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Emerging Adults Learn Management Through Service-Learning

Kent D. Fairfield

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This article describes a journey introducing service-learning based on large-scale projects in an undergraduate management curriculum, leading to supplementing this approach with more conventional small-group projects. It outlines some of the foundation for service-learning. Having students undertake a single class-wide project offers distinctive advantages. The difficulties experienced in early iterations of the course, however, prompted the author to reflect on the literature on developmental psychology and “emerging adulthood.” This reflection led to introducing a second course based on more modest small-group projects, which can serve as a useful prerequisite for the more ambitious class-wide project enterprise. The smaller scale project class focuses on personal skills, individual effectiveness, and team leadership. Moving later to a larger scale project allows students to learn more about delegating to others, managing performance, designing tasks and organizations, and gaining a sense of impact as a collective unit. Results so far suggest the benefit of both classes taken in sequence.

**Keywords:** service-learning; identity; emerging adulthood; developmental psychology; adolescence; team leadership; project management.

The heritage of service-learning goes back decades as a means of highly experiential education that gets students out of the classroom and into the outside world. Educators have used it to enhance learning in a variety

**Author’s Note:** My thanks to Judith Kaufman for her suggestions on developmental psychology issues and to Amy Kenworthy-U’Ren and Charles Fornaciari, and the anonymous reviewers for their comments on a previous draft of this article. Readers may contact the author for copies of any course materials referred to. Address correspondence to Kent D. Fairfield, Silberman College of Business, Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1000 River Road, H-DH2-05, Teaneck, NJ 07666; e-mail: kent@fdu.edu.
of disciplines (e.g., Rama, 1998; Taylor, 2005) and for many reasons (Papamarcos, 2005), whether providing direct service to people in need or to nonprofit organizations or delivering high-level consulting projects. Instructors typically urge students to apply the didactic material they have learned in current and previous classes to managing their project and reflecting on their experience.

This article describes the author’s attempt to launch a service-learning course that would depart from the typical deployment of teams to work on a variety of projects. Instead, students were expected to undertake a larger scale project and work on it as a whole class. Experience from a few iterations of this course yielded positive results both in learnings and project outcomes, but limitations arose as well. The challenge of operating as a big group, including predictable free-riding, exposed certain deficiencies in students’ personal effectiveness. Current thinking on the natural development of “emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2000) helps explain that these results are probably not confined to this small sample of students but may be expected among the broad undergraduate population. These findings led to creating a second service-learning course as a prerequisite, one designed to include a smaller, team-based service project with a classroom focus on personal effectiveness and team development. Early outcomes suggest a profile of what can be learned from each course when taken in sequence.

Foundation of Service Learning

Service-learning has been defined in many ways. One of the shortest comes from a prominent figure in the field, John Saltmarsh, who once called it simply “community-based problem-solving” (Taylor, 2005, p. 372). More extensive is Kenworthy-U’Ren’s adaptation of the definition from the American Association for Higher Education, “that which helps to promote both intellectual and civic engagement by linking the work students do in the classroom to real-world problems and real-world needs” (Kenworthy-U’Ren, 1999). One can trace the foundation of service-learning to John Dewey’s (1938) assertion on the importance of the “organic connection” of knowledge and skills with experience. More recent scholars of education, such as Stephen Brookfield (1990) and Parker Palmer (1998), stress that the teacher’s foremost challenge is to allow the learner to take ideas and concepts and relate them to one’s own knowledge and experience. Bruer (1995) calls this “transfer,” whereas Kolb (1984) defines learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience”
Accordingly, learning has little meaning without being shaped in context (p. 64), which leads directly to experiential learning in the management field.

Some advocates for service-learning cite a value of the approach that goes beyond knowledge and skill and affects a learner’s moral development. Godfrey (1999) asserts that this is a principle aim of such techniques (see also DiPadova-Stocks, 2005). They look on students’ exposure to the not-for-profit sector of society as crucial to breeding civic responsibility, or “moral capabilities” (Godfrey, 1999; see also Godfrey, Illes, & Berry, 2005). It has been further asserted (Giles, 1990) that people’s experiential learning tends to transfer to their future intentions, and service-learning in particular has been shown to contribute to a person’s inclination for community service (McCarthy & Tucker, 2002).

Epistemological considerations provide still another justification for service-learning. The extensive work of Donald Schön (1983, 1989) has lifted up the importance of the knowledge of practice, as distinct from the knowledge of science. Schön argues that the knowledge of practice emerges only from the iterative application of knowledge in a context, with much experimentation, trial and error, and invention. Such emergent learning stands in contrast to the traditional logical positivist reverence for “hard” science. Van de Ven and Johnson (2006) suggest that historically, management knowledge was founded on a “‘trickle-down’ view of the knowledge supply chain: knowledge is created and tested by academic researchers, taught to students by instructors, adopted and diffused by consultants, and practiced by practitioners” (p. 805). The corollary to this view would have service-learning students learn the truths from their professors, then go out and implement them in their field projects. An important alternative view is to be more “pluralistic” (Kenworthy-U’ren, 2005; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006) in allowing the interaction between the knowledge of practice and the knowledge of science, so students may try out certain concepts from their classroom but will run up against ways in which they have to modify and invent their own ways of behaving. Taking on such an approach offers a new kind of challenge and excitement on the part of the student, along with a need for an instructor to be open to unexpected learnings.

**Service-Learning in Action: Stage I**

The birth of service-learning at my university stemmed from my decision to build an undergraduate course in organizational theory around a service-learning project. My predecessors had found that most of our undergraduates
had little experience working in large complex organizations and thus lacked a frame of reference to think about such macro issues.

