

# Course Syllabus

# Strategic Approaches to Project Management

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### Course Description

Project management can be broadly defined as planning, the scheduling of non-routine tasks, and the allocation of resources to meet a specific objective or provide a specified deliverable within a given time period and within budget. Projects have defined start and end points. Today, global economic competition, limited resources, tight deadlines, and the complexity of projects demand knowledge of systematic project management techniques and the applications of project management tools.

This course is designed to provide a general framework for the application of strategic approaches to successful project management. Well-rounded project managers possess not only the technical skills and experience using project management tools, but management skills as well.

To demonstrate a basic knowledge of project management concepts, student projects for this course will build upon competencies and utilize basic project management tools. Topics addressed in this course include concepts and techniques that can be applied to selecting, initiating, planning, budgeting, scheduling, monitoring/controlling, and closing projects. Project scheduling topics will address scheduling techniques (CPM - Critical Path Method), risk assessment, and project acceleration.

Just as important as having experience with using the tools, the project manager should also be versatile in many areas: able to act as a team leader, instructor, decision maker, negotiator, and effective communicator. This course also looks at the leadership and management qualities that project managers should possess to successfully complete a project.

**Note:** This is not a course about how to use project management software. If you want to learn to use it, or you already know how to use a particular piece of software, you are welcome to use it, where appropriate. This course will not offer instruction on using software (such as Microsoft Project), but on the principles and practices of project management that can be supported by any one of the many available software products.

This course will utilize easy-to-learn spreadsheet templates to aid you in the prioritizing projects and scheduling. A freeware Microsoft Excel add-in (YASAI) will also be used (S-1-X) to conduct virtual simulations incorporating the effects of uncertainty for use in risk management planning. While YASAI may not offer the same presentation capabilities nor speed in conducting simulations as commercially-available add-in such as Decisioneering's Crystal Ball, it is easy to learn how to run simulations, and has no restrictions on its use, and is free.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Account for the ways in which organizational structures affect projects
- Follow steps and procedures in initiating a project
- Assess qualitative and financial models to rank project feasibility
- Recognize both good and bad project manager qualities and their impact on successful completion of projects
- Write a clear and concise project scope statement, incorporating elements of the project concept process, project charter, and preliminary project scope statement
- Develop a work breakdown structure (WBS)
- Derive a network diagram then apply scheduling techniques to identify the critical path
- Use simulation techniques and/or risk management techniques to incorporate effects of uncertainty in planning and executing projects
- Apply processes and models in communication, negotiation, and mediation (conflict resolution)
- Plan the steps in monitoring/controlling the project
- Evaluate the impact on resources when expediting projects
- Value the lessons learned in project execution
- Plan the steps in closing the project

## Course Resources

### Required Printed Text

Heldman, K. (2005). Project management jumpStart, (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Sybex, Inc. ISBN: 0782136001.

### e-Book Text (alternate)

The required textbook is alternatively available free for online reading through Books 24x7 from the DePaul University library.

### Required ONLINE Resources

Chapters from the following books are required reading for this course. You are not required to purchase them as they are available online through Books 24x7 at the DePaul Library.

You must use your CampusConnect user ID and password to log into the library.

### Books 24 x 7 from DePaul Library

Huszczko, G. E. (2004). Tools for team leadership: Delivering the x-factor in team eXcellence. Mountain View, CA: Davies-Black Publishing. ISBN: 0891062017.

Kezsbom, D. S. & Edward, K. A. (2001). The new dynamic project management: Winning through the competitive advantage, (2nd Ed). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN: 0471254940.

Lientz, B. P., & Rea, K. P. (2002). Project management for the 21st century, (3rd ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press. ISBN: 012449983x.

Verma, V. K. (1996). The human aspects of project management: Human resources skills for the project manager, volume two. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute. ISBN: 1880410419.

### To access Books 24x7

1. Go to <http://www.lib.depaul.edu/>
2. Under "Research", click on "Books, videos & music."
3. On the right hand side of the screen, under the heading "e-Books", click on "books 24x7: Business Pro."
4. On the EX Proxy Login screen, log in using your CampusConnect user ID and Password. Note: CampusConnect runs maintenance midnight to 12 noon on Sundays so login may not be available during those hours.

