GCSP 301 – Grand Challenges Orientation Seminar
Fall 2017 Syllabus

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Course Information
Wednesdays 4:00-4:50
Sondheim 107

Instructor
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Prerequisite
Acceptance into the Grand Challenge Scholars Program.

Course Description
This seminar provides students with an introduction and foundation for the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) Grand Challenge Scholars Program (GCSP), including the Grand Challenges themselves, ethical frameworks, Responsible Conduct of Research training, and creation of an initial GCSP e-portfolio. The seminar will also help students to develop effective teamwork skills, including managing diversity and understanding implicit bias. Students will identify a particular Grand Challenge and focus area.

Textbook
The primary textbook for the course is Abundance: The Future is Better Than You Think, by Peter H. Diamandis and Steven Kotler (Free Press, 2012). The textbook will be supplemented by additional readings and multimedia materials.

Overview of Course Structure
The course includes three interleaved arcs: Grand Challenges, Curricular Themes, and Interpersonal Skills. The Grand Challenges arc explores each of the four GC areas (Sustainability, Healthcare, Security, and Learning and Education), using the textbook, Abundance, as the primary reading material. As part of this arc, students will present the main reading assignments in small groups of 1-3 students (depending on enrollment) in a short (10-minute) prepared presentation. The Curricular Themes arc explores the five requirements of the Grand Challenge Scholars Program (research, interdisciplinarity, entrepreneurship, global perspectives, and service learning), augmenting the textbook with supplementary reading and multimedia materials. This arc will conclude with the students presenting their individualized GC completion plan, identifying their selected Grand Challenge and sharing how they will meet each of the curriculum requirements. The Interpersonal Skills arc develops important personal and interpersonal skills for succeeding in the program, and will be tracked and assessed through written reflections.

**Communication**

As you will learn, I am a strong believer in two-way communication. I expect all students to participate in classroom discussions, both by asking questions and by expressing opinions. In return, I will make myself available to answer questions, listen to concerns, and talk to any student about topics related to the class (or not). I welcome your feedback throughout the semester about how the course and the GCSP are going.

In addition to regular office hours, I am happy to schedule additional meeting times with students as needed, with advance notice (or on short notice, as my schedule permits). My other responsibilities as Associate Dean preclude me making myself available for drop-in meetings without notice. However, I am very responsive to email, and will make a concerted effort to answer e-mail promptly. If you haven’t heard back from me within 24 hours (or on Monday for email sent over the weekend), please feel free to ping me again in case the email was misplaced or spam-filtered.

**Course Policies**

**Attendance:**
Students are expected to attend all classes and will be held responsible for all material discussed or assigned. Attendance will be taken and class participation will be graded each day.

**Reading Assignments:**
Reading assignments are listed on the course schedule. In order to participate in class discussions, you should complete all reading assignments prior to class.

**Assignment Submissions and Late Policy:**
Most assignments must be typed and submitted as a hardcopy. Please staple multi-page assignments together before coming to class. (I reserve the right to deduct points for unstapled or "folded-at-the-corner" assignments!)

Late work is considered submitted when the TA or I receive it, which means that if you cannot hand it to the TA personally, you should email the assignment as a placeholder, and then give the TA a hardcopy at the next opportunity. Please try to print your assignments early, since students sometimes have trouble with the library printers, and “The printer wasn’t working” is not an acceptable excuse. At a minimum, for such an assignment to receive full credit, you must email it to the TA before the deadline and then provide a hardcopy as soon as possible. I reserve the right to assign a late penalty in these cases, particularly if this issue comes up repeatedly for a particular student.

In an effort to encourage good time management, we will generally grant one one-week extension per student, over the course of the semester, if requested in advance and with a clear explanation (other projects due, work-related travel, outside commitments). Last-minute requests for extensions will generally be denied, since the purpose of the extensions is to plan ahead for “crunch times.”

Work is expected to be turned in on time. In general, assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. If you miss class, you must arrange for your homework to be turned in during or before class. Late work will be assessed a penalty as follows:
- 0-24 hours late: 25% penalty
- 24-48 hours late: 50% penalty
- 48-72 hours late: 75% penalty
- More than 72 hours late: No credit

Grading:
Students’ grades will be based on the following weights:
- Class participation: 35%
- GC reading presentation: 10%
- GC portfolio presentation: 15%
- Written reflections: 20%
- E-portfolio: 20%

Regrading:
Requests for regrading must be made in writing to the TA within one week after the return of the assignment, with a written explanation of why you feel an alternative grade is justified.

**Academic Integrity**
University policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. This course adheres to the Provost’s statement on academic integrity:
“By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal.”

To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory.

Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. In particular, all submitted work must be your own work, written in your own words (not borrowed or “mashed up” from other sources). If you wish to quote a source (including the course textbooks or other assigned readings), you must do so explicitly at the point of the quotation, with proper citation. Plagiarism of any source, including another student’s work, is not acceptable.

You may discuss the projects and readings with anyone. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss the assignments, topics, and concepts of the class with other students. However, the work you submit must be completed by yourself, independently of the other students in the group. That is, when you write the actual answers, you should be writing in your own words, not just copying down a group answer word for word.

Providing another student with answers, or helping them to cheat, is an equally serious violation of the principles of academic honesty. A student who commits such an offense is subject to the same penalties as the student who cheated.

Any violation of the academic honesty policy will result in a minimum penalty of a zero grade for that assignment. In addition, in order to pass the course, the student will be required to recomplete the assignment honestly. Consequences for more serious infractions of this policy, or for second offenses, may include, but are not limited to, receiving a failing grade in the course, losing Grand Challenge Scholar status, or being suspended or expelled from the university.

Readings
Vi Hart and Nicki Case, Paragon of the Polygons: A Playable Post on the Shape of Society.
http://ncase.me/polygons/

http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/ten-qualities-of-an-effective-team-player.html


