

**UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
THE WHARTON SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL STUDIES AND BUSINESS ETHICS**

**LEGAL STUDIES AND BUSINESS ETHICS 227X Syllabus
Spring 2007
Professor G. Richard Shell**

**THE LITERATURE OF SUCCESS:
HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Classroom: F36 Huntsman Hall
Office: 643 Huntsman Hall
Class times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30 PM – 3 :00 PM
Office Hours: 3:00 – 4:30 PM Thursdays or call/email me
Office Phone: 215-898-9525; e-mail: shellric@Wharton.upenn.edu

This course explores the history, literature, and philosophy of two age-old questions: what does it mean to be successful and how does one achieve this elusive goal? It surveys some of the classics of the “success” genre – from Epictetus’ (c. A.D. 50-130) classic “Handbook for Living” to Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography in the 18th century and Dale Carnegie’s How to Win Friends and Influence People in the 20th century. Case studies including Charles Lindbergh’s The Spirit of St. Louis (about the first successful solo flight across the Atlantic), Mary Kay Ash’s Miracles Happen (about the founding her Mary Kay Cosmetics company), and Arthur Miller’s play Death of a Salesman provide additional contexts within which to reflect on the questions at the center of the course.

During the semester, students will use the readings to intensively reflect on their own personal attitudes and beliefs about success. They will also utilize web-based tools developed by Penn’s Positive Psychology Center and the Gallup Organization to examine their character strengths, talents, and achievement orientations. Group projects and personal reflections on the importance of such “success factors” as goals, personal failures, relationships, and family will also be part of the course. Grading is based on a number of elements: class attendance (10%), daily response papers and short quizzes tracking the readings (35%), personal journal entries on assigned topics during the semester (10%), two short, 5-page papers on themes in the course (20%), and a 12-page final paper on two historical (i.e. not living) figures (from business, the arts, science, politics, etc.) who best exemplify your personal definition of success and your approach or system to achieving it (25%).

Readings include a Bulk Pack and these required books: Benjamin Franklin, The Autobiography and Other Writings; Marcus Buckingham & Donald Clifton, Now, Discover Your Strengths; Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People; Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People; and Napoleon Hill, Think and Grow Rich.

CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Class 1 (1/10): Course Introduction, Overview, and Expectations

Discuss: Grading, Expectations, Reading “Response Papers,” Personal Journals, Class Session Leaders.

Class 2 (1/12): Opening Question: What is Success?

Read: BP #1 selections from George Gallup, Jr. & Alec M. Gallup, The Great American Success Story (1986); biographical profiles in BP #2 Studs Terkel, Working (1972); #3 Steve Young, Great Failures of the Extremely Successful (2002).

Part I. The Character School

Class 3 (1/17): The 18th Century

Read: BP #4 (Quick Biography of Benjamin Franklin and Timeline); Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography: Pages 1-40.

Class 4 (1/19): The 18th Century

Read: Franklin’s Autobiography 40-75. Each student will select a moral virtue from Franklin’s list and practice it daily for two weeks, reporting on successes and failures in his or her learning journal.

Class 5 (1/24): Character’s Roots: the Examined Life

Read: BP #5, Plato The Trial and Death of Socrates. We will each take the “VIA Signature Strengths Test,” a virtue profiler developed by the Positive Psychology Center, and look at both the top and bottom five of our virtues. Which of these require more effort and practice? Go to www.authentichappiness.org. To display all of your strengths in order after completing the instrument, type: www.authentichappiness.org/all24.

Class 6 (1/26): Character’s Roots: Family and Role Models

Read: BP #6, Joseph Wall, The Andrew Carnegie Reader; BP #7, from Sam Walton, Made in America (1992); BP #8, from John McCain, Character is Destiny (2005).

Class 7 (1/31): Character's Roots: Religion

Read: BP #9, from Cotton Mather, Essays to Do Good (1710); BP #10, from Gandhi, Autobiography (1957); BP #11, from Liebman, Peace of Mind (1946).

Class 8 (2/2): Character in the Modern Literature of Success

Read: Everyone should read pages 15-62; 309-319 in Stephen Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (1989). Students will be assigned to report on each of Covey's 7 habits and everyone should visit and explore www.FranklinCovey.com.

II. The Excellence School

Class 9 (2/7): Aptitudes and Talents

Read: Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton, Now, Discover Your Strengths (2001); BP #12, from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (1990).

