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PSC 460.01: Strategic Planning and Leadership

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PSCI 460 (1 Credit)
Strategic Planning and Leadership
Fall Semester 2009

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Office: Corbin 252
Office Hours: M, W, F 9 am-11:30 am
and 1 pm-2 pm or by appt.
Class Location: On-line

Course Description:

Non-profit organizations rely on leadership for success. As suggested in strategic management, the leader needs to bring all of his/her resources together to be successful. A significant part of an organization's success depends on the strategic plan that is developed and implemented for the organization. This course highlights the importance of leadership for realizing an organization's fullest potential. It also introduces strategic planning – a process by which staff members can bring their shared vision of success into being.

The reading assignments are designed to increase knowledge of strategic planning and leadership, and the writing assignments are designed to build personal skill and confidence by asking you to draft a brief strategic plan.

There is an assigned reading for the first session.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify and understand the major traditions that structure the study of strategic planning.
2. Identify and understand the major traditions that structure the study of leadership.

Required Textbooks:

None required. Reading assignments are drawn from three useful texts, but purchasing them is not required. All reading assignments will be available on Blackboard as pdf files under ***Course Materials***.

Course Requirements:

Learning Units must be completed each Monday night by 7 pm (MST). Students are required to read the mini-lectures, all assigned readings, participate on the discussion board, and complete all writing assignments. Learning Units provide "*Learning Points*" based on what the instructor and authors are trying to emphasize as key elements for the student to learn and understand. These are not to be considered all-inclusive and the

student is responsible for utilizing these “*Learning Points*” in conjunction with the readings in developing their understanding. All time requirements for papers, and projects will be based on Mountain Standard Time and are considered due by 7:00 pm MST each Monday.

Writing Assignments:

Five writing assignments are required. The first four assignments are short writing assignments regarding a section of a strategic plan. For the fifth writing assignment students must integrate the first four assignments into a brief strategic plan. Students are required to follow the instructions contained in the relevant Learning Unit for each assignment. Refer to Learning Unit 1 for writing assignment requirements.

Sources for Writing Assignments: Students are encouraged to utilize sources provided in and through the Mansfield Library.

Graduate Student Increment: Graduate students will notice that on Writing Assignments 2, 3, and 4, that they have an additional requirement that must be included in writing the paper.

Course Grading and Assessment:

Grading will be based on five (5) writing assignments and your responses to the Discussion Board questions. Writing Assignments 1 – 4 are worth 50 points each. Writing Assignment 5 is worth 100 points. Your Discussion Board responses are worth 50 points. The total possible points for the course are 350 points.

The Discussion Board requires **active student participation** and **active student participation** is understood as answering the Discussion Board questions, reading other students responses and replying to their entries as you feel necessary. I am encouraging you to “**engage in a week long discussion**” regarding the topic for the Learning Unit incorporating the questions presented. In other words, the discussion should address the questions presented, but is not limited to just those questions. You may discuss any issues related to the Learning Unit. If you are curious as to how you are doing on your Discussion Board questions during the semester, you may call or email the instructor.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

A =	326-350	C =	256-269
A- =	315-325	C- =	245-255
B+ =	305-314	D+ =	235-244
B =	291-304	D =	221-234
B- =	280-290	D- =	210-220
C+ =	270-279	F =	0-219

This is an upper division course and assignments and Discussion Board participation should reflect an upper division level of thought and effort. Assignments will be assessed (graded) based on your presentation of your knowledge and understanding of the concepts being presented. This includes your ability to interpret, comprehend, analyze, apply and explain these concepts. Have you grasped what the readings and mini-lectures have presented and can you apply it?

Discussion Board Questions will be assessed based on your response: 1) does it address the question asked; 2) does the response reflect an understanding of the concept or question; and 3) is it based not only on what you have been presented, but also includes insights that you have and can justify.

The Discussion Board provides each student with the opportunity for self-assessment. By reading others responses and discussing the topic with them on the Discussion Board, you can assess your understanding. The Discussion Board provides instant feed-back between students and the instructor.

