



MLS 540: Leadership and Finance

Student Syllabus for the Master of Science in Leadership Studies Program

Course Description

In this course, students are provided with a working knowledge of essential concepts that are used in understanding the financial picture of organizations. The application of those concepts for effective organizational leadership and decision-making is a key emphasis. In addition, students will examine the important role that stewardship and ethics play in financial decision-making.

Course Introduction

This course provides an overview of the relationship between finance and leadership. Many issues regarding finance and leadership will be explored and will become practical and functional tools for examining organizations.

During this course, students will be introduced to the language of finance, the importance of measuring and tracking results, and the concept of stewardship. The course will also introduce several ways leaders are using finance to change the world. Particular attention will be given to biblical examples of leadership and finance.

Beyond the language of finance, students will be exposed to the debates and questions pertaining to measuring the intent of leaders. Some of these debates will include the idea of results and what aspects of leadership should be measured.

Using this knowledge, students will be challenged to examine and apply their understanding of leadership within the context of finance. Furthermore, students will examine what the Bible has to say about money and planning. The understanding that flows from the application of knowledge will allow students to view the process of leadership through the finance paradigm and consider how leaders ought to think about money, planning, and results.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Recognize the terms used in the business language of finance.
2. Identify, examine, and classify the concepts of finance in organizational situations.
3. Identify and apply various concepts of measurement to leadership and leadership's intent.
4. Integrate the use of finance, financial concepts, biblical planning, and budgets in a daily work application.

5. Understand what it means to intend different types of results and how to measure those results.
6. Use a SWOT analysis as a method of understanding an organization's current situation, emphasizing its financial situation.
7. Explain the role that an individual's worldview plays in organizational finance.

Course Texts

ESV value thinline Bible. (2016). Crossway.

ISBN-13: 978-1433550652

ISBN-10: 1433550652

Shoffner, H. G., Shelly, S., & Cooke, R. A. (2011). *The McGraw-Hill 36-hour course: Finance for nonfinancial managers* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

ISBN-13: 978-0071749558

ISBN-10: 0071749551

Articles Provided in Course

Bassi, L., & McMurrer, D. (2007, March) Maximizing your return on people. *Harvard Business Review*, 115-123.

Church of the Brethren, Annual Conference Official Documents. Christian stewardship: Responsible freedom: 1985 church of the brethren statement. Retrieved from <https://www.brethren.org/ac/statements/1985christianstewardship>

Gandossy R., & Guarnieri, R. (2008). Can you measure leadership? *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 50(1), 65-69.

Heuer, M. (2010). Defining stewardship: Towards an organisational culture of sustainability. *JCC*, 40, 31-41.

McGee-Cooper, A. (2009). Accountability as covenant: The taproot of servant leadership. Retrieved from <https://amca.com/amca/wp-content/uploads/Accountability-as-Covenant-2014.pdf>

Moccia, S. (2012). Leadership that gets results: Lessons from Don Quixote. *Review of Business* 33(1), 5-18.

Plueddemann, J. (2004, September 11). A biblical view of results: Acts. *Symposium at Trinity Divinity School*. Chicago, IL.

- Rakotobe-Joel, T., & Sabrin, M. (2010, November). An outcome-based perspective of leadership: Investigating the direct effects of corporate leaders on the firm's financial outcome. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 8(11), 113-124.
- Snodgrass, K. (2010, Spring). Jesus and money—No place to hide and no easy answers. *Word & World*, 30(2), 135-143.
- Wardell, C. (1999). High-performance budgeting. *Harvard Management Update*, 4(1), 1-3.
- Willigan, G. E. (1988). The case of the expensive expansion. *Harvard Business Review*, 67(1), 10-25.
- Zehetner, K., & Steinkellner, P. (2014). Servant leadership in finance—Contradiction or symbiosis? *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 7(2), 361-372.

Textbook Disclaimer

The textbooks for this course were chosen because their primary content directly relates to the objectives of this course. At times, there may be items or issues that are not presented from a proper Christian worldview. As such, the textbooks do not represent an endorsement by Geneva College or the relevant academic department at Geneva College.