It occurred to me that I could arrange the entire class, not into small teams, but into a single enterprise that took on a community service project (Appendix A contains a description from the syllabus of the required project). The campus ministry office was pleased for this class to infuse new energy into an annual campaign to raise money for the statewide Food Bank. I wanted this enterprise to simulate operating in a complex organization, so I told the students they could organize the 25 or so students however they wanted but with a few stipulations. For one, I demanded that there be at least three levels of hierarchy, so the participants would have the experience of operating with the challenge of different levels. The students soon learned in the readings about the virtues of specializing in their tasks, so a few different “departments” were a good idea. Here, I wanted them to have the experience of communicating across department lines, a typical source of challenge in any organization. In addition, to help make this rather simple “complex organization” a little more complex, the class would be required to enlist at least 30 other people in their efforts. I hoped that would provide the students with the challenge of training and coordinating other people further away from the core of the operation. Issues of timeliness and quality control would undoubtedly come out with so many other participants.

The essential readings included such standard subjects as modes of organizational structure and design, change management, strategy and design, technology, and culture. I especially wanted them to understand the dynamics of functional, divisional, and matrix organizations so they could decide how to organize their enterprise. I also shared a few pages on organizing taken from a comprehensive manual derived from the long history of service-learning at Bucknell University (Miller & Hiller, 2006; see also Comas, Hiller, & Miller, 2005).

Initial Results

This first semester class learned a number of important things. They were also proud to have raised more than $5,000 for the Food Bank, more than previous campaigns. Although they hoped to induce a lot of area businesses to contribute, they encountered great reluctance and inexperience at reaching out to companies. Only an older student showed the skill and confidence to undertake a corporate outreach, and even she had limited success. The on-campus publicity and activities of raffles and bake sales
obtained many smaller dollar contributions. Only a student with experience as a professional project manager showed much understanding of how to organize a project in detail.

One dilemma that students and instructor all experienced was how to balance a focus on course content with attention to the project. The engaging nature of the project made it clearly more salient to students than reading a textbook—which is a virtue of the approach, even if causing tensions for me and for them. I did assign some case studies and occasional written homework as well as reflections on the project: a “Milestone Report” done individually and a second report done by their “department” group. At the end of the semester, the group made an oral presentation on their project, and each individual wrote a reflection paper on the whole project (20% of the grade). I assigned supplemental readings (Kloppenborg & Kloppenborg, 2008; Verzuh, 2003) and lectured on project management.

Everyone who has engaged in experiential activities knows that outcomes are unpredictable, and service-learning projects are no exception. The first time I ran the course, I was pleased that many students eventually got themselves coordinated and did a creditable job for the benefit of the charity. To involve outsiders in the effort, one man used his fraternity brothers to promote a fund-raising tie-in with a local restaurant. One woman arranged with a local elementary school for children to sell lollipops for the cause in their school. On the other hand, I was dismayed at the number of uninvolved students. I could detect this from their unresponsiveness in class and from reports from student leaders. Just as striking was that their department “bosses” seemed largely unequipped to enlist support from their “direct reports,” build much team spirit, or effectively delegate and follow-up on performance. I was not teaching these skills, and it showed. Peer evaluations accounted for 5% of students’ grade, but free riders were undeterred from standing back.

Teaching this same class a year later, I made several changes to respond to the outcome the first time. The first concerned the goal. I decided in advance that I would use the Food Bank as our beneficiary and that the class would start working on that from the start of the semester. Second, I realized that even though I had arranged for the Food Bank’s director of development to speak to the class the previous time, the mission was not completely clear and compelling. Consequently, the second time I gave them all an assignment to visit either the Food Bank’s warehouse operations or, in most cases, one of the affiliate agencies. As a result, students in pairs or trios all had an experience of spending a few hours serving food to homeless people or volunteering at a shelter or food pantry. They universally
reported that they were struck by just being with these human beneficiaries and felt this was an eye-opener—hunger and poverty in the midst of quite an affluent region.

I also attempted to create more accountability. I introduced a reading and lecture on giving feedback to attempt to sharpen their skills in performance management. I established a “Board of Directors,” made up of two outside business people and the previous year’s enterprise student leader (I called myself the “nonexecutive Chairman”). The students presented their oral and written Operating Plan to the Board in Week 7. The Board members responded with critiques, suggestions, and encouragement. They cautioned about having a narrow-enough focus and stressed the need for specific time lines. The Board then returned at the end of the semester to hear the final presentation. I believe this arrangement provides a different kind of urgency and importance to what would otherwise be just an in-class presentation to the instructor. Furthermore, the Board could provide a fresh look at what they were doing and offer broader experience than any one instructor could.

I considered the second year’s effort to be reasonably successful, as they too learned important elements of the course and raised a comparable amount of money for the Food Bank. However, the third time I taught the course, I allowed the students to choose their own project. Emulating a colleague then teaching the course on a separate campus, I decided that students are more likely to be committed to a project that they selected themselves. I had an influence, however, and after considering possibilities, they picked up on my idea to raise money for a charity that builds schools in rural Cambodia. They conducted a dinner fund-raiser, and, although they fell short of their goal, the $3,000 they raised was still a source of pride.

Reflections on Shortcomings

After the first 2 years of conducting this course with a class-wide project, I observed that the students came into the class with some significant deficiencies that prevented them from dealing with many of its challenges and learning as much as possible from the experience. They often struggled with such aspects as

- taking personal responsibility, in such things as following through on what they agreed to do, or not even “showing up” literally or figuratively;
- delegating tasks in a clear manner;
- managing performance, including giving feedback to classmates to insure accountability;
• feeling empathy for the project’s beneficiaries or ownership for the collective project; and
• possessing the confidence to operate as an external representative of the enterprise, such as in negotiating with outside entities for services or contributions.

The early work of Erickson (1950, 1968) sheds light on some of the reasons why typical undergraduates may find certain projects particularly challenging. Psychologists agree that human development traces certain stages where distinctive crises are encountered, and young persons must successfully deal with these to be able to flower into fully functioning adults. Erikson wrote that adolescents between about 13 and 20 years of age face questions of identity, clouded with self-doubt and possible rebellion. Once they can satisfactorily answer the question, “Who am I?” they can progress to a new kind of certainty instead of self-consciousness and continued self-doubt. Positively clearing these hurdles allows the young person to take on concerns of achievement rather than being imprisoned in feelings of inferiority. All college instructors have experienced students who evidently have not yet completed this stage in a positive way. In conventional classes, this may be manifested in late or inadequate papers and poor test performance. To a member of a service project team, these psychological phenomena may result in a student not fulfilling assigned tasks, rejecting the project altogether, or shutting down. Teammates are naturally puzzled or angry at the apparently willful free-riding.

