

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

LEGAL STUDIES AND BUSINESS ETHICS 227-001 Syllabus
Spring 2019

Professor G. Richard Shell
THE LITERATURE OF SUCCESS:
ETHICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Classroom: F38 Huntsman Hall
Office: 643 Huntsman Hall
Class times: Thursdays 3:00 -- 6:00 PM
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30 – 2:50 PM or call/email me
Office Phone: 215-898-9525; e-mail: shellric@wharton.upenn.edu

This course explores the history, literature, ethics, 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. We will also watch Arthur Miller’s play Death of a Salesman.

Each class has an "Introduction to Class Readings" with pre-class questions for review posted on Canvas, along with “Additional Materials” as readings. We will utilize a number of web-based and in-class personality assessments to help you examine your own personal strengths, talents, personality traits, and achievement orientations. The following paperback books are required (and are on reserve at Lippincott Library if you wish to read them there): Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People; Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People; Napoleon Hill, Think and Grow Rich, and selections from many works in the Literature of Success. **NOTE: We will also use Rath’s StrengthsFinder 2.0 web-based personality profiler available online for \$15.00.** You can find that assessment at the web address here: <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/en-US/Product?Path=Clifton%20StrengthsFinder>.

GRADING: There is no “Wharton curve” for this course. Top grades go to people who do outstanding work on the three dimensions being evaluated. Grading is based on:

- 20%: Your overall class contribution and participation;
- 15%: Six short reading reflection papers/journals on assigned topics.
 - **NOTE: If you are assigned to write a reading reflection paper for a given class, you should come prepared to lead the class discussion on that set of readings!**
- 65%: Two personalized, well-written research papers:

- 25%: A short paper (6-10 pages) on a “success theme” (See the 2016 prompt near the end of this syllabus -- this year will be different)
- 40%: A “Final Project” (10-20 pages) titled “My 2017 Theory of Success and How I Plan to Achieve It.”

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY: Committed class attendance in this course is critical. Students may miss one class without penalty, but beyond that a 10% grade penalty will be imposed for each class (or part of a class) missed unless the student provides a written medical excuse or evidence of a family emergency. Recruiting and extracurricular activities, while recognized as important student interests, are not valid excuses for missing class, arriving late, or leaving early. Please consider this very carefully when enrolling.

CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Part I. Introduction

Class 1 (1-17-19): The Question: What is a Successful Life?

Discuss: Course Requirements, Syllabus, Grading, Reading Response Papers, Personal Journals.

Read: Readings to be handed out, read, and discussed during class.

Activity: Do and discuss the Six Lives Exercise. Begin the investigation of the differences (if there are any) among the concepts of happiness, achievement, and success.

Class 2 (1-24-19): Following Your Passion: The Answer or Another Question?

Read: Canvas Readings for Class 2. Note well: “Introduction to Class Readings.”

Discuss: Is success a question of having a “passion” to follow?

Activity: Do you know anyone who is “following their passion”? Do you know some people who are happy even though they are not doing so?

Part II. The Character School of Success

Class 3 (1-31-19): Character, Virtue, and the Self-Made Person: Benjamin Franklin
RRP – All Students

Read: Canvas "Additional Materials" Readings for Class 3, including Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography, Part 1 (written in 1771) and a short selection from Part 2 (written in 1784).

Activity: Group discussion of Franklin’s book as well as your individual VIA Strengths profiler results for Top 5 and Bottom 5 virtues. See Canvas Reading Introduction for this class to get directions on the VIA profiler as well as a sheet summarizing all 24 VIA virtues. You will pick one of Benjamin Franklin’s 13 virtues to practice for the rest of the semester. Choose wisely!

Class 4 (2-7-19): Character and Virtue as a System for Success:
Habits and Elephants RRP – Red Folder Group

Read: Canvas readings on Self Control for Class 4 + Stephen Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (1989).

Activity: Groups discuss readings as well as their experiences trying to practice one of Franklin's virtues on a daily basis for this past week.

Class 5 (2-14-19): Character's Roots: Family and Role Models – RRP Yellow Folder Group
Journal #1 Due – Experience Report on Self Discipline and Self Control (“Practicing My Virtue”)

Read: Canvas Readings for Class 5.

Activity: Come to class prepared to talk about how your family has affected your success ideas and values. In what ways might your family's expectations for your eventual success been a burden? Has family emotional turmoil affected you? Has your family always served as a source of unconditional support? With respect to the “Ain't No Makin' It” reading for today, consider whether success depends only on where you end up in life – or does where you and family started out also matter?

