Why do some organizations succeed while others flounder? Why do some employees rise in the ranks and others stagnate (or fall)? Why do some people love their jobs while for others work is sheer misery? As students of business, it is critically important for you to have an understanding of the key factors that contribute to both organizational success and the role that managers play in helping their organizations succeed and employees thrive.

The primary objective of the course is to help students understand the elements that contribute to organizational and employee success, as well as some of the common impediments to high performance. We will focus on how organizations position themselves for success within their external environment, and how they organize and motivate their people. More specifically, the course will explore how organizational leaders develop winning strategies, and then design their organization in a way that aligns structures, social relationships, tasks, and people to achieve those strategies. In exploring these issues, we will identify the challenges that organizational leaders and managers face as they try to make good decisions in the face of a constantly evolving industry environment, competing goals and agendas, and an increasingly diverse and global workforce.

A second objective of the course is to strengthen students’ managerial and leadership potential. Regardless of your major or your future career plans, such an understanding will enable you to work more effectively within an organizational context, whether that context is a small start-up company, a family business, a not-for-profit organization, or a large financial institution. In other words, the course will provide you with tools and skills that you can use to increase your own personal career success.

The structure of the course encourages learning in multiple ways: through lecture, readings, in-class discussions, exercises, case analyses, and a team project. These approaches provide opportunities for students to enhance their analytic and interpersonal skills, both of which are essential to effective management and to success in the workplace.
Desired Outcomes

The course aims are: 1) to develop an understanding of critical management and the micro-practices of managers, 2) to understand and analyze the forces that influence management processes, 3) to develop a reflective practice of management by translating theory into practical applications.

Assessment Components

The final course grade consists of:

1) Participation (15%)
2) Exam I (20%) and Exam II (20%)
3) Individual paper (15%)
4) Team project (exec plan + report + presentation) (30%)

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

1) Participation (15%)

Participation is an essential part of the course and is important for your own learning experience and the learning experience of your classmates. Class participation will be evaluated based on demonstrated preparation through involvement in class discussion and group exercises, and completion of any short assignments or memos (if assigned). You are expected to be prepared for and actively participate in class.

Contribution to class discussion. With regard to participation itself (i.e., talking in class), quality (the thoughtfulness of your comments) counts more than quantity (how frequently you talk), although simply waiting to offer a couple well-prepared comments throughout the course and staying silent otherwise will not earn you a very good participation grade. Your goal should be to contribute in a meaningful and (reasonably) consistent way to the class discussions. Quality in-class comments 1) go beyond the facts of a particular reading or case and offer unique insights, 2) provide links between the topic under discussion and other cases, the reading, or outside situations, and/or 3) extend, build upon, or constructively critique others’ contributions. Those who will receive the highest participation grades not only speak up with reasonable frequency but are willing to take risks with their comments.

Voluntary presentations, short assignments, class preparation, and engagement. You are expected to be fully engaged with in-class exercises and case discussions throughout the semester. You also are expected to complete a few short assignments during the semester and invited to deliver a voluntary presentation.

A note on readings. You will be a valuable contributor to class only if you come prepared. You are fully expected to complete all of the readings and come to class prepared with insights and questions for the in-class discussion. We will engage in several case analyses as a class, and it is important to everyone’s learning experience that you read the case thoroughly and think about the events critically before we discuss the case in class. This does not mean you have to bring complete answers or a memory for all the details of the case. It does mean you need to bring questions and opinions (which you are prepared to
defend).

Dates are provided for each case in the course schedule (see below). This is the date on which we will discuss the case so you will need to read the case before that date.

2) Exam I (15%) and Exam II (20%)

Exam I will be held in class on **Wednesday, October 5, 2016** and Exam II will be held in class on **Wednesday, November 23, 2016**. Exam I will cover the content from sessions 1-5 (Organizational level). Exam II will focus on the content from sessions 6-11 (although some content from previous sessions could be included). Make-ups for the exams will not be arranged. Every effort will be made to return graded exams to students within 10 days of the exam date.

3) Individual paper (15%)

**Due: Tuesday, November 8, 2016**

**Late assignments.** Late assignments – no matter how soon after the deadline they are uploaded – will be marked as late and will receive a 25% grade reduction for the assignment. Each subsequent 24 hours that passes after the assignment is due will result in an additional 25% reduction. Papers that are not received by November, 11, 2016 at 5:00pm will receive a zero.