5. This brings you to your home page on the Books 24x7 site. Feel free to use the “Help” tab at the top right hand side of the screen as it explains all the features of the site.
6. First you need to locate the books you will be using this quarter and, for your convenience, add them to your electronic bookshelf, so you will be able to access them easily every time you log in.
7. In the lower Search field under the text “Your starting point for finding books”, type in the title of the first book “Project Management for the 21st Century”, then click the “Go” icon.
8. Click the “add to bookshelf folders” icon to the right of the e-book title.
9. On the “Manage Book” screen you may choose to add the book to your default folder or give the folder a name of your choice. Click on the “Update” icon to complete the process of adding the book to your electronic bookshelf.
10. In the “Search” field at the top of the screen, type in the author’s name of the next book and set the first dropdown menu to “authors” and the second to “BusinessPro.” Click the “Go” icon.
11. Locate the book in the list and click the “add to bookshelf folders” icon to the right of the e-book title. On the “Manage Book” screen click on the dropdown menu and add the book to the folder that you created in step 9. Click on the “Update” icon to add the second e-book to your electronic bookshelf.
12. Continue until you have all books added to your bookshelf folder.

Now, any time you log into “books 24x7: Business Pro” these books will be accessible by clicking on your “Bookshelf Folders” title located on the left hand side of the login screen.

We encourage you to search on the topic of “Project Management” and look at the other texts that are available. If you have a particular interest in any aspect of Project Management you are likely to find a book that specifically addresses it, e.g. Project teams; Conflict Resolution; Negotiation etc. While some of the texts were too specialized for use in this overview course, they may provide additional information useful in your final assignments for this course.

***For further help and instructions:***

Click on the “Help” tab at the top right hand side of the screen.

Read the sections on “Viewing Books,” “Browse Tools,” and “Bookshelf Folders” for navigation information.

## Recommended ONLINE Resources

### **Strongly Recommended:** Basic Training in Excel

This course utilizes Microsoft Excel spreadsheet templates, requiring a minimal working knowledge of Excel. This course does not require in-depth knowledge of Excel functions. If you have no experience or not comfortable using Excel, we recommend that you look at the following two URLs and learn how to open workbooks, insert worksheets, input data into cells, insert a row or column, add borders around cells, use standard worksheet functions, input a basic formula (e.g. “=B1\*C1”), use the arrow drawing tool, rename a worksheet, reorder worksheets in a workbook, and saving a workbook.

<http://www.usd.edu/trio/tut/excel/>

[http://www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line\\_excel.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line_excel.htm)

## Course Competences

In this course, you will develop the following competences:

Competence	Competence Statement

H-3-D	<p>Can employ the skills of negotiation, mediation, or interpersonal communication in the resolution of a problem.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifies the components of a specific interpersonal relationship and describes the problem that exists within that relationship</li> <li>2. Applies principles of mediation, negotiation, or interpersonal communication to resolve the problem</li> <li>3. Evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention and of the theoretical model underlying it</li> </ol>
S-1-X	<p>Can design and plan an information technology solution for a problem in project management.</p> <p><b>Alternatively</b>, after discussion with your academic committee, the S-1-X competence can be negotiated with the instructor to fit your particular S-1, providing it can be demonstrated within the context of this project management course.</p> <p>This must be done by the end of the third week of the course.</p>
F-X	<p>Can create a project plan employing accepted project management principles, decision-making models, and tools to identify and acquire information, recognize and incorporate constraints, schedule project activities, and monitor/control execution of the project.</p> <p><b>Alternatively</b>, after discussion with your academic committee, the F-X competence can be negotiated with the instructor to fit your particular focus area, providing it can be demonstrated within the context of this project management course.</p> <p>This must be done by the end of the third week of the course.</p>

## How the Competences Will Be Demonstrated in this Course

You should complete all individual writing assignments, participate in all the online interactive discussions with the instructor and other participants, and submit your final project. If you are taking this course for any two of the three competences, you must demonstrate, in your assignments turned in for assessment and in your final project, the competence requirements listed in both areas.

