



Self Development for Personal and Professional Success

Undergraduate Business Administration (UGBA) 98/198, Fall 2011

Facilitator: Reeta Banerjee E-mail: reeta@berkeley.edu Office Hours: By Appointment (Bank of America Forum, Haas) Decal Website: http://www.decal.org/courses/selfdev *You can find an electronic copy of the syllabus on this website and on the bspace site.	Meeting Time: Monday, 8pm – 10pm Meeting Place: C135 Faculty Sponsor: Holly Schroth E-mail: schroth@haas.berkeley.edu
---	---

Course Description

This course is about becoming more effective at identifying, defining, and achieving your personal and professional goals. Most academic courses excel at imparting knowledge in a particular domain, but very few directly focus on developing self-awareness and employing strategies that help people realize what they aim to do in life and purposefully embark upon that journey.

This course focuses on clearly defining your goals and creating action plans around them, as well as learning strategies and frameworks for tackling the common pitfalls that people face when trying to achieve what they set out to do. In this course, we refer to goals as anything that you wish to accomplish personally and professionally. Self-development is the process by which you work to improve yourself.

Most people do not use a structured or rigorous method in determining their life's direction. However, if anything is worth thinking about in such depth, it is this subject exactly.

This course carves out a time every week for you to join forces with your peers and critically think about the issues that you're facing, as well as brainstorm (and sometimes role-play) solutions. Learning and brainstorming among your peers is ideal for self-development because peers often face similar dilemmas and can brainstorm and share potential solutions in a supportive environment.

Weekly sessions involve discussions of the topics and direct applications to students. The course is meant to be interactive, and the course facilitator will strive to improve the course through your feedback in an effort to make this your most positive and productive course.

Course Objectives

- Encourage you to challenge your assumptions, understand your values, re-design your goals around what's important to you
- Learn to combat the common obstacles that people face: difficulty making decisions, always picking the option that keeps the most doors open, inability to make tradeoffs and prioritize, difficulty imagining and creating better alternatives than your current choice set, inability to operate in ambiguous situations
- Offer frameworks, techniques, and exercises to provide structure to the often unstructured process of self-development
- Teach you to take the initiative and be entrepreneurial in your self-development, making it a habit rather than a forced exercise.

Course Logistics

Class Sessions

Time and Place: Monday, 8pm – 10pm in C325. Class begins promptly at 8:10pm on Mondays.

Enrollment

All students who are approved for enrollment will receive the Course Control Number and a Course Entry Code. Note that the enrollment assignment, with photo attached, must be turned in during the second class session on September 12.

In-Class Participation

Students are expected to attend, be prepared for, and arrive on time for each class session. Students must also bring their name card to every class session. Students are also expected to actively participate in class discussions, as much of the learning will come from peer-to-peer interaction and shared experiences.

Required Readings

Required readings are usually short online articles, whose links are provided in the syllabus. Students are expected to read assigned materials before class, and be prepared for group discussion. Additional readings or worksheets may be handed-out in class.

Class Materials

Journal—the journal should be large enough that you can write down your thoughts throughout the semester, but it should be small enough that you feel comfortable carrying

it around with you. I would like you to bring this journal to every class. Nobody will be reading your journal, but I may ask you to write in it during some class activities.

Post-its—preferably in multiple colors. We will be using post-its as a brainstorming and problem-solving tool throughout the class.

Here's a link to cheap set of post-its, but obtaining post-its from any store should be fine: http://www.amazon.com/Post-Original-inches-Assorted-Colors/dp/B000GAVJP4/ref=pd_sbs_op_2

Grading

This course is graded on a Pass/Not Pass basis. To receive a pass:

- Each student must be an active participant in class discussion and activities.
- Student must earn at least 70%, 140 points out of 200 points (see list of assignments below). To pass the class, you must do the Class Presentation and submit the Final Reaction Paper even if you have more than 140 points.
- Student may not have more than two (2) absences.
- Two tardies (more than 10 minutes late or leaving early) will count as one absence.

You are evaluated on how committed you are to developing yourself, as demonstrated by progression on your goals and thoughtful reflection—your thoughtful completion of the assignments are how the course evaluates this. This method of evaluation is designed to be aligned with what you want to accomplish. And the “assignments” that follow exist only to be the extra motivation to do what you want to do anyway, but maybe have never gotten around to doing. Do not take the class if you're looking for an easy pass/not pass class—only take the class if you're serious about developing yourself and are willing to put forth the time to do so.

Written Assignments

Late assignments are not accepted for credit. All assignments must be typed (double-spaced, 12-point Times font, 1 inch margins) and must include: student name and ID number, assignment due date and title.