**Academic integrity.** I trust that each student will author her or his own work. Papers that closely resemble each other will be cause for suspicion. If a student has any concern about whether a certain action might violate the Stern Code of Conduct, ask me. It is better to ask than to assume. Papers will be run through TurnItIn. This software will compare each assignment to all other assignments from this class and previous classes as well as with any other online content.

**Overview of assignment.** Your task is to apply concepts from class in order to help understand the causes of one of the following relevant organizational disaster/issues.

**Option A. Mount Everest:** In May 1996 Rob Hall and Scott Fischer, two of the world’s most accomplished mountaineers, each led an expedition attempting to reach the top of Mount Everest. Five individuals, including the two leaders, died during the descent from the summit on May 11. It proved to be the deadliest day in the mountain’s history. Since then, many survivors and other observers have tried to explain why this tragedy occurred.

*Analysis question: Why did this tragedy occur? What is the root cause of this disaster?*

**OPTION B. NUMMI** (New United Motor Manufacturing): General Motors and Toyota opened the New United Motor Manufacturing (NUMMI) as a joint venture. Toyota showed GM the secrets of its production system: How it made cars of much higher quality and much lower cost than GM achieved. But today, GM cars still don't have the quality of Japanese imports, GM is bankrupt and on March 31, NUMMI will be closed, sending thousands of car workers looking for jobs.
Analysis question: Why did GM fail to capitalize on the successful changes it implemented at NUMMI?

OPTION C. Pressure of Perfection (TO BE EXPANDED)

OPTION D. Amazon (TO BE EXPANDED)

People often cite the “idiocy” of the decision-makers who “should have known better” in explaining these organizational tragedies and failure. They berate the character of mountaineering guides who get stranded in snowstorms and the stubbornness of middle managers who fail to implement important innovations.

These “target-centered” explanations tend to provide nothing more than an over simplified and inaccurate analysis of the events. It is rarely, if ever, the case that a single cause fully explains a major organizational disaster. Thus, your task is not to identify the single, most important explanation for the events. Rather, your job is to view these events through lens of a management and organizations scholar. You will critically apply concepts learned in class in order to make sense of the tragic expedition to Everest or a car company’s failed attempt to revolutionize auto manufacturing in America or one of the alternative options (c, d, to be expanded)

Your specific task for the individual case analysis is as follows:

You will select one of the fourth cases described above and address its corresponding question. Identify concepts from at least two different course topics that help to answer the question about the case (e.g., you could choose concepts from group decision making and networking and influence). Explain why your chosen concepts help to address the question. The best analyses will be the ones that also attend to how the chosen concepts interacted or affected each other. You will then propose remedies that could have been in place (or could be in place in the future) to address the issues that you identified (e.g., if you identified a problem with a team’s culture, you would need to offer a suggestion for how this problem could have been – or could be - fixed). It is important that you draw support for your analysis directly from the case.

Grading: To receive the highest grade, papers will...

• Be written and organized in a clear and concise manner

• Have a clear, perspective/thesis

• Demonstrate an understanding of course concepts through the appropriate application of these concepts to the case

• Integrate the chosen concepts in addition to discussing the concepts individually

• Ground the analysis in the content of the case (i.e., use the content of the case to support the claims in the analysis).

• Propose remedies that could have been (or could be) implemented to address the problems identified in the analysis and explain clearly why these remedies would be effective.
Follow the guidelines of the assignments

**Length and format of the analysis:** A compelling, thorough analysis does not equate to a long-winded one. I have found through experience that clarity of thought results in conciseness, and, thus, agree with Shakespeare’s observation that “brevity is the soul of wit.” Thus, this analysis is limited to 850-1000 words (excluding the reference list). Papers should be formatted as follows: Double-spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman font.

**References:** You will need to cite any material you include from the case and class readings. Any style guide you use is ok (e.g., MLA, APA) as long as it is clear whom and what you are citing.

If you would like to cite material from class lectures, you may do so by including the following information ([Class Number][Date of Lecture]).