Learning and Physical Disabilities Policy

Geneva College values diversity and inclusion and recognizes disabilities as an aspect of diversity. Our shared goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive, ultimately leading to the success of our students in and beyond college. Therefore, Geneva College complies with the ADA as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act by affording reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations should contact Geneva's Student Success Center (SSC) to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the SSC before or during the first week of classes. (Some accommodations may take time to put into place, so it is advised to request this appointment as early as possible.) Legally, no retroactive accommodations can be provided. Accommodations for disabilities are available only as recommended by the SSC. Students whose accommodations are approved will be provided confidential letters which students should review and discuss with their instructors in relation to course requirements. Students who have questions about their right to benefits or have grievances under these statutes should contact the Director of the SSC. For more details, visit the [Student Success Center website](#) or call 724-847-5005.

The Grading System in the MSLS Program

Letter grades for the MSLS program are A, B, C, and F. Geneva includes pluses (+) and minuses (-) in the determination of the grade point average (GPA). Grade points are assigned for each semester hour of credit earned according to the following grading system:

| Letter Grade | Percentage | GPA | Explanation |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| A | 92.00% - 100.00% | 4.0 | Excellent |
| A- | 90.00% - 91.99% | 3.7 | |
| B+ | 87.00% - 89.99% | 3.3 | |
| B | 83.00% - 86.99% | 3.0 | Good |
| B- | 80.00% - 82.99% | 2.7 | |
| C+ | 77.00% - 79.99% | 2.3 | |
| C | 73.00% - 76.99% | 2.0 | Satisfactory |
| C- | 70.00% - 72.99% | 1.7 | |
| F | < 70.00% | 0.0 | No Credit Given |
| WX, WP, WF | | | Withdrawal |

Policy on Academic Honesty

Geneva College has adopted a campus wide policy on academic honesty; the main portions of which are summarized here. Students should become aware of the fuller policy found in Appendix A of the student handbook.

When an instructor has reason to believe that dishonest behavior has occurred, the parties involved should be confronted as soon as possible by the instructor and notification made to the Department of Professional and Online Graduate Studies (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Sanctions may be levied on the student, which could range from an informal warning to expulsion, based on the seriousness of the student's offense (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students may appeal any disciplinary action by following the procedure laid out in the College's Policy on Academic Honesty (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students are encouraged to visit www.plagiarism.org in order to clarify what constitutes plagiarism as well as a number of other academic standards. This website also provides directives as to how to avoid committing this act and how to properly cite academic sources.

Turnitin Policy

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as

source documents in the Turnitin reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Students must agree to the End User License Agreement (EULA) for Turnitin. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on Turnitin.com. Assignments that are not submitted through Turnitin will not be graded and will not receive credit.

Participation Policy

In the online environment, **participation is marked by the completion of an *academic event* in each session (week) of the course.** Academic events include, but are not limited to, submission of a class assignment, participation in class discussion forum, or completion of a quiz/exam.

If no academic event is completed within the first session (Week 1) of a course, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course. Beyond the first session, if no academic event is completed for a class session, the student will be considered as having not participated in that week of class, which in some cases may result in zeros on the missed assignments and a half-letter grade deduction from the student's final course grade.

If a student does not complete an academic event for two consecutive sessions, the student will either be administratively withdrawn from the course or will receive a final course grade of F, depending on how much of the course has transpired at the time of the second week of nonparticipation. For more details, please review Geneva's Student Handbook ([Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#)).

Course Evaluation

| Criteria | Points Breakdown | Points |
|--|--|------------|
| Discussion Forums (8) | 30 points each | 240 points |
| Lexicon Project Parts 1-3 | Part 1 and Part 3 = 50 points each Part 2 = 30 points | 130 points |
| Application Paper 1 | One Submission | 60 points |
| Application Paper 2: Part A and Part B | 60 points each | 120 points |
| Application Paper 2: Final Project | One Submission | 140 points |
| Total | | 690 points |

Assignment Descriptions

Discussion Forums

Class participation is monitored by postings and responses in the discussion forum. Typically, class participation is composed of two parts:

- a. Part 1 – Requires you to go to your discussion forum and post a response to a question or prompt that is written in your syllabus by Wednesday at 11:55 pm (EST) of your scheduled session week. Your instructor will generally respond to your post within 24 hours. Depending on the nature of the assignment, the instructor may have a follow up question for you, ask you for clarification or further details, or direct your conversation to someone else for rebuttal.
- b. Part 2 – Respond back to your instructor's post. In addition, post a response to at least two of your fellow classmates' postings, using 1 or 2 paragraphs. Your response should further the discussion (e.g., ask a question, provide further information or examples, or introduce a different opinion). In particular, one response to a classmate **MUST** be in the form of a question that seeks to further the conversation. Your question must be posed by 11:55 pm (EST) Friday of the scheduled session week so that your classmate has adequate time to answer it.