### H-3-D Competence

You will demonstrate this competence by documenting your application of skills in interpersonal communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution discussed in this course, to an actual situation. You will explain your reasons for using a particular approach and evaluate the effectiveness of it. If you are not currently in a situation in which these skills can be applied, you can reflect back on a situation in which these skills would have been relevant, or use a provided case study.

### S1-X Competence

You will demonstrate this competence by demonstrating proficiency with a computing program such as Microsoft Project and/or existing specialty software to solve financial and scheduling problems in project management, by assessing problems, gathering and statistically analyzing data, recognizing constraints, incorporating the effects of uncertainty, running simulations to make informed decisions, and presenting your approach to solving the problem.

Alternatively, after discussion with your academic committee, the S-1-X competence can be negotiated with the instructor to fit your particular focus area, providing it can be demonstrated within the context of this project management course. This must be done by the end of the third week of the course.

### F-X Competence

Students demonstrate this competence by preparing a project plan that applies general project management principles and processes, utilizing tools and techniques, and employing decision-making models to a real project situation. Students will recognize constraints, utilize tools and management models incorporating constraints, evaluate results, and present their approach to solving the problems in areas of financial analysis, scheduling, risk assessment, and project controls.

Alternatively, after discussion with your academic committee, the F-X competence can be negotiated with the instructor to fit your particular focus area, providing it can be demonstrated within the context of project management. This must be done by the end of the third week of the course.

## Course Structure

This course consists of ten modules. The estimated time to complete each module is one week.

To view the course schedule, click on the **Schedule** link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.

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## Assessment

### Assessment of Learning

#### Course Grading Scale

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

We recommend that you take this course for a letter grade.

### Percentage Distribution of Assessments

Each competence taken in the course will be assessed a letter grade. There are four basic aspects of your participation that contribute to the final assessment of grades. The first two items have to do with your participation in the discussion forums. Because integrating and synthesizing the ideas and theories in the course is an important aspect of the learning process, sharing and offering feedback to your fellow students is a significant element of the process. The third item relates to the assignments turned in for individual modules. The fourth item relates to completion of your final project.

You are being assessed on your reading assignments, through your contributions to the discussion forum, as well as integrating the course text with your independent research on your written assignments. The percentage distribution of assessments is as follows:

20% - Quality of contributions to weekly discussion forums

- Relevance to the topic addressed
- Accuracy of information and use of theory
- Conciseness of explanations and focus on main points
- Evidence cited to substantiate ideas
- Timeliness of submitting messages

15% - Quality of responses to other students in discussion forums

- Respect for other participants' ideas and input
- Appropriate use of comments related to discussion topics
- Focus on staying on track with discussion
- Contributions of helpful and insightful ideas
- Questions that challenge and engage others

#### 35% - Quality of Module Assignments

- Addresses the assignments according to directions
- Submits assignments on time
- Summarizes and prioritizes information appropriately
- Demonstrates understanding of Learning Outcomes
- Describes content with appropriate level of reflection and detail

#### 30% - Quality of Final Projects

- the assignment according to directions
- Originality of incorporating own ideas and theories into the assignment
- Appropriate use of theories and research
- Accuracy of information used as evidence and proper referencing
- Presented with attention to aesthetics, clarity and grammatical acuity
- Demonstration of ability to use software tools to solve project management problems

### General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments

In general, grading of all writing assignments will be based on the following:

**Content** refers to the treatment of the topic logically and analytically. This is the substance, the “what” of the paper; what you had to say about the topic, what you presented in defense of your position, and what your analysis revealed about your thought processes and grasp of the material you grappled with.

**Organization** is the way your paper is arrayed and presented, including both the overall organization and the arrangement of sub-parts. These include: relevant title and subheadings; introductory material, where needed; summaries, where appropriate; connective and transitional links; and what used to be called “rhetoric”: the skillful arrangement of the pieces for maximum persuasive impact on the reader.

