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### Course Syllabus: Management in High Tech Industries

*Becoming a Superior Manager and Leader*

*Our Teaching Team:*

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COURSE PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

Welcome to your Core MEM/MENG Management Course. This course will help you to continue to develop your capacity to become a superior manager and leader.

In today’s world, you cannot predict the kinds of environments in which you will work, manage and lead. Even within particular industries – and within particular organizations – organizational characteristics are changing rapidly and they vary immensely. We *can* predict that, if you manage, you will be managing both technical and non-technical people at some point in your career. You may have already discovered that if you have the ability to manage and lead others toward excellent results, you have a significant advantage over many of your engineering peers.

**WHAT ARE “HIGH TECH INDUSTRIES”?**

A note about our course title, “Management in High Tech Industries.” “High tech industries” has become a misleading term. Walmart and McDonald’s have joined the “high tech industry.” Today, all successful companies deploy high tech in multiple ways. They employ engineers directly and/or working in the cloud, in AI, software development, data analytics, cyber, logistics, etc. The fact is that every successful industry today has vital high-tech components. This is great news for you!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Core Objective: To help you continue to develop your effectiveness as a manager and leader, and to help you become a life-long self-learner and developer.

Supporting Objectives, with *learning outcomes:*

1. Ensure that you have a sound understanding of management and leadership – of their distinctive purposes and activities – and how they are mutually supportive. [Note: We will focus on the special challenges posed by engineering and high-tech environments, while not neglecting non-technical environments.]
	1. *What are the five functions of effective management?*
	2. *What are the five practices of superior leadership?*
	3. *What are the distinctive roles & purposes of management and the distinctive roles & purposes of leadership?*
	4. *As a manager, when do you focus on using the management functions and when do you focus on the leadership practices?*
2. Help you test and refine your own management and leadership “philosophy”

*Is your management and leadership “philosophy” based on sound knowledge of…*

1. *What causes superior human performance and motivation?*
2. *What creates superior teams, characterized by trust, collaboration and excellence?*
3. *What builds and sustains superior organizational cultures, characterized by trust, high engagement, high ethics and superior performance?*
4. *You will create a Personal Leadership Brand to articulate your personal aspirations as a person, professional and manager/leader*
5. Increase your self-awareness of your managerial and leadership competencies; your personal strengths, emotional intelligence, and development needs; and whether managing and leading others is a good vocational fit for you.
6. *You will self-assess on a set of core management and leadership skills and Emotional Intelligence attributes*
7. *You will self-assess your alignment with a set of attributes and preferences characteristic of successful and satisfied managers*
8. Build your skills in those core management and leadership competencies most important to you. Special emphasis will be given to managing, leading and working in *teams,* and building your capacity as a *coaching* manager.
9. *Our course’s individual and team assignments will focus on specific management and leadership skills*
10. *Team assignments and other team activities provide numerous opportunities for mutual feedback and coaching*
11. Construct a personalized approach to continuous self-improvement as a person, professional and manager/leader.
12. *You will complete your personalized development plan and work with the plan to focus your development and chart your progress*
13. *You will create a Personal Leadership Brand to articulate your personal aspirations as a person, professional and manager/leader*
14. Increase your capacity to build and lead a high performing, innovative and ethical culture.
15. *What is the definition of culture and what are the characteristics of a superior, winning culture?*
16. *What are the leader’s primary tasks in building and sustaining a superior culture?*
17. *You will self-assess [with help from your teammates] on your ability to execute effectively the primary leadership tasks in culture building*
18. Enhance your ability and confidence in managing and leading globally, across ethnic, cultural and geographic boundaries.
19. *What are the primary challenges in leading across boundaries?*
20. *How do you as a leader create cultural values that work across boundaries?*
21. *You will self-assess [with help from your teammates] on your abilities to lead across boundaries and create superior multi-cultural organizations*

**WARNING [and OPPORTUNITY]: THIS COURSE IS DIFFERENT!**

This course may be quite different from most other courses you have taken in your engineering career. Given our course objective – helping you become an effective manager and leader of human beings – the core subject matter of this course is: Human Beings. Have you noticed that human beings – people like you and me – have properties that are very different from such things as numbers, chemical elements, electricity, computers and spectrophotometers?