Erickson (1950, 1968) labels the next developmental stage, from about 20 to 24 years, as “Intimacy,” with the desirable capability being love. This not only refers to romantic connections but also describes deeper interpersonal relationships, qualitatively different from the inward focus of the preceding stage (Bowlby, 1983). Here, the person acquires the ability to be close, caring, and vulnerable to others (see also Sullivan, 1953). The outward focus for our students means that they become more trustworthy and trusting, more willing to listen to feedback, and better able to give feedback and criticism to others.

More recent research by Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (1998, 2000, 2004, 2007; Arnett & Tabor, 1994) builds on Erikson’s observations that modern society in developed countries allows young people, especially in the middle and upper classes, to enjoy a “psychosocial moratorium” to delay their growth. This comes out in demonstrably later mean age of marriage, childbearing, and serious career commitments. Arnett posits that a distinctive new stage needs to be recognized, “emerging adulthood,” which he delineates from
about 18 to 25 years of age. This cohort, which parallels the traditional-age undergraduate, exemplifies behaviors that are a mix of Erikson’s identity stage and the intimacy stage. This stage offers an opportunity for exploration and experimentation in developing capability with *love relationships*, *work roles*, and *world view*. This reasoning makes it understandable that we see many students who are variously struggling with identity, rebellion, self-consciousness, and self-doubt on the one hand, while they or others are exhibiting the ability for achievement, closeness, caring, and vulnerability. Key markers of reaching adulthood are (a) taking responsibility for one’s actions, (b) enacting autonomous decision making, and (c) achieving financial independence.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990), best known for his research on “flow,” the highly rewarding and satisfying times of high productivity, also argues that for success in life, students need “intense concentration in any activity that requires skill and discipline” and that teaches them to enjoy challenges (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000). He points to community service projects as one productive form of activity of this sort and observes that these are much less available to lower and working class families—a major portion of students on our campus. The required conditions for flow include clear goals, immediate feedback, and a balance between challenges and skills (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). These elements lend themselves to a service-learning project.

### Service-Learning in Action: Stage II

My analysis of students’ struggles with the larger scale project led me to consider what kind of experience would equip them better beforehand. The natural solution was a course built around a more conventional service-learning activity to be conducted in small groups. This idea led to the launch of a new course, “Managing Self and Others,” focusing on personal effectiveness and team skills (the intended Learning Outcomes are shown in Appendix B). I explored several possibilities for project sites, sharing them with the class in the first week, and they offered some of their own ideas. As before, I asked some champions to research the possibilities and report to the class the following week.

At that time, I wrote each proposed project on a sheet of easel paper on the wall. Students then marked three or four votes on the sheets for the projects that most interested them. This first round of voting reduced a large number of possible projects to about seven or eight. Students then
volunteered to investigate the feasibility of the project ideas by making phone calls and checking the organizations’ Web sites. As a result of this research, students have reported that a charity only wanted volunteers who commit to long-term help or did not want to work with college students, or that a proposed project appeared more exciting than we guessed at first.

The following week, after all the reports had been made, I invited all students to put on the wall three different colored Post-It notes with their name on them to signify their first, second, and third choices for their project. We then could tell which people selected the projects and allowed assigning of students. It required some negotiation on the spot to persuade some people to accept a project other than their first choice so as to even out the membership of each team. Those projects with few first choices fell away. Before locking in team assignments, I also sought some level of diversity, especially on gender and cultural background. I find that forcing both men and women to work together offers the chance for both to encounter classic dilemmas of difficult conversations. Similarly, it appears that allowing native-born Americans to engage up close with those from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe permits all to learn more about critical transnational communication and work styles.

Self-selection for a project appeared to be an important element to energizing their efforts. The athletes willingly agreed to consult to the YMCA with a market survey of competing gyms. The animal lovers raised money related to Seeing Eye dogs and a local animal shelter. Some who were raised in the inner city were excited about helping organize a painting project for the Boys and Girls Club, which serves many lower- and working-class children.

The scope of these team-based projects is understandably more limited than what I expect with a larger group. Still, as Csikszentmihalyi (1990) would suggest, I insist that they be challenging and if possible draw on their skills in management or some other disciplines. For instance, I told the team wishing to do the painting project that they were to do more than just provide “another set of hands” to the management of the Boys and Girls Club. As a result, they organized more than 30 college students to join in a weekend painting project, while also reaching out to the parents of the children at the Club to encourage the children to take part. This kind of contact with the clients of an agency provides an important human touch to their service, which adds to the pride in their activities and their altruism as well as broadening their interpersonal capabilities.

The core content for the course comes from *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence* (Neck & Manz, 2007), an
excellent treatment of personal capability. It encourages readers to increase self-awareness, take responsibility for how they respond to the world, set goals for themselves, create useful beliefs and self-talk, and deal with obstacles in life. To heighten self-awareness, I require them to read *StrengthsFinder 2.0* (Rath, 2007). Growing from the positive psychology stream, it describes the power of building on one’s talents rather than expending too much energy attempting to compensate for weaknesses. Each book comes with a pass code to be used to access the online StrengthsFinder instrument. This self-assessment tells readers the five key talents that their responses indicate and suggests how to build these talents into real strengths. Students have invariably found this a rewarding experience, as it names and affirms things that they may have been only vaguely aware of that they enjoy and are good at.¹ In developmental terms, these findings seem to validate one’s strengths as part of identity. Students are also required to design a “Personal Growth Project,” where they select one or two of their strengths and do some outside reading and interviewing of trusted friends, then plan and activate it over the semester to refine and enrich those strengths. We cover team dynamics through a text (Whelan, 2005), lectures, and discussions. I also set up a means for students to learn about giving feedback and actually do it with teammates and discuss it in class, both in Week 6 and at the end of the semester.

