager, Enterprise Business Reps. <b>Salesforce</b>	1) Quiz #5 due Fri., 8:30am 2) Cantopia: Q4 – LT decision due Friday 8:30am
<b>Day 5 (1/10)</b>	Chapters 8, 9 & previous day's lecture	Leadership "Catch Up"	Kimberly Small, Owner <b>Agent Sauce</b>	1) Simulation Journal due Sunday, 8/25, 11:59pm 2) Final Quiz due 11:59pm 3) Essay due Sunday, 8/25, 11:59pm

\*journal entries are assigned every evening