MGMT 312 – Principles and Practices of Management
Course Syllabus and Schedule (Revised 1/19/11)

Tuesdays (001) 7:20 – 10:00pm (East 122)
Professor: Dr. Mandy O’Neill
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Email address: ooneill@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Monday 4-6pm and by appointment
Blackboard 9.1 access: http://mymason.gmu.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES & FORMAT

Course Description: This course builds on the fundamental theories and concepts learned in MGMT 301 by examining the nature of managerial work under a range of business models and under rapidly changing business conditions. Managerial functions and activities such as planning, organizing, controlling, and decision-making are examined in depth and in the context of current organizational examples and scenarios. In MGMT 301, you viewed organizational behavior as a member of that organization. In this class, you will assume the role of manager and examine the organization from a new view. You will look at the variety of pressures contemporary managers face; clients and competitors, leaders above and colleagues that report to you, organizational demands and personal goals. And you will examine the ways in which managers attempt to balance all of the often conflicting demands.

Management Program Learning Goals: Students who are competent in the management discipline will meet the following learning goals (note: goals addressed in this course are printed in **bold**):

1. Students will understand and apply the theories, models, research findings, and tools related to organizational behavior.

2. **Students will understand and apply the theories, models, research findings, and tools related to the management functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling.**

3. **Students will analyze and solve problems creatively.**


5. Students will synthesize key aspects of strategic management. (optional: including industry dynamics and creative disruptions, new venture creation, innovative processes, and strategy formulation and implementation)

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Course Learning Objectives:
1. To introduce students to the process of managing organizations and to the kinds of problems and issues contemporary managers face; to acquaint students with the principles, practices, and models used by contemporary management to deal with these issues and problems.
2. To review, in particular, the management functions of planning, organizing, directing, decision making, and controlling and to identify their contribution to management of organizations.
3. To understand basic theories, concepts, and research findings in the behavioral sciences.
4. To perceive the organization as a total dynamic system that interacts with its environment.
5. To compare theoretical approaches of management discussed in class with how management is performed by managers in actual organizations.

The course will focus on active learning and will mix a lecture-based approach with discussion and application. Research strongly suggests that active learning in conjunction with traditional lecture-based teaching methods is effective for student learning and skill-building. Successful active learning requires a major investment from both of us. You will need to study the assigned readings before each class meeting, do a fair amount of thinking, and be prepared to contribute to the class discussion.

COURSE MATERIALS
1. Notes you take during class discussions/lectures. As there is no required textbook for this course, the hand-written notes that you take during class will be critical to your success in the course. You will need comprehensive notes from which to study for the mid-term and final exams. Lecture slides will be provided on Blackboard. I recommend that you print copies of the lectures slides and bring these to class to aid in your note taking.

2. Management articles and cases from Harvard Business School Publishing: I have created a course area on the Harvard Business Education website where you can order many of the required materials for this course. Each article/case costs $3.95.

Click on the link below to order the course materials:

http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cb/access/8169392

If you have not registered with Harvard Business Education site, you will be required to do so. The above URL will provide you with a list of required materials for use in this course. Electronic course materials are in PDF (Portable Document Format) and should be viewed with Adobe Reader. Students can access PDF files of course materials via a link on Harvard Business Online for six months from the date of purchase.

You will have immediate access to the materials upon placing your order, for subsequent access, you must login to www.hbsp.harvard.edu and go to My Library -> Courses.

For technical assistance, please view the Quick Tips section or contact Harvard Business School Publishing at 1-800-810-8858 or 617-783-7700. They are open 8am-8pm Eastern Standard Time. They can also be reached at techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu
3. Management readings and cases on Blackboard. **Please access and print these cases as soon as possible to ensure that you have a hard-copy of each case.**

4. Optional text: *Management - Principles and Practices for Tomorrow’s Leaders* (Dessler, Revised 3rd Edition, Houghton Mifflin). A copy of this book is on reserve at the Johnson Center Library (2 hour loan). This book will not be referred to specifically during the course, but is available for those students who wish to obtain additional reinforcement on some course topics.

