Management Problems in Media
Stephen F. Austin State University | Fall 2023
Online

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Catalog Description
Analysis of management problems with special attention to policies, procedures and organizational principles in media-related fields.

Course Description
Management involves not only knowing the media industry well but also developing leadership practices in a rapidly changing world. In this class, we will learn the history of management theories and discuss how our ideas of leadership have evolved through the decades. We’ll also work on developing as leaders through attention to communication practices, expectations of management today, and knowledge of policies and regulations in the current media industry. Finally, we’ll speculate on the future of media management. Thus, despite the official title, this course is less about “problems” in modern media management, and more about the opportunities that come with leadership in an exciting, evolving field.

Course Format & Required Materials
Regular participation is mandatory for this online, asynchronous course. Participation will be gauged through annotations (comments) on course readings. You must have access to your SFA email and Brightspace D2L to succeed in this course.

All required readings can be accessed on the course Perusall. Information for accessing Perusall will be listed in D2L. Perusall is a free, online platform for compiling course readings—all you will need to access the site is to set up an account.

You will also need to get access to one book for your leadership book review, as explained in the assignments section below.

In addition, the recommended textbooks for this course include:

- *Origins and Traditions of Organizational Communication: A Comprehensive Introduction to the Field* edited by Anne M. Nicotera

Active communication is key to your success in this course: reach out to me, your peers, on campus resources, or consult additional resources I provide for help completing assignments. Although succeeding in the course remains your responsibility, I want to set you up to succeed—do not hesitate to reach out for help, assignment feedback, clarification, etc.
Student Learning Outcomes

1. You will gain an understanding of media from a commercial, business standpoint, including considerations that go into media management. (Case Study)
2. You will examine the changes and development in management across the decades and within different media industries. (Something Old & Something New Essay)
3. You will develop leadership communication techniques to aid in media management situations. (Participation, Case Study, Leadership Book Review)
4. You will exhibit introductory-level understanding of policies and regulations applied to media management. (Case Study, Participation)
5. You will critique and question the role of management and leadership in your experience as an employee and leader in the twenty-first century. (Leadership Book Review, Participation)

Assignments and Grading Scale

Points Breakdown
Total points 1000, broken down as follows:
- Participation (200 points)
- Something Old & Something New Essay (200 points)
- Leadership Book Review (200 points)
- Management Case Study (400 points total)
  - Case Background (75 points)
  - Management Theories that Apply to Case (150 points)
  - Discussion of What Worked, What Didn’t (100 points)
  - What Case Means in Future of Media (75 points)

Grading Scale
Your final course grade will be comprised of a weighted average, using the following grading scale. Grades are not rounded up.

A = 90% - 100% Excellent. (900-1000 points)
Mastery of the assignment/concepts at the highest level of attainment.

B = 80% - 89.9% Good. (800-899 points)
Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment.

C = 70% - 79.9% Average. (700-799 points)
An acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment.

D = 60% - 69.9% Inferior. (600-699 points)
A marginal performance; a minimal passing level of attainment.

F = 0% - 59.9% Failure. (0-599 points)
Unacceptable performance revealing almost no understanding of content.

Participation
Each week, you will be assigned a collection of readings based on key concepts covered in the lecture videos. You must make five total substantial comments on the readings each week. Substantial does not just mean word count—rather, I am looking for (a) recognition of key concepts, (b) genuine interest in the subject matter, (c) additional examples from personal observation and/or experience, (d) critical thought, (e) practical takeaways for managers, and/or (f) questions to discuss. You must make your comments in the course Perusall. Responses to your
peers’ comments, if substantial, will earn the same number of points as a stand-alone comment. In addition, each module will have one very simple discussion prompt in d2l.

**Something Old & Something New Essay**

Early in the course, we will discuss the development of management theories, with special attention to media industries. Keeping in mind the development of management and workplaces, as well as changes in media industries in the twenty-first century, for the Something Old & Something New Essay you must outline concepts and/or theories that still apply to management today and concepts and/or theories that need updating or replacing completely. Choose 2-5 concepts/theories to keep and 2-5 concepts/theories to update or replace. Make sure to fully explain why the concepts/theories are still relevant today or why they are not. I suggest having an overarching theme to your essay that threads throughout all the concepts/theories you choose. Your final essay must be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, following the latest APA style. No cover page is required, and references do not count toward the page count.