The subject matters of STEM [science, technology, engineering and math] all tend to follow well-known “laws of behavior” – that is, they show observable, quantifiable, and “explainable” patterns. Zinc has a particular atomic weight and predictable properties. We build our technical tools to operate in certain ways, and they do so to a remarkable degree. Defects and failures occur, but typically are understood and fixed. Clear reasoning and quantitative rigor –along with creativity – are the primary problem-solving requirements.

Each and every one of you has become very proficient at the kind of reasoning and technical problem solving required to excel in engineering. My sincere congratulations for the high STEM proficiency you have attained and for your personal achievements.

However, many of you have learned that if you want to manage and lead others effectively, you face a very different kind of challenge. By now, you have noticed that you and other human beings don’t often function in easily predictable and always rational ways. We human beings often do not behave rationally, and the reasons for our behavior are often unclear. While we share some properties in common, we also vary immensely as individuals. So, picture the group of people you manage or will manage someday as an unruly, hard to understand and predict “non-periodic table” – the names of your “elements” may remain the same, but their properties vary from day to day. These human “elements” continuously surprise and test any of us who manage others.

The good news is that at a deeper level, there are human behavior “laws” [we call them “principles”] that emerge, and that we can and must use if we are to manage and lead effectively. For example, “trust” is such a principle, and one that powerfully impacts how people work with one another. There are fundamental principles about human motivation that we can tap into. And so on. So, not all is subjectivity and guesswork when it comes to working with humans!

THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF THIS COURSE…and why it’s not in fact easy

Much of management and leadership theory is not complicated. Most of the concepts in this course are far simpler than the STEM material you have studied and mastered. Because of that, many students make the mistake of thinking that this course [and other management courses] is easy and already mastered. Not true.

While most of the concepts of this course are not complicated, putting them into effective practice is often difficult. Those of you who already have significant management and leadership experience know this. It is not difficult to recite the “Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership.” But it is very challenging to actually become an exemplary leader. It is not difficult to learn the principles of conducting difficult conversations, but these conversations are called “difficult” for a reason.

Why do we have “zillions” of management/leadership resources [books/videos/podcasts/etc] – many of them claiming that “THIS IS THE ONLY LEADERSHIP SOURCE YOU WILL NEED!!” – while we have far fewer than “zillions” of great managers and leaders?

Here is a simple graph:



The graph depicts that your STEM work is typically complex, and can be easy or difficult depending on your relevant training and experience. Management, on the other hand, is typically not nearly as complex as your STEM subject matter, but it is surprisingly difficult to do it well. Just one example: Giving difficult, corrective feedback to an overconfident, not-self-aware, highly talented performer is not that complicated, but it is definitely not easy.

One student recently said, “If I can Google it, then don’t waste my time teaching it.” Good luck to that student who wants to become an expert basketball player, golfer, violinist, karate-ka, dancer or who wants to excel in any other performing art!

Many of you have already discovered that effective managing and leading is a craft and an art, requiring one’s total engagement, not just a theoretical or technical exercise. Becoming an effective manager/leader means becoming a virtuoso performer, not merely a SME. It requires great skill, determination and practice, in addition to a lot of knowledge. Therefore, this is a practical course that encourages you to go beyond “knowledge *about”* to “knowing *how*.” For example, the aim of this course is not just to convey *knowledge* *about* giving feedback, but is focused on *building your skills* in giving feedback.

However, our effectiveness as managers and leaders requires even more than just acquiring skills. It requires our self-awareness. Managers who don’t know themselves can’t manage and lead well. To manage and lead well means that we must know our true intentions and values, our strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities. What we are afraid of. Our blind spots can cause us and others great harm.

Emotional Intelligence [aka EI, which encompasses self-awareness, empathy, self-regulation and social skills] has become a greater differentiator of leadership effectiveness than is SME.

Our lack of self-awareness and EI as engineering managers can be worse than ineffective, they can be deadly. Stockton Rush, CEO of Ocean Gate, was repeatedly warned, even threatened by a lawsuit, about safety issues concerning his company’s submersible. He appeared to be blinded by his ego and arrogance, and the result was the implosion of the Titan and the death of its five passengers.

