

Course Syllabus (DRAFT Feb 8)
MHR 7225: Leading in a Crisis
Room: Gerlach 375 Tuesday/Thursday 10:15-11:45 am
Spring 2nd Session, 2017

Instructor: Mr. Jeff Rodek
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Office hours: 9:30 – 10:00 and 11:45 – 1:00 T/Th (Also by appointment)

Course Description

Effective leaders are able to galvanize people around a compelling, inspirational vision and strategy, and to then lead people in ways that bring out their best ideas and effort focused on the success of the organization. There are times, however, when an organization faces a severe crisis and leaders' skillsets are severely tested in ways that are often unforeseen. These crises can come from inside or outside the organization. Examples include natural disasters, economic downturns, imminent bankruptcy, fraud, manufacturing flaws, shareholder or customer revolts, or disruptive technology. This elective course will have a 'practical applications' bias. It will include case studies of organizations in crisis and lectures so as to expose students to a variety of leaders who have successfully, or unsuccessfully, led their organizations through crises.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to create a classroom experience and provide readings and assignments that allow each student:

1. To understand and appreciate both the academic literature as well as the practical applications of good senior leadership practices, especially in times of crisis.
2. To critically evaluate the unique nature of effective leaders and identify key commonalities among proven leaders, especially those who have thrived in especially turbulent times.
3. To critically evaluate the special needs of organizations including management processes, internal and external communications, and talent assessment & organizational improvement that are in a period of crisis,

Lectures will include

- **Enterprise Risk Management**
- **Role of a Board vs. Role of Management during a crisis**
- **Brand Management a crisis**
- **The positives and negatives of bankruptcy**
- **Public Relations do's and don'ts**
- **Core leadership principles and why they matter**
- **Dealing with outside stakeholders and customers**
- **Cases may include hostile takeovers, strikes, food tainting, missed earnings, environmental disasters, product failures, etc.**

Guest Speakers: at least four executives will be invited to attend the class, describe their experience in leading during crises, and answer questions from the students. It goes without saying that preparation to meet with these executives is expected.

Case Studies: Several studies will be discussed. Sources will include HBR cases as well as organizations currently in the news for which we will use readings in the public domain (Examples may include BP & the Gulf of Mexico disaster, Apple's iPhone antenna, and Toyota quality failures). Student teams will present and discuss their recommendations regarding these case studies; individual assignments on Cases will also be required.

Course Schedule and Reading List

Week 1

Thursday, Mar 2
Session 1

Course Introduction & the Spectrum of Crises

Classroom introductions, Course overview
Topics of Interest Discussion
Case team signups

Reading:

“*Why Companies Fail...*” Fortune, May 2002
“*Why CEO’s Fail*” Fortune, June 1999
“*CEO’s in Denial*” Fortune June 1999

Week 2

Tuesday, Mar 7
Session 2

Oversight from the Board Room

Reading:

Predictable Surprises: The Disasters You Should Have Seen Coming, HBR
“*D&O Liability: Avoiding Legal Hot Spots*”, Corporate Board Member, 2012
“*Is Your Board Ready to Put Out the Nest Fire?*”, Fortune, Dec. 2011

Thursday, Mar 9
Session 3

SEC & Public Company crises: Role of Board vs. Role of Management

Earnings Calls, Shareholder meetings, SEC regulations, Shareholder Activism

Readings:

“*The Gray Art of not quite Insider Trading*”, Fortune, 2013

Case: “*Martha Stewart A*”, HBP

Individual paper #1 due (Martha Stewart)

Spring Break March 14-18

Week 3

Tuesday, Mar 21
Session 4

Guest Speakers: Gary Greenfield, Partner, Court Square, Former CEO, Peregrine, Avid, Merant) and Michael Nieset, Partner, Heidrick & Struggles

Boards and CEO’s in Crisis – real world scenarios (Peregrine, Avid, Hyperion)

Reading:

“*The Judge Who Rules on Business*”, Fortune, 2013

Thursday, Mar 23
Session 5

Guest Lecture 2: Larry Mead, Worthington Partners

Enterprise Risk Management, Contingency Planning, Disaster Recovery

Week 4

Tuesday, March 28
Session 6

Guest Lecture 3: Anil Makhija, Dean, Fisher College of Business, and John W. Berry, Sr. Chair in Business

Bankruptcy:
Chapter 7 vs. 11
Strategic benefits of the protection
Special (DIP) financing
Competitive consequences

Thursday, March 30
Session 7

Product Crises
1st Team Case Discussion and Paper Due: Toyota Recall Crisis

Reading:
"How to Save Your Brand in the Face of Crisis", HBR

Case: *Toyota: Unintended Acceleration*, HBP

Week 5

Tuesday, April 4
Session 8

Thom Fladung, Hennes Communications
Crisis Communications

Thursday, April 6
Session 9

Guest Lecture 4: Joe Camoriano, OSU Director, National Broadcast Media
Public Relations / Press Conferences

