

formerly named “The Female Executive: Strategies in the Workplace”

(renamed)
Gender in the Workplace
Mary Baldwin University
MBU ONLINE
BUAD 250 WA C
FALL 2020

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Course Description:

The goal of this course is to enable students to heighten awareness and understanding of gender identity and perception of gender roles, especially as we consider the changing nature of the work environment. The course provides an overview of concepts, terminology, and research related to gender identity and gender roles as valuable background to then address the impact of gender in the workplace. We will explore workplace dynamics and identify both real and perceived impact of gender on career development and life planning. In addition, there will be an intentional exploration of strategies and tools to help students create a pathway to success—with success to be uniquely defined by the individual.

Objectives:

- *To raise awareness of issues related to power, inequalities, and prejudice, including stereotyping and sexism, among other topic areas.*
- *To understand how historical perceptions of women can affect women who are currently employed in managerial or leadership positions and those aspiring to reach positions of influence.*
- *To become aware of the challenges many individuals face as managers and explore leadership style development and positioning one’s self to lead.*
- *To explore perceived and real barriers to career mobility and explore concepts such as the “glass ceiling” and issues of pay inequity.*
- *To understand the importance of networking and developing “mentoring” relationships.*
- *To gain insight into important practices such as negotiation and political game playing in organizations.*
- *To identify issues relating to life as part of a dual career couple and explore the concept of work and family life integration.*
- *To raise awareness of the practice of sex discrimination and identify strategies for dealing with issues such as sexual harassment in the work environment.*

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- *To understand the importance of developing a personal professional development plan and explore how success might look different for each of us.*

Required Resource Materials:

- 1) **Gender: The Basics**, by Hilary M. Lips, publisher: Routledge, 2014, ISBN 978-0-41568954-0 **OR** newer version by the same name & publisher, 2019, ISBN-13: 978-1138036895.

Note: This book will provide significant information that is becoming more and more relevant in our workplaces, our schools, and the broader environment.

- 2) **The Next Generation of Women Leaders**, Selena Rezvani, publisher: Praeger, 2010, ISBN: 978-0-313-37666-5

Note: This resource provides a wealth of information that will be beneficial to those of any gender identification. Selena Rezvani, the author, and, in 2008 an eager graduate student who sought to find out from others (30 women CEOs, CFOs, COOs, chairs, presidents, and executive vice presidents, specifically), how they navigated, attained success and propelled careers in this complex world.

Additional note: As a faculty member, I have been using this text since 2012, and it has been praised by students who identify in various ways. Many students have felt so strongly about the value of its content that they have gone on to share the book with others in their lives.

We will also draw from two other resources: (see special notes below)

- **Overcoming Challenges to Gender Equality in the Workplace**, Greenleaf Publishing, 2016, ISBN 978-1-78353-546-0
Note: I will pull a couple of cases from this resource. I have worked with our MBU librarian to make sure we are within copyright regulations.
- **It’s The Manager**, Gallup Press, 2019, ISBN 978-1-59562-224-2
Note: We will primarily access excerpts from “The Future of Work” section of the text. Material will be posted on the online portal, adhering to copyright regulations. My intention is to have excerpts available to you pertinent to some of the questions we will address on the final exam.

Please note, however, some students may be interested in direct purchase of this resource for the timeliness of its overall content and also the inclusion of an access code for the *Clifton Strengths assessment*, a valuable resource for personal and professional growth.

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GRADING:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Online Discussion Entries based on <u>Gender: The Basics</u> | 36% |
| Online Discussion Entries based on <u>Next Generation</u> book | 24% |
| Course Project—Interview <u>OR</u> Strengths Development Plan | 20% |
| Exam—including, but not limited to case responses | 20% |

GRADING SCALE:

| | | | |
|----|--------|----|----------|
| A | 93-100 | C+ | 77-79 |
| A- | 90-92 | C | 73-76 |
| B+ | 87-89 | C- | 70-72 |
| B | 83-86 | D+ | 67-69 |
| B- | 80-82 | D | 60-66 |
| | | F | below 60 |

Purchase of Texts:

You may purchase your books through online ordering via the Mary Baldwin University Online vendor or other on-line services such as amazon.com. **You will need to initiate your own orders/purchase. Please allow plenty of lead time for textbook shipment and delivery. MBU bookstore orders often require a significant amount of lead time.**

Conferences and Communication:

I will be available for conferences by phone appointment. We will have weekly contact via our online portal through the Discussion feature. I will be monitoring discussion and will enter the conversation as appropriate. **I may not reply to individual “threads” but I will be active in monitoring discussion and will send summary comments once a week via the online portal. I will also be in contact with you during the semester via email, as we discuss project options. (Please initiate discussion regarding the project whenever you are ready.)**

Plagiarism:

Students are expected to adhere to the Mary Baldwin University Honor Code. Details can be found in the Student Handbook. **Refer to Mary Baldwin University Policy. It is critical that you submit your own work, adhering to the proper guidelines for referencing outside sources and text resources you have used.**

MORE DETAILS RE: COURSE COMPONENTS

Discussion entries based on Gender: The Basics

This book is interesting and engaging. It provides a much-needed foundation regarding gender understanding (and historical development of this understanding), as well as an overview of concepts and terminology relevant to a gender studies course. Specifically, we will be covering (at minimum) the following chapters in this book:

- Gender: everybody has/does one
- Power, inequalities, and prejudice
- The gendered workplace
- Gender, leadership, and public life

You will be given online discussion questions/prompts. First, you will post your response to a question or prompt, then also respond to a post or two from fellow students. The purpose of the discussion area is to share significant information, and to learn from each other.

