UCDAVIS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

MGB 267
Teams and Technology
SYLLABUS
Spring 2020
Graduate School of Management
University of California, Davis

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Learning Objectives

MGB 267 is a course on the theory and practice of managing groups and teams. It has *four* primary goals. The first goal is to provide conceptual guidelines for analyzing and diagnosing group dynamics and determining one's strategic options as a manager. The second goal is to understand how technological change affects team processes in organizations. Third, this course will impart practical interpersonal skills for implementing effective strategies for group situations. And finally, the course will teach the practical team leadership characteristics and techniques required to adapt to rapidly changing situations in a real technology company. The course is intended for students who seek greater understanding of teams and who wish to increase their competence in managing and working effectively in these contexts.

The primary goal of MGB 267 is to provide a model of managing groups and teams that complements more traditional models of management. To this end, we will be developing frameworks for analyzing groups' goals and options. This involves determining how to choose group members, how to structure decision-making teams, and how to manage the conflict that sometimes arises in group contexts.

A second goal of MGB 267 entails understanding the effects of technology on teamwork and managing teams. In the past several years, new communication technologies have enabled new forms of working and organizing – virtual worlds that seem significantly different from traditional forms of doing business. However, at the core of these new forms are the people who use the technologies and the contexts in which they are using them. We will explore how teams, and their members, are influenced and constrained by such new technologies.

Third, the approach of the course is based on the belief that a conceptual understanding of optimal management strategies is of little use without the behavioral skills required to implement these strategies. To this end, I have designed MGB 267 with an emphasis on cases and exercises that afford the opportunity to apply the concepts concretely. You will analyze cases that illustrate dynamic social interaction processes that can either facilitate or impede success. Furthermore, you will participate in several in-class exercises that simulate challenging problems, followed by class discussions of how your experiences reflect relevant theoretical constructs. These exercises are designed to provide a forum in which to hone one's team skills and management abilities.

Last, we will apply what we learn as we proceed through the course to our understanding of a real technology startup company. Recognizing that executive management teams lead companies through rapidly changing stages without the luxury of being able to change the team structure through each phase, our class teams will address team leadership through the phases of growth, economic decline, survival, profitability and exit of a real company.

Teamwork Format

This course is designed to provide you with a thorough understanding of the dynamics of team-based work settings and their effects on group performance. As a result, students will be assigned to groups in the second class session that will exist throughout the quarter and will provide a context for experiencing and learning about the effects of group membership first hand.

Please note: This course requires working interdependently every week with your assigned group. You will be expected to regularly meet face-to-face and/or use appropriate groupware with your group outside of class. If you are not able to do this, please do not register for MGB 267.

Group discussion periods, written assignments, and activities will provide many opportunities for students to discuss, reflect on, and explain their group's functioning. In addition, each group will collaborate on a final group project described below. The primary teaching method in this course is inductive, experiential, and case-based. Relatively little class time will be devoted to standard lectures.

Relevant Theory
Although effective managers have always relied on influence and consensus building, management theory has often portrayed the executive as a solitary planner, removed from the fray, whose directions are automatically followed by subordinates. Management education has therefore emphasized topics such as individual decision-making. Although a competence in these topics remains essential, contemporary organizations increasingly put managers in roles that require a different set of competencies. Managers increasingly find themselves working in and with groups, teams, and networks, sometimes without a

clear chain of command or a stable leader. In these more fluid and dynamic management roles, effective performance requires frameworks for analyzing <u>collaborative</u> (as opposed to individual) decision making and facilitating successful <u>informal</u> relationships (as opposed to formal organizational structures).

The primary framework applied to our case work and class team assignments is the one described by the eight characteristics of effective teams in Larson and LaFasto's book, TEAMWORK. Additional theory and concepts related to team performance and productivity, creativity, managing conflict, managing meetings, decision-making, team leadership, and virtual team management are gained from the course readings.

