MGMT 312 – Principles and Practices of Management  
Course Syllabus and Schedule  
Section A01 May 21 – June 22 Mon/Wed/Fri 7:00 – 10:05 pm  
Science & Tech I Room 129  
Professor: Linda Medlock  
Email address: lmedlock@gmu.edu (571) 212-6041 – cell phone  
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. This course is a requirement for the General Management / Management Consulting track of the Management major. Managerial functions and activities such as planning, organizing, controlling, and decision-making are examined in depth and in the context of current organizational examples. 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 such as clients and competitors, leadership above and direct reports below, organizational and environmental demands, and personal values, beliefs, and goals. 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.**

4. Students will integrate key components of human resource management (including: selection, training, compensation, strategic human resource planning, performance evaluation, employee relations, and employment law).

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)
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 (e.g., case studies, role-plays, scenario studies, and simulations). 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 complete 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. Class discussions/lecture notes. Notes that you take during class will be critical to your success in the course. Lecture slides are available on Blackboard. I recommend that you print copies of the lecture slides and bring these to class to aid in your note taking. Please note: lecture slides are not sufficient to ensure the depth of understanding you will need to study for the mid-term and final exams. Assigned articles are also available. You will need to complete the assigned readings before each class meeting and bring a copy of the article with you to each class.
2. Textbook: Management – Principles and Practices for Tomorrow’s Leaders (Gary Dessler, Revised 3rd Edition, Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 9780618733804). The textbook is available for purchase at the bookstore. Used copies are also available online (NOTE: the CD is not needed for this course). A copy of this book will also be on reserve at the Johnson Center Library for a 2-hour loan.

EVALUATION

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

- Mid-term Examination (40 points)
- Final Examination (40 points)
- In-class Participation (30 points)
- In-class Group Deliverables (20 points)
- Article Summary Presentation (25 points)
- Self-Reflection Paper (25 points)
- Discussion Questions (20 points)

Mid-Term and Final Examinations (80 points). Two exams (40 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 conduct an exam review session during the class meeting immediately prior to each exam.

In-Class Participation (30 points). The active-learning nature of this course requires your preparation and willingness to engage with the class. I am looking for a high level of respect and professionalism to be demonstrated and your cooperation and involvement in class exercises. 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.

**In-Class Group Deliverables (20 points).** There will be times during the session when you will work with a group and be responsible for a deliverable specific to that class topic. Details of the assignment(s) will be provided in class. Throughout your career (and life in general) you will find yourself working in groups – some good, some bad. It is expected that you will address any concerns you have *with your group*, versus me. All members of the group will receive the same points/grade for any group assignment.

**Article Summary Presentation (25 points).** One of the functions of a successful manager is keeping current and trying to learn and better oneself. Reading current events is one way to help facilitate this, as lessons can be learned from everywhere, not just your industry. Each student will be responsible for choosing a current events story and presenting a summary of the article and discussing its applicability to the topics we’ve discussed in class. This presentation will be in the front of the classroom and is to be no longer than 5 minutes. Details and assigned dates will be discussed during the first class.

**Self-Reflection Paper (25 points).** This paper will allow you to reflect on your course experience(s) and how this class has an impact on your current work role. Further details (expectations, grading criteria, etc.) will be discussed in class.

**Discussion Questions (20 points).** Prior to our in-class discussion of certain topics, 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 the start of class,** you are responsible for submitting your responses for the question due that day. Your responses must be entered onto Blackboard. 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.

**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.

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>179 and above</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>174-178</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>159-173</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 120</td>
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**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.
CLASS ETIQUETTE

MGMT 312 is a “safe space”, which means we commit to: (1) Making our class a welcoming, open space for everyone; (2) Being aware of our prejudices and insecurities and how our words affect others; (3) Providing room for each of us to explore our own identities; (4) Allowing others to define their own identities and to speak for themselves; (5) Respecting the privacy of others by maintaining confidentiality.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc., must remain on silence and be stowed away from your desk during the class. Use of electronic devices is disrespectful to the professor and to your classmates. Use of them during lecture or class exercises will negatively impact your participation points. Students who choose to use electronic devices may be asked to leave the class at my discretion. An exception to this policy will be occasional situations in which computers are necessary for class exercises.

