

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2012

Life Entrepreneurs: The Place of Meaning, Purpose and Contribution in Business and Politics

Class time: May 15, 6:00-9:00 pm, May 18th, 6:00-9:00 pm, May 19, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, May 21st, 6:00-9:00 pm, May 26th, 9:00 am-4:00 pm, May 28th 6:00 -10 pm and June 4th 6:00-10 pm.

Location: The Case Foundation offices, 1717 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Suite 700. Washington DC 20036

Overview

“This is the toughest climate ever for leaders. It’s not fun. Many want out. They are isolated and running companies on the defensive. This is not good for business or the country. Most need perspective and support, yet are unclear where to find it.” Gerry Roche, Senior Chairman, Heidrick & Struggles, Inc.

“The challenges faced by CEOs today are unprecedented. Leaders need a way to see the bigger picture while in the pressure cooker...but how and where to find such help? As the elusive goal of success is pursued, we can miss the most important things if we don’t pay attention.” Debra Waller, Chairman and CEO, Jockey International, Inc.

Today’s business and political climate is challenging with public disdain for national leaders on the rise. Ironically, most leaders are fine, ethical individuals seeking to create value and do the right thing. The media is increasingly cynical and unforgiving, leaving little margin for error. Many are finding this situation neither enjoyable nor conducive to building long term value. For instance, more CEOs stepped down last year than any time previous. Leaders can feel overwhelmed, isolated, lacking in significant relationships and in need of tools to help navigate these challenging times.

Purpose

“Even when it all seems dark, Mr. Frodo, remember there’s a good worth fighting for...we’re a part of a much bigger story.” Samwise Gamgee, Lord of the Rings, the Two Towers

The objective of this course is to explore the ‘bigger story’ of business and politics, to examine the ‘why’ not just the ‘how’ of commerce and public life. As Socrates exhorted, “the unexamined life is not worth living.” In an age where time for reflection is rare and information overload is the norm, this course will dare to examine the deeper story. Focus will be given to the ‘the meaning’ side of both of these important sectors in hopes of rejecting the dangerous compartmentalization which frequently separates success from values and contribution. When business and politics become detached from higher, better purposes and becomes lost in the

murky waters of pragmatism and success at any price, bad things happen. Perspective is critical but hard to attain in the intensity of the daily struggle; yet perspective is what is required to stay grounded. “He who fixes his course to a star changes not,” urged Leonardo da Vinci.

In short, this course will seek to view business and politics through the lens of life purpose and meaning. Knowledge and practical lessons will be drawn from our readings, discussions, group presentations, historical models and face to face exposure to leaders wrestling with ways to live more integrated lives.

Faculty

J. Douglas Holladay (BA, University of North Carolina, MA, Princeton Theological Seminary, MLitt. Oxford University, Honorary Doctor of Laws, Nyack College)
Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University

Office Hours:

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Guest Speakers will include some of the following and/or others:

Judge William Webster, Former Director, CIA and FBI

Steve Case, founder of AOL

Ambassador Manuel Sager, Swiss Ambassador,

Ted Leonsis, owner of Caps and Wizards

Dale Jones, vice chairman, Heidrick&Struggles, Inc.

Paul & Terry Klaassen, founders, Sunrise Senior Living, Inc.

Secretary John H. Dalton, former Secretary of the Navy

Jean Case, CEO, The Case Foundation

Robert J. Woody, Chairman, Elgin Energy, Inc.

Jack Bennett, consultant, convicted felon

Roger Sant, former Chairman, AES, Inc.

Ralph Larsen, former Chairman, Johnson and Johnson

Learning Objectives

1. Understanding the difference between managers and leaders
2. Understanding the proper place of risk in pursuit of business and political objectives
3. Exploring definitions of success and happiness
4. Exploring ‘how much is enough’ in a culture of consumption
5. Considering if the ends ever justify the means in politics or business
6. Learning how adversity brings clarity of vision
7. Understanding the dangers of compartmentalization
8. Understanding the important place of relationships and accountability in business and politics
9. Learning how historical models can inform present actions
10. Examining the place of ‘failure’ in a ‘winner take all’ culture
11. Valuing the place of role models

Textbook (required)

Good Value: Reflections on Money, Morality and an Uncertain World

Stephen Green

Atlantic Monthly Press

ISBN-13:978-0-8021-1917-9

Grading

The final grade will be determined as follows:

- 90% to 100% = A 90% to 92% = A-
- 87% to 89% = B+ 83% to 86% = B 80% to 82% = B-
- 77% to 79% = C+ 72% to 76% = C 68% to 71% = C-
- 57% to 67% = D Below 57% = F

The course grade will be comprised of several elements:

- Class participation: 30%
- Pop quizzes 10%
- 2 short assigned essays: 15%
- Group presentation: 25%
(Identify two leaders who have ‘moved the needle’ and made impact for good or ill, 2 pages, double space)
- Reflective Paper 20%
(So you have heard inspiring stories, learned about the place of failure and setback, read probing articles and reflected in new ways (hopefully) about life, purpose, profession and meaning. So what? How do you plan to incorporate the lessons and themes you have drawn from this class into your life going forward? (4 pages, double spaced, due date: May 28)

Incompletes

Incompletes are not available in this course

Attendance & Late Assignments

Attendance is mandatory. If class is missed, it is the student’s responsibility to secure lecture notes, handouts, etc. from a classmate. Prior approval required for late submissions of assigned work. More than 2 absences can lead to involuntary withdrawal from the course pursuant to BALS program policy.

