



**BUS 490 Independent Study
(3 credit hours)
Winter 2014**

Class Schedule

Time: By appointment
Location: Instructor office

Instructor Information

Instructor: Professor Randy Poon, MBA, PhD
Phone: (403) 410-2000 (ext. 6513)
Email: RPoon@ambrose.edu
Office: Room #2055

Course Description

Consists of an individual research project that investigates a problem or topic area not treated extensively in a regular course.

Students survey the applicable literature, develop an original concept or theory, conduct an extensive literature review, and develop an individual concept paper on a topic approved by the instructor. Each student writes a report suitable for publication, presentation at the Ambrose research conference or to a potential employer, or submission with an application to a graduate school.

Course Objectives

- Enhance academic research and writing skills
- Experience conceiving of an original theory and providing a thoroughly supported, academically-oriented concept paper
- Develop scholarly research presentation/discussion skills
- Prepare for graduate level studies in business

Textbook and Readings

As assigned

Course Requirements Summary

Course grading and evaluation will be conducted according to the following:

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| Reading Responses (written paper and discussion) | 35% |
| • The grade will be based 75% on the written response and 25% on three scheduled discussion appointments. | |
| Concept Paper and Presentation | 65% |
| • The grade will be based 75% on the concept paper and 25% on the presentation at the Ambrose Research Conference on March 31 st , 2014. | |

All requirements must be completed to receive a passing grade in this course.

Course Requirements Detail:

1. **Critical Reading and Discussion:** Asking questions, articulating dissonance, and sharing insights during class discussions are a crucial component of the learning process and to the worth of this course. The student will review selected journal articles and books and prepare a written response (in the form of a paper) to the readings. In addition, the student will discuss the articles and books with the professor during three scheduled appointments. The readings will be selected based on the concept paper topic so as to enhance the student's understanding of the area of research.

The length of this paper is to be between 2000 - 2500 words (around 7-8 pages), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins in APA or MLA style and is due on Monday, March 3rd, 2014. Late papers will not be accepted. The written portion is worth 75% of the assignment grade.

The discussion portion of the assignment will be based on regularly scheduled meetings with the professor. The grade will be based on the student's attendance at these meetings and on the quality of discussion. Participation will be graded as follows: 5 – Highly Engaged, 3.5 – Moderately Engaged, 2 – Marginally Engaged. The discussion portion is worth 25% of the assignment grade.

2. **Scholarly Project and Presentation:** The student will undertake a scholarly research and writing project culminating in a fully researched and documented paper on any topic of your choosing within the discipline of Business (e.g., leadership, organizational behaviour, human resources, organization development and change, strategy, marketing, international development/microfinance, nonprofit management, social entrepreneurship, business ethics, corporate social responsibility, business as transformational mission, etc.). Your paper must be thoroughly researched and must

demonstrate your engagement with the scholarship on your subject. It must follow correct APA or MLA style for documentation and citation of your sources. You should have at least eighteen scholarly sources in your paper. You are also free to cite from web-based sources provided that these are in addition to the fifteen scholarly sources.

I urge you to seek out something about which you have a passion—some interest that emerges from deep within you. It is my conviction that the best scholarship comes from those depths within us where the things we most care about reside. The best scholarship is something we *need* to write.

The length of this paper is to be between 9,000 – 12,000 words (around 25 - 35 pages), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins and is due on Monday, April 7th, 2014. Late papers will not be accepted. The written portion is worth 75% of the assignment grade.

In addition to the paper, the student will be required to make a presentation during the Ambrose Research Conference on March 31, 2014. a class presentation will also be required. Presentations should be about 20 minutes in length. The presentation portion is worth 25% of the assignment grade.

I will serve as a project advisor to each you. I will read your first draft, make suggestions for revision, and provide timely benchmarks for building the paper sequentially over the term.

Topics

Topics should be chosen by January 28, 2014. Feel free to meet with me to discuss the topic.

Provisional Thesis

Your provisional thesis should emerge while completing your working bibliography. The working thesis should be drafted and submitted no later than February 13, 2014.