**Leadership Book Review**

Leadership is a concept that is highly fluid and open to interpretation yet impacts people every single day. For this assignment, you will choose a book on leadership to review. A list of books is provided at the end of the syllabus—you may choose from this list or pick your own, pending my approval. Your review must include (a) relevant background material for the book, such as the author’s credibility, (b) major takeaways or “lessons learned” from the book, (c) what course concepts/theories apply to the takeaways from the book, and (d) your personal evaluation of the book based on both additional research and personal experience/observation. Your final review must be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, following the latest APA style. No cover page is required, and references do not count toward the page count.

**Management Case Study**

Your most substantial assignment for this course involves carrying out an in-depth case study of media management in action. You may choose from the cases listed at the end of the syllabus or choose your own, pending my approval. You will complete the following sections during the second half of the course, then will revise and combine the sections into a complete paper at the very end of the course. The final complete paper must be 10-15 pages, double-spaced, following the latest APA style. No cover page is required, and references do not count toward the page count.

**Case Background**

For the first section, explain the backstory of the case. What is the organization? What is its history? Who are the leaders you’re focusing on? What shift/transformation/crisis/etc. happened? What was the response and the aftermath? Explain in detail, using course concepts when appropriate. This section should be approximately 2-3 pages.

**Management Theories that Apply to Case**

For this section, outline specific management theories discussed in class. You may also use theories researched on your own or from other courses, but at least one of the theories you discuss must be from this course. Explain the theory in detail, bringing in additional scholarly sources as needed. The section should include background of the theory or theories, development of the theory/theories, conversation or controversy over the theory/theories, example applications of the theory/theories in scholarship, and why/how the theory/theories relate to your particular case. Stick to the facts in this section—only hint
at your own interpretation of the case and theories. This section should be approximately 4-5 pages.

Discussion of What Worked, What Didn’t
Explain in detail the aftermath or outcomes of the situation your case involves. Using the theories you’ve already detailed in the previous section, explain what worked with your media manager and what didn’t in their particular case and why. For the previous sections, you relied on facts and research already in existence—you just repackaged those ideas. Here, you must speculate with your own ideas on the topic. So, don’t be afraid to make claims, as long as you back them up by the research you mentioned in previous sections. This section should be approximately 4-5 pages.

What Case Means in Future of Media
In the final section, outline several takeaways or “lessons learned” from this case. What can media managers learn from the case you’ve described and analyzed? Also note potential shifts in media management and media industries in the future. Will the takeaways you’ve described stand the test of time when these shifts occur? Again, don’t be afraid to speculate with your own ideas in this section, though you should pull in additional scholarly sources and/or industry research on the future of the media industry here. This section should be approximately 2-3 pages.

Course and Campus Policies

Late Work
A one-week grace period will be given for all assignments except the final case study, to allow for technical glitches or other issues that may delay you turning in your work. Beyond the grace period, no late work will be accepted.

Extra Credit
Interview a manager, executive, or other formalized leader in a media company about their management style, management problems they face, what they love about management, and anything else related to this course. The interview must last 40 minutes to 1 hour. Provide the name and workplace of your interview subject, your prepared questions, a transcript of the interview, and a bullet-point list of takeaways or “lessons learned” from your interview to receive credit. Up to 50 extra credit points possible for this assignment.

Generative-AI Tools (such as Chat-GPT)
I do not mind if you use AI tools such as Chat GPT to provide structure or basic editing/proofreading for your writing. However, you must NOT use these tools to generate ideas with no reflection or direction from your own mind and you may NOT use these tools to draft a document. I want YOUR ideas and YOUR voice in your work in this class. Producing unoriginal work will result in a 0 on the assignment. A good rule of thumb is to be transparent about your use of AI tools.