Likewise, if a question is posed to you by Friday night, you are also required to answer it.

Part 2 of these online activities (response to instructor, response to classmates' questions of you, and responses to your classmates) must be completed by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of each session.

NOTE: How to earn full credit in graduate-level discussion forums:

1. Become familiar with the discussion forum rubric, which is available to you in all of your Moodle classroom discussion forums.
2. Be thoughtful in your responses and incorporate examples from your personal and professional experiences and references to the course material (e.g., readings, lecture, videos, audio clips, scripture, etc.) when appropriate. Remember to cite all sources and references according to proper APA style.
3. Incorporate outside, individually sought research in all initial discussion forum postings. These outside sources' content should relate to the discussion prompts and the week's course materials. The source(s) that you select can either provide further support for or a different opinion on the week's course materials. Furthermore, the source(s) must reinforce and add clarity to the points you are making in your initial discussion forum posting.
4. Do **MORE THAN THE MINIMUM**. Responding to the discussion contributions of 2 peers is **REQUIRED** as the minimum in all discussion forums. Doing the minimum does **NOT** guarantee full credit. In order to earn full credit, you will have to do **MORE** than the minimum 2 responses to classmates' posts (see the rubric for more detail).

Your posting and responses will be graded by your instructor. For a detailed description of your responsibility in discussion forum postings, please see the “Interacting in the Online Environment” section in the MSLS Student Handbook.

Lexicon Project

Throughout this course, each student will develop a lexicon for financial leadership. A lexicon is a list of important financial terms one could use as a reference tool for an organization. Lexicons are similar to a dictionary in that they (1) define a particular term, (2) explain how and when it is used, and (3) include other concepts to which each particular term is related. A lexicon offers an organization the ability to communicate about financial matters in a uniform manner. Additionally, it facilitates the uniform collection and presentation of financial data.

During the course, each student will develop a list of 50 key financial terms to be included in the lexicon. The lexicon should be designed so that it can serve as a useful reference tool even after this course is completed.

Your lexicon must be written in your own words; definitions cannot simply be copied from the dictionary or an online resource. Additionally, definitions should be written in narrative form.

When developing your lexicon, be sure to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Use complete sentences.
2. Definitions must be original and crafted in your own words.
3. Each term must include the following:
 - Define the particular term.
 - Indicate how and when it is used.
 - Link the term with related concepts.
4. List all terms in alphabetical order.
5. Use bibliographic information where necessary.

The Lexicon Project will be assigned and completed in several parts due throughout this course. Each student should create one document for his or her Lexicon Project and then add to that document for each of the following project parts:

- Session 1 – Lexicon Project Part 1
- Session 2 – Lexicon Project Part 2
- Session 4 – Lexicon Project Part 3

Lexicon Project Parts 1-3 are due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of the designated session week.

Application Papers

Throughout this course, students will complete two application papers that will require them to demonstrate understanding of and apply some of the key course concepts. Each application paper should include appropriate examples and incorporate applicable finance and leadership theory. Additionally, each paper should make good use of appropriate data, present data in a standardized and understandable format, and ensure that any data presented significantly adds to the analysis and conclusion of the paper. Specific instructions for completing each of these written assignments can be found in the course outline below.

- Session 3 – Application Paper 1
- Session 4 – Application Paper 2: Organization Selection Forum
- Session 5 – Application Paper 2: Part A
- Session 6 – Application Paper 2: Part B
- Session 8 – Application Paper 2: Final Project

Professional Skills in Your Online Courses

All courses in your Geneva College Online program will provide you with an opportunity to develop valuable skills that can positively influence your professional and career development. Each course at Geneva provides numerous opportunities to develop skills employers desire in their employees and job candidates in areas including, but not limited to, written communication, research, critical thinking, and decision-making. However, targeted skill sets are also developed through the learning in particular courses.

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to add these particular skills to your bank of professional assets:

Estimating/ Forecasting Skills



Skillful in performing numerical and statistical calculations to provide useful information

Categorizing/ Classifying Skills



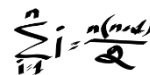
Skillful in compiling, organizing, and using data to enhance planning and effectiveness

Research Skills



Skillful in compiling, organizing, and using data to enhance planning and effectiveness

Problem Solving Skills



Ability to identify and define problems and solutions

Operational Skills



Skillful in proper use of tools, hardware, software, and equipment to ensure optimal functioning

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