I have distinguished three streams for this course: Personal Effectiveness, Project Processes, and Team Processes (details in Appendix C). I find the latter two are valuable to emphasize the crucial difference between activities to directly get the project done, as opposed to the crucial but often-overlooked attention to the processes the team employs. Among the latter are the following: an informal social function just to get acquainted at the outset, deciding on a team name, writing a team charter or contract, giving peer feedback, and performing an After Action Review (Baird, Holland, & Deacon, 1999). I provide them with more detailed instructions and rationale for all assignments in my “Personal Effectiveness and Team Project Manual”² (see excerpts in Appendix D). It also describes how a team can allocate points from the team assignments if they wish to give more or less credit to some participants. In addition, it outlines a process by which teams may deal with nonperformance, a graduated system of feedback and discussion that eventually may involve the instructor and later, if necessary, “firing” of a member. This process is intended to lead students to speak up early on if they have concerns about free-riders and discuss the situation, rather than ignoring it or waiting until the end of the semester to protest to the instructor. It is one more way students are called to act responsibly, including handling their complaints
in a forthright way. Furthermore, I am available to meet with teams as their consultant to facilitate a discussion if they have concerns. This has sometimes proven to clear the air and accelerate more open dialogue and higher performance for all. For some, this procedure offers a vehicle for personal development in emerging adulthood in such areas as self-responsibility and autonomous decision making. Nevertheless, some students still avoid confronting their peers and let differences fester, a variability that Arnett (2000, 2004, 2007) would predict at this developmental stage.

Meanwhile, the larger scale project course has been refined in other ways (see Learning Outcomes, Appendix B). We have changed the academic core of the class. Deciding that organizational theory did not merit a full-semester course in the curriculum, we have moved the focus to be general management and renamed it “Service-Learning in Management.” While still focusing on some elements of organizational design, as they relate to the enterprise organization, we broadened the topics covered. Reading requirements changed to a general management book (Caproni, 2005) and a popular press offering (Friedberg & Friedberg, 2005), while continuing the same project management chapters.

One class continued the international humanitarian emphasis, when it put on a rally on the tragedy in Darfur, educating the campus and raising money for a charity involved in relief work there. The latest project was to work with the “Riverkeeper” for the river that bisects the campus to organize awareness sessions and a cleanup of the river on Earth Day. Accomplishing both these projects required some of the skills to reach outside the organization. For the Darfur rally, team members had to negotiate with speakers to come and with exhibitors to set up tables at the rally. They arranged extensive publicity, with public service announcements on the radio and front-page coverage in the university newspaper before and after the event. They also learned the benefit of strategic alliances, as they arranged for another student organization to turn over all the proceeds from their talent showcase to the Darfur cause. The river cleanup project required making arrangements for some university facilities, fund-raising with neighboring businesses who value an attractive riverfront, and the raffling off of a new Smart® car. These students even thought of a lasting legacy, as they aspired for this to be the “First Annual River Cleanup.” Part of this will result from building alliances with ongoing university organizations, such as the Friends of the Environment, the Institute for Sustainable Enterprise, and the Department of Natural Sciences.

Although the payoffs from these two classes overlap to some extent, they still direct the learners’ focus in different ways and call on a different
level of behavior. Table 1 summarizes some of the differences. “Managing Self and Others” focuses on self-leadership, “Service-Learning in Management” on group management. They are both designed with learning objectives corresponding to key developmental issues of emerging adulthood, shown in the third column. It is easy to see that to be effective at the group-focused skills (middle column), one needs to be quite accomplished at the self-leadership (left column; Cherniss & Goleman, 2001; Goleman, 1995, 1998, 2006; Neck & Manz, 2007). It is natural, therefore, that the two courses are offered in that sequence.

Assessment of Outcomes and Discussion

Because “Managing Self and Others” was originated recently, we have yet to lead a cohort through the two courses in the intended sequence. However, some of the latest assessment for each of four classes (two for each course) separately gives us some indication of how we are achieving our objectives. Most students in each class completed an anonymous survey at the end of the semester, collected and turned in out of sight of the instructor. Although the total sample is small ($N = 51$), the results still suggest what can be learned so far about the two courses.

One segment of the survey contained 17 statements evaluating the course and its value. As shown in Table 2, students reported a fairly high level of general learning from their course, a score of 5.74 on a scale of 1 to 7 (no significant difference between courses except as noted below). The highest rating of 6.04 related to the statement, “This course does not help in improving my interpersonal skills” (reverse scored). Four statements designed to assess personal growth received agreement with a mean of 5.82. The highest marks (6.18) went to respondents’ increased awareness of abilities and tendencies, reflecting attention to this aspect, especially in Managing Self and Others ($M = 6.36$ vs. $5.79$, $p < .05$). The relatively high scores in this group pertain to self-knowledge and confidence, which relate to important emerging adulthood characteristics, such as identity and taking responsibility for oneself. Another foundational principle of these service-learning classes is to provide a kind of simulation of the work place. Four items attempted to assess our success here, where the mean was 5.67. The highest score in this category (5.96) pertained to the statement, “This class will help me in my future work.” That is rather strong affirmation that students see much in the courses as enabling them to improve relevant skills. The lower ratings in this cluster were associated with the characteristics of
Table 1
Comparison of Course Objectives and Correspondence to Issues of Emerging Adulthood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managing Self and Others</th>
<th>“Service-Learning in Management”</th>
<th>Issues of Emerging Adulthood(^a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Gaining self-awareness</td>
<td>Gaining awareness of the group</td>
<td>• Identity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Responsibility for self</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflectivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Assuming responsibility for one’s own actions</td>
<td>Assuming responsibility for group actions and supervising others’ performance</td>
<td>• Responsibility for self</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Setting goals and priorities, keeping oneself organized</td>
<td>Setting group goals and priorities, delegating tasks and responsibility to others</td>
<td>• Responsibility for self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Making independent decisions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Giving and receiving feedback for personal accountability and growth</td>
<td>Giving and receiving feedback for group accountability and growth</td>
<td>• Responsibility for self</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Caring</td>
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<td>• Vulnerability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reflectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Building relationships one-on-one and in a team</td>
<td>Building relationships one-on-one, in a team, and across organizational lines</td>
<td>• Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Closeness</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Love relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Exhibiting empathy for teammates and compassion for clients</td>
<td>Exhibiting empathy for others and understanding and compassion for global/economic/environmental issues</td>
<td>• Caring</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Closeness</td>
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<td>• Love relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Making independent decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Managing team-based project</td>
<td>Managing larger scale project</td>
<td>• Closeness</td>
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<td>• Making independent decisions</td>
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<td>• Work roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Having impact personally and acquiring pride in personal accomplishment</td>
<td>Having impact collectively and acquiring pride in collective accomplishment</td>
<td>• Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Responsibility for self</td>
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<td>• Work roles</td>
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the class itself and the natural absence of many of the work world’s features—notably compensation and dedication to career—make it impossible to go
beyond a certain similarity. Finally, the overall evaluation of the course received the highest rating of all the groups (5.86). Respondents firmly refused to call the class a waste of time (6.35) and quite strongly would recommend it to others and do compare it favorably with other classes.

