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MGMT 646-10 Performance Assessment

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Course Description
This course covers the theory and practice of assessment in organizations. Included will be consideration of environmental and organizational influences on organizational performance; determining what to measure, how to assess, and when to assess; and using assessment results as a basis for selecting change interventions. All of this is undertaken to improve performance at the individual, group and organization levels. We will examine purposes of assessment, formal methods of performance measurement, creation of standards of performance, performance data collection, judgmental processes, and motivation, and sources of error in assessment. We will also examine how assessments are inputs for decisions to make changes, paying special attention to the creating fit between measurement systems and change processes, the culture of the organization and the societal context in which the organization operates. Ethical issues, social responsibility of organizations, sustainability, and perceptions of fairness/justice related to measurement systems, changing organizations, and distribution of outcomes will also be examined.

Objectives
This course is designed to provide an in-depth view of the variables involved in using assessment as a strategic tool, including identifying what to change via assessment at all levels of analysis in organizations. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to apply social-psychological, psychometric, cognitive, and organizational theories to develop, critique, improve and use assessment systems in various organizational contexts to determine causes of problems; and to understand how change interventions are linked to assessment to improve performance.

Format
The content of this course will be covered in classes that meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. To do this, we will use lectures, discussion, movies, and in-class activities to enhance understanding and learning. We will have 3 short papers due during the week. Following the week-long examination of theory and methods, students will apply these theories and methods in a project they develop over the next four weeks. In this project, each student will examine an assessment process in a real organization, assess the current use of the process, identify benefits and problems with the current system, and suggest how the process could be improved to be make it more meaningful as a tool for managers. During this four-week period, each student will consult individually with the professor to insure their success on the paper. This integrative project is designed to allow the student to experience how assessment processes should be conducted in organizations. CAUTION: This course is like running a marathon—we’ll all be VERY tired by the end of the week. BUT, we will also have fun and learn a lot.

Course Materials
Performance Assessment & Change Readings “Packet”—on the course’s Blackboard site at the
Xavier Portal “My Courses” tab. Click on “Course Documents” and then “Readings”. Additional materials and readings will be distributed in class and/or posted during the class.

Grades

Grades will be based upon the following components:

- Attendance & Participation in class activities, 50 points/day  
  250 points
- Short Reports (3, written and presented in class) 100 points each  
  300 points
- Final paper  
  300 points

Participation and Preparation

At the end of this syllabus is the Daily Schedule for each day of the week. You need do all of the reading assigned for each day PRIOR TO THAT CLASS SESSION. You need to have read it in order for us to discuss it—I will not be doing lectures covering each reading. In order to discuss the material and use it during in-class exercises, you need to be familiar with the content prior to class.

Class Activities

Each day, there will be in-class experiential exercises, or activities. Grades will be based upon being present to participate in the activities and in discussion related to the activities, serious involvement in doing the activities, and quality of work. Activities are listed in the Daily Schedule; however, these may be adjusted to meet the needs of the class.

Short Reports

Each student will prepare two short papers on films the student will watch in class. The first will be viewed in class on Monday, with its paper due Tuesday morning; the second movie will be viewed in class on Thursday afternoon, with its paper being due via email on Friday. I will give students specific questions to address in each of the films, and each student will write short papers answering the questions. The first film is “A Beautiful Mind”; the second is “A Few Good Men”. Instructions for these assignments will be distributed in class and posted on the course’s Blackboard site on the Xavier Portal “My Courses” tab. Each is worth 100 points.

The third short paper exercise is for each student to select one article from a collection of newspapers, magazines, and journals that Dr. Kilbourne will bring to class, or one found by the student with Dr. Kilbourne’s approval. The article should be selected because it has something to do with measuring success at the individual, group, or organization level of analysis. Assessment issues will be directly discussed or will underlie articles whose themes involve performance, impact, change, sustainability, ethical issues, strategy, etc., of the organization, group, or person being discussed in the article. The report must briefly summarize the article, identify what the relevant issues in the article are, identify the level of analysis that is the focus of the article, and discuss the potential outcomes of the assessment involved, i.e., analyze and discuss whether the assessment method involved in it will achieve the objectives of measuring as it is designed or if it should be changed. Each student will read the article and write a 2-3 page report applying our material to consider measurement and change issues inherent in the situation described in the article. These reports will be due on Friday, when they will be discussed in class. The articles on assessment from our readings list are to be applied in analyzing the situation in the newspaper article.

All written reports will be graded primarily for content. Each student will also present each
report to class on days indicated in the Daily Schedule. The presentations are scored as Class Activities, along with participating in discussions of classmates’ presentations.

Papers must be word-processed with 1 inch margins on all edges, entirely doubled spaced (not like the spacing in this syllabus) with paragraph indentation (one tab, like this syllabus). Be sure to proof-read for correct spelling, wording, and punctuation. Don’t rely on your software—it will give you incorrect punctuation and wording suggestions, and it will not catch all spelling errors. Finally, attach a copy of the article to your report.

Data Collection
Students will participate in the creation of a measurement process and instrument as one of the class activities. You will be assigned to groups to complete this exercise, going into the field to use your measurement instrument and discuss issues related to improving performance using your data. No written report will be required for this exercise. This counts as participation points for one day.

Final Paper
The purpose of this paper is to apply all the course materials to analyze an assessment process of interest to you. Full instructions for this paper will be distributed in a separate document. This paper is worth 300 points and will be due at the professor’s office or mailbox on or before June 11, 2012, by 5 p.m. in hard copy form at 332 Smith or in my mailbox at 320 Smith. Do NOT send me an electronic copy of this paper.

You will choose an assessment process or system that you present to me for approval. It must be from an organization where you are currently or formerly have been a member, so that the problem you will address can be one of importance to you. Your objective in this case is to describe the system or process, critique it for both positive and negative aspects, and suggest changes where your analysis deems them appropriate, applying our material to do each of these steps. You may, alternatively, choose a situation in which there is currently no assessment being done but for which assessment is needed to be able to control something that is not operating effectively because no one is held accountable for it. In this case, you must describe in detail what the appropriate assessment system would be to give managers needed understanding to calibrate performance, to change goals, to be more successful, etc.

Again, full instructions and a grading guide will be distributed in a separate document.

Approximate Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Graded Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Framework for What to Assess &amp; Goal-based Assessment;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variables that Cause Presenting Problems (Performance Gaps) and Opportunities—review from MGMT 600</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings for discussion: articles by Kerr; Opie; &amp; Mausolff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels of Analysis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Afternoon
Factors that influence how we perceive performance--lecture
View “A Beautiful Mind”

Day 2
Morning
Discussion of Student Papers on the Film
Presentation of a Performance Management Model
Readings for discussion: articles by Lawler & McDermott;
Schuler, Fulkerson, & Dowling; and Grote

Afternoon
Rating/Assessment/Measurement Context and methods
Readings for discussion: articles Maher; Sanwong;
Schellhardt; & Longenecker, Sims & Gioia

Day 3
Morning
Collecting Data—Lecture
Data Sources
Creating a generic measurement instrument

Afternoon
Field exercise in data collection
Reports from teams on data collection

Day 4
Morning
Linking data and action—Outcomes
Attached to Measures
Readings for discussion: articles by Roche; Zhou

Afternoon
View “A Few Good Men”
Types of Interventions—handouts and lecture
Readings for discussion: articles by Schramm;
VanDerCammen; and from SHRM

Day 5
Morning
Discussion of Student Papers on the Film

Afternoon
Discussion of final project and course wrap-up

Monday, June 13 final paper due.