ABSENCES, LATENESS, AND ASSIGNMENTS / EXAMS

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.

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.

Absences: If you miss a class, I 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 provide additional 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.

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.
**CAMPUS RESOURCES**

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** CAPS is available for same-day walk-in and pre-scheduled appointments with trained counselors. Short-term counseling is FREE for all students. CAPS located in Student Union 1 room 3129. Same-day consultations are made available beginning first thing each morning on a limited basis; call 703-993-2380 at 8:30am in the morning to find out the times available and to schedule on that day. Services are confidential and use of these services does not become part of the student’s academic record.

**Learning Services:** Learning Services is available with workshops and individual study skills designed to improve academic skills, as well as to assist and support with learning differences such as attention deficit disorder or learning disabilities. The Certificate in Academic Skills Program provides an individualized program of study to develop academic skills. Call 703-993-2999 or visit Student Union 1 room 3129 to schedule an appointment.

**The Writing Center:** The writing center is available for help with all aspects of the writing process through face-to-face appointment with tutors, style guides, workshops (in-person and face-to-face), and ESL guidance. http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/. For general questions and comments please contact us at wcenter@gmu.edu, call 703-993-1200, or stop by 114A Robinson Hall.

**ACCOMODATION FOR DISABILITIES**

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: (1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office for Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and (2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

**Honor Code:** GMU has an Honor Code (http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/) with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Understanding the Honor Code is your responsibility. However, if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me and/or see the Office for Academic Integrity.

**Violations:** Academic integrity is taken very seriously in this class. Violators will receive an “F” for the assignment and/or course grade and will be immediately referred to the Office for Academic Integrity for administrative review.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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

**May 21 – Session 1**
Print and bring copy of syllabus to class
Topic(s): The Manager’s Job; Ethical Behavior
Preparation:
- Read: *The Betty Vinson Case*
- Read: *The Manager’s Job* (Harvard Business Review)
- Reference: Chapters 1 and 2 (textbook)
May 23 – Session 2
Topic(s): Decision Making
Preparation:
- Read: *Hidden Traps in Decision Making* (Harvard Business Review)
- Reference: Chapter 3 (textbook)
- Due: Discussion Question #1

No class will be held on Friday, May 25 and Monday, May 28 – Memorial Day

May 30 – Session 3
Topic(s): Planning & Strategy
Preparation:
- Read: *Borders Struggles* (Washington Post) & *Borders Bankruptcy* (Wall Street Journal)
- Reference: Chapters 4 & 5 (textbook)

June 1 – Session 4
Topic(s): Power & Organizing
Preparation:
- Read: *Power in Organizations* (short essay)
- Reference: Chapters 6 & 7 (textbook)
- Due: Discussion Question #2

June 4 – Session 5
Topic(s): Managing Change
Preparation:
- Reference: Chapter 8 (textbook)
- Due: Discussion Question #3

June 6 – Session 6
Topic(s): Leadership & Followership
Preparation:
- Reference: Chapter 10 (textbook)

June 8 – Session 7
Topic(s): Mid-Term Examination
Preparation: STUDY!

June 11 – Session 8
Topic(s): Managing & Motivating Individuals
Preparation:
- Read: *Bob’s Meltdown* (Harvard Business Review)
- Read: *Envy at Work* (Harvard Business Review)
- Reference: Chapter 11 (textbook)
- Due: Discussion Question #4

June 13 – Session 9
Topic(s): Control and Building Commitment
Preparation:
- Read: *The Micromanager* (Harvard Business Review)
- Reference: Chapter 14 (textbook)
June 15 – Session 10
Topic(s): Operations
Preparation:
  • Reference: Chapter 15 (textbook)

June 18 – Session 11
Topic(s): Managing Entrepreneurial Organizations
Preparation:
  • Reference: Chapter 16 (textbook)
  • Due: Discussion Question #5

June 20 - Session 12
Topic(s): Managing Global / Cross-cultural Environments
Preparation:
  • Reference: Chapter 17 (textbook)

June 22 – Final Exam
Preparation: STUDY!
  • Due: Self Reflection paper. Bring hard copy to class.
  • Include a self-addressed, appropriately stamped envelope if you’d like the paper returned.