

**THE EXERCISE OF MORAL LEADERSHIP IN AN INCREASINGLY
UNCERTAIN AND VOLATILE WORLD**

Syllabus, Elective Course, Spring 2012 (5 credits)

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Meet Time: Thursdays, 12.30-14.30, Room 740

Office Hours: Fridays, 11.00-12.00 (by appointment only)

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is about moral leadership and the dilemmas and decisions that individuals confront in a range of situations in which ethical thinking is needed. When you join the course, you and other highly qualified graduate students address the long-term political, organizational and systemic challenges that you may face as a leader of your organization (whether public, private, or non-profit). More specifically, this course seeks to develop student's ability to:

1. *Think systematically about leadership under complex and turbulent situations.* Students will learn to recognize the characteristic dynamics of complex adaptive systems, including feedback, information and time lags, linked effects and unintended consequences. The course will also draw on experience of both international organizations and large corporations to use scenario planning as a tool for decision-making.
2. *Develop the practice of forward thinking to help navigate through time of change.* We will develop a systematic approach for dealing with forward thinking/Scenario Planning to take the best course of actions and move beyond the official future.

II. COURSE OUTLINE:

Introduction

- *Session 1:* Thinking about the unthinkable?
- *Session 2:* What challenges do we face and what choice(s) to be made?

Shaping and testing scenarios: Fundamentals, cases

- *Session 3:* Building a vision
- *Session 4:* Inspiration, creativity and reality
- *Session 5:* Understanding the implications of moral dilemmas and work avoidance
- *Session 6:* Intervention, getting attention and getting things done
- *Session 7:* Boundaries, partnerships and staying alive in the corporate world
- *Session 8:* Co-creation and the process of dealing with intractable crisis
- *Session 9:* Technical clinic: Review of the skills and methodology steps
- *Session 10:* Final wrap-up: Listening, sensing the environment and using emotions

Conclusion

- *Session 11: Saying goodbye and laying the past to rest: End-of-term presentations (1)*
- *Session 12: Saying goodbye and laying the past to rest: End-of-term presentations (2)*

III. PREREQUISITES AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are no formal prerequisites for this course. The course draws from several disciplines: History and literature provide a rich caseload from which to explore the pattern of rational and irrational choice. Social psychology provides insight into the dynamics of social systems and group behavior. Philosophy provides the concepts of paradigm change and adaptation. Political science, anthropology and business management provide perspectives on the functions of power and authority. And mythology provides a window into the functions of symbolism, public narrative and choice-making for individuals and communities.

As in a “Lab”, we expect that you will put forth hypotheses, test them, then go back and revise them based on various inputs or other validations. Identifying the best path for a course of action is an iterative process, so the class is designed with checkpoints and many team discussions. The course uses a variety of means to learn theory and the arts of practice. In addition to the traditional methods of lectures and readings, the course uses innovative teaching methods: case studies, structured exercises, and the case-in-point teaching which uses the classroom process to understand the dynamics of adaptive work, the functions of authority, listening, diagnosis, intervention and the practice of leadership.

IV. ASSESSMENT AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION

There are three ways to demonstrate your mastery of the course material: 1°) Participating in class discussion; 2°) the memo write up and policy debates; and 3°) participating into the end-of-term project (20-page paper).

Class Participation (1/3rd of Grade)

We aspire to engaging and high-quality class discussions. The conversation will be engaging if participants are willing to take risky or unpopular points of view; participate in debates and role plays; use logic, precision, and evidence in making arguments, apply course materials appropriately; and are constructively critical. Obviously everyone must be both present and prepared for each class. Participation is obviously subjective. So, please be aware of the very high weight it has on your grade and talk to us to be sure you have feedback on how are you doing.

The memo write up and policy debates (1/3rd of Grade)

During the term, you will be expected to draft a few policy memo (in group) related to a specific case study. The memo will not be longer than 2 pages and specific instructions will be provided to you on how to craft such a memo. Once your memos are drafted, your recommendations will be debated in class.

End-of-term Project (1/3rd of Grade)

Done by all students in groups, this concentrated and integrative end-of-semester exercise will engage students in a practical policy exercise, which will draw upon knowledge gained from the material discussed throughout the semester. Instructions to be provided in class.