**A final note about the assignment.** The assignment requires that you view the events from the perspective of a management and organizational scholar. This is not to say that there are no other lenses though which these organizational disasters/issues could be viewed. Indeed, a mountaineer or an automotive specialist might offer different insights about the case. These perspectives – while informative – are outside the scope of the analysis. Therefore, the knowledge you have gained from this class provides you the expertise to analyze either case. In other words, don’t feel like you must know about manufacturing to analyze the NUMMI case.

4) **Team project (Exec plan + Presentation + Report) (30%)**

**Due date (Exec Plan) : Tuesday, October 11, 2016**

**Due date (Presentation + Report) : Wednesday, December 7, 2016**

Working in teams is an important part of this course. Although some class time may be devoted to working in teams, much teamwork will be completed outside of class. Advancing our teamwork capabilities will be an *end in itself* for this course. Teams will be randomly assigned by the professor. The number of enrolled students in the course will determine the size of the teams.

Your team is required to complete a final team research project. This project entails analyzing various aspects of an organization of your team’s choice. The goal is to apply course concepts, frameworks, and models to understand the organization in depth. The deliverables include:

- **Executive plan (4%)**: An executive summary (1-1.5 pages) of your report indicating 1) which organization your team has selected; 2) which question about this organization you intend to analyze; and (3) why you believe this an important organization to study in light of the course topics
  - Due by **October 11, 2016 at 5:00pm**.

- **Presentation (8%)**: A 10-15 minute presentation during the last session of the course on **December 7, 2016**.
• **Final paper (18%)**: A final paper due by the last session of the course on December 7, 2016.

**Site/nature of study:**

Your team is to use course concepts to analyze a real organization. You need to focus on at least two of the three broad course topics (i.e., Organizations, Groups, People), and within each of these broad topics select two or more specific topics (e.g., If you choose “Organizations” and “Groups” then you could potentially be integrating the topics of “Strategy,” “Structure,” “Decision-Making” and “Influence and Networks” together) that interests your group and is relevant to the organization you are analyzing. In total, you need a minimum of four specific topic areas (note: the total number of topics integrated is less important than the quality of the analysis). These topics must be integrated together throughout your analysis to demonstrate mastery of the interrelatedness of the organization.

It is critical that the question that focuses your analysis should be highly relevant to your specific organization today. A well-selected question will lead to a fitting, critical analysis that provides novel insights about the organization. A poorly selected question will lead to the opposite. A strong analysis starts with a strong question to analyze. Strong questions generally pose more than one possibility and are constrained in their scope. A strong analysis then points to which possibility is the best or most likely.

For instance:

**Example 1**

- A weak question: Why is Company X underperforming?
- A stronger question: Is Company X's underperformance due more to its compensation system or to its CEO's leadership style

**Example 2:**

- A weak question: Why has Company X been successful?
- A stronger question: Should Company X continue selling only product A, or should it expand to selling products B and C?

Your paper should be analytical and issue oriented, not merely descriptive. You should adopt the clinical pose of a management consultant, endeavoring to understand the organization, to identify its strengths and/or weaknesses, and ultimately to propose actions that solve problems, improve performance, allow for continued top performance, etc (note: these will vary depending on the focus of your analysis).

**Work-plan for project.** The team project is a major portion of the course. You should therefore begin thinking about possible organizations to study as soon as possible and begin working on your project as soon as your group has formed. Specifically, you should do the following:

- **Select an organization to study**: It can be a private or public, for-profit or not-for-profit, and of any size. An important criterion to consider in choosing your organization is some degree of accessibility—you need to have some way to collect
information about the organization. For instance, you might be better served by choosing an organization that one of your group members has interned at, a family member or close friend works at, etc. rather a more well-known organization but one where you have limited or no access. NOTE: a well-selected organization can make the project fun and interesting; a poorly selected organization can make the project far more painful than it should be.

• Select a particular issue, problem, challenge, opportunity, threat, etc. to focus your analysis: Choose specific topics from the course that you believe will help your group situate its analysis. If you think you might be interested in a topic covered later in the semester, read ahead to check it out.

• Gather relevant information: Truly familiarize yourself with the organization. If you know someone who works at the organization, you may want to ask him or her for relevant materials (e.g. organization charts, demographic information, annual reports, statements of corporate goals). Web and library sources of information may also be useful. It might be important to interview or survey other members of the organization who are representative of the employees who are part of, or affected by, the organizational issue you are studying (Note. If you choose to do this, please see me before doing so for a quick “course” in survey methodology). Use what you have learned from the course to guide what information is “relevant” and what questions to ask given your focal question.

