

Northwestern University
Farley Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation
Fall Quarter 2018
Entrepreneurship 360**

Leadership, Ethics, and You

** Previously called Entrep 395 and BIP 394

This syllabus is subject to change. Canvas is the best source for the most up to date information.

TIME: Tuesdays and Thursdays, **2:00 pm – 3:20 pm.**

LOCATION: **Ford 1350**

PROFESSOR: Verinder Syal v-syal@northwestern.edu (847) 975-6054

TA: Mason Wessenhofer. masonweissenhofer2019@u.northwestern.edu (815) 641-1591

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment. My calendar is on Canvas.

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power” – Abraham Lincoln

“What luck for rulers that men do not think.” – Adolf Hitler

“All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” - Edmund Burke

“The truth knocks on the door and you say, “Go away, I’m looking for the truth,” and so it goes away. Puzzling.” – Robert M. Pirsig

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.” - Gandhi

“Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.” - Carl Jung

COURSE SYNOPSIS:

What exactly is leadership? Are leaders born? Are you a leader? Where do ethics, and integrity, fit into leadership, and, even more importantly, into your life? Leading others is hard. Leading oneself is even harder.

This course is designed to dig into these questions to help you develop your “True North,” a compass that will help

you lead yourself, and others, with values you have determined for yourself to a destination that you have deeply considered.

For aspiring entrepreneurs, coming up with an idea may be the easiest part of your journey. The hard part will be determining how to lead people, develop the right organization culture, get things done, and most importantly lead yourself. **But these challenges are true for everyone else too** - whether you aspire to be a doctor, engineer, artist, banker, teacher, journalist, or something else.

Therefore, this class is open to *seniors and juniors* from **all** disciplines, and is by **application** only.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Who is a leader and what is leadership? Are leaders born or can leaders be made or make themselves? What does it take to become a leader? Good looks, eloquence, charisma? The answers may surprise you.

Some leaders have conquered vast lands; others have produced profound thought. Some assimilated all that they encountered; others destroyed everything they touched. Some were heroes; others despots. Even today, some build their people and institutions; others focus on their ego and their net worth. Some serve, some take. **Why?**

You will search for answers by studying historical and current leaders, their character, traits, and methods. In our quest for clarity we will ask: Are there any Universal Principles of Leadership (“UPL”)?

You will examine the role ethics, integrity, and character play in leadership? Are these a handicap or are they the very essence of leadership, and perhaps even life?

You will also use real life case studies to think about situations that you are likely to encounter in the real world. You will think about ethical challenges, crucibles, and grappling with the purpose of leadership and your life. We will discuss some of the necessary tools for leadership including Vision, Values, Aligning, Motivating, and Executing (as in getting things done).

Throughout the quarter you will be examining closely three key questions:

1. What exactly is leadership?
2. Are ethics a hindrance to success or are they the foundation to one’s life?
3. What kind of leader – person – do I want to work on becoming?

Your final paper called - **Leading Others, Leading Myself** – will examine these question in depth.

Ultimately life is not about what others do, or what is done to you; it is about you, what you do, how you choose to lead, and how you choose to live your life. Yes, it is a choice. And you make the choice. Only you.

“It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves.” – Sir Edmund Hillary

Course Syllabus:

The **final details** are best found on **Canvas**. But for now, please review the following:

- Exhibit A – The 20 Classes
- Exhibit B – **Grading**, papers, and presentations.
- Exhibit C – **Norms**. (Yes, we have these. And, yes, we adhere to them).

“Participant Centered Learning” will be our philosophy. All that matters is your learning. It has been shown that when students participate actively and vigorously they learn more. So everyone will need to step forward and get onto the playing field. There will be no place to hide; the workload will occasionally be daunting but, if you are like

my past students, you will be energized. Don't get sidetracked by political correctness; speak your mind but always engage with civility.

Required Texts (Available from Amazon):

1. *True North* by Bill George. Without a compass can you really navigate leadership or your life?
2. *The How of Happiness* by Sonja Lyubomirsky. The title says it all.
3. *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown. We have too many choices. We want everything. Now. What we get is a life full of disillusionment and dissatisfaction. Do you not want to live a life of meaning and purpose?
4. *Developing the Leader within You* by John Maxwell. Clear answers, clear plan of action. Are you ready?
5. *How Good People Make Tough Choices* by Rushworth M. Kidder. While deciding between Right and Right decisions can be tough, why do so many have a tough time between Right and Wrong decisions?
6. *How Will You Measure Your Life?* by Clayton M. Christensen. The ultimate question, perhaps.
7. A Case pack from Harvard Business Review Online: *Details will be posted on Canvas.*

I suggest you whip through the Happiness and Essentialism books over the Spring break.

FINAL THOUGHT

This course is ultimately a journey in introspection, something that is alien to most of us. We keep thinking that leadership is about leading others, but how can we lead others without first learning to lead ourselves? Furthermore, how can we lead ourselves without understanding who we are, and where we want to go?

As scary as this may sound on the surface, is this not the purpose of life? "Know thyself," the sages say. "Be thine own self be true." This will be a rewarding journey; of that I am certain. The more you are willing to be honest with yourself and open in class, the more fulfilling it will be.

What are we most scared of? The opinion of others, of being found wanting, of not being good enough? Darkness can only be dispelled by light. Together we must create the conditions that will allow each of us to step forward. Sensitivity and honest feedback can co-exist; from travails and despair, perceived or real, insight will appear.

Even though I do not know any of you, I already know that you are leaders. What kind of a leader you will be – that is yet to be determined. You must take the time and make the effort to get to know each other. Most importantly, you must get to know yourself.

