

**Community Leadership and Service Learning (URSI 230)**  
**Fall 2008**  
**Wednesdays 6-8:45pm**  
**Armstrong Hall Room 39**

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**Instructor:**

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**Big Give Challenge Judges:**

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**Text(s):**

Drexler, Kateri M. and Garcelon, Gwen. Strategies for Active Citizenship. Pearson Prentice Hall. 2005.

Rath, Tom. StrengthsFinder 2.0. Gallup Press. 2007.

Pausch, Randy and Jeffrey Zaslow. The Last Lecture. Hyperion, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. 2008.

Periodically, students will also be required to read additional related articles to the course. Many times, the instructor will provide the articles in the form of a handout.

**Course Overview:** This course will provide students a comprehensive overview of community leadership and service learning within the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Included will be management principles and practices, public administration, ethical and civic responsibilities in our society. Most important, and what makes this course unique, is the involvement of community leaders and the students within the community. There will be a wide variety of guest (community leader) speakers. Additionally, this course requires a high level of student involvement--volunteering, attending meetings, interviewing, public speaking, and working with both student and community teams.

**Course Outcomes:** Students who successfully complete this course will have better knowledge of:

- leadership within the nonprofit sector
- the significance and development of mission, leadership, resources, marketing, decision-making and people development within the nonprofit sector
- leadership within the government sector (leadership, tasks, responsibilities and practices).
- citizenship and representative government as well as the activities of collaboration, citizen participation and citizen self-government
- one or more community non-profit organizations through service learning and student volunteer teams

In addition, students will also expand their value system through:

- an appreciation for ethical and civic perspectives of the non-profit sector mission and leaders within it
- a respect for citizenship, the role of representative government, and the importance of collaboration between the two
- a commitment to the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of community leadership

And finally, students will improve their skills in:

- articulating the goals of the nonprofit sector with those of the public and private sectors.
- articulating the goals of the government sector with those of the nonprofit and private sectors
- applying personal talents and energies in the service-learning model of community leadership.
- applying creative problem solving and critical thinking in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- effective communication—oral and written.
- researching and writing about service learning experiences at the community level.
- working and interacting with others in a team approach.
- using volunteerism as a means for social change.

### **Instructional Methodology and Teaching Strategies:**

A variety of instructional methods and teaching strategies will be employed throughout this course. Above all, my instructional style is based on an “adult-centered” model wherein students are active participants responsible for their own learning. Student motivation is a key factor in learning. You will notice that my role will be as a facilitator and resource person who will help you engage in meaningful involvement by investing your time and energy in the academic enterprise.

### **Class Attendance/Participation:**

Students play an important role in educating and challenging each other, which can only happen with consistent attendance. Class attendance is expected; however, if by some means you are not able to attend... please notify the instructor via email. All assignments are due on the dates shown below; late submissions are at the discretion of the instructor and if accepted will result in significant point deductions.

### **Grading:**

Grades will be based on a variety of instructional methods such as assignments, current events quizzes, exams, papers, presentations, and class participation. There will be a possible 300 points for the class and grades will be based upon the total number of points accumulated as follows: A (270-300), B (240-269), C (210-239), F (Below 209). There are no Ds given in my courses.

### **Grading System:**

Attendance	15
Paper #1	20
Paper #2	20
Paper #3	20
Paper #4	20
Events Quizzes	50
“Big Give” Challenges	30
StrengthsFinder 2.0	15
“Last Lecture”	50
Midterm Exam	30
Final Exam	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

### **American Disabilities Act (ADA)**

ADA requires that the university provide services for persons with disabilities. For more information regarding the services that are available to you, please contact the MSU Disability Services Office at (507) 389-2825 (V) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY). If you are a person with a disability, please discuss your special needs with this instructor within the first week of class. This will allow you and the instructor ample opportunities to make arrangement for taking notes, completion of assignments, and examinations.

### **Paper 1: The Last Lecture: Your Perspective**

What would you say if you knew you were going to die and had a chance to say everything that was important to you? That's the hypothetical question posed to the annual speaker series as "The Last Lecture." But for Randy Pausch, the highly energetic professor at Carnegie Mellon University, the question was reality. Following your reading of this book, write a thought provoking paper and use these questions as a framework (By no means are these all the questions that could or should be addressed...feel free to use your own thoughts and ideas):

- If you only had six months to live, what would you do?
- How would you live your life?
- How did Randy Pausch's message impact you? Positively or negatively.
- Does this change your perspective on how you see your life going forward? Why?
- Do you think you will change your life and how?

This paper should be between 4-6 pages, typed, double spaced, 12 point font. Please ensure your paper is grammatically correct as it will be graded on both content and correctness.

### **Paper 2: A Biography Story**

We have all met someone who has inspired us...maybe a family member, teacher, coach or even a friend. Have you thought about documenting their life and why they inspire you? In this paper, choose that one person who has made a difference in your life. Explain why they have and what you have learned. Tell us about this person – it could be wisdom, humor, a skill or a hundred other things. Try and frame the paper around a theme and keep the assignment focused. There is a lot of room for creativity here, so use it. But also remember to write a paper that is grammatically accurate. This paper should be between 4-6 pages, typed, double spaced, 12 point font.

### **Paper 3: Letter to the Editor**

Have you ever been so passionate about a topic or issue that you wanted to write an editorial and express your feelings to the public? Here's your chance...however, writing an editorial needs to be crafted properly. For this paper, choose a topic that you have interest in and write an editorial suitable for a local newspaper. Challenge yourself to write in a manner that grabs the readers' attention and wants them to take action and support your cause. This takes some time to craft this, but can be done. It is suggested that you may want to read some of the more notable editorial writers and understand editorial style. However, do create your own style as you develop your work.

