

Syllabus for 1206DEPM 604.9040

Faculty Contact Information

Faculty contact info: Michael Beaudoin can be contacted directly via his email address: mbeaudoin@une.edu

Course Introduction

- This is a 3-credit graduate course.
- The course consists of consisting of units of study, covered over a 12 week term.
- The course officially begins on M and ends on August 19th, 2012.
- The last date for withdrawal without penalty is: July 21, 2012.
- Students are encouraged to contact their instructor as needed.

Course Description

(Formerly OMDE 604.) An introduction to the organization, management, and administration of distance education and e-learning training programs and systems. Topics include management theory and practice, organizational behavior and change, leadership roles and styles, and planning and policy. Discussion covers education and training in academic and corporate settings and the knowledge and skills necessary for a distance education practitioner to function effectively in either type of organizational environment. Assignments include individual and group case-study analyses, brief essays, and literature searches related to distance education and e-learning leadership.

Course Goals/Objectives

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Distinguish between traditional and contemporary approaches to organizational leadership and change
2. Identify the role and relationships of individuals and groups and how they impact performance and outcomes
3. Recognize the current state of knowledge with respect to leadership and leadership styles, particularly as these apply to distance education/e-learning.
4. Apply the operant variables in problem analysis, decision making and intervention.
5. Practice effective communication techniques for motivating others to achieve goals.
6. Examine leadership roles most appropriate to advance distance education/e-learning goals.
7. Relate and apply new knowledge and skills that best advance distance education/e-learning in academic and corporate milieu in the digital age.

Additional Readings/Materials

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Beaudoin, M. 2004. Reflections on Research, Faculty and Leadership in Distance Education. ASF Series, Vol. 8. Oldenburg University Press (Selected chapters made available online).

Burge, E (ed.). (2007). Flexible Higher Education-Reflections from Expert Experience. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.

Kotter, J. (1996). Leading Change. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS (Optional for general management background reading)

- Hersey, P. Blanchard, K., & Johnson, D. (2008). *Management of organizational behavior: Leading human resources* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle Creek: Pearson: Prentice Hall.
- Latchem, C. & Hanna, D. (eds.). (2001). Leadership for 21st Century Learning- Global Perspectives from Educational Innovators. London: Kogan Page.

Grading Information and Criteria

For all graded assignments, including online participation in online threaded discussions, students will be provided with timely and detailed written feedback.

Assignment	%Grade	Aligned Objectives
Threaded Discussion Participation (includes entries to the Webliography)	20%	All
Assignment #1 (Annotated Bibliography)	20%	2,6
Assignment #2 (Case Study Part 1)	20%	2,4,5
Assignment #3 (Leadership style analysis & discussion)	20%	2,6
Assignment #4 (Two-part Presentation)	20%	6,7

COURSE SPECIFIC GRADING POLICIES

The criteria for this course are simple and straightforward: Substantive and articulate participation in all threaded discussions (at least three times per unit); regular submissions of appropriate Webliography entries; and satisfactory completion and timely submission of original, well-written, error-free assignments, reflecting graduate level research and writing and use of APA style, is expected in this course.

All graded assignments will be awarded numerical grades based on a 100-point scale; the final course grade will be presented as a letter grade. All marks for graded assignments will be posted within the week following the due date. Please contact your instructor if you have an emergency situation that will not allow you to be able to complete an assignment on time. This must be done prior to the assignment deadline. Depending on circumstances, some reduction in the grade due to lateness may be appropriate.

Project Descriptions

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Threaded Discussions:

All students are expected to be actively and regularly involved in each Threaded Discussion. This forum is one of the most important in this course and the **Threaded Discussion component will account for a percentage of the overall grade. The main purpose** of this activity is to establish dialogue around the ideas generated by the text and other readings, and to share theories and insights as to how such ideas can improve the organizations we work in, or lead, or aspire to lead. Much of the learning that takes place in this course relies on student contributions. The threads allow the course to make important connections between theory and practice and experience. Participation is valued at 20% of the final course grade.

A standard feature of each threaded discussion is the posting of comments in response to suggested questions posed by the instructor, based on readings or other materials provided. Typically, these review questions are provided for most readings to guide students' responses and to focus attention on major aspects of material assigned.

Written (and graded) assignments:

There are a total of **four (4) written (and graded) assignments to be submitted** by the date specified in that Unit. Topics are determined by the material covered in the current or immediately preceding unit. All written assignments, with the exception of the ongoing threaded discussions, are due on or before the final day of the Unit (i.e., usually Sunday evening NLT midnight). Comments and grades will be posted for each assignment Unit within the following week. An approximate word count will be specified for each assignment. These written works will be assigned a letter grade to be posted in the Gradebook. Each is valued at 20% of the final course grade. Writing appropriate for graduate-level academic work, as well as adherence to APA style, is expected; accurate and complete attribution of all sources is mandatory.