All great journeys require work, often hard work. This journey will be no different. **So, be prepared to work hard.** What will be even harder is looking within. Many students have found this to be a fulfilling venture. Exhibit D gives you one student's reaction.

I am excited to take this journey with you. My job will be to support you when needed, cajole you when necessary, and push you when called for.

You must explore, embrace, and tap those great capacities that lie within you.

Professor Verinder Syal

Exhibit A - The 20 Classes

Area of Focus

- 1 Introductions: Breaking the Ice. What is this class all about?
- 2 What is leadership? A Hypothesis will be presented.
- 3 Authentic Leadership as defined in "True North."
- 4 *The How of Happiness* book.
- 5 *Essentialism* book.
- 6 What is a **Vision**? *The Dr. Shetty case*.
- 7 Good World Leader presentations by students.
- 8 Bad World Leader presentations by students.
- 9 Self Awareness – Peeling the Onion results from your surveys.
- 10 *Developing the Leader Within You* book.
- 11 Good Business Leader presentations by students.
- 12 Bad Business Leader presentations by students.
- 13 **Culture** of an Organization. *The Siebel case*.
- 14 Your Universal Principles of Leadership. And how to **Execute**.
- 15 *An Ethics Case – Send the Fax?*
- 16 *How Good People Make Tough Choices* book.
- 17 *How Will You Measure Your Life?* book.
- 18 *Shackleton case*. What if we had just 5% of what he had?
- 19 The Meaning of Life
- 20 Your roadmap and compass for life. Your personal Vision-Execution-Tracker.

Primary focus on: **Leadership Ethics You**

Exhibit B - Grading Scheme

You will learn a lot in this class, of that I am sure. But, for that you will have to do a fair bit of work – homework before every class, some papers, a team presentation, active in-class, and outside class, participation. I expect a lot because I know you have great capacity, and I believe these insights will help you perhaps for a lifetime.

I do not grade on a curve, but on the merits. It is said, that the harder you work, the luckier you get. The more you put out, the better the quality of your work, the better your grade is likely to be.

So, work hard. Do good work. Be timely. And the grade will take care of itself.

Grades range from 95 – 80, although the vast majority are at the upper end.

Details can be found on Canvas.

Exhibit C – Norms & Meet Ups

Norms: Besides the usual University norms, here are a few quick operating rules.

- Classes will start and end on time. Doors will close at **2:00 pm**; coming in late disturbs everyone. Come early.
- Classes will end exactly at 3:20 pm.
- Participation, and even more importantly CONTRIBUTION, is the key to this class. If you are absent you can't obviously do either. Please stay healthy.
- No laptops are allowed in the classroom except when your team makes a presentation. Turn cell phones off.
- Water and beverages are acceptable; but please do not bring, or consume, any food in the class.

Meet Ups: You will meet all your classmates one-on-one for at least 15 minutes to get to know each other as human beings. Often these meetings last much longer. Sometimes they turn into friendships. The vast majority of the students rave about this. There is no grade attached, but it may be one of the features of this class you remember for a long time.

Exhibit D – Two emails from one student

January 2016

Professor Syal,

The other day, I was walking around downtown Evanston. I was rushing home from the gym, listening to music with my head down. I glanced up for a moment, only to lock eyes with xxx. We were at opposite ends of the street, still quite a ways from each other, but almost immediately, we both reached to take out our headphones. This made me smile. I learned a lot of things from your class, but I think one of the biggest was this idea of human connection. I'm so glad I was able to meet xxx, and all the other students, because of your class. When he told me he was running off to a consulting coffee chat, I was overwhelmed by a genuine sense of happiness and pride. Since class has ended, I find myself stopping a lot more, stopping to remember to ask about the other person's day, stopping to ask if a friend needs help, stopping to remember that the slow, lethargic barista is probably at the end of his 6 hour shift, and maybe he's feeling a little run down or thinking about all the errands he has to run after. You were always so present in class, in our conversations, seemingly never thinking about anything outside of the discussion. That is such a gift. I am grateful for your time and attention.

I spent three hours in Norris today, helping younger friends run cases and answering their questions about the consulting recruiting process. It's trivial, but I feel such a sense of satisfaction now. I'm learning to stop more, and I see the effects. Thank you for reminding me to think about today instead of tomorrow, to face reality and see through my translucent excuses, and to remember that every person has a label, a job, a reaction, a flaw, but also a heart.

September 2016

Professor Syal

I am writing to you from (a far away place where I am on holiday). I (am) practicing yoga twice a day and spending my remaining hours reading and chatting with locals.

I have made the conscious decision to disconnect from all friends and family while away, but tonight I had to write to you, rather implore you, to read a book I just finished. It's called "Essentialism" by Greg McKeown. It's exactly what it seems like: how to do less better. I ask that you read it, because I know you will enjoy it. In fact, I sincerely believe this should be incorporated into next year's curriculum for the class, as no book has ever had such a profound impact on my way of thinking and my way of life, and I am absolutely certain that all over-achieving, over-committed Northwestern students, the sort that enroll in your class, would benefit immensely from McKeown's wisdom.

I say this because I've come to realize that, while I've always reflected on my morals and values in passing, your class was really the beginning of what has now become a long, intricate journey into sorting out who I want to be and what sort of life I want to live. It was your class that made me realize this is a subject worthy in itself of not just an entire course, but an entire lifetime of effort. I think this book is an essential (pun intended) component of that path.

Caution: Every student's experience is different. I believe it is solely dependent on how deeply they immerse themselves in the class.