List of assignments:

- Enrollment Assignment (**due Sept 12**)—20 points
- Strengths Assessment (**due Sept 19**)—20 points
- Goals and Action Plan Assignment (**due Sept 26**)—20 points
- Mental Models Assignment (**due Oct 10**)—20 points
- Opportunities Assignment (**due Oct 17**)—20 points
- Class Presentation: Self-reported progress on goals (**on Nov 21**)—50 points
- Final Reaction Paper (**due Nov 28**)—50 points

Once you're enrolled in the class, you will have access to the course's bspace site, where grades and announcements will be posted.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Monday, August 29

Session 1: Introduction to the Course

Defining Success for Yourself, Creating Your Own Compass

- Overview of the course, what you can hope to gain, and what's expected of you
- Logistics
- Background on the facilitator
- Icebreaker exercise
- Comparing societal ideas of success to your own ideas of success

Video clip on what success means to different people:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LubnES0GWuA>

Defining what society sees as success

- Define what measures you would use to define your own success and why you have picked those measures
- Understand the basis for your ideas of success—where did these ideas come from?
- Figuring out what success means to you in each of the following realms of your life:
 - Personal—you, friends, and family
 - Professional—boss, colleagues, company
 - Societal—impact on others outside your direct network

Class Activity

Post-it brainstorming session to identify and prioritize your values to create and weight your measures of success

Enrollment Assignment (due on Sept 12)

-½ page explaining why you're taking this class and what you expect to accomplish through the class, please attach a photo of yourself

-1 page explaining what your definition of success and your measures are

-Strengths assessment: <http://literacyworks.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html>

Print your results to bring to the next class.

-Shortened Myers Briggs-Jung test: <http://similarminds.com/jung.html>

When you get the results of your test, click on the link that says "For more info on your Jung type click here." You should then see single-word descriptions of the personality type, as well as favored and disfavored careers. Please print that page to bring to the next class.

Reading

Read about Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of Flow

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/199707/finding-flow>

Monday, September 5—No Class due to Labor Day Holiday

Monday, September 12

Session 2: Identifying your strengths and weaknesses, Transforming them to your advantage

Submit your enrollment assignment

Discussion of results from strengths assessment and Myers Briggs-Jung test.

Marcus Buckingham: Putting Your Strengths To Work

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWZTds02Njs> (until the 4:44 mark)

1. Identify your strengths and passions
2. Shape your work based on your strengths and passions

Class Activity

Share with the class a time in your life when you did something that you are really proud of (something that you weren't required to do, that you initiated yourself)

Strengths Assignment (due Sept 19)

1 page

Think about the times when you felt "Flow"—list these as your Strongest Moments. How many hours in a day do you feel this? Record the times in the day during the week that you feel this way. What are more of these activities that you can include in your weekly schedule that you can implement?

What are your weaknesses? What are strategies you can use to counteract weaknesses with your strengths?

Reading

How to Set Goals: <http://www.mindtools.com/page6.html>

Monday, September 19

Session 3: Defining your goals, Setting your goals, Creating an Action Plan to Achieve those Goals

Discussion of the reading

Designing your goals based on your interests and strengths

Creating Action Plans (subgoals with deadlines)

Goals and Action Plan Assignment (due Sept 26)

Following the advice of the Goals reading (the mindtools link), write up an action plan for at least 5 goals you want to achieve, include contingencies for what you will do if things don't work out as planned.

Match each goal with one or more of the measures of success that you defined in Assignment 1.

Reading

How To Do What You Love, essay by Paul Graham: <http://www.paulgraham.com/love.html>

Monday, September 26

Session 4: Common Problems People Face in Achieving their Goals

Review your goals assignment with your group before submitting.

- Personal: Motivation, doubting the worthiness of the goal, internal conflict between different priorities
- Societal: Family disapproval, feeling peer pressure to do something else
- Systematic: you discover new information about “how things work” that makes your goal much harder to reach, requires you to reframe your goal

Misaligned expectations and outcomes

What happens if you want to do something that’s different from a traditional path?

--facing problems with legitimacy and self-doubt?

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you’re facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Monday, October 3

Session 5: Transforming Your Approach: Trying On Different Frameworks

Moving from short-term thinking to long-term thinking

- Rather than evaluating an option as “What is this going to get me immediately?”, think about “What environments, people, or potential opportunities would this expose me to?”
- Not going down the path of doing something you dislike because it’s the “safe option”
- Going with the right option, not immediately going to the safe option, Calculating what is a risk worth taking
- Being able to reassess a situation, sometime walking away from a loss
- Doing what you to expose yourself to opportunities in areas that you like

Srikumar Rao, Leading at Google

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u20vVbhpM50> (40 min)

Class Activity: Pair up with people and discuss the biggest challenges you face in achieving your goals, identify the assumptions that those challenges rest upon, and brainstorm new frameworks for achieving those goals.

