

# CURRICULUM VITAE

**JAMES A. DOWNING**

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## EDUCATION

<b>University of Illinois, Chicago</b>	<b>PhD, Business Administration, Strategy and Entrepreneurship</b>	Status:	Data Analysis
		Anticipated Defense:	December 2012
<b>University of Illinois, Springfield</b>	<b>Master of Business Administration</b>		1999
<b>DePaul University</b>	<b>Bachelors of Arts, Political Science</b>		1993

## DOCTORAL RESEARCH

*The Micro Foundations of Competitive Advantage in Professional Service Firms* (Chair: Mark Shanley)

My thesis is a study on the roots of competitive advantage in fragmented professional service businesses. My research develops a framework for strategies used in fragmented industries to understand the micro-foundations of competitive advantage. The framework expands the competitive advantage literature by understanding the role of performance differentials used to obtain a competitive advantage. The use of performance differentials creates a competitive advantage for the firm by forming strategic groups, and then sustains the competitive advantage by erecting mobility barriers which raises rivals costs. I begin by identifying an industry structure that does not determine firm conduct and thus does not determine firm performance. I then examine the inputs and processes to understand how value is created and appropriated for the firm as well as firm governance mechanisms. The outcomes are strategies to gain and sustain a competitive advantage in fragmented industries. Two research questions guide this study: (1) How does a stable rent producing structure develop in the absence of institutional supports? (2) How are individual knowledge generation and firm governance combined in professional service firms? The empirical examination is a multi-level analysis of extensive and unused proprietary data from the executive search consulting industry. My emerging research agenda stemming from this study includes contributions to the strategy literature on strategic profit differentials, specifically mobility barriers and raising rivals costs. My contribution to the corporate entrepreneurship literature is to understand how entrepreneurial value is created

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in professional service businesses. The next phase of my entrepreneurial research is to then apply the principles of competitive advantage in professional service firms to venture-backed firms.

**ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES****Editorial**

*Strategic Human Capital Newsletter*, Strategic Management Society, 2010 – Current  
 Strategic Human Capital Interest Group (Co-Editor with Mark Shanley)

*Research at the Marketing and Entrepreneurship Interface*, 2008  
 Conference Proceedings (Co-Editor with Gerald Hills)

**Encyclopedia Entries**

*Palgrave Encyclopedia of Strategy* Forthcoming  
 Market Segmentation (with Mark Shanley)  
 Supply and Demand (with Mark Shanley)

**Journal Reviewing**

*Journal of Strategic Management Education* 2012 – Current

**Conference Participation**

Academy of Management Annual Meeting 2008-2011  
 Strategic Management Society 2011  
 Atlanta Competitive Advantage Conference 2011  
 The Value Proposition of Human Capital Conference (An SMS mini-conference) 2011  
 U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Annual Conference 2009-2010  
 Entrepreneurship and Marketing Interface Conference 2009  
 Technology Transfer Society 2008

**Conference Reviewing**

Academy of Management Annual Conference 2008-2011  
 U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Annual Conference 2008-2011

**Service**

UIC Graduate Student Council Representative, College of Business 2007 – 2011  
 UIC Concept2Venture Business Plan Competition, Team Advisor and Judge 2007 – 2011  
 Undergraduate supervisor for an Honors College capstone project 2011

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE*****University of Illinois at Chicago***

MGMT 495: <i>Competitive Strategy (capstone)</i>	Sp11, Fa11, Sp12, Su10, Su11, Su12	(Average 4.25/5.0, n=2)
ENTR 430: <i>Family Business Management</i>	Sp10, Fa10, Fa09	(Average 4.0/5.0, n=3)
ENTR 454: <i>New Venture Formation</i>	Su09	(Average 4.4/5.0, n=1)
MRKT 360: <i>Principles of Marketing</i>	Sp09, Fa08	(Average 4.0/5.0, n=2)
ENTR 300: <i>Survey of Entrepreneurship</i>	Su08	(Average 4.3/5.0, n=1)

Teaching AssistantMBA

MGMT 590: *Strategic Management* (1)  
 MBA 500: *Corporate Strategy* (6)

Undergraduate

MRKT 465: *Strategic Marketing Management* (2)  
 MRKT 360: *Principles of Marketing* (2)  
 ENTR 594: *Topics in Entrepreneurship* (2)

***Illinois Institute of Technology***

BUS 475: *Sales Management* Sp10 (4.2/5.0)  
 BUS 462: *New Product Development* Sp10 (4.2/5.0)

**Memberships**

Academy of Management: BPS, ENT, MOC  
 Strategic Management Society: SHC, CS  
 U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

2010 Outstanding Reviewer Award, Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division,  
*Academy of Management Annual Meeting*  
 2009 John Wiley & Sons Outstanding Student Reviewer Award, Managerial and  
 Organizational Cognition Division, *Academy of Management Annual Meeting*  
 2009 Outstanding Reviewer, Corporate Entrepreneurship and Innovation Division, *United*  
*States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Annual Conference*  
 2009 Traveling Scholar, Big Ten Committee on Institutional Cooperation  
 2008, 2006, 2002 University of Illinois at Springfield, Leadership Roundtable of Distinguished Alumni  
 2007 Resolution of Commendation, Village of Thornton  
 2006 Letter of Recommendation, Barack Obama, President of the United States of America  
 2006 Plaque of Appreciation, Illinois Venture Capital Association  
 2000 Recognition for Outstanding Leadership, Illinois Venture Capital Association  
 2000 Resolution of Commendation, Illinois State Senate

**INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE**

Village Manager of Thornton, Illinois	2005 – 2007
<i>Managed Village operations, economic development and annual budget</i>	
Managing Director, Venture Maxims Consulting	2000 – 2005
<i>Produced strategic plans for an investment bank, trade associations, and start-ups</i>	
Founding Executive Director, Illinois Venture Capital Association	2000 – 2003
<i>Created the state private equity trade association from inception to sustainability</i>	
Illinois State Senate Staff and Venture Capital Administrator, State of Illinois	1995 – 2000
<i>Managed the business legislation for Senate President and seed investment due diligence</i>	