**NOTE:** Please bring a copy of relevant cases or articles with you to each class, per the course schedule.

**APPOINTMENTS AND E-MAIL**
I strongly urge you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, or obtain additional help. It is best to contact me via email to ask a question or to set up a phone or in-person appointment (ooniell@gmu.edu).

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS.**
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

**ABSENCE/LATE ASSIGNMENTS**
If you miss a class, you may access the slides used in class on Blackboard. I would strongly suggest that you also ask a classmate for his/her notes as it is likely that key points will be brought up in class discussion and may not be captured on the slides. Once you have reviewed a classmate’s notes, if you have targeted, specific questions on material covered, I will gladly meet with you to answer your questions. However, I will not have time to “re-do” the lecture, nor will I have documented class notes.

**Make-up Exams:** Make-up examinations will not be given unless a student has a university-validated excuse that the instructor is notified of in advance of the examination. **Without exception,** students who request a make-up exam will be asked to provide appropriate documentation before a make-up exam is scheduled. Make-up exams must be completed within two weekdays of the original exam date. Approval of absence from the **final exam** must be obtained from the Assistant Dean of Academic and Career Services before a make-up exam will be arranged. **Late Assignments:** Writing assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. If you do not turn in your assignment in class on the day it is due, four (4) points will be deducted immediately. One (1) additional point will be deducted for each 24 hour period of lateness. NO writing assignments will be accepted after 72 hours from the time the assignment was due. If you will not be in attendance on the day a writing assignment is due, you may email me your assignment, but I must receive your emailed assignment before the beginning of class. As noted below, late Discussion Question responses will NOT be graded.

**Attendance:** While attendance itself is not evaluated, you cannot earn credit for participation if you are not in class. Therefore, it is clearly in your best interest to attend class. In addition, examination questions will be based on content discussed and exercises conducted in class sessions – if you are not in class you will not have the necessary information to perform well on the examinations.

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**Lateness:** Lateness is disruptive and disrespectful to both me and to your fellow students, and habitual lateness will negatively impact your participation grade. Every effort should be made to be in class on time and ready for the topic(s) of the day. Please allow time for traffic or parking problems, as these are frequent occurrences in our area and our school. In addition, I would prefer that the desks nearest the door be left open for late students so that they may easily find a seat with minimum disruption to the class.

**Inclement weather:** In the event of inclement weather, please consult Mason’s website or call the main information line (703.993.1000). If the University is officially closed, our class will not meet. If the University remains open during an inclement weather event, our class will meet as scheduled, unless you receive an email from me to the contrary.

**Cell Phones, Pagers and Computers:** These items are to remain off and put away during the entire class. Using cell phones/computers during lecture will negatively impact your participation points. Students who choose to talk on cell phones or text message may be asked to leave the class. 

**NOTE:** The use of laptops during class time is not permitted. An exception to this policy will be the occasional situations where computers are needed for class exercises.

**COMMUNITY STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR**
The mission of the School of Management at George Mason University is to create and deliver high quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni that participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Management (SOM) community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following Community Standards of Behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. SOM can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the SOM. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

In order to maintain a respectful and distraction-free learning environment,

- Attend class **on time**
- Be unobtrusive when entering late
- Do not interrupt me or classmates
- Please turn off all computers, beepers, cell phones, and other handheld electronic devices

**HONOR SYSTEM AND CODE**
The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class. I take honor code violations very seriously and will not hesitate to forward all suspected violations to the Honor Committee for review and adjudication. For a full description of this code please refer to [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/acadpol.html](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/acadpol.html).
Group participation is permissible during in-class small group exercises and while studying for Exams. Discussion with other previous or current MGMT 312 students (in any section) with regard to exam content or responses to discussion questions is prohibited. No discussion or study aids will be permitted while taking Exams.

EVALUATION

Your learning in this course will be evaluated by the following tools:

- Mid-term Examination (30 points)
- Final Examination (30 points)
- In-Class Participation (40 points)
- Experiential Learning Assignments (20 points)
- Best Self Project (40 points)
- Discussion Question responses (32 points)
- Resume (8 points)

**Mid-Term and Final Examinations (60 points).** Two exams (30 points each) will consist of objective test questions (e.g., multiple-choice, true/false) and short-answer/short-essay questions. The exams will cover the information/readings discussed and exercises that occur during class sessions. **Students are required to bring green SCANTRON forms (available in the bookstore) and #2 pencils to each of the exams.** I will provide paper for the written portion of the exam. I will post an exam study guide on Blackboard approximately five calendar days before each exam. In addition, I will conduct an exam review session during the class meeting immediately prior to each exam.