Assignment #1: (Due at the end of Week 3)-

Write an **annotated bibliography** of 5 paper or electronic readings that relate to Situational Leadership. While these sources do not necessarily need to be in the context of distance/e-learning/training, you are expected to make that connection in your annotated write-up, and also relate your comments to what else has been read to date in the course, on management and leadership (especially as this may apply to transformational leadership).

Cite the source, then write a one-paragraph summary of the selection's key points and comment on this piece. You may agree with, challenge, and/or add further insights. In a second paragraph, explain why you selected it, and how it may relate to the other assigned course readings, and to your own experience and opinions.

Use APA citations standards. **Approximately 500 words per entry**. Post in the Assignments folder NLT Sunday evening at the end of week 3.

Written Assignment #2 (valued at 20% of final course grade):

Part 1 (To be completed by the end of week 4) Write **a brief paper on one of the two case studies provided (both are provided in their entirety below). Each describes** a problem or situation or issue that warrants some change intervention, and you are to conduct an analysis, based on the information available to you, of what is going on and what you think ought to be done next by whom to ameliorate the situation. This will involve writing a brief paragraph on each of the aspects outlined below. You should also incorporate whatever material from the Kotter text that seems applicable to your analysis and intervention, and explain its relevance. Use APA style and double-space the document, to be posted in the Assignments folder NLT Sunday midnight of the week assigned. Approximately 1750 words.

- Description of the most salient elements of the situation
- Utilize and appropriately cite a minimum of 3 relevant sources from the literature
- Explanation of why intervention is warranted
- Diagnosis of the strengths & weaknesses
- Development of a strategy for changing the situation
- Proposed leadership style required to effect intended outcome
- Analysis of likely reaction from stakeholders involved
- Description of next steps
- Concluding comment

Distance Education Case Study #1

The University of the 5th Age (U5) is a relatively small private non-profit institution in New England (approximately 4,000 students) with a mix of liberal arts/sciences and professional studies programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with an enrollment of approximately 4000 “traditional” students. Some 15 years ago, a new dean developed the institution’s first distance education (DE) program- a master’s degree for experienced teachers (MT). It was designed as a hybrid program, utilizing a combination of video-tapes, study guides, texts, with email communication between faculty and students. The MT also offered an intensive (optional) one-week summer session on campus for those wishing to include a f2f component to their DE studies.

As is frequently the case with the development of new DE enterprises, the MT was launched with a corporate for-profit partner based on the west coast, which provides a battery of services that have continued until the present. These include: production of video-based materials, marketing and recruitment, warehousing and distribution of study materials. U5 hires faculty, who oversee course development, approve curricula, and mentor students at a distance. After 15 years, it has become the institution’s largest single academic program, with about 750 degree candidates, each enrolled in an average of 1.5 courses per term, over three semesters throughout the year. The program is housed in the Education Dept.; there is a small core administrative staff on campus and around fifty adjunct faculty, most of whom seldom come on campus. Only one senior professor is dedicated full-time to the MT program. The tuition is divided 50/50 between the two partners, resulting in a net profit of approx. \$500,000 per year for U5.

In addition, the Education department also offers a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Educational Leadership (CAGS), which began five years ago as U5’s first fully online program. But has never realized its full potential, and today has an average enrollment of 100 or so in any given term,

including about 1/3rd who take individual courses for continuing professional education credits. The university pays a portion of tuition revenues to a different corporate partner, which provides an instructional platform and server. This program barely breaks even each year since its inception. Finally, the department offers stand-alone video courses for teachers seeking continuing education credits, registering around 500 students per term. These courses are also marketed by the MT partner firm, with revenues split, generating another \$150,000 or so each year for U5.

Despite the relative success of these DE programs, they remain essentially an anomaly within the institution, operating in relative isolation, never really having had a ripple effect to other departments. Beyond these offerings, a few U5 faculty utilize instructional technology to augment their classroom courses, but there is no established infrastructure to encourage and support DE activity throughout the institution. As for institutional leadership in relation to DE, the key academic leaders- president, academic VP, college dean- are all tolerant of DE programs, but none are especially knowledgeable about it, nor could any be described as champions of it, though none are actively opposing DE activity. A new president recently was installed, and her attitude toward DE is considered to be quite positive.

Two months ago, the corporate partner announced, as a result of being acquired by another company with new business interests in the higher education sector, that it was severing its contractual relationship with U5, effective 1 January, 2010. This sudden development caused instant panic within the college and department. The Academic VP, college dean and Ed. department chair decided to name a 6-person Task Force (DETC) to formulate a strategic plan to chart the future (or fate) of the main program (MT), as well as consider the viability of its other DE-related activities. Membership is composed of faculty and staff with varying levels of DE experience, but none have any significant expertise.