Grading Rubrics:

Written Papers

| Rubric Criteria (weight) | Excelling (4.5 - 4.75 - 5 pts.) | Accomplished (3.75 - 4 - 4.25 pts.) | Developing (3 - 3.25 - 3.5 pts.) | Beginning (0 - 1.25 - 2.5 pts.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Purpose and Content (30%) | The written document has a well-developed and supported thesis. The assignment demonstrates excellent development of subsequent ideas and focuses on relevant details. Clearly explained examples support the claims and topic is thoroughly researched. | The written document has a workable thesis. Arguments are mostly supported. The assignment contains adequate evidence to support its claims, and would benefit from more research and development of relevant points. | The written document has some elements of a thesis but it is largely undeveloped or unclear. Arguments are somewhat supported. The arguments are somewhat developed but lack sufficient evidence or contain irrelevant details. | The written document is lacking in elements required with many gaps in the information presented. Arguments are not supported. The assignment needs more details on every level (main ideas, specific ideas, and examples). |
| Critical Thinking (30%) | Goes above and beyond identifying the most obvious issues and arguments and raises intriguing issues that are well supported. Challenges existing assumptions. Thoughtfully and thoroughly analyzes and evaluates alternative (beyond the major) points of view | Raises all the key issues and identifies relevant arguments (largely the most obvious ones) and their pros and cons. Offers thorough analyses and evaluations of the major points of view. | Raises some of the key issues and identifies limited number of arguments, not all of which are relevant. Offers limited analyses and evaluations of alternative points of view. | Does not address the key issues and does not identify counter-arguments. Ignores or superficially evaluates alternative points of view. |
| Structure and Organization (15%) | Structure of the assignment is very clear and easy to follow. Transitions maintain an overall flow throughout the assignment. Conclusion is logical and flows from the rest of the argument. | Structure is mostly clear and easy to follow. Transitions largely maintain the flow throughout the assignment. Conclusion is logical, and for the most part, flows from the rest of the assignment. | Structure of the assignment is not easy to follow. Transitions need much improvement. Conclusion is missing, or if provided, does not flow from the rest of the assignment. | Organization and structure detract from the message of the assignment. Points are disjointed and lack transition of thoughts. Ideas are not organized around a central idea. |

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| Mechanics (15%) | Paper demonstrates mastery over the basics in sentence completeness, structure, variety, word choice, punctuation, and writing style (i.e., APA or MLA). Language is clear and precise. All arguments are properly cited. | Paper displays good control over mechanics, although some areas may still need sentence-level revision. Minor errors do not detract from readability of the work. Most arguments are properly cited. | Paper shows that mechanics are an area of concern. Assignment contains a moderate number of grammatical, punctuation, spelling, and writing style errors. Some arguments are properly cited. | Paper lacks basic control over mechanics and contains excessive proof-reading errors. Arguments are not properly cited. |
| Spiritual Formation (10%) <i>In applying a spiritual formation lens to your analysis and critical thinking, explore the manner in which one's faith in Christ impacts the topics in question.</i> | Individual consistently applies a spiritual formation lens to discoveries gained from analysis and critical thinking. | Individual occasionally applies a spiritual formation lens to discoveries gained from analysis and critical thinking. | Individual makes some reference to spiritual formation but does not apply a spiritual formation lens to discoveries gained from analysis and critical thinking. | Individual makes no reference to spiritual formation. |

Presentations

| Rubric Criteria (weight) | Excelling (4.5 - 4.75 - 5 pts.) | Accomplished (3.75 - 4 - 4.25 pts.) | Developing (3 - 3.25 - 3.5 pts.) | Beginning (0 - 1.25 - 2.5 pts.) |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Communication and Delivery (35%) | Oral presentation delivered with clear, confident, well-paced voice(s) so that all audience members can hear presentation. Awareness of audience demonstrated through physical presence and eye contact (seldom referring to notes). Generate(s) significant enthusiasm about topic. Presenters show significant interest in topic. | Oral presentation delivered with clear, mostly confident voice(s) so that most audience members can hear presentation. Awareness of audience partially demonstrated through physical presence and eye contact (frequently referring to notes). Generates some interest about topic. Presenters largely show interest in topic. | Oral presentation delivered with subdued voice that may also be too slow or too fast. Audience members have some difficulty hearing. Sense of audience wavers (e.g. presentation largely read from notes with little eye contact). Generates little interest about topic. Presenters show some interest in topic. | Oral presentation delivered with subdued voice that may also be too slow or too fast. Audience members at back of class have difficulty hearing. Unfocused sense of audience (e.g. looks only at notes or away from audience). Generates little or no interest about topic. Presenters lack interest in topic. |