**In-Class Participation (40 points).** The active-learning nature of this course requires your preparation and willingness to share your insights with the class. Your participation grade is the single largest component of your course grade. Your participation will be formally evaluated through my assessment of your classroom behavior, such as the level of respect and professionalism demonstrated, the quality of your contributions to our class case discussions, and your cooperation and involvement in class exercises and with guest speakers, etc. Take advantage of participation opportunities available to you in each class by giving your full effort to class exercises, thoughtfully consider the reading material and topic(s) of the day, and be prepared to share your insights and solutions. Your participation points will be based on the quality of your behaviors and contributions (e.g., demonstrating respect, incorporating course and management concepts, adding unique insights or ideas, identifying less-obvious solutions or underlying issues). I will track participation points throughout the semester and post your participation points on Blackboard after our final class. I will also post participation feedback at the mid-point of the semester. If you have any concerns about your participation grade at any point during the semester, please ask me. The table below defines the criteria associated with various participation “point levels.” Please note that this table is not all-inclusive in terms of behaviors associated with each level, but is meant to serve as a guide to direct your efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Participation Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Outstanding:</strong> Demonstrates consistent on-time attendance, preparation, and constructively participates in all class activities and discussions; consistently demonstrates insight by asking questions, making statements that add to and facilitate the class discussion, or building upon others’ comments. Consistently demonstrates respect for professor and other classmates.</td>
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**Experiential Learning Assignments (20 points).** Because the course involves a fair amount of experiential learning, you will be expected to respond to requests to complete a set of assignments that support this method. While each assignment will not be graded, maximum points can be earned by approaching each one in a conscientious manner, turning each in according to the format provided and turning it in when it is due.

**Best Self Exercise (40 points).** The document, “Reflected Best Self – Assignment and Instructions” should be used to condone this assignment. There are several parts to this project - detailed instructions are posted on Blackboard and will be reviewed during our second class.

**Discussion Question Responses (32 points).** For each class meeting, you will be responsible for preparing for that day’s topic of discussion. Preparation requirements are noted on the course schedule and will vary by topic and may include (but are not limited to) reading cases or articles to be discussed that week. To that end, prior to our in-class discussion of certain topics or cases, you are asked to respond to discussion questions that will be posted on Blackboard. Please consult the syllabus, which specifies the dates that you are responsible for responding to discussion questions. **No later than 4:30pm EST,** you are responsible for submitting your responses for the question(s) due that day. Your responses must be entered onto Blackboard (emailed responses will not be accepted). Late responses will not be graded. Each submission is worth a maximum of four points. Your responses will be graded based on the quality of your answers – your ability to show logic and incorporate course concepts into your responses. Responses that show shallow or basic thinking will receive fewer points than responses that show careful consideration and deliberation.

**Resume (8 points).** Every professional must have an up-to-date resume. Many students taking this course are within a few semesters of graduating. Even if you are already situated in your career and have an existing resume, your experiences during your final semesters of education can (and should) be included on your resume. If you haven’t created a resume yet, or if you haven’t updated your resume recently, now is your chance. During the course of the semester, a Career Advisor from SOM’s Office of Academic and Career Services will visit our class to provide resume writing guidance. Prior to the speaker’s visit, you must draft a resume using existing resume-writing resources (see [http://som.gmu.edu/CurrentStudents/Undergrad/CareerServices/Resumes](http://som.gmu.edu/CurrentStudents/Undergrad/CareerServices/Resumes) for more information). Please consult the course syllabus for the specific date of Resume Workshop, and bring a copy of your resume with you to class on this date. During class, your resume will be “peer reviewed” (this draft
should be *as good as you can get it*). After receiving peer feedback, you will have one additional week to finalize your resume and submit this final version for grading.