• Analyze your problem or issue: Given the information you have gathered about the organization and/or your interview and/or survey analysis, try to draw some conclusions about the issue you are studying. Draw on the management and organizational literature relevant to your topic to help you analyze it. Your analysis should be clear, logical and based on what you’ve learned from the class in addition to the data/research you have gathered.

• Generate suggested solutions: Given your analysis of the problem, issue, opportunity, etc. generate key steps the organization can take to improve any problems and/or build on any strengths. Your suggestions should involve things the organization could actually do given its constraints. It might be helpful to first lay out all possible solutions, including the ideal ones in a world without constraints, and then select from those, attempting to approximate the ideal ones. Your suggestions should be based whenever possible on general and guiding principles learned in this course.

Below are the main sections that should be covered in the paper. The number of pages suggested is to give you a general idea of the proportion of space that should be allocated to each section.

**Example final team paper outline:**

Note: Your team’s paper need not take the exact form provided below; however it should be organized similarly and in such a way that it is logical in the context of the analysis and recommendations.

All papers must include section headings. Papers should be formatted as follows: Double-spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman font.
Title page
  o Title of paper, class, professor, date, authors

Introduction (p. 1)
  o Describe the organization you studied: its purpose, location, age, size, industry, etc.

Issue/Problem (pp. 2-3)
  o Describe the issue, problem, challenge, opportunity, threat, etc. that is the focus of your analysis.
  o Describe why providing an answer to this issue, problem, challenge, opportunity, threat, etc. is critical to the organization today and/or in the future

Analysis of the issue/problem/challenge/opportunity/threat (pp. 4-6)
  o Provide an integrated analysis of the issue, problem, challenge, opportunity, threat, etc. in the context of the specific course topics you selected for your analysis

Recommendations (pp. 7-10)
  o Provide concrete recommendations for how the organization should proceed in light of your analysis and research on the organization
  o Describe, in a way that integrates the topical areas your team selected from class, how and why your recommendations will be effective

Potential risks and limitations (p. 11-12)
  o Briefly describe the potential risks and/or limitations of the recommendations that you have proposed

Brief concluding remarks (p. 12)

References, appendices, etc. should be included at the end of the document in the order listed below:
  o References (mandatory): List of books, chapters, articles, class slides, etc. cited in the text
  o When drawing on research, either a) cite it in the text by listing the authors’ last names and the date of publication (e.g., Smith 2011) with a reference section at the end that includes the full citation, or b) insert a footnote with the reference listed at the bottom of the page where the citation is made. (If you need assistance with formatting citations, I have found this website to be a useful resource: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/). Please note, I care much more about whether you cite work than how you cite work so don’t let frustration about figuring out the best way to cite a reference lead you not to cite the reference.
  o Appendices, Data tables, Graphs, Charts, Figures, Interview questions and answer excerpts (if applicable)

Grading Policy

Stern School of Business classes adhere to the following Stern grading guidelines:

“At NYU Stern, we strive to create courses that challenge students intellectually and that meet the Stern standards of academic excellence. To ensure fairness and clarity of grading, the Stern faculty have adopted a grading guideline for core courses with enrollments of more than 25 students in which approximately 35% of students will receive an “A” or “A-“ grade. In core classes of less than 25 students, the instructor is at liberty to give whatever grades they think the students deserve, while maintaining rigorous academic standards.”

Statement on Provisions to students with disabilities

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please
contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html) for further information.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

### Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in harsher penalties including failure.

Unexcused absences affect students’ grades: In classes meeting once a week, a 2% deduction from the student’s final course grade occurs on the occasion of the first unexcused absence.

Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, and emergencies.

**Illness:** For a single absence, students may be required to provide a doctor’s note, at the discretion of the Assistant Directors of Academics. In the case of two consecutive absences, students must provide a doctor’s note. Exams, quizzes, and presentations will not be made up without a doctor’s note.

**Religious Observance:** Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their instructor and the Academic Office in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If exams, quizzes, and presentations are scheduled on a holiday a student will observe, the Assistant Directors, in coordination with the instructor, will reschedule them.