**Mechanics** refers to the use of Spelling and Grammar check, the use of Standard English, the accurate use of sentence structure and punctuation, and effective and sensitive word choice usage. Mastery of basic communication and writing skills is a must for undergraduate (and graduate) students. The paper you prepare should also use proper APA citation form for in-text references and for your reference list.

It is important that your essays and papers:

- Specifically addresses the competence that you are fulfilling in this course
- Organizes your supportive evidence into relevant paragraphs that address your subject
- Takes into account a variety of points of view
- Demonstrates your appreciation of other points of view (demonstrates empathy and the ability to account for the vantage points of others)
- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate the evidence derived from your chosen sources into your argument according in standard English using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure
- Uses proper quotation form, including the introduction to your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation
- Has an introduction and a concluding paragraph
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography

### Assessment Criteria for your Course Paper by Competence

All competences offered in this class (H-3-D, S-1-X, and F-X) will complete all weekly assignments. This accounts for 35 percent of your grade. The final paper, detailed below, accounts for 30 percent of your grade.

If you are taking this course for two competences you must fulfill both competence document requirements. The final paper can be combined into one deliverable if you are taking this course for two competences.

### H-3-D

You will write a 5-page paper (1250 word essay) documenting your application of the principles of negotiation, mediation or interpersonal communication in a project management situation. You will justify your choice of approach and evaluate its effectiveness. The situation can be one you are currently involved with, one you have been involved with in the past, or you can use a case study provided for you. You will complete all the weekly assignments but are not required to complete the final Project Plan Documents.

**Word Count:** Your final paper is not to exceed 1250 words.

It is important that your final paper:

- Specifically addresses the competence(s) that you are fulfilling in this course
- Has an introduction (Executive Summary) and concluding paragraph (Final Remarks)
- Identifies the components of a specific interpersonal relationship and describes the problem that exists within that relationship
- Applies principles of mediation, negotiation, or interpersonal communication to resolve the problem
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention and of the theoretical model underlying it
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography (if used)

### S-1-X

You will complete all the weekly assignments AND complete the final Risk Management Plan. Many of the sections of your final paper are created as homework assignments during the course. You are required to turn the assignments in. Work towards your final paper will be considered as a DRAFT and will not be graded during the course. HOWEVER, your instructor will comment on your work, so that you will have the opportunity to review and revise until your final document is handed in.

**Word Count:** Your final paper is not to exceed 1750 words.

### Final Project Risk Management Plan Specifications

Your final project document will have the following headings and sections:

- Executive Summary, including Scope Statement
- Schedule
  - CPM Diagram
  - Schedule Simulation
  - Recommendations
- Risk Management Plan
- Final Remarks
- Personal/Professional Applications and Benefits Using Simulation
- Appendix (not included in word count)
  - Supporting documentation (Excel spreadsheets, etc.)

It is important that your final paper:

- Specifically addresses the competence(s) that you are fulfilling in this course
- Uses the headings provided above
- Has an introduction (Executive Summary) and concluding paragraph (Final Remarks)
- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate the evidence derived from your chosen sources into your paper according to standard English using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography (if used)

### F-X

You will complete all the weekly assignments AND complete the final Project Plan Document. Most of the sections of your final paper are created as homework assignments during the course. You are required to turn the assignments in. Work towards your final paper will be considered as a DRAFT and will not be graded during the course. HOWEVER, your instructor will comment on your work, so that you will have the opportunity to review and revise until your final document is handed in.

**Word Count:** Your final paper is not to exceed 3000 words.

### **Final Project Plan Specifications**

Your final project document will have the following headings and sections:

- Executive Summary, including Scope Statement
- Initiation
  - The Project Manager and Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities
  - Project Selection Process
- Planning
  - Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
  - Schedule
    - CPM Diagram
    - Activity Slack Time
    - Gantt chart
  - Risk Management Plan
- Execution
  - Assembling the Project Team
- Monitoring and Controlling
  - Change Management Plan
- Closing
  - Plan for Closing the Project
- Final Remarks
- Appendix (not included in word count)
  - Supporting documentation (Excel spreadsheets, etc.)