VI. SCHEDULE AND READINGS

The primarily material for this course will be case studies and articles. The readings have been carefully selected to reflect a variety of perspectives and stimulate your thinking. They will be provided to you in advance of each class by electronic means. There is no course packet for this course.

<p>Session 1: Thursday, 26 January 12:30-14:30</p> <p><i>Reading for Session 1</i></p>	<p>Thinking about the unthinkable?</p> <p>This session introduces the notion of forward thinking in a world of uncertainty and turbulence. We start the discussion by a panorama of today’s world, including the role played by disruptive innovations and breakthrough. We show that scenarios are a well-established, tested, and powerful tool for making decisions, generating ideas, framing research, crafting visions, and developing new directions and initiatives. Finally, we discuss the syllabus, team formation and ground rules.</p> <p>Practical exercise 1: Identifying and developing the focal question Introducing the process; beginning to identify an organization's focal issue; reviewing scenario thinking fundamentals; discussing second thoughts and the logics and dynamics of alternative worlds; introducing scenario fundamentals.</p> <p>Case Study: Mount Everest Simulation. The case will be distributed in advance with instructions. Groups will be formed to discuss the issue and find the most appropriate solutions to a survival problem.</p> <p>Methodology: Overall introduction to our forward thinking process. Note: The full “Scenario Planning” methodology is to be handed out in class.</p> <p>📖 “Mount Everest 1996”, HBS case 9-303-061 📖 “Mr. Order Meets Mr. Chaos” (9 pages), Robert Wright, Foreign Policy, May/June 2001 📖 “Linking Scenarios to Corporate Planning” (6 pages), Gill Ringland 📖 “US must learn to think the unthinkable” (3 pages), Eamonn Kelly, September 2005</p>
<p>Session 2: Thursday, 2 February 12:30-14:30</p>	<p>Diagnostics test: What challenges do we face and what choice(s) to be made</p> <p>During this session, we re-affirm our main objective: We do not seek to predict the future; rather, we help identify the most important driving forces and uncertainties in order to create multiple scenarios of how the world and the industry might unfold. Indeed, choosing a scenario framework is an iterative, trial-and-error process. It requires testing various combinations of critical uncertainties until you arrive at a framework that will serve as a strong platform on which to explore the future possible outcomes of the focal question.</p> <p>Debate: Antigone by Sophocles We explore fundamental questions about the rationale of choice based on the discussion of Antigone, the classic play by Sophocles, which serves</p>





as a mirror of human experience in all of its complexity and ambiguity. A few questions prevail: In this conflict between society and the individual (between the laws of man and those of God), what arguments can be made? What scenarios can be drafted, what course of action to follow tenaciously? Shall we seek or accept some type of compromise? How to consider alternatives and how to recognize that we can embark on a tragic course? Etc.

Practical exercise 2: Exploring the external environment

We learn to develop strategies for identifying key factors, environmental forces, critical uncertainties, and the logics and dynamics of alternative worlds.

Case study: The Mont Fleur Scenarios. What does it mean for a government to recognize a problem, to see a crisis coming? How can scenarios help the decision makers? How much can training, systems, and the regulation of special interests enable political will? To do so, we will study the “Mont Fleur Scenarios”.

Reading for Session

- 2  Antigone by Sophocles. Please by the book or consult <http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/antigone.html>
-  The Mont Fleur Scenarios, “What will South Africa be like in the year 2002?” with a new introduction by Mont Fleur facilitator, Adam Kahane
-  “Scenario Planning: A Tool for Strategic Thinking”, Paul Schoemaker, Sloan Management Review, Winter 1995 (Pages 25-40)
-  Ahead of the Curve: Anticipating Strategic Surprise Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall (16 pages)

Optional:

“Scenarios of Change in South Africa”, by Graham Galer (July 2004)
<http://taylorandfrancis.metapress.com/media/halhnmwurme7a768x2m/contributions/1/h/c/a/lhca782543wnphje.pdf>

“Creating Scenario Building Blocks” in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz, (Pages 100-117)

Session 3:

Building scenarios of possible futures

Thursday, 9
February
12:30-14:30



In this session, we learn about the nuts and bolts of scenario planning and developing concrete forward thinking strategies. We learn how to integrate as broad a range of perspectives as possible. This includes involving many different stakeholders in the discovery process and incorporating active input from visionary, relevant thought leaders, top end opinion leaders, etc. We assert that provocateurs help challenge conventional wisdom and inspire new learning and insights.

