MBA 725 Leadership

August-October 2016, MBA Module 1 Syllabus
Dr. John Hillen

Class meets: Wednesday 6:30 – 10:05 pm, Fairfax Campus, Mason Hall D001

Instructor: Dr. John Hillen, Executive in Residence & Professor of Practice

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Office: 703-993-8657
Office hours: by arrangement

Blackboard: www.mymason.gmu.edu

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to give you a deeper understanding of the demands of organizational leadership - as distinguished from the tasks of good management practices. This approach should give you an increased ability to be a successful leader at different levels - ranging from small teams to a large enterprise.
**Cases:**

We will use a fair few Harvard Business School Cases. These must be ordered directly from the publisher. A direct link to our course case package has been created:

http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/42805939

**Books & Articles:**

There is no book for this course, but many of our articles and a few other outstanding ones besides are in an HBR compendium of 10 great essays on leadership. **HBR’s 10 Must Reads On Leadership.** Harvard Business Review Press, Boston MA, 2011.

The book is a great resource/reference for you to have throughout your career and is only $14 on Kindle and $25 in book form. If you want to though, given that the articles in the book were all in HBR magazine at some point, you can chose to get them thru the GMU library as with many of our other articles.

We will be using many articles. We may not get to all of them but you'll want them in your leadership library – they are all important and are just a tip of the Leadership iceberg. The ones marked ** will be reviewed in class and will be key to your written assignments, exercises, and class discussion. They are the fundamental building blocks of this course and if you don’t read them….well, you'll likely struggle with the work and cheat yourself besides. The other readings are supplemental but might come in handy in your day job, now or in the future. **I will say that referencing key points in the supplemental articles in your written work is always a winning tactic.** The articles assigned in this syllabus are easily found through Mason resources or will be added to the course Blackboard site a few weeks in advance of their applicable class.

You can also download many of the articles directly from the libraries' electronic journal collection.

Last, I pen some Leadership thoughts in a monthly column – some of which sneak their way into our class discussions/lectures or vice versa. They are here:

https://washingtontechnology.com/articles/list/new/john-hillen.aspx

**Other course materials:**

Most other course materials will be made available on our course web site
I. **CLASS FORMAT**

The course will be built around individual and student team work. The course itself will be interactive and will incorporate guest speakers, some short lectures, exercises, impromptu and planned presentations by students, role-plays, simulations, and faculty and student-led discussions involving the readings and case material. There will be student presentations based on the Leader Profile report produced by student teams.

The syllabus as you see it here is complete….but is subject to change – of course! All changes/modifications will be announced on the course BB site in as timely a way as possible.

I will try to have a guest speaker at most of our sessions – usually a CEO or equivalent from the national capital region. These individuals will be asked to brief the class on their current leadership challenges or their leadership experiences especially in and around the Leadership topic of the night.

II. **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Gain personal insights in key areas such as how to work in teams, build and use a leadership network, improve communication in hardship and crisis situations and understand different ways to motivate and influence people.
- Articulate the critical competencies for organizational leadership, especially as these relate to managing work groups and teams.
- Understand your own potential for leadership and how to best develop it.
- Energize your efforts to develop this potential.
- Explain the role of leaders in achieving the success of work organizations by creating and insuring the alignment among the tools of leadership including organizational vision, strategy, structure, culture, hiring and socialization programs, reward systems, leadership succession programs.
- Become familiar with research-based frameworks for explaining effective organizational leadership and learn how to better link theory to practice.

This course also contributes to the MBA learning goals of:

- **Teaming and Leading**
- **Analytic Decision Making**
- **Communication**
- **Ethics & Responsibility**
III. COURSE DELIVERABLES AND EVALUATION

There are several evaluated deliverables in this course. Some are individual deliverables, some will be done by teams.

**Deliverable 1: Written Leadership Case Analysis (1 Required; 20% of Course Grade)**

- Learning teams will be formed – usually with three or four students. For the case analysis, each member will contribute to the creation of a team **five-page** case analysis which provides answers to case questions posed in the case **or** posits and defends a thesis from the case on the leadership issues at hand. These analyses will be due on the evening that the cases will be discussed. On the dates assigned, one member of the team will submit a copy of their team report to me via email and also bring one hard copy to class that evening. The members of a team will receive the same grade for the team submitted case report.

- The case study write ups and presentations will start in week 3. Week 2’s case study (really two cases we will treat as one) we will do together as a class, in class. Teams can sign up for which case study they want to present starting the Monday of week 2 via email to me. While there is only 1 write up due per team, **every student should read and familiarize themselves with all the case studies** (an invaluable leadership skill – the ability to quickly absorb information and have familiarity with it, not expertise in it). If you haven’t familiarized yourself with the case study just because you are not writing it up, you could be in an uncomfortable place during discussion and exercises around the case study. And participation is important in this class. I have developed a pretty good radar over the years for knowing who has done or not done the readings.