Please stay on schedule. It will be a more enjoyable and productive learning experience for everyone!

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please plan to enter your discussion post for the chapter material by Monday evening of each week, if at all possible. Then, make sure to enter your response/s to the post of one other student by the weeknight deadline each week, if you have been asked to do so in the discussion prompt. All work must be completed by the given weeknight deadline to avoid grade penalty.

Discussion Board entries based on The Next Generation of Women Leaders

This book is a very user-friendly and enjoyable read. We’ll be reading and responding with significant points pertaining to 1-2 chapters at a time. I hope you will think about and note ways in which you might be able to use this information in your life and your career. You’ll be asked/encouraged to share several of your significant points per chapter or two on dedicated weeks using our online Discussion feature.

I will set a schedule of target due dates for entries or threads. The purpose of the discussion area is to share significant information and to learn from each other.
Please stay on schedule. It will be a more enjoyable and productive learning experience for everyone!

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please plan to enter your discussion post/s for the chapters by Monday evening of each week, if at all possible. Then, enter your responses to one or two other student posts by the weeknight deadline each week. All work must be completed by the specific weeknight deadline to avoid grade penalty.

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Graded Entries—Online Discussion

Based on Gender: The Basics and The Next Generation of Women Leaders—detailed rubrics will be created within the online portal—specifics to be provided on the portal.

- **Maximum points will be awarded** for each fully developed response delivered on the discussion board on time;
- **Points will be awarded** for late entries with a degree of grade penalty (to be determined and included on rubric); additional grade penalty is also reserved for incomplete or not fully developed response/s;
- **0 pts**—awarded for entries not submitted within 2 weeks of due date unless there are extenuating circumstances and the professor has been notified of these.

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Course Project—You have the opportunity to choose!

There are two different options offered to maximize your personal educational experience in the course. Please carefully consider your options. I am happy to discuss these with you, if you’d like to schedule a phone appointment or correspond via email.

OPTION 1

A career sketch/information interview with an individual who is currently employed in a managerial role or significant leadership position in a profit or not-for-profit organization. A list of suggested questions is provided below. The project/paper should be typewritten using either essay or question-and-answer format. It should be grammatically correct and 3-5 pages in length. Please remember to use appropriate documentation (APA style). **A reflective component is also required (described at end of the section with suggested questions.)**

Interview Assignment Suggested Questions

Make an appointment for a thirty-five to forty-minute interview with a **manager or executive of your choice.** (This person should be responsible for directly overseeing the work of others to reach the goals of the organization.) She/he/they may work in a large or small, profit or nonprofit organization. The purpose of this interview is to

obtain specific information from a career professional and to benefit from the experiences and reflections of another. Please feel free to add your own questions.

Include:

Name of Organization
Years of Formal Education
Present Title & Years in the Workforce
Years in Management
Years with Present Organization
Number of Subordinates
Career Progression (briefly stated)
Phone and/or Email address

General Background Information:

1. How did you get into management?
2. What is your management style and has your style changed over time?
3. How have you gained recognition/visibility throughout your career?
4. What obstacles have you encountered in your career, and do you believe any of these obstacles may be gender related? If so, please provide additional comment, if you are comfortable doing so.
5. Do you presently—or have you (in the past) had a mentor as you progressed along your career path? Can you comment on the benefits of a mentoring relationship in the workplace?
6. Do you presently have a supportive group or network to help you deal with career-related issues?

Your Personal Outlook On Your Career

7. What is the most rewarding part of being a manager?
8. What is the most difficult part of being a manager?
9. What methods do you use to keep your life in balance (personal and career)?
10. Do you feel that your career status changes the way others perceive you? Have you sensed that gender has had any place or impact on perceptions in the workplace?
11. How has your career impacted your personal life? Have you had to make major sacrifices for your career? If so, what type of sacrifices have you made?

12. In general, have you found sexual harassment to be a problem in the workplace? Have you experienced sexual harassment of any type throughout your career? (If yes, are you willing to comment on this?)
13. Do you feel gender discrimination is still a major challenge in today’s work environment? (If so, do you wish to expand on this?) Do you believe there is gender equity in your workplace regarding salaries/pay?

Politics and Other Aspects of Your Career

1. Is there a high degree of political game playing in your organization? If so, have you found it difficult to adjust to playing the political games you must play in a managerial position?
2. What is your typical dress or attire on the job? Do you feel appearance is important to your position?
3. Are you happy with your career choice? Where do you want to go from here?
4. Do you consider the culture of your organization to be a healthy and sustainable one?