Practical exercise 3: Engaging and applying the scenario process

Exploring different scenario techniques; explaining alternative approaches to scenario development: inductive, deductive...; Building scenario logics; Fleshing out scenario stories. A specific exercise will help you to:

- Identify how scenario planning can address different strategic situations in order to design your project effectively
- Structure and adjust scenario projects, based on available time and resources
- Choose and engage participants in the scenario process (core team, interviewees, external experts and provocateurs)
- Define the focal questions and set the appropriate scope and expectations
- Create, test, and refine strategic options, using scenarios as the platform
- Identify early indicators for monitoring the external environment
- Develop a scanning, monitoring, and scenario review process appropriate to your organization
- Communicate scenarios to other stakeholders
- Etc.

Simulation: The power of the group - “Think Big 10 Minutes”. Each group will be given 10 minutes to speak on their vision for an assigned topic.

Reading for Session 3  Plotting Your Scenarios Jay Ogilvy and Peter Schwartz (21 pages)
 “Destino Columbia” (32 pages), a Scenario-Planning process for the new millennium (in-class discussion)

Session 4 Inspiration, creativity and reality: The art of story telling and writing

Thursday, 16
 February
 12:30-14:30





A difficult step is to develop scenarios into good narratives—stories that begin in the present, and end in the future. These scenario stories can be powerful communication tools—a well-written brief story can quickly capture a lot of complexity and leave a lasting message. This session is a pure skill building exercise on writing the narrative of scenarios. Core concepts will be revisited: Framing issues, decision makers and experts, moving the plot of the scenario, information hunting and gathering, driving forces, emotions and perceptions. More importantly, techniques of writing narratives and communication findings will be introduced.

Practical exercise 4: Automatic writing – “Words matter. Words count. Words have lasting import”

The art of forward thinking is about the reasoned presentation of your scenarios. To do so, you need to identify the choice points and from them on you can organize and present your analysis in an orderly, logical way. There should be an evident flow in your reasoning and writing. This does not mean that you find neat answers; forward thinking is, after all, filled with ambiguities, paradoxes, and complexities. Your job is to explore various situations thoughtfully and with some degree of logic. You will need to ponder before you write. Writing too soon, before you know what you are going to say, can lead to vague thinking. Keep in mind that a good analysis will have a recognizable beginning, development, and end, as any good essay does.

Simulation: The Future of Education

<p><i>Reading for Session</i> 4</p>	<p>📖 "Teaching Smart People How to Learn" (20 pages), Chris Argyris, Harvard Business Review, 1 May 1991</p> <p>📖 "The Death of the Expert?" (10 pages), Richardson, Kurt A. & Tait, Andrew, Emergence: Complexity & Organization, Issue Vol. 12 No. 2 2010 pp. 87-97</p> <p>📖 General Pointers on Memo-Writing and Talking Points</p> <p>📖 The Elements of Style, William Strunk and E.B. White</p> <p>📖 The Courage to Create, Rollo May, 1994 (Read entire book)</p> <p>📖 "Composing the Plot" in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 135-162)</p>
<p>Session 5:</p> <p>Thursday, 24 February 12:30-14:30</p> <p><i>Reading for Session</i> 5</p>	<p>Understanding the implications of moral dilemmas and work avoidance</p> <p>In this class, we discuss the implications of not recognizing moral dilemmas and adoption a "work avoidance" attitude. We develop a sense for dealing with such issues and implementing strategies and early indicators for decision-making. Knowledge creation will be critical to assess strategic options. A policy debate is also organized.</p> <p>Case study: Royal Dutch/Shell in Nigeria (A). Working with Shell's country manager for Nigeria, the company's Committee of Managing Directors must decide <u>to respond or not to respond</u> to the Nigerian government's decision to impose the death sentence on Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other leaders of a movement for the rights of the Ogoni.</p> <p>Practical exercise 5: The Art of the Debate (1)</p> <p>📖 Royal Dutch/Shell in Nigeria (A), HBS Case 9-399-126.</p>
<p>Session 6:</p> <p>Thursday, 15 March 12:30-14:30</p> <p><i>Reading for Session</i> 6</p>	<p>Intervention, getting attention and getting things done</p> <p>By this time, you understand quite well how to use the scenario planning methodology, which allows you to develop scenarios for the future and arrive at a few choice options. We now argue that the most difficult challenge is your ability to exercise leadership and get your choice to the decision-making table. A specific focus is made on the following issues: Communicating, presenting, and extending the scenario process and further implications; Embedding scenarios in organizations; Sustaining scenario thinking with senior management, etc.</p> <p>Practical exercise 6: Scenarios on the Cuban Missile Crisis</p> <p>📖 Scenarios: An Explorer's Guide.</p> <p>📖 "User's Guide: How to hold a strategic conversation", in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 227-239)</p> <p>📖 "Appendix: Steps to developing Scenarios", in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 242-248)</p> <p>📖 Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis [Paperback]</p>