YOUR THREE POTENTIAL JOURNEYS IN THIS COURSE

Given that this course is about human beings, you can decide to take one, two or three different journeys in this course.

Journey #1 – Just Learn the Concepts & Tools

This journey represents your minimum investment. The course presents numerous valuable concepts, such as our leadership framework [The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership], the 7 Intrinsic Motivators, the topics for effective performance management, the Core Conditions of effective human interaction, coaching principles, the 3 C’s of Ethics, the essential organizational culture building actions and others.

If you decide to take only Journey #1, you can get a good grade, but likely not an “A” or higher. That is because we do assess your genuine commitment to develop your skills and increase your EI. However, the primary cost for you is not taking advantage of the opportunity to increase your effectiveness.

Journey #2 – Build your Skills

To take Journey #2, you will need to take Journey #1, as your conceptual and practical foundation [e.g., to build your coaching skills, you will need to use a sound coaching framework]. Journey #2 means taking full advantage of our Team Assignment skills-building exercises and fully engaging in your team’s Weekly Application Discussions.

But there is a catch: having a very successful Journey #2 requires you to take Journey #3. Applying your skills effectively means knowing yourself and knowing others, through caring and empathy. We can’t be effective with others if we don’t know our actual values and motives, our strengths and vulnerabilities, our fears.

We may build up our listening skills, but how effective will we be if we haven’t developed our empathy and if we have internal barriers to listening objectively?

Journey #3 – Self-Discovery: Increase your EI, including your self-awareness

Research continues to show that EI is the most important distinguishing factor for top performers. One major study quantified EI as being approximately twice as important as IQ. As a management consultant and executive coach, I fully affirm the validity of this research.

Suppose that Sam Altman and the entire board of OpenAI would have demonstrated greater EI, including self-awareness and empathy. Evidently, they were not able to engage in constructive difficult conversations. Brilliant as they are, they needed to take Journeys #1 - #3, in order to be effective. Whatever their intentions, they caused harm. High tech, as you likely know, is rife with examples of brilliant leaders who cause harm due to low EI and character.

We will help you identify which of the Journeys particular class resources point you toward. For example, we may identify that a particular portion of an Assignment is to help you on Journey #3, Self-Discovery.

A NOTE TO OUR MILITARY STUDENTS

First, thank you for your service and sacrifice! And thank you for bringing much value to this course. Historically, our military students find that they can learn much about managing and leading, even though they may have received excellent classroom and down range/underwater training and development.

A number of our military students have plans to transfer soon to the civilian sector. This course can help you do that efficiently. I have worked with countless military personnel over the years. As with engineering training and experience, a military background can either be a powerful resource or a hindrance, depending on our mindset.

I had the privilege of working with an outstanding veteran: Phil was a former US Marine and was the #1 manager/leader at the US’s leading brokerage firm. Phil took the very best of his semper fi training and mentality, and astutely applied and modified his skills and habits to the civilian sector. Phil’s people admired him, worked with full engagement and together they outperformed peer groups year after year. Perhaps Phil’s most important military value he carried with him: We must care for and care about our troops!

What are the elements of our military background do we take with us as positive resources [such as our discipline, commitment, high standards, caring for those who report to us, team spirit, etc.]? What elements might we have to modify [such as working in a strong hierarchy, presuming commitment to a shared mission, etc.]?

Our military and our civilian students have much of value to share with each other. We hope that you will deploy this rich diversity on your Team Assignments and in your Weekly Application discussions.

We are especially pleased that LT COL John Borland is our Mentor-Coach. Please check out John’s bio on our Home Page. He is currently Command Engineer’s Innovation Chief at USSOCOM and is finishing his PhD in Interdisciplinary Engineering at Texas A&M. John has had an exemplary career as a strong leader and is an expert on innovation. John will reach out to you at the beginning of the semester to arrange individual coaching sessions. Having a Mentor-Coach will support you in all three of your Journeys.

**MINDSET: YOUR ROLE AS A LEARNER & PEER COACH IN THIS COURSE**

This course requires a different mindset than that of many technical courses. This course requires the mindset that superior managers and leaders demonstrate: great curiosity, a combination of humility and self-confidence, and a willingness to introspect, engage and change. Superior managers/leaders are eager to give and receive feedback and to make whatever changes are required.