- We will use the standard MBA methodology if any teams feel they have a “free-rider” or uneven participation issue on their team.

**Deliverable 2: Case Presentation (1 Required, 10% of Course Grade)**

- Teams will do a short presentations (10 minutes) on the case they wrote up and submitted. These will be the foundation for class discussions about the cases each night. The ability to quickly and cogently “win the day” or make one’s case in a presentation to a small or large group is a core leadership skill and tool. Each team will present their case study during the course. We need to have eight cases covered so everybody might not get their first choice. We’ll sort it out in class and we will spread out the presentation order. If a team presents in the earlier part of the course on a case study then they will present later in the course on their leader profile so it will balance out between teams.

***** On Deliverable’s 1 & 2: Some keys to a really good written case study
analysis and/or presentation:

- Have a clear and compelling thesis, point of view, or opinion on the leadership issues involved in the case study. This should be stated up front and explained.....and then supported and defended throughout the rest of your paper and/or presentation. Some cases “tee up” a major question for you to offer an answer to, or a problem for you to offer some solutions to. Some do not. Either way, you will succeed if you say something interesting and important that reflects your own analysis of the Leadership aspects in the case and is intelligently and coherently supported by your writing or presentation. Make a point! Keep our attention.

- Do NOT simply repeat the facts of the case study. You can assume that I and the class have read and know the facts. You of course need to bring some of those facts into play to bear on whatever argument you are making, but it is a real waste of analytical space in a five page paper or 10 minute presentation to take 3 pages or 5 minutes simply re-stating the case. We’ve already read it! Your assignment is to analyze it and say something interesting about it.

- The readings that accompany that week’s case study or have proceeded it provide rubrics or frameworks to analyze the cases. They are like Rosetta Stones in helping you to think through the leadership issues and analyze them in each case. Almost any one of the readings gives you a framework through which you can analyze a case. You’ll be spoiled for choice. Case write-ups should reference the concepts and ideas in the readings.

- Like every business case study, there are issues of strategy, finance, marketing, engineering, sales, and all sorts of other business things going on within the case. You need to analyze it from a Leadership perspective – the focus of our course.....of course.

**Deliverable 3: Leader User’s Manual (15% of Course Grade)**

- Over the weeks, we will answer some short simple questions about ourselves based on the concepts we are exploring in the course. You will keep it as a running list of answers about you to key leadership questions and ultimate that list will represent a "User’s Manual" for you as a Leader that you could give to someone who is working for you, with you, or even for whom you are working so that they “get” you and your own unique style and strengths as a leader.

**Deliverable 4: Participation (20% of Course Grade)**

- This is an advanced MBA elective that has participatory, almost seminar style ab out it. A large part of how we will learn together is our case- based and readings-based discussion and exercises. Course goals can be attained only if there is a high level of student engagement. Thus your evaluation in the course is based in part on
how well you integrate the readings and case materials into class discussions and impromptu presentations/exercises. Your contributions to your learning teams will also be assessed and enter into your participation grade. High levels of engagement during our course sessions will count toward obtaining the maximum number of participation points possible. Regular class attendance is expected.

**Deliverable 4: Leader Profile Project (15% of Course Grade)**

- Each team will do a short presentation (10 minutes) based on a leader whom they interviewed in person, via Skype, or on the phone. The purpose of this exercise is to allow you to explore one or more of the issues or themes addressed in our class from the point of view of actual senior organizational leaders. As such, it would be important for each team to agree on an interviewee, an issue, theme or direction for the interview early on in the process. Then, as a result of the interview and analysis based on the interview, the team should be in a position to come to a set of conclusions regarding the issue(s) addressed (e.g. what it takes to build a top management team, how best to go about succession planning). This means it would be very appropriate to go into the interviews with the goal of answering a question or a thesis regarding the topic (e.g. one based on course materials or on the work experiences of team members).

- Each group will conduct a set of interviews (one per group member) with business leaders who meet any one of the following criteria:
  - CEO of firm (company must be 3+ years old, >20 people)
  - C suite officer (company must be 3+ years old, >100 people)
  - President, VP or GM of division of larger company (company must be 3+ years old, >1000 people)
  - Active Government SES level leadership position (with significant management responsibilities)
  - Active Military – General or Admiral level position or position with significant management responsibilities (e.g., a Brigade or Battalion commander, etc.)

For those up to the challenge, teams might seek out individuals who represent:

- C level position of large firm (3000 or more)
- Top Military and Government officials (administrators, second in command)

- Note that the chosen leaders selected for this assignment may not be an immediate supervisor or someone with whom you have an established relationship (e.g. relative, friend).
- This project deliverable is a 10 minute presentation to the class. We will discuss this project more in class.