The survey also sought to ascertain what elements students learned most about, and so it asked them to consider 11 elements and rank the 6 most important to them. First-place votes were then given a score of 6,
second-place 5, and so on until those not selected were accorded a 0. This approach and modest-sized sample contributed to a wide dispersion of replies, but the results in Table 3 still indicate in general the most powerful aspects of the courses. The element cited far and away most often was learning about how to manage a project. They also mentioned team activities very highly, including learning about “Being a good team member,” “Exercising leadership of a team,” and “Understanding the dynamics of teams.” Reflecting my special emphasis on feedback, the other highly rated area was “Giving and receiving feedback.” One concern here relates to the objective in “Service-Learning in Management” to encourage some of the leaders at least to improve in supervising and overseeing performance of others. Although that may pertain to only a subgroup of respondents, some of the lowest ranked learning areas were “Enlisting others to help do a task” and “Getting others to be accountable for their performance.” I see a need to place more emphasis on these important skills, both for those with “direct reports” as well as those relating to peers on a team.

Qualitative data from the survey helps elaborate on what students thought of the courses. Two open-ended questions elicited “What I liked most about this course” and “The most important things I learned in this course.” In Managing Self and Others, several mentioned the reality of the projects:

[I liked] the service learning project because it felt “real.” It wasn’t just studying and doing tests. You actually had to get out there and hold events, plan functions, contact people, raise money, etc. . . . I think it will be beneficial when working out in the “business world.” Definitely a good experience.

Another liked

[T]he service learning project as a whole—it helped bring together a lot of things I’ve learned in business classes the past 3 years. It made the lessons more interesting because we had real-world experiences to refer to.

Several students reported the satisfaction of having a personal impact through the project, such as, “You can see results and you feel good about them” and “In this course we had a chance to show our strengths individually and as part of a team.” Another commented on liking “that a lot was done outside of class. I am a visual learner, and doing events outside of
class helped seeing how things are done.” Although this respondent may refer to kinesthetic learning, the positive impact is the same.

More of the intrapersonal and one-on-one learnings came out in comments from this class. One observation may be seen in the light of the developmental tasks such as personal responsibility, having learned to “take a more active role as a member of a team.” Many mentioned feedback, for example, “How to give proper feedback. Be specific and give examples. Also to get and give feedback often and from a number of people.” The majority of respondents mentioned team skills, such as learning about

Managing conflict and accountability. Working with the team, learned the importance of holding people accountable for their assigned tasks. I also got a better understanding of how to successfully manage team conflicts and disagreements.

Still others’ comments suggest important developmental learnings. One reported learning “to be patient with others and to work as a team from the

### Table 3
**Areas of Greatest Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Managing</th>
<th>Service-Management</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing projects</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a good team member</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving and receiving feedback</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising leadership of a team</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the dynamics of team</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting on what I have done</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding concepts from the readings</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlisting others to help do a task</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing organization</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing jobs to be done</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting others to be accountable for their performance</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ N = 29, 22, 51 \]

a. Rankings were based on the following: “From the following elements of your course, rank the TOP SIX, where 1 = what I learned most about, 2 = what I learned second most about, etc., up to 6” (coded by assigning 6 for first place, 5 for second, etc., to 0 for unranked).
beginning,” whereas another said, “I learned that working together as a team will help a project to be more successful than working as individuals.” The latter comment could be seen cynically as merely regurgitating an explicit goal of a course, but it also may be considered as a repudiation of the reaction of many students to uncooperative teammates when they exclaim, “They’re just not working, so I’d rather do it myself!” Real progress cannot occur, of course, unless the student team succeeds in working through their setbacks. That implies the need for vigilance by the instructor to inquire and sometimes intervene if projects are running off the rails. As with any skillful consultant, it is not enough to solve problems directly for a client, but it is powerful to show them how to solve the situation for themselves. For this reason, it is helpful if instructors in service-learning have experience in group facilitation or counseling. In one class, I had a team whose final report was becoming a shambles and the de facto leader was ready to complete it all himself. After I facilitated a rather confrontational meeting with them, I gave the team more time to regroup, work out their differences, and submit it late, albeit with a lowered grade. It appeared that the consequent learning was appreciably more than it would have been.