The DETC has been given 6 weeks to arrive at a preliminary plan of action, to include projected income-expenses of a post-partner operation. If this plan is approved, the DETC will then be given an additional 2 months to finalize details and begin implementation of the plan NLT 1 June 2010. The partner has committed to continue recruiting up to and including the spring 2010 cohort, and to continue the current level of support for those students for two years, when remaining degree candidates would be expected to complete their studies. This means that U5 must be ready to assume responsibility for all program functions, both academic and otherwise (e.g., marketing) by summer 2010, if it wishes to maintain the program uninterrupted, and to generating enrollments sufficient to remain profitable.

Despite the reasonably successful track record that U5 has had in DE, the fact is that you are the only resident employee of U5 at this time that has any significant knowledge and experience of the administrative and instructional aspects of DE. Thus, you are a critical element that could well make the difference between the success and failure of this complex planning process. Your assignment is to assist the DETC in crafting an intervention strategy, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the present situation; investigating and proposing appropriate options; possibly identifying new partners, new programs, new delivery systems; and assessing suitable staffing and other structural arrangements within the dept and institution, etc

Distance Education Case Study #2

A regional university launched two graduate level distance education programs 10 years ago that have both been relatively successful. The first was a master's degree and the second, a certificate of advanced graduate study. Each contains a 10 course program of study, offered in an online format. Since their inception, both programs have required a one-week intensive summer residency session on campus, worth 3 credits. Feedback from students indicates this is a popular aspect of the program, despite the added cost

and inconvenience of travel and residency on campus for a week. The residency provides them an opportunity to “bond” with the institution, with faculty and with student peers.

About 5 years ago, with increasing enrollments and a more geographically dispersed student population enrolling in the master’s program, the residency session became an optional activity, and 3 credits could be earned from an additional online course. Still, a significant number of degree candidates opted to attend the summer session, and it remained financially beneficial to the university. The residency has been continued for the smaller, certificate program.

In the past year, a new director of online graduate programs was hired by the university. This individual immediately advocated that the summer residency be eliminated entirely in both programs, arguing that any campus-based activity is inappropriate for true distance education programs. Faculty who had previously involved in the summer sessions argued that this was a valuable aspect of the program that should remain as an option (It also provided them with extra income). Some students planning to attend the upcoming session were upset to learn its elimination might be forthcoming.

Some university officials seem inclined to keep the residency in place (optional for master’s and required for certificate), especially as it provides additional income. The dean is not enamored with DE, so seems to favor keeping the residency, as she feels the face-to-face component adds legitimacy to the program. The department chair is inclined to support his program director who strongly favors eliminating the summer session for both programs to tout the fully online aspect of the programs.

To resolve the dilemma, the dean decides to appoint an ad hoc task force to study the situation, and make a recommendation regarding the residency question. She suggests they consider all options, possibly even making the master’s residency mandatory again. You are a member of this task force and must make a recommendation to the dean as soon as feasible, including a convincing rationale, advantages, etc. for whatever option you propose.

Prepare an action plan that reflects a diagnosis of the current situation, a strategy for the future of DE at U5, and steps for achieving the goals you see as realistic and viable to make this happen. In particular, identify an appropriate leadership style to ensure successful implementation of the plan.

NOTE: You are permitted to ask your course instructor ONE question that you feel may have bearing on the situation and that might be helpful in crafting your plan

Assignment #3: (Due at the end of week 6)-

Now that you have had an opportunity to be exposed to various leadership concepts and strategies that have potential application to distance education settings, you are to identify one leadership style that you believe is especially relevant to the current state of e-learning, and make a case for why you have selected this particular approach. Prospective leadership styles to consider in making your case include (but are not be limited to): situational, transformative, charismatic, servant, provocateur, entrepreneurial. You are to explain the most salient features of the style you choose, give examples of where and how it has been used effectively, identify both assets and liabilities of the approach, and then describe a situation (real or imagined) in which that style is applied and how/why it resulted in a satisfactory outcome, and include its impact on the individuals and the organization involved.

Approximately 1750 words, APA style. Minimum of 5 citations/references.

Assignment #4 (valued at 20% of total course grade)

This is a two-part presentation, to be prepared and submitted as a single document in the Assignment folder, using APA style, double-spaced and approx. 1750 words.

1. Develop a list of five (5) attributes that you feel best embody an effective DE leader. Whether these are people skills, technical skills, organizational skills, etc., justify your choices by explaining why these are so critical to successful leadership in this digital age. Also indicate if these leader characteristics have changed much in this more recent era of DE, and if these are universal to most DE settings or are best suited to particular situations.
2. Define and discuss five (5) crucial issues that, in your opinion, DE leaders must attend to in order to successfully guide their organizations. How have leaders that you are aware of (perhaps including yourself?) dealt with these challenges? Identify those trends, politics, events, pressures and developments (both positive and negative) within the field of DE that have brought these issues to the fore and now demand the attention and action of DE leaders, not only to deal with today's DE issues, but also those of the future. Note: Attributes and issues are quite different, so be careful that in Part 2, you do not simply continue to identify additional attributes that best belong in Part 1.