**GRADING**

I take grading very seriously and I assign grades with care and thought. In general, the more proactive you are in dealing with your coursework, the less of a likelihood there will be of a grade "problem" or surprise. I am committed to grading all assignments in a timely fashion and posting grades on Blackboard on a regular basis. Please check your grades on Blackboard throughout the semester so that you know where you stand with regards to points. Remember, I want nothing more than for you to succeed and I am willing to work with you so that you can attain your goals.

**Grading Scale:**
Your grade will be assigned on a straight scale based on the number of points you earn as noted above. Below is the grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>179 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>174-178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>159-173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>154-158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>139-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>120-138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 120</td>
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COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that the schedule and assigned readings are subject to change. Adjustments will be discussed throughout the semester.

January 25 – Session 1
Topic(s): Course introduction, The Manager’s Job
Preparation:
- access course website on Blackboard, print/download syllabus
- read: *The Manager’s Job: Folklore and Fact* (Harvard Business Review)
- read: *Southwest Airlines* (Harvard Case)

February 1 – Session 2
Topic(s): Ethics
Preparation:
- read: *The Grocery Cart Case (A)*

February 8 – Session 3
Topic(s): Decision Making and Planning
Preparation:
- due: Discussion Question #1 response

February 15 – Session 4
Topic(s): Strategy
Preparation:
- read: *Stick to the Core – or Go for More?* (Harvard Business Review)
- read: *Are You Sure You Have a Strategy?* (Academy of Management Executive)
- Note: if you have one, please bring a laptop computer to class – we will be doing an in-class, group exercise that involves on-line research.
- due: Discussion Question #2 response

February 22 – Session 5
Topic(s): Organizing, structure
Preparation:
- read: *Trojan Technologies* (mini-case)
- read: *AES Honeycomb* (Harvard Case)
- read: *Fostering Collaboration* (Kouzes & Posner; book chapter)
- due: Discussion Question #3 response
- due: Reciprocity Ring assignment

March 1 – Session 6
Topic(s): Leadership
Preparation:
- Read: *What Leaders Really Do* (Harvard Business Review)
- read: *Bob’s Meltdown* (Harvard Business Review)
- read: *Big Shoes to Fill* case (Harvard Business Review)
- read: *150 Ways to Encourage the Heart* (book chapter)
- due: Discussion Question #4 response
March 8 - Session 7
Topic(s): Managing Change, Resilience
Preparation:
• read: Paragon Information Systems (mini-case)
• read: Welcome Aboard (But Don’t Change a Thing) (Harvard Business Review)
• read: Leading in times of Trauma (Harvard Business Review)
• read: Organizational Fusion (Daft & Lengel; book chapter)
• due: Discussion Question #5 response
• Note: If you have one, please bring a laptop computer (which Microsoft Excel software) to class for an in-class exercise.

March 15 – SPRING BREAK

March 22 – Session 8
Topic(s): Mid-Term Examination
Preparation: STUDY!

March 29 – Session 9
Topic(s): Teams
Preparation:
• read: Terra Swan at Nickelodean Latin America (Harvard Case)
• due: Discussion Question #6 response

April 5 – Session 10
Topic(s): Control
Preparation:
• read: The Micromanager case (Harvard Business Review)
• read: Acme Hardware (mini-case)
• read: Selection Bias the Perils of Benchmarking (Harvard Business Review)
• due: Discussion Question #7 response

April 12 – Session 11
Topic(s): Working with Difficult People
Preparation:
• read: Surviving the Boss From Hell (Harvard Business Review)
• read: When Your Colleague is a Saboteur (Harvard Business Review)
• due: Discussion Question #8 response

April 19 – Session 12
Topic(s): Managing Yourself
Preparation:
• Read: Ste. Basil (mini-case)
• read: Being a Contribution (book chapter)
• read: Investing in Strengths (book chapter)
• due: Best Self Exercise

April 26 – Session 13
Topic(s): Resume-writing / Job Search Workshop (Career Advisor visit to class)
Preparation:
• Complete draft resume, bring a copy to class for peer review

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May 3 - Session 14
Topic(s): Final Examination
Preparation:
  • STUDY!
  • due: finalized resume (bring a copy to class to turn in)