**Please note:** if you are unable to attend class, you are required to email your professors directly and notify them.

### Late Submission of Work

Only acceptable for the Individual Paper due by November 8. However, a late assignment – no matter how soon after the deadline– will be marked as late and will receive a 25% grade reduction. Each subsequent 24 hours that passes after the assignment is due will result in an additional 25% reduction. Individual Papers that are not received by November, 11, 2016 at 5:00pm will receive a zero.
At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community.

**Plagiarism:** presenting others' work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one’s own. Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:

- a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks
- an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another’s work
- the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one’s own
- submitting evaluations of group members’ work for an assigned group project which misrepresent the work that was performed by another group member
- altering or forging academic documents, including but not limited to admissions materials, academic records, grade reports, add/drop forms, course registration forms, etc.
- using language translation software.

For further information, students are encouraged to check [www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html](http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html)

There is no single book that covers all the topics we would be discussing, so there are no mandatory books beyond the required readings (see below). However, if you want to further expand the main topics, using well-recognized references, I would suggest:

**On Management:**

"Simply Managing" by Henry Mintzberg. Berrett-Koehler Publishers;

**On Strategy:**

"Contemporary Strategy Analysis" by Robert M. Grant. John Wiley & Sons; 9th Revised edition

**On the remaining topics:**

"Organizational Behaviour" by Andrzej A. Huczynski and David A. Buchanan; Pearson. 8th edition.  

See below. Those marked as OCP (Online Course Package) are part of the package to be purchased at Harvard Business Publishing. If you already have acquired the package and
have a personal code to access, you will be able to use your code and access the materials through NYU Classes. If not, please contact Administration Office. Everything not marked as OCP will be uploaded at NYU Classes.

**Session 1**
August 31st

**Course Introduction. Frameworks for understanding organizations**

Cases: *Group Dynamic.*

Readings: *The congruence model, Images of organizations*

**Session 2**
September 7th

**Organizational Level. Strategy**

Cases: *Mud Wars, Ikea, Netflix (OCP)*

Readings: *The five competitive forces that shape strategy (OCP); Competing on Resources*

**Session 3**
September 14th

**Organizational Level. Structure**

Cases: *Zappos, Big Spaceship (OCP)*

Readings: *Do you have a well-designed organization?*

**Session 4**
September 21st

**Organizational Level. Culture**

Cases: *The mile Factory, Amazon*

Readings: *A note on organizational culture (OCP); The Paradox of "Corporate Culture"; Engineering Culture*

**Session 5**
September 28th

**Organizational Level. Leadership**

Cases: *MBA Hackers, Movie 1 (TBC)*

Readings: *Survival Guide; It's all about me, Inspiring others: The language of leadership; Act like a leader, think like a leader; The Authenticity Paradox;*

**Session 6**
October 5th

**Exam 1 (15%) and Group Level. "I vs We"**

We will be having our first exam in this session.

Readings: *The great conundrum: You vs. the Team; Why teams don't work*

**KEY MILESTONE**
October 11th

**Exec Plan Delivery (4%)**
**Session 7**
October 14th

**Group Level. Decision Making**

Cases: *Group Exercise*

Readings: *Agreement and thinking alike; Cognitive repairs; Framing; Videos*

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**Session 8**
October 19th

**Group Level. Conflict**

Cases: *The gold watch*

Readings: *How management teams can have a good fight*

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**Session 9**
October 26th

**Group Level. Creativity and Innovation**

Cases: *The Bakeoff?*

Readings: *Building an innovation factory; How to kill a team's creativity*

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**Session 10**
November 2nd

**Group Level. Influence and Networks**

Cases: *Heidi Roizen (OCP), Movie 2 (TBC)*

Readings: *Power Dynamics in Organizations (OCP); Harnessing the science of persuasion; In the company of givers and takers; Critical Management Studies Readings*

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**KEY MILESTONE**
November 8th

**Individual Paper Delivery (15%)**

**People Level. Motivation and Incentives**

Cases: *Lincoln Electric*

Readings: *Why you hate work; On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B; One more time: how do you motivate employees?; Do Financial Incentives Drive Company Performance? (OCP)*

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**Session 11**
November 16th

**Exam 2 (20%) and People Level. Managing Employee Performance**

We will be having our second exam in this session

Cases: *Wolfgang Keller*

Readings: *Why it’s so Hard to be Fair; Actionable feedback*
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