Webliography:

Students are expected to contribute to the Webliography, in effect, the course "library." Appropriate sites should be identified and added only after the student has thoroughly read and digested the material. Be prepared to explain how each new Webliography contribution relates to the topics under discussion. Adding a site that simply "looks good" is to be avoided. The purpose of the Webliography is to augment the materials already used in the course, so all additions should be carefully considered for relevance and usefulness prior to posting. Additions to the Webliography should be briefly noted in the Threaded Discussions so that others may benefit from them. It will be assumed that you are familiar with them and that you and others can use this information to enhance the subject being discussed. Each student will be expected to contribute to the Webliography. Though not a graded activity, participation is expected, as it demonstrates intellectual curiosity and resourcefulness in enhancing one's repertoire of knowledge, and the ability to share relevant resources with others in the field.

Course Schedule of Assignments

Each of the following ten (10) units lasts one week, beginning on Monday and ending on the following Sunday (Except for Unit 4, which extends over three (3) weeks, as it involves student teams conducting case study analysis and intervention. Note: always look ahead one or two weeks beyond the current Unit to get a sense of what is coming up, especially with respect to written graded assignments, and to see if any changes in the schedule have occurred.

Weeks	Units	Topics
Week 1	Unit 1	Transformational Leadership to Manage Change Kotter, ch. 1-2)
Week 2	Unit 2	“Institutionalizing” Change (Kotter, ch. 2-8)
Week 3	Unit 3	Leadership- -Situational Approaches (Literature Review)
Weeks 4-6	Unit 4	Diagnosing the Environment (Case studies)
Week 7	Unit 5	Conversations with DE Leaders (Burge, ch. 1-6)
Week 8	Unit 6	DE Leaders’ Meta-reflections (Burge, ch. 7-13)
Week 9	Unit 7	Leadership for 21st Century (Beaudoin readings)
Week 10	Unit 8	Educational Transformation in the digital age (Kotter) ch. 9-10)
Week 11	Unit 9	Attributes & Issues Unique to the DE Leader (Essay on Topic)
Week 12	Unit 10	Course wrap-up & feedback

Unit 1: Transformational Leadership to Manage Change (Week 1)

Introductory Notes:

Kotter immediately reveals his notion of how to transform organizations, seeing it essentially as a process of managing change, with a discussion of what he refers to as the “Change Problem” and the “Eight Mistakes.” Unless those in a position to effect organizational change can address these chronic issues, the transformative process he advocates is unlikely to occur. He then introduces us to a change process by describing those forces that drive the eight-step change process he shares in detail. He also includes his own definition of what leadership is and how it differs from management.

Objective:

To examine basic theoretical elements of leadership that will serve as a foundation for subsequent study of this topic in the course

Readings:

Kotter, chapters 1, 2 (pp. 3-31)

NOTE: There is a fairly lengthy reading assignment coming in the next unit, so you may wish to continue with the Kotter book, beyond those chapters assigned for unit 1.

Discussion Questions:

In the online conference area, respond to the following: Does Kotter’s view of the typical organization’s “change problems” and “mistakes” have relevance to your past or present organization, particularly as it relates to its culture and its behavior vis a vis distance education / e-learning opportunities and activities?

Assignment:

Participate actively and regularly in TD, as indicated above, adhering to the TD guidelines posted elsewhere.

Unit 2: “Institutionalizing” Change (Week 2)**Introductory Notes:**

Kotter elaborates in these next six chapters (the heart of the book) his proposal for initiating and sustaining an eight-step change process he believes can be effective in a variety of organizational settings. He emphasizes the importance of several critical elements that constitute this strategic process, including creating a sense of need, the value of alliance building, articulating a vision, establishing conditions for participative change, and demonstrating / documenting success. Though it does not explicitly use the terms, this reading moves us into consideration and discussion of a critical theme that pervades the study of organizations and people within them: motivation and behavior. This focus helps us arrive at an understanding of the important role that leadership plays in establishing a successful organizational climate. We have probably all had experiences with leaders with varying levels of effectiveness in this area; this unit will be a reality check on your current outlook on leadership!

Objectives:

To recognize the potential influences and impact that strategic management of change processes can have on individual and collective behavior within organizations and programs.

Readings:

Kotter, chapters 3-8, pp. 35-130.

Discussion Questions:

One notion of leadership is that it is a process of "getting work done through other people. How does this compare to more traditional definitions of management in which people are directed? In your own settings, have you observed and/or been involved in any similar efforts to create conditions for innovation and change? What role, if any, have you played in this process?

Activities:

1. Following your reading of the assigned chapters in Kotter, post your responses/comments to the discussion prompts / questions posed above. Be prepared to continue to make connections between the readings, including your own experiences, and be sure to include reasons why those experiences are pertinent to the material being covered in this Unit.
2. Post at least one source (properly cited) in the Webliography that you feel adds significant additional information and understanding on the topic of motivation and behavior, and indicate the rationale for your choice.