In this course, you are expected to work hard to acquire the core knowledge that the lectures and readings present [Journey #1]. But in the areas of Skills Building [Journey #2] and Self-Discovery [Journey #3], you are not graded on your *proficiency* – you are assessed on your willingness to engage in your own development and to help your classmates do the same.

So, presuming you have reviewed the PPT slides, watched/listened to the lectures and done the readings/videos, I encourage you to ask your teammates, your Mentor/Coaches and me about what you don’t understand, or agree with, or about something you are struggling with. Please feel free to bring up past situations where you did well, or failed miserably, or just left the situation plain confused. As a life-long practitioner, I have learned much from making and reflecting upon my own mistakes and those of others.

**Our work together is to help us all learn and grow, not to try to impress one another. My role as your professor encompasses the roles of both instructor and coach. Please affirm your dual role as both student and peer coach**. Your coaching one another is one of the best ways that you can develop your own skills and EI as a coaching manager and leader.

**Personal Note:** I continue to engage in organizational consulting and executive coaching. I recently led an engineering firm in their transition to/selection of their new CEO. It has been deeply gratifying to watch the new CEO turn this company around. I use the same concepts and content [including many of our readings] to help this talented executive succeed. Seeing his increased effectiveness is extremely gratifying to me. I am passionate about helping companies and individuals [such as you!] become and do their very best.

**COURSE CONTENT AND APPROACH**

Our course principles and tools are grounded in the latest applied research, the extensive practical experience of myself, your professor, that of many other effective managers and leaders with whom I have worked over many years, and of those practitioners who have contributed to our resources. ***All* of the course content has been tested by experience, and *none* of it is purely theoretical or academic.**

The objectives and subject matter of this course shape its content and approach. Since we are building our skills, and not just acquiring knowledge, this course has a workshop orientation. Further, this course has several distinguishing features, given your work experience and maturity:

* Emphasis on your own personal and professional development goals
* Connected to your actual work experiences [“action learning”] through “Weekly Application” and other activities
* Opportunities to coach and teach each other

We will use role-plays, real-life “mini cases”, discussions and self-reflections on your experiences.

Since this course has a workshop/lab orientation, your active engagement is essential and required.

**OUR DIGITAL LEARNING PLATFORM: CANVAS**

Canvas is our digital learning platform. The Duke Learning Innovation and Lifetime Education group has prepared comprehensive support to help you learn how to use Canvas. Stay tuned for Announcements to you and your classmates.

**COURSE COMPONENTS**

**Here are the course components:**

1. **Weekly Readings and videos** – Our readings/videos are listed for each week on our Weekly Pages. They will be linked to a resource [PDF or online] or will be from a digital online coursepack from Harvard Business Publishing [HBP]. These readings are denoted with an [H]. We have found that purchasing the Harvard materials [including articles from Harvard Business Review (HBR)] directly from HBP is the most economical approach for you. You can purchase your HBP coursepack beginning today and you should purchase it at the latest by August 26, 2024. To purchase your HBP coursepack, use this link: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1188801>

Over many years, I have read, watched, used and/or created thousands of articles, books and videos on effective management and leadership, to improve my own effectiveness, and to find the best resources for my clients and for the classes I teach. Your readings and videos are those that “work in the real world.” My only frustration is that there are many other excellent resources that I couldn’t include.

Given my decades of experience in managing and leading, and in teaching/coaching other managers and leaders, I am confident that *all* of the readings, videos and class activities will be helpful to you. In fact, many of these readings and videos are the very same resources I currently share with my clients. These clients – right in the thick of the action – have no doubt about these resources’ value.

I encourage you to regularly add to your collection of resources. In today’s world, the top managers keep learning, in order to stay current. As Satya Nadella, Microsoft’s CEO, recently said, “We don’t need ‘know-it-alls’ – we need ‘learn-it-alls.’”

We will certainly not be able to address directly all of the readings/videos in this syllabus. However, these resources have value for you. I do not want our structured activities to be an artificial limiting condition of your long-term learning. So, please keep these things in mind:

* Whether we discuss a particular reading/video or not, it will be a valuable resource for you to develop your abilities to manage and lead others.
* The readings/videos will be helpful for you in your Assignments, Weekly Application Conversations on Canvas and your Semester Team Project.
* On the Final Exam, you will be responsible for knowing the Central Point[s] and Other Key Points of the various resources.
* For some of the readings/videos, I will post a note on the Weekly Page, giving you guidance regarding that week’s resources. This will help you study the resources efficiently and effectively.

