

UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE
College of Business and Public Management
Department of Management and Leadership
Masters of Business Administration

BUS 586 **Leadership for the Future; Online**

Course Syllabus and Detailed Schedule

Summer Term 2014

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“Office hours” **by appointment** at times/places of mutual convenience.

I will always telephone you if we find a need for “in-person” conversation.

NOTE: ***This document is a draft as of 5/27/14. The course may be modified, at faculty discretion, to meet the needs of enrolling students, or changing circumstances.***

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“Scholars tackle two kinds of subjects. Some, like dry-fly fishing and the iconography of sixteenth-century French poetry, can be plumbed to their depths. Others, like leadership, are so vast and complex that they can only be explored” (Bennis, Warren. 1996. The leader as storyteller. *Harvard Business Review* (Jan-Feb): 157).

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In this course, our exploration into leadership will include gaining insight into ourselves, being attentive to a variety of current and classic leadership theories, focusing on current challenges of leadership and followership within organizations, and reflecting on the context and culture in which organizational leadership is practiced and developed.

We frequently hear the complaint that there is a need for more leaders, or more effective leaders. However, we believe, with the management consultant and theorist Peter Block, that “. . . we can and we must make our organizations more the kinds of places we want them to be . . .” That impact is most likely to occur with attention to our own individual and collective practice of leadership.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: While exploring contemporary theories, principles, and practices of leadership, the course focuses upon understanding leader/follower relationships in the attainment of organizational and societal goals. Leadership styles are assessed, and effective leadership techniques explored. Attention is given to the contribution of followers to organizational goal attainment.

This is a highly reflective course, grounded in online discussion and interaction with faculty and classmates. The course will be characterized by high challenge, active participation, self-direction, and the encouragement of and respect for diverse viewpoints.

ACTIVITIES: Course design reflects the ideas of Warren Bennis, distinguished professor, University of Southern California and Harvard, and founder of The Leadership Institute: "Leadership skill building happens through these methods: Experience (learning by doing), Example (learning from other successful organizations), Mentoring (learning from senior, successful people), Discussion (Socratic small group seminars), Technology (ongoing, regular mutual sharing of information), and, the oldest--but most neglected--method, Reading and Reflection" (The Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California, undated, p. 9). In addition, the readings and assignments together echo the ideas of leadership scholar Jay Conger: ". . . four approaches should be brought together: a conceptual part to understand leadership; skill building to practice teachable skills and awareness building for others; feedback to understand personal strengths and weaknesses; personal growth to bring out emotions and stimulate imagination" (in Mintzberg, 2004, p. 214).

Students will be involved in a variety of activities and experiences throughout the term, including both popular press and scholarly readings in the field of organizational leadership, reading/reflection/writing throughout the term in a professional workbook based on research, and conducting an interview related to key concepts. An individual thoughtful paper will identify future leadership development through commitment to the disciplines that make credibility possible.

Course design will include both full group discussion board postings and comments on classmates' postings, and private individual journal postings that only faculty will be able to read. Blackboard software will support our online work and provide a place for detailed assignment descriptions. ***Students will need to access the Blackboard course site several times each week for information, as well as being attentive to frequent email messages from faculty.***

Management scholar Henry Mintzberg has commented on the nature of reflection in his book, *Managers Not MBAs*: “Reflecting does not mean musing, and it is not casual. It means wondering, probing, analyzing, synthesizing, connecting— ‘to ponder carefully and persistently [the] meaning [of an experience] to the self.’ And not just about what you think happened but ‘*why* do you think it happened?’ and ‘how is this situation similar to and different from other problems?’ (Daudelin 1996, 41)” (2004, p. 254). **Reflection is central to the work of this course; it is expected that student reading and reflection will contribute significantly to learning.** Reading and reflective writing related to the book *Finding Our True North* (George, McLean & Craig, 2008) and individual journal postings are one way to ensure thoughtful reflection over course content.