Session 7:	Boundaries, partnerships and staying alive in the corporate world
Thursday, 22 March 14:45-16:45	<p>During this session, we introduce students to the use of scenarios planning within the corporate world. We continue the discussion on the concept of innovation and disruptive forces. We will examine four fundamental obstacles to the ability of organizations to embrace the long view strategy: cultural obstacles, psychological obstacles to decision making, organizational obstacles to action, strategic obstacles.</p> <p>Case study: Iridium – Could the failure be avoided? A class discussion will be organized. The case will be distributed in advance and students are expected to do the reading and analysis in group beforehand.</p> <p><i>Reading for Session</i> 7  The Rise and Fall of Iridium, HBS Case 9-601-040  “Shell Global Scenarios to 2025” (Skim through it to get a sense of the methodology), The Future Business Environment: Trends, Trade-Offs, and Choices (See www.shell.cosm/scenarios/). Read ‘Scenarios: An Explorer’s Guide’</p>
Session 8:	Co-creation and the process of dealing with intractable crisis
Thursday, 29 March 17:15-20:45	<p>In this session, we discuss the key principles of co-creation in building scenarios. We do not begin with answers. Rather we are looking at all the ways to discover the answers on a specific case. Co-creation not only liberates the collective intelligence, but it also produces deep, enduring learning among stakeholders involved in a major dispute, enabling them to make wiser decisions about the future and act with greater confidence in the present.</p> <p>Case study: Permanent Status Negotiation between Israel and Palestine. Is the Peace process likely to be achieved in the next 5 years?</p> <p>Practical exercise 7: The Art of the Debate (2)</p> <p><i>Reading for Session</i> 8  Watch the video (First 20 minutes): Let's Meet in the Common Room: How East and West Can Find Common Ground In Today's Strained Political Climate, http://ksgaccman.harvard.edu/iop/events_forum_video.asp?ID=3106  “The Future of the Middle East” (6 pages), Peter Schwartz, April 2005</p>
Session 9:	Technical clinic: Review of the skills and methodology steps
Thursday, 12 April 14:45-16:45	<p>This is a review session before the presentations for the end of the term project. In examining the learning over past months, we focus on choice points and choices, on how problems are seen; on how power to act is legitimized and exercised by using scenario planning; on how purposes and ultimate ends are balanced; and which actions are taken and why. We now review the key concepts and allow time for you to present work-in-progress on the end-of-term simulations.</p>

<i>Reading for Session 9</i>	📖 Review the methodology handed out during previous classes
Session 10:	Final wrap-up: Listening, sensing the environment and using emotions
Thursday, 19 April 14:45-20:45	This is a session about concluding on scenario planning. Case study: Paradise Lost, by John Milton
<i>Reading for Session 10</i>	📖 Review the methodology handed out during previous classes
Session 11 & 12:	Saying goodbye and laying the past to rest: End-of-term presentations
Thursday, 26 April 14:45-19:00	Please invite your fellow students, friends, partners, spouses, etc. Venue to be announced (Dinner or cocktail provided)