**CRITICAL THINKING VS. LEARNING STEM ITEMS**

Some students in the past have complained that we do not attach guide sheets with “here are the three things you will know by the end of this reading.” It’s true that most technical online courses today spell out in advance “Here are the ‘X’ things you will know after this module.” Or, “These are the three learning outcomes you should strive for as you experience this module.” This approach is well-suited to learning discrete technical items.

This approach is not well suited for building your skills in critical thinking as you read/watch management/leadership content. As you know, even highly technical reports have qualitative segments that explain the rationale for the data set presented. The qualitative segments defend the methodological choices made by the researchers. The qualitative segments interpret, promote and/or defend the data presented. We, as readers of technical reports, must use our critical thinking skills and our judgment to form a view as to the validity and relevance of the data.

Even more so with non-STEM resources. Whether you are reading/watching learning resources in academic settings such as this course, or whether you are ingesting qualitative material at work such as strategy statements, performance appraisal comments or feedback from customers, you will need to interpret wisely what people are telling you. In “real life” there will be no attached help sheets telling you “here are the three things you need to learn from this material.” Building your interpretive skills is a key managerial and leadership competency.

Trying to spell out exactly what you should or will learn from our modules is not helpful to you or even possible. As you build your listening skills during Journey #2 [Building Skills], for example, what are the exact things you need to become more aware of, or more competent in doing? I couldn’t possibly know. Further, during Journey #3 [Self-Discovery], no one but you knows what specific elements of self-awareness you need to discover.

**GUIDANCE FOR READING IN THE FIELD OF MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP**

Every business and academic discipline has its own distinctive approaches in reading professional literature. In the management/leadership field, I recommend that you ask yourself these questions when you read professional material. Asking these questions will help you build your interpretive skills.

* What is the Central Point of the reading?
* What are the Other Key Points?
* What is the specific industry experience of the author[s]? Is their learning derived mostly/exclusively from *academic theory* vs. solid industry experience?
* What are the author’s [usually implicit] assumptions and core beliefs regarding business, human beings and management/leadership?
* What are the major implications for managing & leading?
* What specifically have I learned that I can apply to my own personal, professional, managerial and leadership development, including my Personal Leadership Credo?
* *How* can I apply what I have learned -- what practical development step(s) can I take?
1. **Video lectures** – Each week, I will provide video lectures, along with some PPTs, on our weekly management/leadership topics. There will be two types of videos/PPTs:

	* 1. Occasional **“Welcome to the Week”** videos. Weekly videos, sometimes accompanied by PPTs, released at the beginning of each week, provide an overview of the week’s topics. This video will help you focus your work on your three of your course Journeys.

This video might cover: What do we mean by this week’s topics? Why do they matter? How do these topics apply to real-life industry challenges? What are the specific skills you could focus on? I might explain the individual or team Assignment for the week.

* + 1. **“Key Learnings” video[s] and/or PPTs:** These videos focus on the key learnings from our weekly readings, videos, Canvas Discussions and Assignments. **The Key Learnings videos are released at various times, depending on the topic.** Some are released at the beginning of the week and some may be released on the Monday [12 pm ET US] after the close of the preceding week and the submitting of your Assignments. So check the prior Week Pages for additional Key Learnings videos.
1. **Optional Online Discussions** – We will schedule voluntary online discussions several times during the semester. These online discussions are likely to be held on Sunday evenings or another weekday evening convenient for you.

1. **Individual and Team Coaching** – Our Mentor-Coach, John Borland, is available for individual and team mentoring-coaching sessions. John will reach out to you at the beginning of the semester. At any time, feel free to reach out to John and/or to me for coaching.
2. **Individual Assignments** – These assignments are designed to assess your knowledge of management/leadership, develop your skills and increase your self-awareness.
Typically, your individual assignments will be posted on Canvas at least one week before they are due. Submit your assignments to Canvas, via the “Assignments” tab.  Do not upload an assignment in the digital drop box or by email. Make sure that you include your name on all pages of an individual assignment.
3. **Teams & Team Assignments** – We will assign you to your Team at the beginning of the semester. Your Team Assignments will be posted on the Canvas weekly Pages. Submit your assignments to Canvas, via the “Assignments” tab.  Do not upload an assignment in the digital drop box or by email.