NOTE: The next unit requires completion of a graded written assignment, so you may want to look ahead to get a sense of what is expected to satisfy this requirement and to perhaps plan your schedule for that week to be sure to complete this task on time.

Unit 3: Situational Leadership (Week 3)

Introductory Notes:

Is there a “best” management leadership style that is particularly effective in most DE settings? Do typical DE situations require an approach that is especially applicable and useful, that is perhaps less so in non-DE contexts? One leadership style that has gained significant attention and application in recent years is what is referred to as “Situational Leadership.” (See, among many other sources, Hershey, Blanchard & Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior*). Because distance education, especially the development and implementation of online courses and programs, has evolved rapidly in both academic and corporate organizations over the past two decades, the context in which managers and leaders must function constantly presents new circumstances that require adaptation to where the organizations is at any given point in time. Should leaders then be flexible enough to change their style vis a vis their followers to bring their organization to the next stage based on the current situation? If so, will this approach seem inconsistent and confusing to followers?

In this unit, you are asked to investigate the concept and practice of situational leadership, and arrive at your own opinion regarding the viability of this style as it applies to DE. This is to be achieved by conducting a review of literature on this topic, and presenting an annotated bibliography, following the instructions below under Assignment #1.

Objectives:

To develop an understanding of a major approach to organizational leadership (i.e., situational leadership), and to assess its efficacy in DE-related settings.

Readings:

Review the literature (as described below).

Assignment #1 (valued at 20% of total course grade):

Write an **annotated bibliography** of 5 paper or electronic readings that relate to Situational Leadership. While these sources do not necessarily need to be in the context of distance/e-learning/training, you are expected to make that connection in your annotated write-up, and also relate your comments to what else has been read to date in the course, on management and leadership (especially as this may apply to transformational leadership).

Cite the source, then write a one-paragraph summary of the selection’s key points and comment on this piece. You may agree with, challenge, and/or add further insights. In a second paragraph, explain why you selected it, and how it may relate to the other assigned course readings, and to your own experience and opinions.

. Use APA citations standards. Approximately 500 words per entry. Post in the Assignments folder NLT Sunday evening of week assigned.

Unit 4: Diagnosing the Environment (Weeks 4-6)

Introduction:

The Kotter readings to date have provided some exposure to one approach for fostering a change-oriented environment to effect goal achievement. Our focus in this course is to arrive at a better understanding of principles and practices that can effectively guide those involved in managing human and organizational resources, or those who aspire to such roles, particularly as they apply to advancing distance education/training/e-learning in educational, corporate or other settings.

Advancing and achieving ambitious and complex goals usually involve transforming some aspect of the existing milieu to create conditions suitable for innovation and change. This can best be achieved if one is able first to understand the present context by analyzing the prevailing behaviors, values, and attitudes, in order to determine what elements are present that can drive change and those that are more likely to restrain any change from occurring. In short, the setting must be accurately diagnosed before proceeding to effect any change, however well intended and noble it may appear to be.

In this unit, we undertake a study of two illustrative cases that presents many of the typical challenges one might encounter in the role of “change agent.”

Objective:

To acquire an understanding of how current conditions existing in a particular setting can foster or inhibit change from occurring, and to develop skills in facilitating innovative change by diagnosing the dynamics that affect the situation.

Readings:

- Kotter, chapters 9, 10, pp. 131-158

- Case study

Written Assignment #2 (valued at 20% of final course grade):

Part 1 (To be completed by the end of week 4) Write a brief paper on one of the two case studies provided (both are provided in their entirety below). Each describes a problem or situation or issue that warrants some change intervention, and you are to conduct an analysis, based on the information available to you, of what is going on and what you think ought to be done next by whom to ameliorate the situation. This will involve writing a brief paragraph on each of the aspects outlined below. You should also incorporate whatever material from the Kotter text that seems applicable to your analysis and intervention, and explain its relevance. Use APA style and double-space the document, to be posted in the Assignments folder NLT Sunday midnight of the week assigned. Approximately 1750 words.

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Distance Education Case Study #1

The University of the 5th Age (U5) is a relatively small private non-profit institution in New England (approximately 4,000 students) with a mix of liberal arts/sciences and professional studies programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with an enrollment of approximately 4000 “traditional” students. Some 15 years ago, a new dean developed the institution’s first distance education (DE) program- a master’s degree for experienced teachers (MT). It was designed as a hybrid program, utilizing a combination of video-tapes, study guides, texts, with email communication between faculty and students. The MT also offered an intensive (optional) one-week summer session on campus for those wishing to include a f2f component to their DE studies.