The “Service-Learning in Management” class identified somewhat different issues in their course. Some thought they had too many assignments to reflect on their progress, so I have reduced the number of those. Still, several classmates appreciated this aspect: “I liked the fact that I was able to reflect back upon every aspect of growth in this course.” Some commented on their individual and group accomplishments: “I am today proud of our efforts, more confident in my abilities and feel accomplished because of this course. It gave me a chance to shine, and I’ve gained a reputation for it.” Many revealed that they acquired a new sense of having collective impact, not just individual: “Being able to successfully work as a group of 20 people,” and,

I liked the fact that we did a big project as a class. It really was a different and learning experience than anything in school I have ever done. Not only did we learn and run an organization, but we also did it for an amazing cause and I am proud of all we have done.

Students in this class also picked up on some of the more advanced skills, such as delegation: “Other people are capable of doing tasks. Learning to delegate was hard,” and “As a leader you cannot ‘boss’ your teammates around.” “I learned how to ‘read’ people better, become more aware and in tune with their personalities while working with them.”
The final survey item asked them to comment on, “If I look back on this course in five years, I think the most valuable things about the experience will have been . . . ” This item elicited a range of comments that referred to the learnings, the sense of collective impact, and the pride they experienced from the process. For example,

Having the chance to do the service-learning project and being able to help out a beneficiary. From picking a beneficiary to developing a strategy to holding events and raising money to giving our donations to them. It was such a good feeling knowing you helped someone out.

Comments such as these say something about the development of empathy and altruism, and they align with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1997; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000) stress on the power of the use of one’s skills and immediate feedback. As a result of perhaps the larger scale of their project, two thirds of the members of the “Service-Learning in Management” class especially remarked on the pride of their collective effort for the benefit of the people of Darfur. One remarked on “How 20 individuals came together and did something great for their school and a tragic cause. And we were successful at it.”

Conclusion

This experience has been a journey that is ongoing, and many questions remain. One major tension of any service-learning course is how to strike a balance between didactic content and the focus on the project. Tilting too far toward the first leads to a conventional lecture-and-take-notes course, whereas too far the other way makes it a work project bereft of the unique opportunity to learn from one’s actions. I used to build in more reflection papers than were necessary, but after student feedback, I have become more discerning as to how often such papers and journals are most productive. Still, the byword of good action–reflection–learning remains that one “doesn’t learn from experience but from experience reflected-upon.”

We most definitely need to do more extensive long-term assessment of our efforts. Although I have already involved students in sessions giving me feedback, this needs to be regularized across courses and instructors. We particularly want to know the value of this new two-course sequence, so we can leverage the unique advantages of each and their interaction.
Once we have cohorts of management majors who have experienced both of them, we will know more about their impact.

The thing we do know is that these courses allow students to experiment with new roles, which they generally have not been able to do in school before, fulfilling one of the needs of the emerging adult stage of development. Many also tell us in the survey that they are getting better at taking responsibility for themselves and at relating to teammates and people outside their organization and feel more competent in a type of work role. Most of them report a growing empathy for the beneficiaries of their projects, near and far. I find that emerging adulthood research helps explain the wide variation in student performance. One of the signal characteristics of emerging adulthood is the heterogeneity of young persons’ readiness to move into full adulthood. From my observation, the student who is more able to take responsibility for actions and make autonomous decisions is likely to be an effective leader or reliable performer on the project. The less developed appear more inclined to hang back or even be absent, derided as a “social loafer.” In other words, it seems that an undergraduate student’s progress through the developmental tasks of emerging adulthood is a primary predictor of performance in a service-learning setting, perhaps even stronger than intellectual accomplishment. At the same time, a student’s immersion in a skillfully executed service-learning activity seems to allow an increase in his or her emerging adulthood capability, so as to enhance that person’s competence in future interpersonal and work situations. Rigorous pre- and postexperience assessment is necessary to corroborate the preliminary observation that two consecutive class experiences of increasingly greater challenge do in fact accelerate that growth.

More rigorous assessment will help inform us as to what elements need to be strengthened and what ones downplayed. Whether or not to pursue service-learning, however, seems to already be answered by both an adaptation of the wisdom of Lao-Tzu:

A leader [teacher] is best
When people barely know he or she exists,
... When their work is done, their aim fulfilled,
They will say:
We did it ourselves.

and by one student’s reflection on the Darfur project: “The satisfaction and pride of being part of an historic event is beyond measure.”
Appendix A
Service-Learning in Management: Description of Service Project Requirements

The guiding principle of this course is, “Learning management by doing management.” The foundation is to engage firsthand in theories of management by forming an enterprise made up of all students in the class and perform a valuable community service project. This project will allow you to exercise your energy, creativity, and interpersonal abilities to create something from scratch. All of you will have opportunities to exhibit leadership behavior, regardless of your specific role. You will be expected to take initiative, follow through on what you agree to do, and hold teammates accountable by giving constructive feedback—positive and negative—for their own growth and for better results. We know that this builds knowledge and skill that translates directly into success in business. Yes, you will even be able to brag on your resume about the group’s and your personal accomplishments this semester.

Conducting a project of ambitious scope and under rather urgent conditions will allow real-time learning about the operations of a complex organization. The class members will decide exactly what project they wish to take on, in consultation with the instructor. The project must be challenging, and it must be of a scale that each student will have a chance to make a major contribution to the outcome.

The class will engage in a variety of activities early in the semester to form the enterprise, establish personal connections among members, ascertain the necessary tasks, divide into appropriate subgroups or “departments” to best accomplish the job, and devise a comprehensive Operating Plan for how to proceed. The class will make a presentation of its Operating Plan to a Board of Directors, which will be made of the instructor and a few other professionals. Feedback from the Board will assist in guiding subsequent activities. At the conclusion of the project, the members will make a final report to the Board of Directors. Both presentations will be a part of everyone’s grade. To help the subgroups, or “department,” of the enterprise, each one is required to meet out of class, get acquainted, and reach agreement about how all members will operate. I will distribute separately guidance on constructing this “Team Charter.”