Relevant Readings

Textbook: Larson, C.E. & LaFasto, F.M.J. 1989. Teamwork: What Must Go right/what can go wrong. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. *(Abbreviated LL throughout syllabus)* **ISBN-10: 0803932901**

Course packet: Additional course readings required are available through Study.net, Harvard Business Publishing, and the UC Davis Library

Course Schedule and Student Preparation

Linked items are available online or through the UC Davis library. If noted, some links will need to be accessed from on campus or by using the library VPN. Other item's locations are also noted.

SESSION 1 (Saturday, March 28)
Introduction to Teams and Team Building

<u>Readings</u>:
- LL: Introduction and Chapter 1
- Red Herring, Next Wave: New books, not goods, May 5, 2004 **[Study.net]**

<u>In class</u>: 1. Course and student introductions
  2. **Team Exercise**

SESSION 2 (Saturday, March 28)
Group Performance and Creativity

<u>Readings</u>:
- HBS CASE: A Note for Analyzing Work Groups (Merit Case) **[HBS]**
- Thompson, Leigh. (2011). Making the Team. Chapter 2: Performance and Productivity. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. **[Study.net]**
- LL: Chapters 2 & 3

<u>In Class</u>: 1. **Team Exercise: Food for Thought Creativity (Kellogg DRRC)**
  2. **Case discussion: Merit Corporation (HBS)**
  How effective is the NPD group at the end of Part IV of the case? What factors contributed to its effectiveness? How did the effectiveness change at the end of Part V? What might account for these changes?
  3. SkyStream discussion
  The boom years, it's all about creativity.

<u>Handout</u>: **Team Contract (Kellogg DRRC)**

SESSION 3 (Saturday, April 11)
Creativity and Conflict

Readings:
- Thompson, Leigh (2011) Ch. 9: Creativity: Mastering Strategies for High Performance, in Making the Team. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. **[Study.net]**
- Whetton, D. and Cameron, C. (1995) Managing Conflict (Ch. 7) in Developing Management Skills, pp. 412-451. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman. **[Study.net]**
- Behfar, K. and Goldberg, R. (2015) "Conflict Management in Teams". Darden **[HBS]**
- HBS CASE: Suzy Wetlaufer. "The Team That Wasn't". **[Needs VPN]**
- LL: Chapters 4, 5, & 6

In class: 1. Debrief of creativity exercise
              2. **Case discussion: The Team That Wasn't (HBS)**
              What are the problems in the FireArt team? Where do they come from?
              What should Eric do to solve them?
              3. SkyStream discussion
              Managing conflict as "the bust" sets in

Due: *Personal reflection paper*

SESSION 4 (Saturday, April 11)
Managing Meetings and Information Sharing
Readings:
- HBS CASE: The Overhead Reduction Task Force (ORTF). Wageman, R. and Hackman, J. **[HBS]**
- Whetton, D. and Cameron, C. (1995) Principles for Managing Meetings in Developing Management Skills, pp. 454-476. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman. **[Study.net]**
- Cosier, R.A., & Schwenk, C.R. (1990). "Agreement and Thinking Alike: Ingredients for Poor Decisions," *Academy of Management Executive, Vol.4, No.1*, 69-74. **[Needs VPN]**
- Sunstein, C. and Hastle, R. 2014. Making Dumb Groups Smarter. Harvard Business Review, Dec. 2014. **[Needs VPN]**

In class: 1. **Team Exercise:** *Murder Mystery*
              2. **Case discussion: The Overhead Reduction Task Force (HBS)**
              Given ORTF's composition and purpose, what should Williams expect at the first meeting of the task force? How should he prepare for that meeting, and how, specifically, should the first meeting be conducted? What, if any, discussion format or procedures should be implemented?
              3. SkyStream discussion
              Team dynamics and leadership through "survival" phase