For Team Assignments, upload only one version per team.

Typically, all students on a particular team receive the same Team Assignment grade. However, if a team member consistently under contributes to their team, their Team Assignment grade will be lowered.

1. **Mid-Term Quiz**

During Week 7, you will take a brief, online Mid-Term Quiz. This quiz will help you assess your learning progress. The quiz will ask for your knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of the course thus far, as presented in the weekly readings/videos/PPTs.

1. **Semester Team Project** – Each Team will choose a management/leadership topic that greatly interests the team members, and that we don’t cover thoroughly in our planned curriculum. There are many important topics that we cannot cover in one semester. As a team, you may choose a topic of your own or you may choose from the list in Semester Team Project Topics, which is located on Canvas [in Assignments, Semester Team Project]. Teams must choose their topics by no later than Monday, 9/23, 12 noon ETUS. You need to notify your TAs of your topic, via email, so that we can approve the topic. Your STP Description and Outline is due Monday, 10/21, 12 noon ETUS. Your Semester Team Projects are due by Monday, 12/9, 12 noon ETUS. The specific details of the Semester Team Project are given on our Home Page and in Assignments.
2. **Team Peer Coaching, Feedback & Evaluation**: You will have the opportunity to provide valuable coaching and feedback to your teammates. Also, we will ask you to provide an evaluation of your teammates’ contributions to your team. Submitting substantive and constructive peer coaching/evaluation comments is a component of each student’s Team Peer Evaluation grade.
3. **Weekly Applications**: You will have two ways of participating in our Canvas Discussion conversations:

1] Each team contributes to their own team’s online “Weekly Applications,” due by Monday noon ETUS at the close of the prior curricular week. The Weekly Applications provide prompts for students to apply the week’s topics to their work and life, and to contribute to and to learn from their teammates.

Each week, teams will be given one or more topics from the week’s agenda to apply to their work and life. Each individual on the team will submit a brief description of how they applied the prompted topics. The particular application topic for the week will be described on that week’s Weekly Lesson Page and linked to a more detailed description of the Application task in Discussions. The link also provides a template for sharing your post with your teammates. Each team begins and adds their posts on a separate thread.

Your Application activities and posts will be lightly and developmentally graded – that is, we are looking for serious, genuine, honest engagement in the conversation – NOT for technical/professional expertise. We are also looking for candor and a genuine desire to learn and to help coach each other.

It is totally Okay to acknowledge that your application attempt failed miserably! It is totally Okay to admit that you are confused about something and/or would like help with something. We are focused on your genuine attempt to learn, whether from so-called success or failure. If you engage in your application activities and your application conversations with genuine seriousness, honesty and appropriate humility, you will do very well, grade-wise.

Your Mentor-Coach will review your comments and offer their own coaching comments. At all times, please feel free to reach out to your Mentor/Coach and your Prof for further exploration.

2] The second way you can participate on Canvas is to create your own discussions and join in your classmates’ conversations. This is a way for you to contribute to our on-going exploration of management and leadership, and to develop your communication skills. It is a way to explore areas that we don’t have time to cover in our curriculum. You can contribute by pointing out good articles on management and leadership, by offering your insights, by raising issues, and by asking questions. You can use this conversation forum to communicate – primarily to your classmates – any specific management and leadership question/problem/issue/concern that you would like addressed. Our class discussion forum is, in effect, your peer management/leadership blog and help desk. It is not possible for us to address every important management and leadership issue in our curriculum.

1. **Final Exam:** The final exam will be a multiple-choice exam, along with some short-answer questions. The exam will measure how much you have absorbed the specific content of the course. It will contain detailed questions about the readings/videos and what we cover in your prof’s lectures and our work together. You will not be able to just “think your way through” the questions. You will need to remember, understand and apply the core concepts and tools we present in this course.