Every student will be expected to carry out the following activities reflecting on the learnings implicit in the project:

A. After-Action Review—Done with one’s subgroup
B. Milestone Paper—Done individually
C. Final Reflection Paper—Done individually

This project will allow the honing of one’s skills in working in an interdependent situation with others, as well as learning about large system dynamics, which are more complex than operating in a simple, free-standing team. Part of this
Appendix A (continued)

inter dependence will be to work collaboratively and to give other people feedback on their behavior so as to improve their performance and that of the enterprise. In addition, you will be asked to assess others’ performance at the end of the term, which will have an effect on their grade.

Appendix B

Intended Learning Outcomes (as Shown in the Syllabi)

Managing Self and Others

On completion of this course, students should be able to

1. Make more effective choices as they relate to personal responsibility, discipline, planning, and integrity
2. Understand their emotional intelligence competencies and experienced how these may be improved over time
3. Practiced self-leadership, including designing a plan for personal and professional growth, and implemented activities to begin to realize their career goals
4. Better design and manage projects to achieve timely and successful client outcomes
5. Understand key concepts of group dynamics and how groups and teams grow over time
6. Become a more effective leader of others in a team setting, as assessed by peers and the instructor
7. Better interact with others from different national cultural backgrounds

Service-Learning in Management

On completion of this course, students should be able to

1. Further improve their ability to manage themselves in positions of responsibility
2. Better structure various unstructured business problems
3. Understand how organizational structure and systems can impact the behavior of group members and employees, and, consequently, business performance
4. Help design and manage a significant service project
5. Become a valuable contributor to a team and to one-on-one relationships in a work context
6. Experience firsthand the giving and receiving of solid supervision and performance evaluation of work activities
7. Further understand global social, economic and environmental issues and the role of business in that context
Appendix C  
Managing Self and Others: Class Schedule and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Personal Effectiveness</th>
<th>Project Process</th>
<th>Team Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Mastering Self-Leadership (MSL), Preface, Ch. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 2</td>
<td>Teams formed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Start Weekly Journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(required only even numbered wks) (100 pts Total)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Creating Effective Teams (CET), Ch. 1, “Why Groups?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>StrengthsFinder 2.0, pp. i-vii, 1-31</td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Team Name Memo (20 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take StrengthsFinder 2.0 on-line</td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Team Social Function Memo (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Emotional Intell. readings</td>
<td>DUE: Team Project Site Report (20)</td>
<td>CET, Ch. 3, “Group Development”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Proposal for Personal Growth Project (50)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>“5 Project Success Factors” (posted on Webcampus)</td>
<td></td>
<td>CET, Ch. 7, “Stage 1”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>¾</td>
<td>Mills, “Feedback” (posted on Webcampus)</td>
<td>DUE: Oral Team Project Proposal Presentation (40)</td>
<td>DUE: Team Contract (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout, “Peer Feedback”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 4</td>
<td>DUE: Written Team Project Proposal (40)</td>
<td>CET, Ch. 4, “High Performance Teams”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Learning from Action” (AAR) (on Webcampus)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Team After Action Review (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break—Enjoy!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>CET, Ch. 5, “Effective Team Members” &amp; Ch. 8, “Stage 2”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oral update on Personal Growth Project</td>
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<td>CET, Ch. 6, “Team Leadership”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>MSL, Ch. 7</td>
<td>DUE: Extra Credit: Project Monitoring Oral Report (up to 20 Points)</td>
<td>CET, Ch. 9, “Stage 3”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Appendix D
Managing Self and Others

Excerpts From “Personal Effectiveness and Team Project Manual: Growing and Learning Through Service to Others”

Personal Effectiveness

After you take the StrengthsFinder 2.0, you should identify one or two strengths that you would like to build on. You are to complete a leadership development project and write a paper at the end of the semester. You should describe the application of a course concept or combination of concepts (e.g., self-leadership or leadership principle or technique) to improve your own leadership behavior, guided by one or two of your strengths indicated on the instrument. You should submit your Proposal for Personal Growth Project (50 points) by Week 4. Once you have selected the leadership topic, you should draw on at least two outside reference sources (books, articles, educational tapes, etc.) on this topic. In addition, you should identify two people who you think are particularly effective in this area or in some other way you expect to be a good learning source. You are to interview these persons about their philosophy, approach, or style regarding the topic.

(continued)
Appendix D (continued)

Then you should apply the new insights gained from these sources to develop a plan and implement it before the end of this course (and beyond if appropriate) to enhance your own behavior.

The Proposal should report what area or topic of leadership you have selected and explain how it relates to your areas of strength (not weakness). While you will not have yet designed your plan, you should indicate in general the kind of improvement you would like to accomplish and why. If you have already identified the person you intend to interview, you should name that person, although that’s not required at this point. You will provide an oral update on your project during Week 8.

The **Personal Growth Project Report** (200 points), due in Week 15, should identify your objective of what behavior you attempted to improve on, the plan and method used, the results, and the interpretation of your project as to what you learned. You should identify the outside sources, personal and written, in a Reference List at the end and use those in your interpretation. The Report may be between four and six pages, plus any charts, graphs, and reference list. Changing our behavior is a challenging enterprise, so you may not have attained all your goals. As a result, the best papers will provide a candid appraisal of the writer’s success and demonstrate thoughtful insights as to what made it possible or difficult to improve. They will reveal high levels of self-awareness and astute ideas of how to continue to improve after the end of the semester.

A vital part of the Personal Effectiveness component of the course is to do entries in an online **Journal** (150 points). You should make entries every week, except you may omit 2 weeks without penalty. I will ask you sometimes to comment on specific questions for a particular week. In other cases, your comments should be around your reflection on your own experiences. These might answer questions such as

1. What aspects of the week’s readings seem especially important or helpful to me?
2. What have I learned from our recent team meetings and activities?
3. What theories and concepts have I seen coming out in my behavior or that of my team?
4. What concerns me about how my team is functioning right now? Why?
5. What is working especially well right now in our team project? Why?
6. If I were to teach someone about some principle of management in this course, how might I illustrate it with my own current experience or that of my team?