Week 6

Tuesday, April 11
Session 10

Natural Disasters
Case Discussion: Fritidsresor under Pressure
2nd Team Case Paper Due: Fritidsresor

Reading:
"You Have to Lead From Everywhere", HBR

Case: *Fritidsresor under Pressure*, HBP

Thursday, April 13
Session 11

Guest Lecture 4: Lora Schaeffer
Brand Management in Today's Social World

Reading:

Week 7

Tuesday, April 18
Session 12

Team Presentations: Selected Business Crisis
Six teams @ 8 minutes each, followed by discussion

Thursday, April 20 **Session 13 scheduled for April 26**

Wednesday, April 26
Session 13

Team Presentations: Selected Business Crisis
5 teams @ 8 minutes each, followed by discussion

Reading: *Selected by Each Team*

Individual Final paper (#2) due

Reading:

"7 Keys for Crisis Management", Boardmember.com, Aug. 2011
Other readings selected by each team

Books and Readings Required for the Course

Text: None Required

Course Packet: (Digital) Readings will be available via Harvard Business Press and Carmen links.

Course Requirements and Grading

The course will include a mix of class discussions, cases, articles, class presentation assignments, and written assignments. Papers should be submitted using Times New Roman (font 12), double spaced. Please include page numbers and make sure to put your name on your paper.

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Group Case assignment #1 (Toyota)	15 %	(4 pages – 2 pgs short answer)
Group Case assignment #2 (Fritidsresor)	15 %	(3 pages – 2 pgs short answer)
Individual Paper #1 (Insider Trading)	10 %	
Classroom participation (including attendance)	10 %	
Team presentation & slides (Selected Crisis)	20 %	
Individual paper #2	30 %	(4 pages – 3 pgs short answer)
Total:	100%	

Group Case assignments: 2 papers and presentations

These assignments will require the team to analyze an assigned company in crisis and develop recommendations. Details regarding the assignments will be posted to Carmen. At the initial class session, students will be assigned to a team. On assigned dates, team papers and *possible* oral presentations will be due.

Individual assignments: 2 Papers

Each student will submit two papers:

The first will be a short paper related to an assigned Case; the write-up likely will be no more than one page in length and is due at the beginning of the class that the case will be discussed.

The second paper will allow students to distill their primary insights and lessons learned from our discussions, guest speakers, cases and readings. The length of this paper will likely be less than 5 pages.

Details regarding the assignments will be posted to Carmen.

Class participation

I will be looking for you to provide your insights, thoughts, perspectives and questions in a professional, productive manner. Participation in class is expected for a wide variety of reasons, including the value of learning from one another and the wide variety of life perspectives and experiences of the class. Note comments regarding attendance, below.

Final Team Paper on a selected company in crisis

Each team will prepare a final paper on leading and managing in a crisis. Teams will present their analysis and recommendations in class. As a group, identify and prepare an analysis of a leader/business who faced a crisis and who either 'passed' or 'failed' that challenge. Teams will select and research the crisis providing an analysis and recommendations. Details regarding the assignment will be posted to Carmen.

Attendance. Since class participation is part of the grading consideration, then attendance matters. I will circulate a sign-in sheet at the start of each class for your signature. This will be the basis for determining unexcused absences. ***There will be one unexcused absence for the term. Any unexcused absence beyond the first without advance notice will adversely impact your class participation evaluation, unless due to a true emergency.*** Regarding excused absences, I assure you I am extremely understanding about such issues, and realize that people (even graduate students!) have personal lives. I know there will be the occasional personal emergencies or business travel that may come up. I will absolutely consider such issues as legitimate, excused reasons to miss a class...**as long as you let me know in advance, if possible.** This advance notification will be on the honor system...you do not need to provide any documentation. Rather simply notify me before class that you have a personal or professional conflict that will cause you to miss class. ***Please do not exploit this privilege!*** This applies to both class attendance and assignment due dates.

On guest speaker days, attendance in class is even more critical. Also, please be on time on guest speaker days rather than walk in while the speaker is already presenting. If you must arrive late, you MUST advise me in advance and I will notify the speaker before they start. In addition please stay in the room during the complete session. I trust you can understand the need for this discipline. We are collectively representing the Fisher College and Ohio State University. ***Note that on "guest speaker days" appropriate / 'presentable' attire will be the rule for the class.*** Remember, we are representing The Ohio State University and the Fisher College on these occasions, and should act accordingly...tough business questions are acceptable and encouraged, but any line of questioning which is designed to embarrass the speaker or their company is not appropriate.

Course Policy Statements

Diversity. This course on leadership should practice what it preaches in its week-to-week conduct. We will, as a group and as individuals, hold ourselves accountable for demonstrating an openness to and appreciation for ideas of others. *This means being conspicuously respectful of each other on all occasions and in all of our class transactions.* That includes NOT surfing the web or reviewing email during class sessions.

Disability Services. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Academic Integrity (Academic Misconduct): Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.