You will not do well on the final exam if you haven’t read the weekly resources/videos and watched the weekly videos and PPTs. We cover many specific principles, practices, techniques and tools, so your own experience and “common sense” will be insufficient. Given the breadth of our course content, it would be unwise to wait until the last week of class to prepare for the exam.

**EVALUATION OF YOUR LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT (GRADING)**

The primary *purpose* of this course is that you learn the concepts and develop the skills that will help you become a superior manager and leader. Grades of course are not the purpose – they are finite indicators of how well the purpose is achieved in your case. It is a paradox of work and life that if you focus on grades, and on extrinsic rewards, you are far less likely to succeed – and be happy – than if you focus on your development and on making a worthy contribution.

Given the maturity, talents and work ethic of typical Duke online graduate students, I expect that you will do very well in this course, grade-wise, if you give it your best effort.

We will likely use the following grade breakdown. We may adjust these percentages slightly, as our experience warrants:

* 5% Team Peer Evaluations
* 10% Weekly Application Discussions and your Independent Canvas Contributions
* 10% Mid-Term Quiz
* 20% Individual Assignments
* 30% Team Assignments [including Semester Team Project]
* 25% Final Exam

**ASSIGNMENT GRADING APPROACH**

Since our core subject matter is Human Beings, most of our work in this course will be “qualitative” rather than quantitative. Further, much of the material is “subjective”, that is, it relates to our “first person” experiences that entail intentions, attitudes, motivations and values.

While there is much research on management and leadership that can be presented in quantitative form, the content, input and methods that lead to the quantitative results are qualitative.

For example, a study on leadership effectiveness might present findings quantitatively, but the content of the research involves questions like, “How motivated are you when this leader gives you an assignment?” Another example: Performance Evaluation results are sometimes presented on scales with numbers attached, such as “A Rating of 5 means “Exceeds Expectations”. However, the judgment regarding exceeding expectations is mostly qualitative and subjective, based on the rater’s experience and judgment. Many of you have already experienced the subjective nature of Performance Evaluations.

Likewise, your Assignment grade may be presented in the form of a number, typically based on a 20-point scale. Still, the buildup to your numerical grade is qualitative, based on human judgment [specifically, that of your professor and Mentor/Coach], anchored in explicit qualitative criteria for each Assignment.

Additionally, we adhere to a grading process that combines an absolute dimension [how well we believe you met the specific Assignment expectations] and, less significantly, a relative dimension [how your submission compares with those of your classmates].

Even with our careful, professional process, the assessment of your grade, since it is a qualitative judgment by humans, cannot be perfect and precise. This is a “fact of life” which you will need to accept whenever you are dealing with the human factor in your professional life. For example, the evaluations of your work performance may strike you as being incorrect or flawed in some way. As a manager, you may already have evaluated others’ performance. You are keenly aware that your evaluations are not perfect.

Our grading approach is as follows [with likely point totals, based on a 20-point Assignment]:

20 points = Excellent – Superior: The very best submissions

An Excellent – Superior submission shows excellent understanding of the course concepts, applies the relevant course concepts to the Assignment elements and, when relevant, to your work experience.

* Responses are fully responsive to the question[s] asked, capture all important points, and show exceptional insight.
* Responses are complete, comprehensive, concrete, specific, accurate, concise, well organized and structured, and show seriousness of effort.
* Responses relate the submitter’s real-life experiences to the relevant concepts.
* Responses insightfully and accurately relate the Assignment elements to the student’s work situation and experience
* One or more examples of pertinent creativity and imagination.
* The individual and/or team members show, where appropriate, honesty, candor and courage.

18 – 19 points: Very Good – Excellent: These submissions are, overall, not quite as strong as the Excellent – Superior submissions

A Very Good – Excellent submission shows very good understanding of the course concepts, applies the relevant course concepts to the Assignment elements, and, when relevant, to your work experience. However, there may be some deficiency in the understanding and applying of the course concepts.

* Responses are accurate & comprehensive.
* Responses relate the submitter’s real-life experiences to the relevant concepts.
* Responses insightfully and accurately relate the Assignment elements to the student’s work situation and experience
* Responses can be improved; are noticeably deficient [not excellent] regarding one or more Assignment elements or grading criteria [see the descriptors for Superior/Excellent]

17 points: Good – Acceptable: A likely minority of submissions. These submissions have positive features, but also significant problems and just meet the level of acceptability.