It is important that your final paper:

- Specifically addresses the competence(s) that you are fulfilling in this course
- Uses the headings provided above
- Has an introduction (Executive Summary) and concluding paragraph (Final Remarks)
- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate the evidence derived from your chosen sources into your paper according to standard English using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography (if used)

### **Online Discussion**

#### **Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation**

In the online discussions your responses will be assessed on whether you are:

- Offering up ideas or resources and inviting a critique of them
- Asking challenging questions
- Articulating, explaining and supporting positions on ideas
- Exploring and supporting issues by adding explanations and examples
- Reflecting on and re-evaluating personal opinions
- Offering a critique, challenging, discussing and expanding ideas of others
- Negotiating interpretations, definitions and meanings
- Summarizing previous contributions and asking the next question
- Proposing actions based on ideas that have been developed

*Adapted from: Gilly S. (2000), p. 143. e-Moderating: The key to teaching and learning online. London, UK: Kogan Page Press.*

### **Online Participation Guidelines for this Course**

A significant part of your online learning experience involves learning with and from your classmates and the instructor in the online discussions and group assignments.

Active participation means sharing information and resources and posting your ideas and critiquing and expanding on the ideas of others in a collegial fashion. This discussion is informal in the sense that it is meant to encourage interested discussion. You are expected to follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar and usage.

These discussions are for you to exchange your reflections with your classmates and instructor about what you are learning. The discussions will be organized into forums around the particular topic you are studying each week.

You may be asked by the instructor to take leadership in a certain group for a certain time of the course. You will receive further instructions from your instructor if this occurs.

You should contribute your responses to the particular assignment for that particular discussion heading which will be posted.

For each Discussion Forum, ***you are required to make at least one original contribution to each topic and respond to one classmate's contribution.***

## Online Discussions

Online discussions are a forum for discussion and sharing information among students. Your instructor may create one or more discussion forums related to the topics you are studying each week.

At the beginning of the quarter, your instructor will set up three discussion forums. These three forums will help you and your classmates get off to an immediate start on the course, by providing conversational spaces for necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. These forums are:

- Introductions
- Course Q&A
- The Project Forum

The Course Q&A forum is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers. You will also find the schedule of specific dates for your course in this Forum.

The Project Forum can be used freely for your own conversation (like setting up groups or teams, if these are used in the course).

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## Policies

### Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

## Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

## Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

## Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve "interactions"—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as "research" with "human subjects" and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning's Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no "harm"—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.

3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
  - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

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## Course Expectations

### Time Management and Attendance

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour “face to face” course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate “office hours” when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

### Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

### How to Do Well In This Class

This section provides a few hints on how to do well in this class:

Participate in class discussions. The class discussions and homework exercises are worth a large percentage of your grade. Most modules ask you to post an opinion and include a follow-up. Don't miss the follow-up posting.

Don't fall behind – In general once a discussion is graded, it's over. Because the forum will be closed don't think you can post discussion items several weeks after they are graded and expect credit. **If you have special circumstances that will require you to post late to a discussion, you must inform your instructor as soon as you are aware of them.**

Read the assignments carefully. If the assignment says answer three questions, then answer three. If it says use APA style for your references, find out what that style is and use it.

Email questions. When you have any questions, email your instructor. If your instructor posts a question to you (via your private discussion forum) then answer it (it often means your instructor cannot find an assignment of yours).

Post all assignments by the specified Due Date.

### Final Note

Participating in SNL courses can be an enriching, rewarding experience, and a chance to share ideas in a safe environment.

Some difficulties at the beginning of an online course are quite normal; solving them is part of every distance learning experience.

Enjoy the journey into lifelong learning!

### Credits

This course was designed by Paul A. Okamoto, MBA, PE, and Mauri Collins, D.Ed, and produced by staff at the Center for Distance Education, the School for New Learning, DePaul University.

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