



## University of Michigan Alternative Fall Break Program 2025 Client Information Document

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### Overview

The University of Michigan School of Information (UMSI), in partnership with the U-M Detroit Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Project (DNEP), is seeking metro Detroit small business owners to participate in UMSI's Alternative Fall Break Program on **Tuesday, October 14, 2025**.

Through this pilot project, Information students will apply their classroom knowledge to either:

- (1) Analyze your business data to help you make informed decisions, or
  - (2) Evaluate your website to enhance user experience.
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### Menu of Services Available

#### **Option 1: Business Data Analysis**

*Students can analyze sales, CRM, inventory, booking, or marketing data to help you make informed decisions.*

#### *Types of Data You Might Want Analyzed:*

- Sales data (from point of sale systems, website payment processor, Venmo, CashApp or other third-party payment processors)
- Customer data (location, purchase history, customer reviews, loyalty program data)
- Booking and appointment data (schedules, no-show rates, peak booking times)
- Inventory data (inventory turnover rates, supplier information, product return rates, stock levels)
- Marketing data (website analytics, email campaign performance, social media engagement)
- Operational data (worker schedules, production timelines, equipment maintenance)

#### *Types of Questions Students Can Answer, If You Have the Data:*

- What are my best and worst performing products/services, sorted by month?
- Who are my most loyal clients and what are their scheduling and service preferences?
- How often do customers return? How much do they spend, on average, per visit?
- How long does it take me to sell each product? Which products have the highest return rates?
- How can I optimize employee schedules to meet customer demand?
- What are the trends in my revenue and expenses over the last two years?

#### *What Students Need to Do this Work:*

- Minimum of two years of data or 1,000 records
- The actual dataset(s), exported to Excel, Google Sheets, or CSV format
- Clear labels or a simple document explaining what each column means
- A relatively clean dataset, without excessive duplicates or errors
- 2-3 key questions you want answered
- One hour of your time (broken into two 30-minute blocks) over a 3 hour block on October 14, 2025 for an interview and to share results

#### *What Students Will Do:*

- Interview you to learn more about the data and what you hope to learn from it,
  - Use a guided worksheet to analyze your data,
  - Provide a high-level summary of the data and answer your questions, and
  - Refer you to resources for further support.
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### 👉 Option 2: Website UX Heuristics Review

*Students can analyze the back-end of your website to identify what is working well and what could be better from a user experience perspective.*

*Types of Questions Students Can Answer, If You Have the Data:*

- Is my website easy to navigate for first-time users?
- Where do people linger on the site?
- Are there sections of the site where people might get confused or misinterpret information?
- Why are people adding things to their shopping cart on my site, but not buying?

*What Students Need to Do this Work:*

- Access to view your live website that has been established for at least one year or has many pages
- Pages or sections identified for students to focus on, with 2 -3 key questions you want answered about those pages
- One hour of your time on October 14, 2025 for an interview

*What Students Will Do:*

- Interview you to learn more about the website, your goals, and any feedback you have received in the past about the site,
  - Conduct a heuristic evaluation to identify what is working and what could be improved from a user experience perspective,
  - Provide 1-2 simple fix recommendations that could be implemented right away,
  - Make suggestions for larger recommendations from a user experience perspective,
  - Refer you to resources for further support.
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### Application Process & Timeline

1. **Apply Online:** Interested businesses should complete an Application. [\*Note: if you have never completed a business intake form for the Detroit Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Project, you must do this first.]
2. **Review and Verification:** UMSI Engaged Learning Office staff will review applications as they are received. They will review the data you uploaded with your application (if a data analysis project) or website information (if a user experience project) to confirm that they can access it and that there is enough there for students to be able to analyze. They will also review privacy protocols in place to protect your confidential information and answer any questions.

- 3. Scheduling and Follow -up:** A UMSI staff member will screen your application and reach out to you. If your application is a good fit for the UMSI Alternative Fall Break program, you may be asked to schedule a virtual meeting to go over preparations and questions. Selected applicants will be scheduled for an October 14 time slot.
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### What Happens Day Of Tuesday, October 14, 2025

- Clients check in at the U-M Detroit Center, 3663 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI 48201 (validated parking available in DSO deck in the back) before your appointment
- Students will interview you for 30 minutes, then get to work!
  - Clients are welcome to leave and come back in 2 hours, or to co -work at UMDC for the day
- Clients meet with students again for 30 minutes to share results of data analysis or recommendations, and answer client questions
- Students will refer businesses to additional resources for follow -up support and implementation

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### Contact Information

Questions? Please contact Angie Zill at [azill@umich.edu](mailto:azill@umich.edu) or visit the [DNEP website](#).

Apply online at [registration link]

*This opportunity is offered at no cost to business owners as a result of support from the University of Michigan Engage Detroit office and the University of Michigan Detroit Center.*