Questions about Grades
I welcome questions about grades, so please reach out if you would like clarification. However, I ask that you wait for 24 hours after receiving your grade before talking with me about it. This “cool off”
period is required before I will meet with you. Afterwards, you have a week to talk with me about the grade; after a week, I will consider the issue closed. All discussions of grades must take place via videoconference or, depending on our situation, in person.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Grade Withheld Policy (Semester Grades, Policy 5.5)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Academic Integrity
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.
Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
**The Dean of Students Office** (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
[www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

**SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic** Human Services, Room 202
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

**The Health and Wellness Hub** “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

[www.sfasu.edu/thehub](http://www.sfasu.edu/thehub)
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
Course Schedule
(subject to change)

Due dates bolded and in red.
Required readings in blue and in italics.
Lecture videos are boldfaced. “Fireside Chat” videos are module wrap ups, in which I will chat about the readings and assignments for the module. Not all weeks will have videos.
Additional videos may be posted on Brightspace D2L explaining specific assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date &amp; Topics</th>
<th>To Do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1—Theories of Management</td>
<td><strong>Read Course Syllabus</strong></td>
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**Week 1 (Aug. 28-Sept. 3)—Intro to Media Management**
- Intro to Management Problems in Media (on d2l)
- “Questioning media management scholarship: Four parables about how to better develop the field”
- “Why is media management research so difficult—and what can scholars do to overcome the field’s intrinsic challenges”

**Week 2 (Sept. 4-10)—Classical Management Approaches**
- Classical Management Theory: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1jOwD-CTLI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1jOwD-CTLI)
- “Maybe it is time to rediscover bureaucracy”
- “Back to the future: Lessons from the past for a new management era”
- “Is management still a science?”
- “It’s time to invert the management pyramid”

**Week 3 (Sept. 11-17)—Development of Management Approaches**
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the Workplace: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nASV5I_WG3k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nASV5I_WG3k)
- Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXAzZRnJo2o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXAzZRnJo2o)
- “A theory of human motivation”
- “The human side of enterprise”
- “Japanese and American management: Theory z and beyond”
- “Managing without managers”

(Module 1 Fireside Chat)

Something Old & Something New Essay Due by Sunday, Sept. 17 at 11:59 p.m.
# Module 2—An Evolving Leader

**Week 4 (Sept. 18-24)—The Modern Leader**
- **Managerial Grid Theory of Leadership:**
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Ra5fT2DGA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Ra5fT2DGA)
- “How to choose a leadership pattern”
- “The politics of emotion”
- “Three skills every 21st-century manager needs”
- “Post-pandemic leadership: How managing a business is changing in times of COVID-19”

**Week 5 (Sept. 25-Oct. 1)—Leadership as Communication**
- **The Situational Approach to Leadership:**
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rb7UBpcTTg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rb7UBpcTTg)
- “Discursive leadership: A communication alternative to leadership psychology”
- “Situational leadership, perception, and the impact of power”
- “Managing yourself: Bringing out the best in your people”

**Week 6 (Oct. 2-8)—Practical Leadership Strategies**
- “From leadership-as-practice to leaderful practice”
- “Managing in the age of outrage”
- “How to run an effective meeting”
- “Research: Where employees think companies’ DEIB efforts are failing”

(Module 2 Fireside Chat)

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# Module 3—The Media Biz

**Week 7 (Oct. 9-15)—The Media Business Landscape**
- **The Explainer: The 5 Forces that Make Companies Successful:**
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCWHSeDU-zk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCWHSeDU-zk)
- **Structure Conduct Performance:**
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAICCDsIPjo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAICCDsIPjo)
- **Structure Conduct Performance (2):**
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XKKQZ9d7LA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XKKQZ9d7LA)
- “How competitive forces shape strategy”
- “Applying the structure-conduct-performance framework in the media industry analysis”
- “Connected television: Media convergence, industry structure, and corporate strategies”

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**Leadership Book Review Due by Sunday, Oct. 8 at 11:59 p.m.**
- “How Microsoft became innovative again” (read for ideas for your own case study assignment)

Week 8 (Oct. 16-22)—Media Audience
- “Audiences in an age of datafication: Critical questions for media research”
- “Reconfiguring the audience commodity: The institutionalization of social TV analytics as market information regime”
- “Diffusion of innovations: Communication evolution and influences”
- “Encoding and decoding affordances: Stuart Hall and interactive media technologies”

Week 9 (Oct. 23-29)—Navigating Media Management
- “How information gives you competitive advantage”
- “Synergizing traditional media and the social web for monetization: A modified media micropayment model”
- “Social media marketing management: A conceptual framework”
- “Customer-centered brand management”