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Distance Education Case Study #2

A regional university launched two graduate level distance education programs 10 years ago that have both been relatively successful. The first was a master's degree and the second, a certificate of advanced graduate study. Each contains a 10 course program of study, offered in an online format. Since their inception, both programs have required a one-week intensive summer residency session on campus, worth 3 credits. Feedback from students indicates this is a popular aspect of the program, despite the added cost and inconvenience of travel and residency on campus for a week. The residency provides them an opportunity to "bond" with the institution, with faculty and with student peers.

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In the past year, a new director of online graduate programs was hired by the university. This individual immediately advocated that the summer residency be eliminated entirely in both programs, arguing that any campus-based activity is inappropriate for true distance education programs. Faculty who had previously involved in the summer sessions argued that this was a valuable aspect of the program that should remain as an option (It also provided them with extra income). Some students planning to attend the upcoming session were upset to learn its elimination might be forthcoming.

Some university officials seem inclined to keep the residency in place (optional for master's and required for certificate), especially as it provides additional income. The dean is not enamored with DE, so seems to favor keeping the residency, as she feels the face-to-face component adds legitimacy to the program. The department chair is inclined to support his program director who strongly favors eliminating the summer session for both programs to tout the fully online aspect of the programs.

To resolve the dilemma, the dean decides to appoint an ad hoc task force to study the situation, and make a recommendation regarding the residency question. She suggests they consider all options, possibly even making the master's residency mandatory again. You are a member of this task force and must make a recommendation to the dean as soon as feasible, including a convincing rationale, advantages, etc. for whatever option you propose.

Prepare an action plan that reflects a diagnosis of the current situation, a strategy for the future of DE at U5, and steps for achieving the goals you see as realistic and viable to make this happen. In particular, identify an appropriate leadership style to ensure successful implementation of the plan.

NOTE: You are permitted to ask your course instructor ONE question that you feel may have bearing on the situation and that might be helpful in crafting your plan

Assignment #3 (Valued at 20% of overall course grade)

(Due at the end of week 6)

Now that you have had an opportunity to be exposed to various leadership concepts and strategies that have potential application to distance education settings, you are to identify one leadership style that you believe is especially relevant to the current state of e-learning, and make a case for why you have selected this particular approach. Prospective leadership styles to consider in making your case include (but are not be limited to): situational, transformative, charismatic, servant, provocateur, entrepreneurial. You are to explain the most salient features of the style you choose, give examples of where and how it has been used effectively, identify both assets and liabilities of the approach, and then describe a situation (real or imagined) in which that style is applied and how/why it resulted in a satisfactory outcome, and include its impact on the individuals and the organization involved.

Approximately 1750 words, APA style. Minimum of 5 citations/references.

Unit 5: Conversations with DE Leaders (Week 7)

Introductory Notes:

While not a unique approach, Elizabeth Burge has made effective use of the interview style to capture some essential principles derived from the reflections of experts in the field of DE. In *Flexible Higher Education*, Burge weaves interviews with 44 DE leaders into a number of themes which she addresses in the first six chapters. Some interviewees are widely recognized names; others are perhaps less known, but all have noteworthy accomplishments in their respective histories. Their collective story provides significant insight into how this generation of DE pioneers addressed the challenges of articulating and advancing distance education, often within environments that were not especially receptive to their efforts in “non-traditional” education, and in an era when the classroom was generally viewed as the only acceptable venue for teaching and learning.

Objectives:

To extract lessons from those who have distinguished themselves as DE leaders, and to acquire insights from their reflections that can enlighten you should you be involved in similar roles.

Readings:

Burge, chapters 1-6, pp. 3-90. (Also read the biographical sketches of those profiled (pp. xiii-xxvi))

Activities:

Post comments in the conference areas provided in response to a minimum of two (2) chapter-related discussion questions, and both of the summative questions posed below.

Discussion Questions:

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the rationale for, and organization of, the book. Does this seem like a viable approach?

Chapter 2 discusses the changes that are occurring within the field of DE. Do you see the same changes? To what extent are these unique to DE as compared to traditional educational institutions? To what extent does the business side of DE impact the academic aspects?

Chapter 3 continues the notion of DE being an integral part of the marketplace by arguing for an entrepreneurial approach. Is this approach prevalent in DE today? If yes, offer some examples. If not, explain why not.

Chapter 4 addresses issues around change. What is the role of the DE leader / manager in this process? How much control does a manager really have in engineering change? Do you see change occurring in your organization? Are you a participant or an observer of the process?

Chapter 5 examines the roles and characteristics of leadership in open learning contexts. Various references from the literature are cited regarding change, leaders and followers. Do these seem to you to be relevant to DE settings in general? To your organization in particular?

Summative Questions:

To what extent do the views of the various interviewees match your own view of leadership challenges in the field at this time?

Of the diverse group profiled and interviewed, select 1 or 2 who you find to be especially inspiring, explaining the rationale for your choices.