Class 6 (2-21-19) Success, Family, and Literature: Death of a Salesman

Activity: Watch and discuss the original Broadway cast production of Death of a Salesman.

2-20-18 (5 PM) Mid-Term Paper Due – Topic to be Announced. Upload a copy to Canvas and turn in a paper copy at the Legal Studies & Business Ethics Office – 6th Floor JMHH.

Class 7: (2-28-18) Character, Success and Social Influence – RRP Blue Folder Group

Read: Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People (1937) (Parts 1 and 2 only – roughly the first 100+ pages).

Activity: Also, we'll have group discussion on authenticity vs. social “technique” and whether altruism is possible. Share examples of your “Friends of Virtue.”

SPRING BREAK (No class on March 7, 2019)

III. The Excellence School of Success

Class 8 (3-14-19): Aptitudes, Talents, and Success – RRP Manila Folder Group

Read: StrengthsFinder Assessment; Canvas readings.

Activity: Discuss Short Papers. Be prepared to discuss a person you know who seems to thriving through excellence in what they do. Review “flow” experiences; survey and talk about StrengthFinder Assessment results.

Class 9 (3-21-19): The Problem of Purpose – RRP Red Folder Group

Read: Canvas Readings -- Plato, The Trial and Death of Socrates; Fankl, Man's Search for Meaning and purpose readings in Additional Materials.

Activity: Discuss the role of religion (if any) in your life. Also – “virtue practice” checkup!

IV. The Mind Power School of Success

Class 10 (3-28-19): Success through Beliefs, Mental Focus, and Positive Mental Attitudes
RRP Yellow Folder Group

Read: Napoleon Hill, Think and Grow Rich -- Introduction and Chapters 1-6 & Chapter 15 (feel free to look into some of the parts we are skipping – much of it is repetitive but some is very strange indeed!).

Activity: Watch Byrne video -- The Secret. Discuss Mind Power School – strengths and weaknesses in the theory. Share personal experiences related to readings.

Class 11 (4-4-19): Mind Power's Roots: Stoic and Buddhist Philosophy
RRP Green and Blue Folder Groups

Read: Canvas Readings for Class 11.

Activity: Launch discussion of how you will survey your social network about your true strengths, virtues, and talents and how they might relate to your choice of work. Also, bring your most and least favorite quotes from the Stoic and Buddhist philosophers and be ready to discuss your selections.

Class 12 (4-11-19): Mind Power's Tools – Goals, Role Models, Self-Talk, Rituals
RRP Manila Folder Group

Read: Canvas Readings for Class 12.

Activity: Group discussion on your plans for getting data for Journal #2 -- virtues, vices, strengths and weaknesses. Survey Mind Power Tools – what works? What does not?

Class 13 (4-18-19): Success Case Studies:
Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Entrepreneur Mary Kay Ash
RRP – All Students

Read: Canvas Readings for Class 13

Activity: Be prepared to assess the strengths and aptitudes of two lives you read about. Also, make a judgment about whether you think either or both of these women is a “success.” Finally, be ready to name at least one of the people you intend to use as a success role model in your Final Project.

Class 14 (4-25-19): Concluding Class

Journal #2 Due – Complete Capabilities Assessment – Report on What You Can Do Better Than Most. (My True Virtues, Strengths, Talents, and Aptitudes, with Comments from My Circle of Friends, Colleagues, and Family).

Read: Nothing!

Activity: Bring these things: 1) your final Personal Journal 2) a final “self grade” for yourself on your virtue practice for the semester, 3) your personal success metaphor, and 4) a favorite, “signature quotation” from the readings to share with the class along with an explanation as to why you picked that passage. Also: someone bring a camera for a final class photo.

May 6, 2019 at 4:00 pm: FINAL PROJECTS AND PEER EVALUATIONS (WEB-BASED) EXERCISE DUE. *Upload a Word formatted copy of your paper to the class Canvas website and turn in a paper copy to the reception desk of the Legal Studies and Business Ethics Department on the 6th floor of Huntsman Hall.* I have to submit final grades for seniors on a tight deadline, so grade penalties will be imposed for late papers. The Peer Evaluation site for ratings on classmate contributions to your learning will close at 5 pm on May 6, as well. Failure to complete this exercise will result in your losing all the points for this aspect of your grade.