Due: *Group ORTF Case analysis*

SESSION 5 (Saturday, April 25)
Group Design

Readings:
- Fayard, A. and Weeks, J. Who Moved My Cube? Harvard Business Review, July/Aug 2011. **[Needs VPN]**
- LL: Chapters 7 & 8

In class: 1. **Team Exercise: Project Team Effectiveness (Kellogg DRRC)**
              2. SkyStream discussion
              Balancing multiple teams; management team, Board, turnaround team

Handout: Leadership Assessment Questionnaire

SESSION 6 (Saturday, April 25)
Leading High Impact Teams

Readings:
- Huey, J. (1994) The New Post Heroic Leadership, Fortune, February 21, 1994, pp. 43-50.
- Hackman, J.R. (2002) Expert Coaching. Ch 6 in Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances, Boston: Harvard Business School Press. **[Study.net]**
- LL: Chapters 9 & 10

In class: 1. **Team Exercise: Tanagram Production**
              2. SkyStream discussion
              Keeping teams focused and motivated when you're out of cash.

SESSION 7 (Saturday, May 9)
Virtual Teams: Trust and Organizational Issues

Readings:
- Kirkman, Rosen, Gibson, Tesluk and McPherson. (2002) "Five Challenges to Virtual Team Success: Lessons from Sabre, Inc." Academy of Management Executive, 16, pp. 67-78. **[Needs VPN]**
- Ferazzi, K. "Getting Virtual Teams Right". Harvard Business Review, Dec. 2014. **[Needs VPN]**
- HBS CASE: Maruca, R.F. How Do You Manage an Off-Site Team? **[Needs VPN]**

In class: 1. **Case discussion: How do you manage an off-site team? (HBS)**
What are the underlying issues causing conflict on the team? How should Craig handle these issues? How is an off-site team different from an on-site one?
2. SkyStream discussion
Virtual teams: where they work, where they don't, and why.

SESSION 8 (Saturday, May 9)
Qualitative Feedback Exercise (Kellogg DRRC)

Due: *1. One page individual reflection on the exercise (hand written, done in class, not graded)*
2. Group meeting format comparison paper

SESSION 9 (Saturday, May 23)
Building a Team-Based Organization

In class: 1. Discussion of group meeting comparisons
2. **Team Exercise: Tip of the Iceberg (HBS)**
3. SkyStream discussion
Surviving "survival". A "ground up" approach to changing the executive team to prepare for profitability and exit.

SESSION 10 (Saturday, May 23)
Wrap-Up

<u>In class</u>:   Group Project Final Presentations

Due: Final group paper and Presentation

FINAL EXAM SESSION (Saturday, June 6, 9-12 am)

Depending on class size, a final exam *session* may be required in order to complete the group project final presentations. This will be determined before Session 6.

Grading and Evaluation

Course and team participation	20%
Personal reflection paper	10%
Group ORTF case analysis	15%
Group meeting format comparison paper	15%
Final group project/paper/presentation	40%

1. Course and Team Participation (20% of grade): Attendance, class participation, and participation on the team project, are an essential part of the learning process in this course. If a reading is listed in the syllabus for discussion, you should be prepared to contribute to the class discussion of that reading. Most importantly, <u>you should be ready and willing to participate fully in all discussions, cases, and exercises.</u> Because the progression of exercises in this class depends on learning between a stable set of classmates, it is very important that you attend all classes. If you cannot attend class, make sure to notify me at least 24 hours in advance via e-mail. Missing one class session will result in a loss of 15 points from your course and team participation score. Missing two sessions (1 entire Saturday) will result in a loss of 30 points. **If you are absent more than two sessions, you will lose 60 or more points and it will be very difficult for you to receive a B grade. Depending on your other course scores, you could fail the class.** If you anticipate missing more than two class sessions due to other demands on your time, please do not enroll in the course.