Students Utilizing the No-Credit Option: Since the assignments given in this course are integrated to achieve the best possible learning outcome for students, and since they are designed to build on and to test knowledge gained through comprehensive participation, the expectation is that all students will to the best of their abilities participate on the Discussion Board and complete all assignments. Attention paid by the instructor to critiquing written assignments will be directly proportional to the amount of effort put forth by individual students on writing them and on overall course participation as well. Late assignments will be critiqued at the discretion of the instructor.

Other Student Resources:

There are other resources available to you on the Blackboard. At the top-left you will notice there is a link to UM's Mansfield Library. You may also go to the UM website and click on "libraries." If you need assistance navigating through the Blackboard, you can click on the BB Tutorials tab next to the Mansfield Library tab. If you need ADA assistance in taking this course, you may contact the University of Montana Disability Services for Students at their website <http://life.umt.edu/dss> or email them at dss@umontana.edu. Students taking this course are expected to do so under the provisions set forth in the UM Student Conduct Code. You can review the SCC by visiting the website at <http://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode>. There is one new service available to you through The Writing Center...they now offer free one-on-one online tutoring "to all students seeking to become more effective writers. You can email them at onlinetutoring@umontana.edu or point your browser to <http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter>.

Schedule of Learning Units and Assignments:

Learning Unit 1: Introduction to Strategic Planning and Leadership (Due 28 Sept 2009)

Readings:

- Michael Allison and Jude Kaye, *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations* (John Wiley & Sons, 2005), pp. 1-30.
- Burt Nanus and Stephen M. Dobbs, *Leaders who make a Difference: Essential Strategies for Meeting the Nonprofit Challenge* (SF: Jossey-Bass, 1999), pp. 3-26

Learning Unit 2: Mission and Vision Clarification (Due 05 Oct 2009)

Readings:

- Burt Nanus and Stephen M. Dobbs, *Leaders Who Make a Difference: Essential Strategies for Meeting the Nonprofit Challenge* (SF: Jossey-Bass, 1999), pp. 75-95
- Michael Allison and Jude Kaye, *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations* (John Wiley & Sons, 2005), pp. 85-117.

Assignment:

Writing Assignment 1: Mission and Vision Clarification – (Due 05 Oct 2009)

Note: The readings provide good advice about how to engage your staff in clarification exercises. However, for purposes of these writing assignments you are to offer your own ideas while pretending they emerged partly from you as a visionary leader and partly from a group planning process involving mission and vision clarification.

Our goal is to write a “combined mission, vision, values statement” of the kind shown on pp. 85-86 of Allison and Kaye’s text. But let’s proceed one analytical step at a time.

1. **Mission Clarification.** Write 1-2 paragraphs capturing, generally, what your organization exists to do and what unique contributions it seeks to make to society. This is what Allison and Kaye refer to as defining your “business” and “purpose.” **Warning:** we are not yet ready to condense your analysis into a formal mission statement; avoid all rhetoric and do not borrow directly from existing statements of mission. Just put pen to paper in an effort to clarify your mission.
2. **Vision Clarification.** Write 2-4 paragraphs describing your agency five years in

the future after it has achieved your desired state of excellence. Warning: this is not the same thing as a formal vision statement; simply try to capture the warmth and color of an agency accomplishing great things.

3. **Values Clarification.** Write 1-2 paragraphs identifying the values or principles that will guide you in pursuing your vision of success, and briefly explain their relevance or importance.
4. **Putting It All Together.** Now, draw upon the foregoing analysis to write a Combined Mission, Vision, and Values Statement of the kind shown on pp. 85-86 in Allison and Kaye.

Graduate Students: Nothing additional required on this assignment.

Learning Unit 3: Stakeholder Analysis (Due 12 Oct 2009)

Readings:

- John M. Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations* (SF: Jossey-Bass, 2004), "Stakeholder Analysis," pp. 107-113.
- Burt Nanus, *Visionary Leadership: Creating a Compelling Sense of Directions for Your Organization* (SF: Jossey-Bass, 1992), pp. 62-69.