Georgetown Honor System

All students are expected to follow Georgetown’s honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at www.georgetown.edu/honor, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, “What is Plagiarism?”, “Sanctioning Guidelines”, and “Expedited Sanctioning Process.” Papers in the course will be electronically checked for plagiarism. Submitting material in the fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and

to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Penalty for plagiarism (0 for assignment, F for the course)

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu.

Snow and other emergencies

During inclement weather or other emergencies, check <http://preparedness.georgetown.edu> or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open.

Course Schedule

Class and topic

- **May 15:** Life as Journey. Course introduction, exploring the human longing for meaning and purposefulness. The Greek myth of the thread leading Theseus through King Mino's labyrinth.

Guest speaker

- **May 18:** Business and politics as 'high callings'? Ethical considerations in these professions. Do the 'ends' ever justify the 'means'?

Guest speaker

Primary Readings, assignments, projects

Green, Ch. 1
Man's Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl, [Excerpt provided by professor]
The Lonely Crowd, David Riesman, 1950, [Excerpt]
The Prince, Niccolo Machiavelli [Excerpt]

Green, Ch.2 & Ch.3
The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen R. Covey. [Excerpt]

Managers and Leaders: Are They Different? Abraham Zaleznik, Harvard Business Review [article provided by professor]

Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital, Robert D. Putnam (Journal of Democracy, January 1995, 65-78 [provided by professor]

"Why So Lonesome", S. Mallaby, Washington Post, 6-26-06, [provided by professor]

"Social Isolation Growing in the US", Shankar Vedantam, Washington Post 6/23/06

- **May19:** What is a leader? Are leaders born or developed? Are leaders of one personality sort? Are they always visionaries? Why do we compartmentalize our lives, and what are the inherent dangers in doing so?

The vital place of relationships and friendship in purposeful living.

Guest speaker

Group Presentation

On Friendship, Cicero with introduction by J. D. Holladay [provided by professor]

“What Makes Us Happy?”, (Psychology Today, 6/09 [provided by professor]

“How Will You Measure Your Life?” Clayton M. Christensen (Harvard Business Review), [Provided by professor]

“Talk Deeply, Be Happy?”, R.C. Robin, NY Times 3.17.10 [article provided by professor]

- **May 21:** Measuring success and happiness. Is fulfillment an illusion? What is the place of set back and failure in the life of a leader?

Guest speaker

Green, Ch.4 & Ch.5

“Letter from Birmingham City Jail”, Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

“How Much Land Does a Man Need?” Leo Tolstoy, [Essay provided by professor]

“Science Confirms: You Really Can’t Buy Happiness” Shankar Vedantam, Washington Post, 7/3/06

- **May 25:** How much is enough? Finding an identity beyond pure economic measures or political power.

Guest speaker

Green, Ch.6 & Ch.7

Group Presentation

The French Executioner, Dr. Arthur Applebaum, **Harvard Law Review**.

Essay: What is the Place of Risk in your Life? [In class]

“The Wager”, (**Pensées**), Pascal [Essay provided by professor]

- **May 26:** Can a business provide a life affirming context? What specifically can a leader do/control to create the right environment?

Green Ch.8

“The Gift of Life”, Washington Post 11/17/02

Can professional excellence squeeze out morality? The Faustian dilemma, where do you draw the line?

James Hunter, "To Change the World", (PN)
"The Man Who Changed His times", W. Wilberforce, (PN brochure)

Understanding the vital place of risk in pursuit of business or personal ambitions.

Poems:" Who Am I?" Dietrich Bonhoeffer
3/4/46

Guest speaker

"It's Between You and God", Mother Teresa.
Andrew Carnegie (Personal Memorandum,
Dec. 1868)

Reflective Paper due May 28

- **May 28:** Going from success to significance. Are there '2nd' acts in life? Can skills learned in one arena translate to another?

"The Summoned Self", Washington Post,
8/2/10 David Brooks.

Changing the World. Cynics argue that the world is going from bad to worse, while others remain hopeful and work for change. We will examine two models, one historical, the other contemporary.

Last Testament, 5/21/96, Murdered Trappist Monk, Christian de Cherge.

"If I had my life to live over again", Nadine Stair, Age 85.

Guest speaker

- **Jun 4:** Undergraduate and graduates will read their papers (Reflective Paper) outlining how they might incorporate the lessons and themes of this course into their lives going forward.

Lives Rich with Meaning. The instructor will identify common traits in lives that have been purposeful with real impact.