Participation in this class is unlike that in any other class you take at the GSM. This is a TEAMS class, which means I expect you to work INTERDEPENDENTLY with your assigned team members. Thus, you will be required to meet frequently as a team outside of class, including face-to-face meetings. If you are not willing or able to work interdependently with your team members outside of class meetings, please do not enroll in the course. An important component of your participation grade will consist of a "team participation score" from your teammates. You will be assigned to a team toward the beginning of the quarter and you and your team will work throughout the quarter on various group assignments. You are expected to pull your weight and work equally hard as your other teammates each week. Your "team participation score" will be heavily influenced by your teammates upon completion of your final project presentation.

2. Personal Reflection Paper: (10% of final grade)
As an individual, write a paper (no more than three pages, **double-spaced, 12-point font**) describing (1) your most effective and (2) your most ineffective group experience. This paper should incorporate your own team experiences with theoretical insights from the readings. Therefore, the paper should use concepts from the readings to explain on what dimensions you feel the group was effective or ineffective (e.g., performance relative to external standards, group satisfaction, individual growth, or organizational gains). Why was the effective group successful? What could have been done to make the ineffective group more successful?

Due: START of Session 3

3. Group ORTF Case Analysis: (15% of final grade)
As a group, write a 5-page paper that answers the following questions: Given ORTF's composition and purpose, what should Williams expect at the first meeting of the task force (NOT THE MEETING WITH DIXON)? How should he prepare for that meeting, and how, specifically, should the first meeting be conducted? What, if any, discussion format or procedures should be implemented? Be sure to justify your answers using concepts from the readings to date.

Due: START of Session 4

4. Group Meeting Format Comparison Paper: (15% of final grade)**
As a group, you are to compare and contrast at least three forms of team meetings: face-to-face, teleconference, and online meeting (with or without video). This, of course, requires that your team meet in these three different forms over the course of the quarter. Analyze your group's process and effectiveness using each of the forms, discuss any problems encountered, and relate these to the concepts, theory, and readings from the course. Some questions you might consider: How was conflict resolution different across the three forms? How did they differ in terms of your ability to understand one another? How did they differ in terms of the tasks you accomplished? Were there differences in the way you felt about the team process or one another? Your comparison should be 5 pages and you should come to class prepared to present and discuss it in Session 8.

** There will be one or two more choices of topics (TBD) for teams to pick for this paper.

Due: START of Session 8

5a. Final Group Project/Paper: (25% of final grade)
This project should be completed in your assigned groups (assignments will be given in class). Each group will choose a real group or working team (not a sports team) to observe and analyze its performance using the concepts learned in the course. You should use observation and personal interviews from several sources to obtain information for your analysis. An 8-10-page report on the findings of your assessment and your recommendations is due at the end of the quarter. The report should contain an analysis of the group's performance and effectiveness, any problems encountered, and recommendations for improvements (a concrete action plan) using the concepts, theory, and readings from the course. Be sure to cite appropriately. I am happy to meet with you to discuss your paper topics.

The paper will be evaluated on the following criteria:
> *Theory/application:* How well do you understand and apply the concepts learned in the course and the readings?

> *Analysis:* How clear and insightful is your analysis of the group? How well do you integrate the theory to create a coherent and logical argument? How well do your recommendations correspond to the conclusions of your analysis? How "actionable" are your recommendations?

> *Organization:* How clearly written and organized is the paper? Be sure to check spelling and grammar.

> *Peer evaluation:* How do the other members of your group evaluate your contributions to the group's performance? Evaluation forms will be distributed the last day of class (this evaluation will be factored into your course participation grade).

I am looking for an in-depth analysis of the team process and performance. You should use both the meeting observations and interviews to get an understanding of the team's effective and ineffective processes. Strong papers have a point of view and do not just present a laundry list of concepts from the course reading applied to the team studied.