(Module 3 Fireside Chat)

Case Background
Due by Sunday, Oct. 29 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 4—Navigating Policies

Week 10 (Oct. 30-Nov.5)—Management Ethics
- Human Resource Management (HRM) Explained in 10 minutes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bI9RZjF-538](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bI9RZjF-538)
- “Human resource management in the media”
- “Risk management in digital advertising: An analysis from the advertisers’ media management perspective”
- “Author Talks: Tomorrow’s capitalist is socially conscious”
- “Self-regulation, corporate social responsibility, and the business case”

Week 11 (Nov. 6-12)—Regulations & Routines
- Media Regulation: Crash Course Government and Politics: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6LK4RKIew](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6LK4RKIew)
- “When culture doesn’t translate”
- “Comparative media regulation in the United States and Europe”
- “An application of the Analytic Network Process to the advertising media budget allocation decision”
- “The struggle to give stories away”

Week 12 (Nov. 13-19)—Following Policies
- “Toward creativity management: Idea generation and newsroom meetings”
- “The management of virtual teams and virtual meetings”
- “Building an ethical company”

(Module 4 Fireside Chat)

Thanksgiving Break—No Class (Nov. 20-26)

Module 5—The Future of Media Management

Week 13 (Nov. 27-Dec. 3)—Technology & the Workplace
- “The influence of ICT megatrends on global megatrends”
- “The permissionless corporation”
- “A review of artificial intelligence adoptions in the media industry”
- “Special issue: Big data and media management”

Week 14 (Dec. 4-10)—Horizon Scanning for Media Management
- “Current state and development perspectives of media economics/media management research”
- “Does media management matter? Establishing the scope, rationale, and future research agenda for the discipline”

(Module 5 Fireside Chat)

**Final Management Case Study Due Friday, Dec. 15 at 11:59pm—NO Grace Period**
Leadership Books to Review:

- *Leadership in Turbulent Times* by Doris Kearns Goodwin
- *The First 90 Days* by Michael Watkins
- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni
- *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek
- *The Leadership Challenge* by James Kouzes and Barry Posner
- *Execution* by Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan
- *Good to Great* by Jim Collins
- *Primal Leadership* by Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee
- *Drive* by Daniel H. Pink
- *True North* by Bill George
- *Wooden on Leadership* by John Wooden and Steve Jamison
- *Extreme Ownership* by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin
- *First, Break All the Rules* by Marcus Buckingham
- *Tribes* by Seth Godin
- *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* by John C. Maxwell
- *Leading Change* by John Kotter
- *On Becoming a Leader* by Warren Bennis
- *The Effective Executive* by Peter Drucker
- *The One Minute Manager* by Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson
- *Immunity to Change* by Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey
- *Lean In* by Sheryl Sandberg
- *Dare to Lead* by Brené Brown
- *Beyond the Wall of Resistance* by Rick Maurer
- *Conscious Business* by Fred Kofman
- *Leaders Eat Last* by Simon Sinek
- *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *Women and Leadership* by Julia Gillard and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
- *How Women Rise* by Sally Helgesen and Marshall Goldsmith
- *Nice Girls Don’t Get the Corner Office* by Lois P. Frankel
- *How Remarkable Women Lead* by Joanna Barsh, Susie Cranston, and Geoffrey Lewis
- *The Likeability Trap* by Alicia Menendez
- *HBR’s 10 Must Reads on Women and Leadership* by the Harvard Business Review
- *We Should All be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *That’s What She Said* by Joanne Lipman
- *Grit* by Angela Duckworth
- *In the Company of Women* by Grace Bonney
- *Run to Win* by Stephanie Schrock and Christina Reynolds
Cases for Case Study Assignment:

Note: You will need to narrow down the following businesses/organizations to a time they managed change and/or crisis effectively or ineffectively through media management of some kind. For instance, perhaps look at AT&T’s decision to acquire Time Warner, or Netflix monetization issues with shared subscriptions, or Disney’s Disney+ and ESPN+ streaming platforms, etc.

- MoviePass
- Uber (focus on their app/media)
- Disney
- Netflix
- Guardian News Media
- The New York Times
- AT&T
- ABC
- NBC
- CBS
- National Public Radio
- Public Broadcasting System
- Coca-Cola (focus on their use of media)