An Acceptable submission shows a generally acceptable level of understanding of the course concepts, while also demonstrating some incorrect/ incomplete/ superficial understandings.

* Responses need *significant* improvement on two or more Assignment elements and grading criteria. The responses in multiple ways do not respond to the Assignment requirements. These deficiencies will be noted.
* The submission fails to sufficiently relate the responses to real-life experiences.
* Responses fail to relate the Assignment elements to the student’s work situation and experience in insightful and accurate ways.
* The effort appears to be less than full; that is, the submission could probably be better if the individual and/or team gave their best effort.

<17 points: Not Acceptable: Poor understanding of course concepts, significant non-responsiveness to Assignment requirements, and overall a poor quality product. We hope that no submissions receive this grade.

A Not Acceptable submission shows a lack of acceptable content, presentation elements and effort. The responses are incomplete, inaccurate and clearly show lack of effort.

* Responses need *significant* improvement in multiple Assignment elements and grading criteria.

**TWO DISTINCT GRADING APPROACHES**

Within the above grading context, we grade your Assignment, Quiz and Exam submissions in two different ways:

Journey #1 [Learn the course concepts & tools]: When we ask you for specific course concepts and tools, and for substantive, objective responses, such as constructing your Team Charter, we apply rigorous standards, as you would expect in a Duke graduate school course.

Journeys #2 & #3 [Build your skills; Self-Discovery]: In skills-building Assignments [such as Team Assignment 4 – “Conducting Difficult Conversations”], we do not assess you on your proficiency. We assess the seriousness with which you took the Assignment, including the quality of the feedback you provide to your teammates.

When we ask you to engage in self-reflection [such as in the 1st Individual Assignment: “What are the gaps between you and Eugene Kranz?”; and in Assignment 3: “Developing Your Personal Leadership Credo”] we are looking for how seriously you have taken the Assignment; the genuineness and authenticity of your response; your honesty, candor and courage; your degree of self-insight.

For your Journeys #2 & #3, we are prone to give you “an A for your effort,” because we want to fully honor your very best effort. Please note, however, that it is easy for us to see when students have blown off an Assignment.

**HONOR CODE AND COURSE VALUES**

Note that students are expected to follow the **Duke Honor Code and Code of Conduct** for this class. We may use some cases and exam questions from previous years so you are NOT to obtain copies of such documents from previous years and you are NOT to provide them to next year’s students. Either of these actions is considered an honor code violation and could be grounds for expulsion.

Plagiarizing – copying information directly without citation, is of course not allowed.

You are NOT allowed to use AI/ChatGPT for your Individual and Team Assignment preparation and submission unless explicitly allowed for specific Assignment segments.

Using ChatGPT in unauthorized ways robs you of the benefits of non-AI supported and unbiased self-discovery. It makes it impossible for your teaching team to assess your own contribution and progress. [We assume that all of you have sufficient skills in how to use AI.] It is also a serious violation of the Duke Honor Code.

Please see our orientation materials and Canvas site for more information about the Duke Honor Code and its application to the MEM/MENG Programs. Students have been suspended or expelled due to what they thought were minor infractions of the Honor Code.

BE CAREFUL! DO NOT TAKE ANY CHANCES! IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS ALLOWABLE, PLEASE CONTACT US.

That said, much more important than considering the dire consequences of non-compliance, I encourage you to continue to build a personal and professional reputational platform of integrity. This course centers on principles-based management and leadership. Our Course Values are **Integrity, Authenticity, Trust, Open Communication, Respect, Accountability, Collaboration, Curiosity and Excellence.** Your professor, along with a growing number of highly successful organizational leaders, have found that integrity and trust are the bedrocks for sustaining superior and inspired performance in organizations.

**TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICAL QUESTIONS**

All student technical questions (including lost/forgotten Canvas passwords) should go to: http://oit.duke.edu/ or call 919-684-2200.

**Our Teaching Assistants are our Course Administration Managers. Refer your issues regarding course logistics, teams, submitting of assignments, etc., to our TAs, rather than to me, your professor [you may certainly copy me].** Your Mentor-Coach and I want to focus on teaching and your learning, not on logistics and administration. Our TAs are very proficient, and are eager to help.