Activity: Take the Gallup Organization Strengths Test (you need a newly purchased copy of Now, Discover Your Strengths to access this on the web) and be prepared to discuss your signature talents.

Class 10 (2/9): Talents, Virtue, and Excellence

Read: BP #13, from Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics.

Class 11 (2/14): Excellence vs. Happiness

Read: BP #14, from Martin Seligman, Authentic Happiness (2002); BP #15, from Robert Nozick, The Examined Life (1989).

Class 12 (2/16): Case Study: Mary Kay Ash

Read: Mary Kay Ash, Miracles Happen pp. 1-94 (1994).

III. The Mind Power School

Class 13 (2/21): The Mind Power School of Success

Read: Introduction and Chapters 1-4 in Napoleon Hill, Think and Grow Rich (1937).

Class 14 (2/23): Success Theories of the Subconscious Mind
(Quiz #1 in class – includes readings for Class 14)

Read: Chapters 6, 9, & 15 in Think and Grow Rich (feel free to skim the parts we skip – there is some strange material here); BP #16, pp. 107-114 (middle) from William Brown, “Hypnosis and Suggestion” in Psychological Methods of Healing (1938); BP #17, Blakeslee, “This is Your Brain Under Hypnosis,” (New York Times, 11/22/05).

Class 15 (2/28): Mind Power’s Roots: Roman Philosophy

Read: BP #18, Epictetus, Handbook for Living; BP #19, Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus; BP #20, selection from Marcus Aurelius, Meditations;

Class 16 (3/2): Modern Mind Power: Self-Efficacy and Self-Concept

Read: BP #21, Albert Bandura, “Exercise of personal and collective efficacy in changing societies,” in Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies (1985); and # 22, selections from David Burns, Feeling Good (2002).

3/5 through 3/10: PENN SPRING BREAK

Class 17 (3/14): Modern Mind Power: Cognitive Beliefs and Expectations

Read: BP #23, from Anthony Robbins, Awaken the Giant Within (1991); BP #24, selection from Irving Kirsch, Changing Expectations; BP #25, from Dov Eden, Pygmalion in Management; BP #26, selection from Viktor Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning (1959).

Class 18 (3/16): Modern Mind Power: Goals and Persistence (Paper #2 Due)

Read: BP #27, Brian Tracy, “The Master Skill” in Maximum Achievement (1995); BP #28, Gerald Seijts, Gary Latham, Kevin Tasa, Brandon Latham, “Goal Setting and Goal Orientation,” Academy of Management Journal (2004); BP #29, Newsweek, “Mind Games” (9/25/00); BP #30, Doskoch, “The Winning Edge,” Psychology Today (11/3/05)

Class 19 (3/21): Case Study: Charles Lindbergh’s Flight from New York to Paris

Read: BP #31, selections from Charles Lindbergh, The Spirit of St. Louis (1954).

Class 20 (3/23): Mind Power and Spiritual Power

Read: BP #32, selection from Norman Vincent Peale, The Power of Positive Thinking (1952); BP #33, selections on Buddhism from The Dhammapadam; BP#34, selection from Hansard, The Tibetan Art of Positive Thinking (2003)

IV. The Social Influence School

Class 21 (3/28): Social Influence and Success

Read: BP #35, selections from Letters of Lord Chesterson to his Son; Pages 3-50 in Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People (1937).

Class 22 (3/30): Social Influence and Success

Read: Pages 53-112 in How to Win Friends and Influence People; BP #36, Selection II from Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics.

Class 23 (4/4): Case Study: Mary Kay Ash, Part 2

Read: Pages 95-193, Mary Kay Ash, Miracles Happen; BP # 37, “The Theory of the Bucket.”

Class 24 (4/6): Social Influence vs. Social Manipulation: the “Power School”

Read: BP # 38 selections from Machiavelli, The Prince; BP #39, selections from Green The 48 Laws of Power.

Case 25 (4/11): Case Study: Death of a Salesman

In Class: First half of Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman

Class 26 (4/13): Class canceled (Passover/Easter)

V. Summary Perspectives

Class 27 (4/18): Death of a Salesman

In Class: Complete Death of a Salesman and discuss.

Class 28 (4/20): Success in Perspective: Social Constraints

(Quiz #2 in class – readings from Class 15-28 – including today’s readings!)

Read: BP #40, selections from Jay MacLeod, Ain’t No Making It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood (1987); BP #41, Gallup, Jr. & Gallup, “Is There a Success Personality?”

Final Papers Due One Week After Last Class