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| Creativity and Graphics (35%) | Presentation is made insightfully, creatively or skillfully. Innovatively or expertly prepared graphics used throughout the entire presentation. They also explain and reinforce the text and presentation. | A good attempt is made to provide insight or creativity to the presentation. Graphics largely used throughout presentation and relate to the text and presentation. | Little attempt to provide insight or creativity to the presentation. Graphics seldom used. They seldom support the text and presentation. | Little attempt to provide insight or creativity. Graphics not used or do support text and presentation. |
| Structure, Organization, and Mechanics (30%) | Information presented in a very logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow. Conclusion flows from the rest of the presentation. Presentation has no misspellings, grammatical errors, or formatting errors. | Information presented in a mostly logical sequence which audience can mostly follow. Conclusion largely flows from the rest of the presentation. Presentation has no more than three misspellings, grammatical errors, or formatting errors. | Structure of the presentation is not easy to follow. Conclusion is missing, or if provided, does not flow from the rest of the presentation. Presentation has between four to five misspellings, grammatical errors, or formatting errors. | Lack of structure detracts from message of presentation. Points are disjointed and lack transition of thoughts. Presentation has more than six misspellings, grammatical errors, or formatting errors. |

Discussions/Attendance

| Rubric Criteria (weight) | Highly Engaged (5 pts.) | Moderately Engaged (3.5 pts.) | Marginally Engaged (2 pts.) |
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| Group Discussions and Contribution Quality <i>Quality is exemplified, but not limited to, the following: pursues thoughtful and rigorous lines of discussion, addresses relevant issues, builds on others' ideas, synthesizes across readings and discussions, challenges assumptions and perspectives, expands the class' perspective.</i> | Contributes great effort to the discussion; shares thoughts and ideas; is always prepared to respond to impromptu questions. Input is always of high quality. Attends all scheduled discussions. | Contributes occasionally to discussion; occasionally shares thoughts and ideas; is sometimes prepared to respond to impromptu questions. Input is occasionally of high quality. Misses two of the scheduled discussions. | Is seldom prepared for the discussion; rarely shares thoughts and ideas; is rarely prepared to respond to impromptu questions. Input is of poor or marginal quality. Misses more than two of the scheduled discussions. |

Grading

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| <i>% Grade</i> | <i>Letter Grade</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 95% to 100% | A+ | Excellent |
| 90% to 94% | A | |
| 85% to 89% | A- | |
| 80% to 84% | B+ | Good |
| 76% to 79% | B | |
| 72% to 75% | B- | |
| 68% to 71% | C+ | Satisfactory |
| 64% to 67% | C | |
| 60% to 63% | C- | |
| 55% to 59% | D+ | Minimal Pass |
| 50% to 54% | D | |
| 0% to 49% | F | |

To pass the course, students must achieve an overall grade of at least 50% and as noted earlier, must complete all requirements. Failure to submit an assignment on the assigned date without legitimate reason (i.e. evidenced illness) or prior approval of the instructor will result in a failed grade for the course. In the case of legitimate or approved absence, and at the instructor's discretion, the assigned date may be rescheduled to a later date, or if this is not practically possible, the marks may be reallocated to other components of the course grade.

Examinations and Final Grades:

There is no final exam for this course.

Please note that final grades will be available on the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Important Notes/Dates:

The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (drop) – Sunday, January 19, 2014. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date.

Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the "audit" up to the "drop" date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a new policy, that came into effect in the 2010-2011 academic year.

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (withdraw) – Friday, March 21, 2014. A grade of “W” will appear on the student’s transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension” from the Registrar’s Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else’s ideas, words, or work as one’s own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person’s ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student’s permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.