It has been my experience that students’ academic success is most likely with a number of short assignments; therefore the course includes weekly assignments, with related feedback to support growth and skill development. Rich details for each assignment are posted on Blackboard under Assignments. Due dates and points possible are included in the course Detailed Schedule (attached). *Success in an online course means almost daily attention, and meeting all required deadlines for assignments.*

ASSESSMENT APPROACH: Throughout the course, attention will be given to students’ ability to demonstrate

- a) a thorough understanding of the complexities involved in contemporary organizational leadership;
- b) professional and effective written skills, with the ability to present material in a succinct and logical fashion, using appropriate academic formatting for written work;
- c) a high degree of familiarity and understanding of course readings and information;
- d) application of assigned material to organizational leadership responsibilities and leadership/followership experiences; and
- e) reasonable, respectful and responsible interaction and dialogue with regard to course material, and views expressed by fellow students and the faculty.

The University-wide rubric for feedback on written work, developed by the Excellence in Writing Committee, will be the basis for grading all written work.

For this particular course, competency development will focus on the understanding of theories of organizational leadership, their applicability, and personal growth management specifically linked to one’s own practice of leadership.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Required Reading for BUS 586 Online, during Summer Term 2014:

Bennis, Warren. *On becoming a leader (2009 edition)*. This memorable short classic book will be read in full in the first weeks of the term. It was written by the University's friend and mentor who is known around the world for his lifelong studies of leaders. One of the first graded assignments in the course is built on this reading. You will wish to begin the reading immediately, since a short essay is due June 29th. Dr. Bennis spoke at the University of La Verne in March of 2011.

ISBN: 978-046 501 4088

George, Bill, Andrew McLean & Nick Craig. *Finding your true north; A personal guide*. (2008) The reading in this workbook is distributed across the term; as you read each designated chapter, give attention to your own reflective writing in response to the book's questions and structure. Faculty guidance posted under Assignments on Blackboard suggests areas for each of the chapters as focal points for individual journal postings. These private journal postings are due five times throughout the term, and are graded, with each posting having the potential to earn ten points for high quality writing responsive to the assignment description and submitted timely. **Because you will be writing directly in the workbook, you must not rent this book; please purchase it instead.**

ISBN: 978-0470 261 361

HBR's 10 Must Reads on Leadership from Harvard Business Review (2011). This collection of key articles from the journal will be the basis of an interview assignment due July 27th.

ISBN: 978-1422 157 978

Kouzes, James & Barry Posner. *Credibility: How leaders gain and lose it, why people demand it (2011)*. Be sure to purchase this **newest edition** of a book that emerged after thirty years' research into the relationship that *is* leadership. A short personal essay, structured to meet the assignment guidance, is due August 10th. Dr. Posner has several times been a guest speaker on the LaVerne campus, most recently on May 13, 2014.

ISBN: 978-0470 651 711

Additional short readings may be posted on Blackboard during the term.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS: Reading and project/written assignments specified on the course Detailed Schedule must be completed prior to the designated times and dates. Written assignments, discussion boards and other work are due on the dates shown; **no work submitted late will receive credit (points).**

The university-recommended rubric will be used to assess the quality of written assignments; *use the rubric to polish your work before it is submitted*. It is wise to create Blackboard postings and all papers in Word and run spelling and grammar checks to ensure the best possible quality of writing. ***Include your name in the title of every posted file.***

In recent terms I have noticed a number of problems with poor quality of written work. The University of La Verne requires that “A” and “A minus” graduate school work meet this standard: ~~“The minimum acceptable quality of the student's written work is that it is written and well communicated”~~

(University of La Verne Catalog online, 2013-2014, n.p.). Support to lift the quality of writing is provided at no-cost through the University's Learning Enhancement Center. If it indicate a need for any student to receive coaching from a writing coach (available through email, telephone, or in person if that is possible), documentation that the student has received such support will be required for future assignments in this course.

We have a contract as joint participants in the course: we are responsible for coming together as prepared professionals, with ownership of our time and a stake in ensuring that it is spent in ways valuable to us both individually and collectively.

Student success in an online course such as this requires frequent and consistent attention to Blackboard, **faculty emailed messages**, and due dates for assignments. *Stay on top of the work*; this advice is central to earning a good grade in the course. It has been faculty experience in previous online courses that students who fall behind are students who do not achieve course success.

The university's policies for grading are described in the online catalog; grading policies for this course are posted on Blackboard.

Students are to be aware that if any written assignments in this course are submitted to online databases to check for potential plagiarism, those papers will be archived indefinitely in such online sites.