(continued)
Appendix D (continued)

Team Project Proposal

In conjunction with the oral presentation, you should also prepare a Written Team Project Proposal (40 points). The written proposal will be able to convey in more detail some form of action planning document, such as a Work Breakdown Structure or PERT chart. It should reflect the task objectives to be accomplished for each project goal, estimated completion dates for these tasks, and the name(s) of who is responsible for each task. Based on your written proposal and oral presentation, I will either approve your proposal and plan or make recommended changes before you execute it.

Note: You should not implement your plan (except for general preparation) until your proposal has been approved. I would be glad to confer with your team at any time in the semester, including prior to finalizing your proposal. Getting initial feedback from me sooner may pay big dividends before you go too far down a path that could be unproductive.

Reflection Paper

The final assignment for the Team Process dimension is to prepare the Team Reflection Paper (100 points). You should refer to the concepts of team development and behavior as seen in Mastering Self-Leadership and Creating Effective Teams. You should focus on three broad questions: (1) What happened? (2) Why? (3) What were the consequences?

More specifically, you should examine how your team developed. What behaviors emerged? What norms and values were expressed? What goals did you set? What team rules did you develop? What problems or dilemmas did your team face? What changes did the team have to make? Important dimensions to consider include team member roles, team leaders, and team basics. Describing behaviors and not evaluating them at this stage. Next, you should examine what caused these phenomena. You should be able to support your explanation with either data or material from books, journals, or class. Finally, what were the effects of what emerged on the team, its productivity, satisfaction, and learning? What would the team do differently now?

Outstanding papers will be well organized and clearly written. They will include some storytelling, which provides useful concrete examples, and they will also develop explanatory analyses and demonstrate mastery of the material covered in class. This assignment assists the instructor in evaluating your team’s development

(continued)
Appendix D (continued)

during the semester. *I reward critical thinking, candor, and creativity.* I will also grade for organization and professional impression. Humor is acceptable as long it is in good taste. There is no minimum or maximum length for this paper. It should represent a comprehensive analysis of your team process during the semester.

**Compensation Distribution Procedure**

Because this course is centered around a team project, you will also determine among yourselves how the points awarded to the team should be distributed among individual team members. I will determine only the quality and value of the overall submission. The team will determine the compensation for each team member. When every team assignment is submitted, you should indicate on the last page how you will break down the team’s points. An individual team member can receive as many points as the team believes is justified. A team member could receive a zero if the team members think that is appropriate.

For example, if you have a five-member team, a 100-point project could earn a maximum of 500 total points for the team. If the assignment deserved 80 out of 100, then the team will be granted 80 times 5 or 400 points. The team’s allocation would then be applied to 400 to determine how many points go to each member. The team might report at the time the assignment is turned in, for instance, that person A deserves 20% of the total, B 15%, C 15%, D 20%, and E 30%. The proportions naturally have to add up to 100%. If the team’s project earned 400 points, then in this case person A would gain $400 \times 0.20 = 80$, B would get $400 \times 0.15 = 60$, and so on. To ensure that you have group agreement on the allocation, every team member must sign the first or last page of every team assignment next to the agreed-upon allocation.

If a team has made a good-faith effort to reach consensus on point allocation but is unable to agree, I will be willing to meet and mediate a discussion. If such a session becomes too time-consuming, I will be forced to make a decision. Since this really is the team’s business, however, I will try to avoid dictating point distribution if possible.

**Nonperformance Procedure**

Every semester, the topic of nonperformance by a team member comes up. We often hear that the reason you don’t like to do group work is that not everyone carries his or her fair share of the load. I consider nonperformance a serious matter.

(continued)
Appendix D (continued)

In this class, the procedure for dealing with nonperformance is through performance feedback and documentation. Nonperformance may include such things as failing to attend meetings, lacking the ability to perform a specific task, constant complaining, not accepting work assignments, not completing work assignments by an agreed-upon date, or anything else that hampers the group’s performance. Nonperformance does not need to be the same performance repeated over and over, but it could be a set of behaviors that hinders the team. If one of your members is not performing, these are the steps to follow to receive redress:

1. Meet as a team with the person in question. Provide the person with performance feedback. Be specific. Focus on behavior. Identify unacceptable behavior. Explain the effect of this behavior on the team. Listen to the person’s reasons for behaving this way. Make this discussion a problem-solving session. Finally, prepare a written action plan, which identifies the expected behavior and what steps need to be taken to implement this plan. Feel free to confer with me before you have the performance feedback session. Finally, provide a copy of the action plan to each member of the team, including the person in question. I do not need to have a copy of the plan at this time.

2. If the same person continues to not perform, complete Step 1 again, but also prepare a “Letter of Counseling” in addition to the action plan. The letter states the unacceptable behavior that has led to this action and informs the person being counseled of your intent to formally document the unacceptable behavior. All team members must sign the letter. The individual being counseled must acknowledge receipt of the letter. Provide a copy of both action plans and the letter of counseling to me. Again, I will be available for consultation if you wish. Upon receipt of these documents, I will review them and confer with you and the person. Based on my findings, I will provide you and the person with a recommendation.

3. Finally, if the nonperformance continues, prepare a termination letter. All team members other than the person in question must sign the letter. Present a copy of the letter to me and to the person. This letter terminates the person’s involvement with your team. At this point the person being terminated receives a grade of zero for Project Process and Team Process. Upon receipt of these documents, I will review all the evidence and confer with all concerned. I will then determine what further action should be taken.

Note: This subsection and portions of others adapted from materials supplied by Tim O. Peterson, PhD.
Notes

1. Now all our business students read this book in a required core course and write a reflective paper on their analysis of the results.
2. This and all syllabi available from the author on request.
3. This analysis based on emerging adulthood appears much less relevant with those older students who make up most of our MBA and especially e-MBA courses. In other words, the typical 30-year-old MBA student who is not doing too well in a project-based learning situation probably has other developmental weaknesses in areas such as analytical acuity, self-confidence, arrogance, and so on.

References