**Deliverable 5: Leadership Fitness Challenge (20% of Course Grade)**

- While much about how to become a better or more effective leader
can be learned from class work, there is a great deal of evidence that “experience is the best teacher” and that practice-driven leadership development works best.

- Accordingly an opportunity to improve or develop your own leadership potential is being built into our course. This is being described as a “Leadership Fitness Challenge”.

- It is clear to those who want to be more physically fit that it is incumbent upon them to plan for and participate in a “workout routine”. Typically this means setting out the time and place during which to exercise or to perform physically demanding activities. It is the regular participation in such activities that leads to achieving some goal. By analogy, the leadership fitness challenge assignment will involve regular practice in the development of a key aspect of leadership effectiveness - social capital. Points will be earned by having a great plan or even getting started on fulfilling the activities your workout “plan” throughout the course. You will want to reference our readings and topics in constructing your plan! Since this is akin to a “Final Exam for the Course” your plan is due the Saturday after our final class session, but turning it in prior to the deadline is always welcome since I need to grade them and submit grades quickly.

- Specific details on this assignment are provided in a separate document that will be posted on the course site on Blackboard at a later date and discussed in class.

IV. GRADING STANDARDS:

A solid job on the case write ups and the leadership profile report will be evaluated at the A-/B+ border. To earn a strong A, performance must go beyond “meets expectations.”

The case write ups and other deliverables are due at the beginning of class on the due dates specified. Late projects may incur a penalty. Missing deliverables will receive a grade of zero. Most deliverables will be posted to our course web site. But I also request that you bring hard copies to class as well.

Semester grades will depend on the total points you earn on the assignments described above; no extra credit will be available. The percentage cutoffs are shown below.

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V. HONOR CODE

The honor code applies to all work required for this class. You are free to confer with other people when working on your projects, but the final decisions about your projects and the writing should be your own for individual projects, and yours or your group members for group projects. More information about the GMU honor code is given on the GMU web site at various locations, including: http://www.gmu.edu/depts/unilife/honorcode.html and http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12

VI. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS- STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR:

The mission of the school of business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who 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 Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following 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. Some 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 School of Business. Through our personal commitment to these community standards of behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

VII. OTHER

Blackboard Site: This will be a primary way to work with me in order to coordinate such things as class assignments, grades and communications. The HBS site with most of the class materials will also be important for the cases and many of the articles.

E-Mail: I will occasionally send electronic messages to the entire class. I will use your GMU email address as represented in the Blackboard system. Thus, please be sure you check your GMU email account or have it forwarded to whatever e-mail account you normally use. You are fully responsible for taking the steps listed above, for checking your e-mail regularly, and for any information communicated to the class via e-mail. You should always feel free to
communicate with me via e-mail – I will almost always return it w/in 24 hours. PLEASE STATE IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF THE EMAIL “MBA 725: ………”

Disability: Students with disabilities who require special accommodation should contact the Student Disability Resource Center (http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/ or 703-993-2474) and should inform me of their needs so I can take them into consideration. Please take care of this during the first two weeks of the semester.

Religion: Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of their anticipated absences during the first two weeks of the semester.

Inclement weather: Follow the Fed Govt status for weather-related cancellation.

Late arrivals, Cell phones & beepers: Please be respectful to others and be on time to class. Also, cell phone and beepers are distracting. Please turn off all audible signals before class.

When we have a guest speaker, please close all laptops and put away tablets and phones to give them our full attention.

- Writing Guidelines: Unless otherwise specified, all writing assignments should be formatted as follows: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. To cite and reference professional or academic sources, please use APA style. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6th Edition or at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.
## Class Schedule

(See Weekly Reading List on the next pages)

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Case and Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1:</strong></td>
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<td>August 17</td>
<td>Course Introduction &amp; Leadership vs. Management</td>
<td>- Introductions</td>
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<td>- Course overview</td>
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<td>- Lecture: Mgmt. vs Leadership</td>
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<td>- Discussion of readings</td>
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<td>- Team formation</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2:</strong></td>
<td>Leadership Styles</td>
<td>- Film Session &amp; Exercise</td>
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<td>August 24</td>
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<td>- Case Discussions &amp; Presentation: Case #1 (Coach Knight</td>
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<td>- Discussions of readings</td>
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<td><strong>Week 3:</strong></td>
<td>Leadership Environments, Organizational Purpose,</td>
<td>- Guest Speaker Kathy Albarado</td>
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<td>August 31</td>
<td>&amp; Culture</td>
<td>- Leader User’s Manual Exercise</td>
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<td>- Case Discussion &amp; Presentation #2 (Ikea)</td>
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<td>- Leadership Fitness Challenge Intro &amp; Explanation</td>
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<td>- Discussion of readings</td>
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<td><strong>Week 4:</strong></td>
<td>Leadership Networks</td>
<td>- Guest Speaker Sid Fuchs</td>
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<td>September 7</td>
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<td>- Case Study Discussion &amp; Presentation #3 (Roizen)</td>
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<td>- Networks exercise</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Becoming the Boss: Learning to take charge</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Leadership Development and Succession</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Leadership Failures &amp; Ethics</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Leading &amp; Communicating Through Challenge and Crisis</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Values Based Leadership</td>
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Week 10:
October 19
Leading Change
- Guest Speaker Dara Castle
- Case Study Discussion 
& Presentation 
#9 (Lululemon)
- Discussion of readings
- Leader Profile 
Presentations
- Course Evals
October 22
Leadership Fitness
Challenge Due