Students' continued enrollment in this course denotes understanding of and compliance with all elements of this syllabus, with particular attention to academic integrity.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE FACULTY: To be prepared and engaged each week; to return student assignments promptly, with appropriate feedback, to be available *by appointment* to meet with students by telephone or in person if that is possible; to be responsive to email messages; to hold high standards for all of us. Faculty and students together are responsible for creating and sustaining a safe online environment that facilitates learning, openness, personal growth, and mutual trust and respect. As faculty I am committed to the success of every student.

SCHEDULE DETAILS: The course Detailed Schedule provides an overview of each week's reading assignments, graded work, and other responsibilities. **No late work will be credited.**

COURSE EVALUATION: Continuous evaluation of our work, in academic settings as well as in our professional workplaces, is essential. Throughout the term, faculty and students will periodically stop to assess the focus and quality of our learning together. End-of-term course evaluations for the University are conducted online in the last weeks of each term. **All students are asked to participate in these evaluations, with the goal of 100% participation.**

ACADEMIC HONESTY. Each student is responsible for performing academic tasks in such a way that honesty is not in question. Unless an exception is specifically defined by an instructor, students are expected to maintain the following standards of integrity:

- 1) All tests, term papers, oral and written assignments, and recitations are to be the work of the student presenting the material.
- 2) Any use of wording, ideas, or findings of other persons, writers, or researchers requires the explicit citation of the source; use of the exact wording requires a "quotation" format. (*University of La Verne Catalog* online, 2013-2014, n.p.)

Plagiarism is a serious offense, and an illegal act. **Failure to meet these standards for academic honesty has the potential to lead to course failure,** and may result in dismissal from the University. See *University Catalog* for details.

The College of Business and Public Management, and all courses and activities in its programs, are committed to the University of La Verne mission and its emphasis on four major concerns to affirm a positive and rewarding life: reflective attention to values, community in the context of diversity, lifelong learning and community service.

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| | Online BUS 586 Summer 2014 |
| <i>Draft on</i> | Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments for this online class |

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| 5/27/14 | are due by 11:59 pm (California time) on Sundays. Late submissions do NOT receive credit/points. <i>Detailed assignment guidance is provided on Blackboard.</i> |
| Assignment Due Date | Reading and Assignments [points for A+ work] |
| WEEK ONE The first assignment is due Thursday, June 12th . The second assignment is due Sunday, June 15th . | Explore course website; download this schedule . Without doing any research, craft and post your own single sentence definition of effective organizational leadership to the discussion board no later than 11:59 pm on Thursday, June 12th [5 points] . Begin reading <i>On Becoming a Leader</i> (Bennis, 2009). Assignment due Sunday, June 15th : individual statement of your own course goal and leadership challenge posted to the drop box in the Assignment screen folder [10] . |
| WEEK TWO Assignment due Sunday, June 22nd | Continue to review the Blackboard course site. Continue reading Bennis' book. Begin reading <i>Finding Your True North</i> (George, McLean & Craig, 2008), chapters 1-3. Post your first private journal through the Tools screen [10] . |
| WEEK THREE Assignments due Sunday, June 29th | Complete reading Dr. Bennis' book and post your assignment-guided response to the discussion forum [20] . Post your second journal based on <i>Finding Your True North</i> (George, McLean & Craig, 2008), chapters 4-6 [10] . |
| WEEK FOUR | No assignment is due on Sunday, July 6th , because of the holiday weekend. However, this is the week to begin reading HBR's 10 Must Reads on Leadership (2011) for a related two-part assignment due July 13 th [10] and July 27 th [25] . |
| WEEK FIVE July 13th | Continue reading in <i>HBR's 10 Must Reads . . .</i> Post draft interview questions to the discussion board, following the assignment guidance [10] . |
| WEEK SIX July 20th | Continue reading in <i>Finding Your True North</i> ; post your third journal [10] . |
| WEEK SEVEN July 27th | Submit your interview paper after careful attention to the assignment guidance and editing for high quality writing [25] . Begin reading Credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). |
| WEEK EIGHT August 3rd | Continue reading in <i>Finding Your True North</i> ; post your fourth journal [10] . |
| WEEK NINE August 10th | Submit your structured paper in response to <i>Credibility</i> to the designated drop box [30] . |
| WEEK TEN August 17th | Post your fifth and final journal [10] . |
| 150 points are possible in this class. | All students are asked to participate in the university's end-of-term online course evaluations. |