Assignment:

Writing Assignment 2: Stakeholder Analysis – (Due 12 Oct 2009)

Identify your 4 most important stakeholders and write a brief descriptive paragraph on each. In doing so, address the questions that Bryson has set for us:

- What does this stakeholder need or expect from us?
- What criteria does this stakeholder use to evaluate our level of performance?
- How dependent are we on this stakeholder in our pursuit of mission and organizational excellence?

Note: You may not have definitive answers to these questions. Organizations must make educated guesses and then seek to clarify the answers over time.

Example: (I will take a shot at writing one paragraph from my perspective as a member of the political science department).

The department's most important stakeholders are students, taxpayers, faculty and staff, and employers. Students expect to have required courses available to them; faculty members to be accessible outside of class; instructors to teach in a coherent, competent, respectful, and engaging manner; and courses which provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and the knowledge and skills required to obtain meaningful careers. They judge us to be successful to the extent that they can look back and conclude that their educational experience has been enriching and prepared them well for success in life. The department is dependent on their satisfaction because they are our "clients." If we do not provide them with value, we will be without students, which will threaten our revenue base and potentially our jobs. But more importantly, our vision of excellence cannot be realized unless our primary stakeholder group is fully satisfied with the service we provide.

Taxpayers expect...

Graduate Students: Add a conclusion summarizing what you learned from your stakeholder analysis that may help you define and achieve organizational success.

Learning Unit 4: SWOT Analysis (Due 19 Oct 2009)

Readings:

- John Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, pp. 123-149.

Assignment:

Writing Assignment 3: SWOT Analysis – (Due 19 Oct 2009)

Identify the most important 6-8 SWOTS that stand in the way of, or may assist you in, bringing your vision of success into being. (Do not feel that you have to have one of each). Also, clarify the importance of each SWOT to organizational success. Remember, our goal is to build on our strengths and minimize our weaknesses in order to take advantage of opportunities and minimize threats posed by our external environment.

Example:

Strength: Competent and Dedicated Staff. Our staff members possess the knowledge and skills required to do their jobs competently and they are dedicated to serving our stakeholders in a superior manner. To succeed in achieving our vision of success, we must build on this strength by ensuring that they receive

opportunities for continuous learning and that nothing is allowed to erode their morale.

Graduate Students: Add a conclusion summarizing what you learned from your SWOT analysis that may help you define and achieve organizational success.

Learning Unit 5: Strategic Issues and Goals (Due 26 Oct 2009)

Reading:

- Burt Nanus and Stephen M. Dobbs, *Leaders Who Make a Difference*, pp. 97-117.

Assignment:

Writing Assignment 4: Strategic Issues, Goals, and Actions – (Due 26 Oct 2009)

For each of the strategic issues you identified on the Discussion Board, identify appropriate goals and objectives/actions for addressing the underlying concerns.

Example:

Strategic Issue: Engaging students more fully in the learning process by achieving a better balance between classroom learning and experiential learning.

Goal: increase the use and availability of internships, simulations, study abroad programs, etc.

Objective: Have a study abroad program set up and running by summer 08.

Action: conduct feasibility study to determine cost-effectiveness.

Graduate Students: Add a conclusion justifying your choice of strategic issues and explaining how managing these issues will bring your organization closer to realizing your vision of excellence.

Learning Unit 6: Presenting Your Final Strategic Plan – (Due 02 Nov 2008)

Readings: None

Assignment:

Writing Assignment 5: Final Strategic Plan – (Due 02 Nov 2008)

Rewrite all earlier writing assignments based on feedback from the instructor and resubmit them as an integrated strategic plan. No additional writing is required other than an introductory paragraph establishing that this is the 2008 strategic plan for X organization undertaken for Y purposes. Rearrange the assignments as follows:

- I. Introduction
- II. Strategic Issues, Goals, and Actions
- III. Appendix A: Statement of Mission, Vision, and Values
- IV. Appendix B: Stakeholder Analysis
- V. Appendix C: SWOT Analysis