Course Number: MGMT 4340  
Course Name: Critical Thinking and Decision Making  
Instructor: Margaret A. Lucero  
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Office Hours: Mondays 2-4, Wednesdays 2-4, & 6-7, Friday 10-11  
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Blackboard Course: http://bb9.tamucc.edu/


Prerequisites: MGMT 3312, 3320, 3355, 4320 and Junior standing or above

Course Description: This course integrates theory and practice in order to develop and accumulate problem solving skills—the ability to analyze, think, perform, evaluate, and adapt to the changing needs of organizations. The course focuses on complex decision making processes, critical thinking skills and creative problem solving techniques for the learning organization; motivation and coaching of others; development of conflict resolution skills; and the management of stress and well-being.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this course, the students will able to:

- Understand and apply various decision-making approaches and models to cases and examples.
- Apply various creativity approaches to expand options, increase organizational innovation, and enhance problem-solving.
- Describe various theories of learning and methods that link to an effective learning organization.
- Diagnose the sources of poor performance and where appropriate apply motivation theories to recommend solutions.
- Identify the antecedents of conflict and apply conflict management and negotiation techniques to manage group conflict situations.
- Identify critical ethical issues and differentiate between good and bad ethical choices through course topics.

Relationship to Other Coursework: The previous required coursework introduces most of the concepts and theories covered in this course. This course builds upon this prior knowledge and expands on these topics. The skill orientation of the course will allow students to apply concepts and learn new management methods and techniques. The creativity and decision making basis of this course will allow students to probe difficult problems and recommend content based solutions.

Instructional Methodology:
A variety of methodologies will be used to address the needs of different learning styles. They include lectures, case studies and examples, written and oral reports, skill-based exercises, behavioral role-modeling, and discussion.

**Performance Evaluation and Grading:**
Student performance evaluation will be based on exams, a practice set, quizzes/attendance, homework problems, and other assignments. Sample of the relative weights of each of these components are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project 1</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>300 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<td>Project 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1000 points</td>
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**Grading:** (scores are generally not rounded up to the next higher grade)
- A 900 – 1000
- B 800 – 899
- C 700 – 799
- D 600 – 699
- F below 600

**Projects:**
A number of projects are required during the semester. The purpose of the projects is to provide applied experience relevant to the material. Please view the requirements for these assignments in the Blackboard course.

**Oral and Written Communication Content:**
Written assignments will be required. The presentation and class discussions will use oral communication skills.

**Technology Applications:**
Students will be required to use word processing software on personal computers. The research-based paper will require the use of library databases.

**Ethical Perspectives:**
Managers are frequently faced with ethical decisions and ethical dilemmas. These types of issues will be embedded within the cases and examples used to demonstrate management concepts.

**Global Perspectives:**
Occasional examples will be discussed as they occur within cases and examples. In particular, cross-cultural differences inherent in workgroups will be emphasized.

**Demographic Diversity Perspectives:**
Diversity in the work force will be highlighted and discussed as they related to cases and examples. It is recognized that managing a diverse workforce is a key competence for the contemporary manager.

**Political, Social, Legal, Regulatory, and Environmental Perspectives:**
These perspectives are embedded with the context of various cases and exercises. These issues will be discussed as they become relevant.

**Attendance Policy:**
Attendance is required for this course. Students are expected to be in their seats and ready for class at the beginning of the class period. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class. Students coming late or leaving early are required to sign the early/late list and record the time. Points will be deducted for
coming late and leaving early. It is important to come to class prepared to work on the scheduled material. One class period can be missed without the loss of points. After one missed class 10 points will be deducted for each missed class. This is a no fault policy, any exceptions will be handled on a case by case basis; however, students with University Excuses will be given an opportunity to make-up missed work. Such make-up work must be submitted within one week of the absence or as designated by the Professor. Each student, whether present or absent, is personally responsible for assignments and whatever material is covered. A student should consult with other students for missed class notes.

Assignments:
Required assignments should be submitted through Blackboard. Some assignments will be started during class and then submitted after class. The assignments are important building blocks that will enable the student to understand the material and complete the projects on time.

Academic Honesty:
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) All assignments and exams are expected to be done independently unless otherwise specifically noted in the instructions. Sanctions for a student's academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to: a) recording a zero for the specific test, examination or class assignment which involved dishonesty, b) points deducted from the attendance, participation, and professionalism grade, &/or c) recording an F (Failure) for a final course grade.

Dropping a Class:
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 1, 2011 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Code of Ethics:
This course, and all other courses offered by the College of Business (COB), requires all of its students to abide by the COB Student Code of Ethics (available online at www.cob.tamucc.edu). Provisions and stipulations in the code are applicable to all students taking College of Business courses regardless of whether or not they are pursuing a degree awarded by the COB.

American with Disabilities Act Compliance
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101.
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Professional Conduct:**
Due to the impact on others, students are expected to adhere to professional conduct throughout this course. Students that do not adhere to professional conduct as described below and as represented in the College of Business Code of Ethics may be asked to leave a class session. Additionally, the failure to adhere to professional behavior may lead to penalties that can include loss of any bonus points earned, loss of earned in-class points or more severe penalties including failing the course. It is expected that every student will contribute to a positive learning environment including:

- Coming to class on time!
- Being prepared for class
- Prevent classroom disturbances by refraining from the use of cell phones or leaving class to take phone calls (exceptions will be granted for students that are on call for work or children, please contact professor first)
- Minimize involvement in side conversations
- Focus on the course, participate fully in class activities, and do not work on unrelated material during class
- Provide other students the opportunity to express themselves and listen attentively
- Complete and submit all coursework on time

**Schedule:**
Please see the Blackboard course for a more detailed schedule of course material and information on homework assignments.

- **Week 1:**
  - Chapter 1 (CAPS)

- **Week 2:**
  - Chapters 2 & 3 (CAPS)

- **Week 3:**
  - Chapters 4 & 5 (CAPS)

- **Week 4:**
  - Chapters 6 & 7 (CAPS)

- **Week 5:**
  - Chapters 8 & 9 (CAPS)

- **Week 6:**
  - Project 1 presentations

- **Week 7:**
  - Motivation pp. 4-31 (Pearson Custom)

- **Week 8:**
  - Motivation, reshaping behavior

- **Week 9:**
  - Chapters 10 & 11 (CAPS)

- **Week 10:**
  - Project 2 presentations

- **Week 11:**
Managing Conflict pp. 56-70 (Pearson Custom)

Week 12:
  Managing Conflict pp. 70-84 (Pearson Custom)

Week 13:
  Group work

Week 14:
  Project 3 negotiations

Week 15
  Chapter 12 (CAPS)