Required Reflective Component: Please “process” the information you obtained in your interview and comment on your perception of the interviewee’s experiences. What are your key “learning points” from this experience, considering the course work you’ve completed throughout the semester? Total length of submission should be 3-5 pages, single-spaced, in large part.

OPTION 2

A “Course Project” Option to “Create a Professional Development Plan”

TO GET STARTED, you may use Strengths Finder 2.0—book & code info available (directly below), OR you may go online via www.strengthsquest.com to take the online assessment, *Clifton Strengths*, at the student rate of \$11.99 using your .edu email address to prove student status. After completion of the online assessment tool, you will then have access to information designed to enhance your understanding of personal talents & strengths.

Results generated from your Strengths Finder 2.0 or Clifton Strengths reports will identify your top 5 signature talent themes AND give ideas/activities/strategies to further develop your talents & strengths. These will be quite helpful as you plan for the future.

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- **Strengths Finder 2.0**, Tom Rath, GALLUP PRESS, 2007, ISBN 978-1-59562-015-6
 - **OR, *Strengths* code included in: It’s The Manager**, Gallup Press, 2019, ISBN 978-1-59562-224-2
- Some students may be interested in direct purchase of this resource for the timeliness of its content and also the inclusion of an access code to the *Clifton Strengths assessment*, a valuable resource for personal and professional growth.

The Professional Development Plan—Format/Headings to use include the following: (the following *eight headings* are part of a *suggested* format)

1) Past Successes (3-5, or more) significant “successes” thus far; list/describe using narrative and bullets

- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX

2) “Identity Capital”

Describe what you have “built” thus far; discuss skills acquired, notable experiences, etc., in this section. I absolutely love author Meg Jay’s description of “Identity Capital” (see below).

Meg Jay wrote an interesting book called “The Defining Decade.” (Her book describes her work with “twentysomethings” as a clinical psychologist.) In reflecting on her experiences, she shares that as these individuals seek to “find themselves” she uses many tools and techniques.

I often find myself using her term, Identity Capital. I think it’s advantageous for all of us to be able to express (and share) our Identity Capital.

Identity capital is our collection of personal assets. It is the repertoire of individual resources that we assemble over time. These are the investments we make in ourselves, the things we do well enough, or long enough, that they become part of who we are. Some identity capital goes on a resume, such as degrees, jobs, test scores, and clubs. Other identity capital is more personal, such as how we speak, where we are from, how we solve problems, how we look. Identity capital is how we build ourselves—bit by bit, over time. Most important, identity capital is what we bring to the adult marketplace. It is the currency we use to metaphorically purchase jobs and relationships and other things we want.

(Source: The Defining Decade author, Meg Jay, PhD, 2012 publication, pgs 6-7)

3) Highlight Your Talent Themes & Potential Strengths (from *Strengths Finder 2.0* or *Clifton Strengths* results)

List your 5 most predominant talent themes or potential areas of strength and offer brief explanation; use quotes or indent and italicize information, if you are lifting information directly from the Strengths “Themes” or “Insight” reports; list reference at end of doc/plan.

4) Future Aspirations

(You may use paragraph format and/or “bullets”)

5) Planned Actions to Further Develop Strengths

Choose actions from those options listed in your Strengths reports AND/OR come up with some of your own; list roughly two “actions” suggested for each of your top five themes: list, reference, and document appropriately, if lifted directly from the Strengths reports. (The idea here is to “lean into” your talents/areas of strength.)

6) Other Ways You Want to Grow?

(You may use paragraph format and/or “bullets”)

7) Stated Goals (regarding future growth--stated above)

- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX

Note: Use “SMART Goals” guidelines to express goals. (Google the term, if you are not yet familiar with SMART Goals)

8) Develop an “Elevator Speech” or “Elevator Pitch”

Who you are, what you do, OR what you aspire to do. (no more than 30 seconds to communicate this to someone.) Everyone should have an Elevator Pitch (and practice using it)!

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Final Exam: This will consist of a series of discussion questions based on material we have covered throughout the semester. In addition to our online *Discussion* content, it may also include responses to a case or two from the 1st resource listed below, as well as material/excerpts from the 2nd resource listed below.

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- **Overcoming Challenges to Gender Equality in the Workplace**, Greenleaf Publishing, 2016, ISBN 978-1-78353-546-0

Note: I will select cases from this resource. They will be posted to our online course portal (as copyright & usage rules permit).

- **It’s The Manager**, Gallup Press, 2019, ISBN 978-1-59562-224-2
Note: We will primarily use excerpts from the section “The Future of Work.” My intention is to have a selection of excerpts available to you for the questions we will address. Look for uploaded files posted to our online course portal.

The final exam is designed to be an open book/open notes exam. I am anxious to find out what you are taking away from this course! The final will be posted online via our online course portal and there will be a place for you to submit it.

Syllabus revision: 07-06-2020