Unit 6: DE Leaders' Meta-reflections (Week 8)

Introductory Notes: Editor Burge invites seven other DE leaders with diverse experiences and major achievements in their own right, to comment on the reflections summarized in the earlier chapters, and to use this context to share their views on what they believe we ought to be cognizant of in order to better understand the nature of “flexible higher education.” Some of these commentators focus more specifically on their reactions to the prior contents of the book; others devote more space to sharing their own experiences and ideas, but all offer what Burge refers to as “meta-reflections” to augment the earlier chapters.

Objectives:

To learn from, and appreciate, the roles played by DE “pioneers” that have contributed to the development of DE through their leadership.

Readings:

Burge, chapters 7-13, pp. 93-148

Activity:

Read any four (4) of the seven commentators' chapters (pp. 93-148) of your choice In the conference area, respond to at least three (3) of the discussion questions posed below, expanding your reactions with any additional comments beyond the specific questions, as you deem appropriate. Most chapters are relatively brief, so reading and digesting key points in all of them should be manageable. Note that a separate conference area has been created for each chapter, so post in the appropriate ones.

Discussion Questions (Respond to three (3)):

In what ways are these commentaries useful? What are the common themes?

What strategies for managing organizations appealed to you most?

Can you see a common definition of a DE leader emerging from these commentaries?

Did these authors actually comment on this book, or did they go off on their own respective DE themes?

Was there one of these DE leaders/commentators that stood out as exemplary? Which and why?

Is there a single issue / challenge that seems to be the dominant one confronting the leaders profiled in this book?

Do any of these leaders (pioneers or commentators) appear charismatic or do they generally come off as bureaucrats?

Unit 7: Leadership in the Digital Age (Week 9)**Introductory Notes:**

Now that we have the benefit of a continuing dialogue through which we began to analyze and understand organizational environments and how both leaders and followers function within them, we then focused more directly on leadership & its impact on organizational behavior and culture within the context of distance education. In the middle weeks, we examined the topic of leadership in the current context that many of us function within. Now, in the latter weeks, we take a forward look at DE leadership to determine how it can remain a viable and relevant practice in an increasingly complex and challenging environment that we have come to refer to as the Digital Age.

Objective:

To examine elements of leadership applied to various settings more directly related to the work we are doing or aspire to do to advance distance/e-learning/training in this digital age. These readings serves as a foundation for subsequent study of DE leadership throughout the remainder of the course.

Readings:

Beaudoin, ASF Series, Vol. 8. chapters 5.1 and 5.2, pp. 73-102; and
chapters 6.1 and 6.2, pp. 103-124

Activities:

Post responses based on your reaction to the assigned readings in the designated conference area.

For chapters 5.1 and 5.2, pp. 73-102

Post a summary of your thoughts (in the conferences areas provided) to the Beaudoin chapters on distance education leadership, using the prompts below to guide your thinking.

Which concepts in this writing might be relevant or applicable to your own work setting now or in the future (even if you are not involved in distance education at this time)?

Do you agree or disagree with the author's ideas and opinions regarding leadership issues that are relevant to the future of DE in an increasingly digital and global society?

Do you see any evolution in the author's perspectives from chapter 5.1 to 5.2?

For chapters 6.1 and 6.2, pp. 103-124

How will distance education leaders have to respond to new ways of teaching & learning?

What kind of decisions will leaders have to make in this new era?

Will the 21st century require a different sort of education and training leader than today?

What do you need to do to be ready & responsive & relevant to meet these challenges?

Is the scenario the author presents here realistic?

What is your own vision of what the future of education will look like, say in 2025?

What needs to be done now to prepare us for this transition?

What can YOU do NOW to be ready to lead in this brave new world?

Where is the DE phenomenon taking us next?

Unit 8: Leadership for the 21st Century (Week 10)**Introductory Notes:**

The body of literature on various aspects of distance education / e-learning is continuously expanding, with much being written and published that analyzes and comments on what is occurring in this field today. But, less common, and arguably, more challenging, is to prognosticate on what might occur in the near future that will affect the teaching-learning process, those engaged in this dynamic, and the

organizations that sponsor such efforts. With the benefit of having attempted, in prior units, to better understand the evolution of DE, with particular attention to the role of leadership, this unit now focuses on what might occur in the era immediately ahead, that is likely to bring yet more changes within the careers of MDE students. This presents an opportunity to consider what the implications are for the next generation of DE leaders, and how best to anticipate and prepare oneself for this next exciting phase of this profession.

Objective:

To acquire greater insight into what are likely to be major new trends in the field, and how these emerging developments will affect the way new leaders will function in creating and sustaining the organizations and programs that will be critical to meeting 21st century needs for global education and training.

Readings:

Beaudoin: chapter 7, pp. 125 ff.

Kotter, chapter 11, pp. 163-174

Activities:

For Beaudoin: chapter 7:

Are the future scenarios the author presents realistic? Are they likely to occur? How does your own vision of what the future of education will look differ from that of the author?

What kind of educational leaders will be needed in this new era & how should they respond to new needs?