- A Note on Team Grades and Free Ridership. All team members will get the same grade on each of the team assignments unless at least two people in the team decide to change to a peer performance appraisal system. Under such a system, members will rate one another’s contribution (from 0-100% of the team effort) for each of the team assignments that your team chooses to invoke the peer appraisals on. Once evaluations have been completed, individual grades will be adjusted (both upward and downward) based on these ratings. If you decide to invoke the peer performance appraisal system, prepare a document or e-mail to that effect signed by at least two members of your team to be submitted with each team assignment(s) for which you wish to do this, and I will contact you for your evaluation of team members’ contributions. You cannot decide to do peer performance appraisal after you receive your grade. You must tell me and hand in the document (or send the e-mail) when the assignment is due.
All cases & readings proceeded by ** are highly suggested as core. You'll have a very hard time being an intelligent participant in discussion and exercises if you haven’t done these readings.

**Week 1, August 17: Introduction to Leadership**


**Week 2, August 24: Leadership Styles**

**Case: Coach Knight: The Will to Win**

**Case: Coach K: A Matter of the Heart**

- **Rooke & Torbert, “Seven Transformations of Leadership,”** from HBR 10 Must Reads on Leadership or Harvard Business Review, April 2005
- **Thompson, Leigh Making the Team** (2008) Teams- Facts and Myths except posted on BB

**Week 3, August 31: Leadership Environments, Organizational Purpose, and Culture**

**Case: Ingvar Kamprad & Ikea**

- **Drucker, Peter.** “What Makes an Effective Executive” in HBR’s 10 Must Reads on Leadership.
- **Charan & Useem, “Why Companies Fail”** from Fortune, May 27, 2002 (posted on Blackboard)
- **Lorsch, Jay & Mctague, Emily, “Culture is Not the Culprit” Harvard Business**
Review, April 2016

Week 4, September 7: Developing Leadership Networks

** Case: Heidi Roizen

• ** Cross & Prusak (2002). The people who make organizations go- or stop. Harvard Business Review, 80,6, 104-111.

Week 5, September 14: Becoming the Boss – Learning to Take Charge

** Case: Iggy’s Bread of the World

• ** “Why I Didn’t Want to Be the CEO” Washington Post (posted on Blackboard)

Week 6, September 21: Leadership Development and Succession Planning

** Case: Leadership Development at Goldman Sachs

• ** Smith, Lewis, and Tushman, “Both/And Leadership,” in Harvard Business Review, May 2016
• ** Bower, J. L. (2007). Solve the succession crisis by growing inside-outside leaders

**Week 7, September 28: Leadership Failures & Ethics**

*Case: Barclays & the LIBOR Scandal*

- **Bazerman & Tenbrunsel, “Ethical Breakdowns,” in Harvard Business Review, April 2011**

**Week 8, October 5: Leading & Communicating through Challenge and Crisis**

**Case Toyota Accelerator Crisis**

- **Bennis & Thomas, “Crucibles of Leadership,” from HBR 10 Must Reads on Leadership**
- **Hamm, J. “The five messages leaders must manage,” in Harvard Business Review, May, 2006.**
- **Bjorhus, Jennifer, “Target’s Temporary Leader Rose Through the Finance Ranks,” in The Minneapolis Star Tribune, May 11, 2014 (posted on Blackboard)**
• ** Wall Street Journal Article on Target CEO, Feb. 2014 (posted on Blackboard)

**Week 9, October 12: Values-based Leadership**

** Case: JetBlue, Starting from Scratch

• ** Collins, Jim, “Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve,” from HBR 10 Must Reads on Leadership.
• ** William W. George; Peter Sims; Andrew N. McLean; David Mayer; Diana Mayer, “Discovering Your Authentic Leadership,” from HBR 10 Must Reads on Leadership or in *Harvard Business Review*, February 2007

**Week 10, October 19: Leading Change**

** Case: Leadership, Culture, and Transition at Lululemon (Multimedia Case)


July 15, 2016