This paper should be between 4-6 pages, typed, double spaced, 12 point font. As always, ensure your paper is grammatically correct as it will be graded on both content and correctness.

### **Paper 4: "A Celebration Paper"**

In order to help students reflect on their experiences, students are required to write a "Celebration Paper." It is called a Celebration Paper because students should use it to celebrate their experiences and learning. This celebration of learning or reflection can deal with all aspects, positive and negative of your semester's work and this course. You should write about your personal reaction to all the different components that were introduced during the semester. In writing the paper, you should consider some of the following questions:

- How did this experience affect you intellectually and/or emotionally?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about others in either the MSU or Greater Mankato communities?
- Did you learn something about an issue or service agency that is particularly interesting or new to you?
- What will you do in the future based upon your course experience?
- Was this experience everything you expected? If not, how was it different?
- What types of benefits (academic, personal, professional, etc.) did you gain? Explain.
- Do you feel you had an affect on a person, group or community issue? How and why?

### **Current Events Quizzes:**

It may seem cliché, but yes knowledge is power...and many of the best community leaders are those that understand the daily happenings whether they are across town or across the world. In this course, you will be challenged throughout the semester with Current Events Quizzes. These quizzes can not traditionally be "studied" for, but you can make yourself aware of happenings in Mankato, Minnesota, our country and

across the world. These quizzes will provide us topics of discussion as well as to understand how happenings impact leadership and giving back.

### **“Big Give” Challenges:**

For those of you that may have seen Oprah’s spring show “The Big Give” you may have an idea of what this assignment revolves around. For those of you who have not, these “Big Give” Challenges will be based upon giving back or for this course, Service Learning. In previous URSI 230 courses, students have been asked to fulfill a Service Learning component by volunteering time at a local non-profit agency. The “Big Give” Challenges still require a portion of this, but now have taken it to another level with challenges based on teams, judges and assignments that will be fast-paced and create excitement. During three sessions this semester, you will compete to “win” the challenge. Unlike Oprah whose tagline was “Win big or go home” this course’s tagline will be “Win big to get a good grade.”

### **StrengthsFinder 2.0:**

Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day? (StrengthsFinder 2.0) This tool assists people to find their natural talents. According to the book, we devote more time to fixing our shortcomings than to developing our strengths. When completed, this analysis will change the way you look at yourself – and the world around you – forever (StrengthsFinder 2.0). Throughout the course of the semester, you will be asked to revisit this analysis in your approach to this course.

### **The Last Lecture: Your Turn**

Throughout the semester, we will use this book as a theme for discussion, learning and assignments. This end-of-the-semester assignment is straightforward...repeat what Randy Pausch did and give us your last lecture. Each student will have 10-15 minutes to teach us anything. Use whatever you need to make your last lecture memorable to us. Make us laugh, make us cry, teach us, inspire us. There are no boundaries other than time. You can use any audio/visual equipment necessary to reinforce your message. Be real, be you, make it impact.

### **Midterm and Final Exams:**

Students will be required to complete a mid-term and final exam that will “test” their understanding of the course material presented. Exams will likely be a multi-format exam (i.e. multiple choice, essay, etc.). The dates for the midterm and final are outlined below. Exams are not meant to create anxiety, but as a method to reinforce concepts. More will be discussed as the semester progresses.

Week 1 – August 27:

Topic(s): Course Introduction

What is Community Leadership and Service Learning?

Self-Awareness and Active Citizenship

Reading: INTRO ARTICLE and Drexler Chapter 1

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 1

Week 2 – September 3:

Topic(s): Finding Your Strengths

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Social Issues

Guest Speaker: Todd Snell, President, Snell Motors

Reading(s): StrengthsFinders 2.0 and Drexler, Chapter 2

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 2 and StrengthsFinder Results

Week 3 – September 10:

Topic(s): “The Last Lecture”

Guest Presentation: “The Last Lecture”

Reading(s): “The Last Lecture” and ABC News article

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 3

Week 4 – September 17:

Topic(s): Resource Management for Active Citizenship

Guest Speaker: Steve Kosberg, Pastor, Hosanna Lutheran Church

Reading(s): Drexler, Chapter 3

Assignment(s): Current Events Quiz 4/Paper 1 DUE/Big Give Challenge 1 Unveiled

Week 5 – September 24:

Topic(s): **Big Give Challenge 1**

Week 6 – October 1:

Topic(s): Action Strategies and Project Management

Guest Speaker: Becky Kunst, Executive Director, Leisure Education for Exceptional People (LEEP)

Reading(s): Drexler, Chapter 4

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 5

Week 7 – October 8:

Topic(s): Skills for Civic Education

Guest Speaker: John Fallenstein,

Reading(s): Drexler, Chapter 5

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 6/Paper 2 DUE

Week 8 – October 15:

**MIDTERM EXAM**

Assignment: Big Give Challenge 2 Unveiled

Week 9 – October 22:

Topic(s): **Big Give Challenge 2**

Week 10 – October 29:

Topic(s): Communication and Teamwork

Guest Speaker: Jill Evans, Director of Development, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

Reading(s): Drexler, Chapter 6

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 7/Paper 3 DUE/Big Give Challenge 3 Unveiled

Week 11 – November 5:

Topic(s): **Big Give Challenge 3**

Week 12 – November 12:

Topic(s): Leadership and Change

American Democracy and Government Structure

Guest Speaker: Kathy Sheran, Minnesota State Senator, District 23

Reading(s): Drexler, Chapters 7 and 8

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 8

Week 13 – November 19:

Topic(s): The Last Lecture: Your Turn

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 9

Week 14 – December 3:

Topic(s): The Last Lecture: Your Turn

Assignment: Current Events Quiz 10/Paper 4 DUE

Week 15 – December 10:

**FINAL EXAM**