Will the digital age require a different sort of educator than in the recent past?

What do you need to do as a teacher to be ready & responsive & relevant to meet these challenges?

What needs to be done now to prepare teachers and students for this transition?

What can YOU do NOW to be ready to lead in this brave new world?

Where is the distance education phenomenon taking us next?

For Kotter, chapter 11

Give particular attention to any comparisons you might have between the two authors' ideas of DE's future and your own, In thinking about your reaction to this reading, you may wish to respond to the following questions in the main discussion area:

How does what Kotter describes more generally about organizations of the future relate to what Beaudoin has to say regarding more specifically the future context of DE?

NOTE: The next unit requires completion of a graded written assignment, so you may want to look ahead to get a sense of what is expected to satisfy this requirement and to perhaps plan your schedule for that week to be sure to complete this task in a timely fashion.

Unit 9: Attributes & Issues Critical to the DE Leader (Week 11)

Introductory Notes:

Are there any characteristics or practices that are unique to leaders in distance education/training settings that are unique to that particular environment? Are the attributes that DE leaders should possess to be effective in the digital age different than those which leaders in other situations ought to have, and are the issues DE leaders must address distinct from those which their peers in other sectors must contend with? This unit gives us an opportunity to share our perspectives on these questions as we near completion of our studies in this course.

Objective:

To acquire increased knowledge regarding the attributes and skills DE leaders need to succeed, and to identify and analyze the issues that are likely to most challenge them (and you).

Readings:

The culminating written assignment requires no new reading. Instead, you are expected to review as much of the previously assigned readings in the course (as well as any other pertinent sources) that you feel will best inform you in crafting the final essay, as described below.

Activity:

Final written assignment (#4); valued at 15% of total course grade. Due at end of week 11.

This is a two-part presentation, to be prepared and submitted as a single document in the Assignment folder, using APA style, double-spaced, 1500-1750 words.

1. Develop a list of at least five attributes that you feel best embody an effective DE leader. Whether these are people skills, technical skills, organizational skills, etc., justify your choices by explaining why these are so critical to successful leadership in this digital age. Also indicate if these leader characteristics have changed much in this more recent era of DE, and if these are universal to most DE settings or are best suited to particular situations.
2. Define and discuss at least three crucial issues that, in your opinion, DE leaders must attend to in order to successfully guide their organizations. How have leaders that you are aware of (perhaps including yourself?) dealt with these challenges? Identify those trends, politics, events, pressures and developments (both positive and negative) within the field of DE that have brought these issues to the fore and now demand the attention and action of DE leaders, not only to deal with today's DE issues, but also those of the future.

Note: Attributes and issues are quite different, so be careful that in Part 2, you do not simply continue to identify additional attributes that best belong in Part 1.

Unit 10: Course wrap-up

In this final week, you have an opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a reflective exercise, individually and collectively, wherein you assess your engagement with this course, including with your peers, the instructor, the medium, the resources, assignments, threaded discussions, etc. ultimately reflecting on your own learning .

Activities:

Please post, in the appropriate conference area, your final comments on the two requested topics. In each conference area, please write one succinct paragraph responding to each item. Responses do not need to be very long, but make them thoughtful, as they can impact the future direction of this course.

1) What is the single most important concept/idea/skill regarding DE leadership that you learned from this course, and might most likely utilize in the future?; and

2) what one thing would you recommend, if anything, to improve this course? This could be a key topic you felt was missing, a different book, another format, better instructor, etc. You might also wish to note the thing you liked most! In short, use this final discussion opportunity to share your overall thoughts re: any aspect of the course (e.g., readings, assignments, threaded discussions, instructor, etc.).

CORE LEARNING AREA OBJECTIVES

(Check all core learning areas that apply to each course objective)

Course Objectives:	COMM	TECH	INFO	QUAN	THIN
To acquire knowledge of the systems approach as applied to human and organizational behavior			X		
To identify the role of personality and perception in affecting behavior in organizations	X				
To examine traditional and contemporary approaches to organizational leadership and change			X		
To acquire knowledge of the systems approach as applied to distance education.			X		
To recognize the role and relationships of individuals and groups and how they impact performance and outcomes	X				
To review the current state of knowledge with respect to leadership and leadership styles, particularly as these apply to distance education/e-learning	X		X		X
To examine the operant variables in problem analysis, decision making and intervention	X	X		X	X
To understand effective communication techniques for motivating others to achieve goals	X				
To evaluate different approaches to organizational development			X		X
To examine leadership roles most appropriate to advance distance education/e-learning goals			X		X
To relate all of this to one's respective setting and apply new knowledge and skills that best advance distance education/e-learning in academic and corporate milieu in the digital age.					X
To be familiar with the relevant literature in the field of management and leadership			X		

COMM: Effective Communication TECH: Technology Fluency INFO: Information Literacy/Research QUAN: Quantitative Literacy THIN: Critical Thinking