

ESM 296-4S
PROJECT MANAGEMENT
COURSE SYLLABUS - SPRING 2018

Fridays, 1:00 – 3:50 PM, Bren 1510
April 13th and 20th, 2018
John Jostes, Visiting Faculty Office: Bren 3524

Context

Effective project management skills are essential for getting things done, particularly in groups, teams, and networks. This course focuses on skill-building as it applies to Group Projects, marketable skills upon graduation, and project planning and implementation in the consulting world. Students will learn skills pertaining to effective meeting management, project specification, and budgeting, component sequencing, and contingency planning.

This course starts from the observation that regardless of sector (public, private, NGO, etc.) leaders, managers and entrepreneurs are challenged in situations of project, product and/or program management, and sometimes a combination of these. Each class session is practice-based and will offer participants an overview of relevant tools and attitudes, and encourage application of those tools between classes.

On a substantive level, this course explores the practice of project management and collaborative problem solving tools in the context of environmental (i.e., natural resource) and public policy challenges. Core topics and questions to be addressed include:

- ❖ Competence: What are the basic competencies of the project manager responsible for the planning and implementation of internal and external projects (i.e., making things happen)?
- ❖ Dynamics, Improvisation and Cross Currents: What dynamics influence program design, time management, delegation, and unforeseen circumstances?
- ❖ Complexity and Uncertainty: What tools are available to address uncertainty, risk and complexity in project management settings?

Course Organization and Structure

This 2-unit short course is an intense workshop comprised of two or possibly three 3½ -hour sessions focused on the practical aspects of effective project management. Because the course starts on the second Friday afternoon of the Spring quarter, advance reading and preparation is an integral part of the course. The initial class meeting at 1:00 pm on April 13th will be preceded by a short workshop on the Myers Briggs Type Indicator which is a required prerequisite of this course. A representative from Career Services will debrief the class participants based upon their answers to the test administered by Career services. See Casey hanky for details on taking this test. The test will be used to facilitate the formation of teams and study groups.

The course is organized in four modules and each Friday session will cover two of these modules. Module 1 builds on the overview of project management functions covered in ESM 210 and focuses on “What effective project managers bring for effective problem solving and value creation. Section 2 focuses on the importance of deliberately defining projects in a manner that motivates effective engagement, problem solving and program implementation. Section 3 concentrates on workflow management and anticipating and responding to the unexpected – building contingency planning into project design. Section 4 focuses

on the range of other challenges facing project managers and how to anticipate and plan for strategic corrections.

Week 1: Pre-course Readings and Preparation:

There is no class scheduled for the first week of Spring Quarter. However, the course is front-loaded with several assignments intended to prepare students to engage in the course topics with a basic understanding of the nuts and bolts of project management. Tasks and readings that should be completed in this first week include:

1. Myers Briggs Type Indicator: Students are asked to complete a questionnaire designed to determine each person's MBTI. This is intended not only to aid in the creation of study groups and teams, but also to give participants a better understanding of their overall approaches to decision making, group interaction and other traits that reflected in diverse teams. Detailed information on how to participate will be emailed to each student registered in the class before the first week of instruction.
2. Before the first class, read the first five chapters (through p.66) of the book Defining Moments: When Managers Have to Choose Between Right and Right, by Joseph Badaracco (Harvard Business Press). This book is in the Reading Room and available from Amazon.com. This book draws on the insights of four philosophers – Aristotle, Machiavelli, Nietzsche, and James – who offer distinctly practical, rather than theoretical advice to managers for resolving issues of conflicting responsibility.
3. Send the instructor a short email noting: a) what your group project is, b) your anticipated role, and, c) what you believe to be the most challenging aspect of your project. For 2nd year students, please indicate a) what your group project has been, b) your role, and c) you're your most challenging aspect has been over the past year. This email is due to the instructor (jjostes@cox.net) by Wednesday, April 4 at 5:00 pm.
4. In anticipation of the first class, read: The Abilene Paradox posted on GauchoSpace. Please come to class prepared to discuss how the 'abilene paradox' can disrupt or delay your start-up actions associated with your group project.

Week 2: PROJECT CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The first class session will be broken into two modules and will cover a range of topics including the following

Module 1:

- Course introduction and overview - Top 10 skills of effective project managers
- Challenges faced by Project Managers
- Project Planning and start-up – Deciding whether and how to proceed
- Decision-making and the management of agreement
- Individual and Team Values
- Stakeholder Mapping and Roadmap Development

Module 2: Scoping, budgeting and team-building

- Kick-off Discussion from Defining Moments
- Preparing for Productive Meetings – The importance of purpose
 - Agenda Development
 - Meeting Facilitation Skills
 - Note-taking and Follow-up.
- Scoping and Budgeting the Project

- Case Study: SB County Association of Governments; Developing an Interregional Partnership for AB 32 & SB 375 Implementation at the local level
- Team Formulation Exercise: Values and Commitment Exercise (Dry Run)
 - Team Assignment: Budget Development for Group Projects

Week 3: PROJECT CHALLENGES, IMPROVISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Module 3: Delegating, Workflow Management & Scheduling

- Communication deficit
- Role and Scope Creep
- Delegation
- Scheduling Tools
- Unrealistic deadlines

Module 4: Contingency Planning – What can go wrong will, and at a time you least expect it.

- When the data is not compelling
- Customers and end-users are not engaged during the project
- Managing Disagreement
- Poorly defined vision and goals
- Barriers to Implementation
- Student-identified topics (for follow up session)

Week X: APPLYING MANAGEMENT SKILLS TO GROUP PROJECT CHALLENGES

Depending upon class interest, a follow-up “consulting session” will be scheduled to respond to specific student-generated project management questions. Students will take responsibility for scheduling this follow-up session.

Class Assignments and Grading:

Critical to the learning experience in this course is your risk-taking in a variety of situations, team-building activities and class discussions. As a result, class participation and interaction will be the sole determinant of your grade in this course.

Text: The following text is required reading for this course. It can be found in the Bren Reading Room as well as on Amazon.com

Joseph Badaracco, Jr., Defining Moments: When Managers Must Choose between Right and Right (Cambridge MA; Harvard Business Press)

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, SEE GAUCHOSPACE COURSE SITE