Interviewing Suggestions

Preparing for project interviews
    Create a list of categories of questions and refer to them during the interview
        This isn't a survey!
    Have one group member be the scribe
        That way the others can keep up the talking
    Keep people talking
        Your goal is to get information from them, so don't talk too much yourself

Making your informants comfortable
    Make repeated explanations
        Explain the purpose of the study
        Recording of information/confidentiality
        Offer feedback as a benefit of participation
    Continually express interest and ignorance
    Expand your questions (longer questions lead to longer answers)

Interviewing tips
    Avoid questions that close down talk
        Did…
        Does…
        Is…
    Use question frames that open up conversation
        What…
        Who…
        Tell me about…

Encouraging informants to talk
    Remain in the here and now of the interview
        Maintain eye contact
        Evince empathy with non-verbals (eyebrows)
        Respond with verbal interest
    Use active listening skills instead of questions
        Minimal encouragement (nods, uh-huhs)
        Restating (repeat selected word)
        Paraphrasing
        Emotive reflection (sounds like…)
    Don't continue on an uncomfortable topic!

Questions to start off an interview
    Tour questions (place, time, events, people, activities)
        Typical day
        Guided tour
        Task related
    Example questions: Can you give me an example of…?

Experience questions: What is the best/worst *meeting* you've ever been in on this team?

5b. Final Group Presentation: (15% of final grade)
In class, as a group you will give a brief professional presentation of your findings.

Both 5a and 5b due: Session 10

Academic Integrity

All students who take this course are governed by the University of California's standards of ethical conduct for students, in particular, the sections on academic conduct and integrity. These sections set forth the responsibilities of students and faculty to maintain a spirit of academic honesty and integrity at U.C. Davis. It is essential that you are aware of this code of conduct and the disciplinary actions that may be taken in the event of a violation. A copy of the Code of Academic Conduct may be found in your student handbook or at: http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html. Further details may be obtained from the GSM Associate Dean or the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Specifically, academic integrity for this course boils down to the following:

1. You are expected to be prepared and on time for all negotiation exercises (see attendance policy).
2. Do not show your confidential role instructions to the other side, although you are free to tell the other side whatever you would like about your confidential information.
3. Do not discuss cases with people outside of class.
4. Class discussion stays in class. In negotiations debriefs, sometimes tensions run high. Comments should not stray to the personal, but focus on analyzing the negotiation process.
5. For paper assignments, do not misrepresent the written work of others as your own written work.

Note: For all written assignments:
1. I do not accept late papers.
2. Please adhere to all page limits, using 12 point font size and a minimum line spacing of space and a half. Otherwise the paper will lose half a letter grade.
3. Remember to cite appropriately, even when drawing on the readings I've assigned. Otherwise, how will the reader know what reading you are referring to?
4. A good paper:
   > Is clear and effective at getting your point across
   > Directly demonstrates that you have learned something from the class:
   >> Specifically refers to course concepts
   >> References appropriately
   >> Provides specific, detailed evidence to support your points

Digital Device Policy

Smartphones, tablets, and laptops are an integral part of our lives. The classroom is no exception. I expect you to bring them and use them, especially as classroom-related resources. Access to the Internet can be a valuable aid to the classroom-learning environment. It can be a great tool to gain further insights into the lectures, class discussions, and negotiations. And a smartphone is indispensible for being in touch with loved ones in any emergency. So I do NOT require them to be turned OFF. As I continue to evolve the course, there will likely be sessions where digital devices are required. In short, students are encouraged to use smartphones, tablets, and laptops to explore concepts related to course discussions and topics.

Students are discouraged from using digital devices in ways that distract from the learning community (e.g. Facebook, texting, work for other classes, etc.). If one of you becomes distracted from someone's distracting use of a device, I encourage you to change seats. If more than one of you are distracted from the same individual, I will ask the offending individual to move to a more remote location in the classroom. If many of you are more interested in using your digital devices than listening to or participating in the classroom activities, then I have become an ineffective instructor, and that problem has other solutions.

If you have any questions about this policy, don't hesitate to ask me.

END OF SYLLABUS