Reading

Mental Models Article by Srikumar Rao: <http://www.successmagazine.com/are-you-ready-to-succeed/PARAMS/article/783>

Mental Models Assignment (due Oct 10)

1 page. Think of mental models that you have and come up with at least 2 other ways of thinking of the same circumstance that you think are possible and helpful.

Reading

Short article on creating opportunities: <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-search/career-assessment/create-opportunities/article.aspx>

Monday, October 10

Session 6: Brainstorming Possibilities and Creating Opportunities

Creating opportunities for yourself when you find that the available set of options is not what you want

Set-up of scenarios—what do you do?

-Former CEO of Dreyer's ice cream, Gary Rogers, on Creating Opportunities

-Can't find a job

Opportunity Assignment (due Oct 17)

Think about an opportunity that you'd like to create for yourself. This can be anything that you would like to do that someone else didn't write up the description for. Write out the steps you would take to create this opportunity, the likely challenges you are to face, and how you would overcome those challenges.

Reading:

Po Bronsen <http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/66/mylife.html?page=0%2C4>

"The Tyranny of Choice," a Scientific American Article:

www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bschwar1/Sci.Amer.pdf

Note that the first page of the article PDF is blank, so you must scroll down to see the article.

Monday, October 17

Session 7: Making Decisions, Dealing with Too Many Choices, Being Willing to Try and Risk Failing

What do you do when you're paralyzed by choice?

Barry Schwartz on the Paradox of Choice: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VO6XEQIsCoM> (20 min)

Stuck in a rut—can't decide

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you're facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Monday, October 24

Session 8: Navigating through uncertainty, Dealing with Ambiguity

How to make you become more comfortable with uncertain situations, practicing dealing with ambiguity

Making the ephemeral concrete

Discussion of the most uncertain aspects of situations

As students, we're trained to follow directions. What happens when there are no directions? When we have to decide what the direction is?

Building an infrastructure, structure, and framework from scratch

Class Exercise:

You're responsible for self-organizing and creating a lecture on how to deal with ambiguity

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you're facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Reading:

Giving Constructive Feedback: <http://www.littlethingsmatter.com/blog/2010/06/23/five-steps-to-constructive-feedback/>

Monday, October 31

Session 9: Understanding your impact on others and gathering feedback

Perceptions exercise

Getting and giving feedback

Clips from Marshall Goldsmith, Leading@Google, Gathering feedback from others:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WBeGAAYWg8>

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you're facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Monday, November 7

Session 10: Improving your effectiveness with others

How to become more effective in your relationships with other people, having the impact you want

Class Exercises

Being direct, but being nice

Roleplaying—conflict resolutions

Roleplaying situations:

Things aren't going as you planned in with another person or with a group of people

(e.g. with your roommate, with your boss, with your friend, with your significant other, etc)

- you think they did something wrong
- they think you did something wrong
- the group is going in a direction you don't believe in, you feel a loss of control

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you're facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Monday, November 14

Session 11: Motivation

- What motivates people?
- How do you stay motivated?
- Constructing the best environments that will be most conducive to what you want to achieve
- Not just a matter of sheer willpower

Daniel Pink on the surprising science of motivation

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrkrvAUbU9Y&feature=relmfu> (18 min)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc&feature=related> (11 min)

Homework

Continue working toward goals, journal about the challenges you're facing and brainstorm solutions (this is not submitted, but instead for your personal use and to provide material for your presentation on Nov 21)

Monday, November 21

Session 12: Class Presentations on Your Progress on Your Goals

Class presentation on what you've done with your goals this semester and what you intend to do to achieve them, including the structure that you have set up to ensure you do them even after the class has ended.

Final Reaction Paper (due Nov 28)

2 pages

What you learned from the class, what were the highlights for you, what could be improved upon, what will you take away from this course and continue to implement?

Monday, November 28

Session 13: What's next?

Soliciting feedback from others to improve

Re-visiting what goals you set, reassessing how well those goals match your prioritization of values, Maintain the right environments for your success

Maintaining a balance

Creating a support network

About the Facilitator



Reeta Banerjee

UC Berkeley student

Business, Economics, & Psychology Major

I am passionate about bringing out the potential in people, and enabling smart students like yourself to achieve what they set out to do. Feeling many of the common obstacles that smart students face as I was going through college, I felt a great need for a more structured approach and community to support self-development. This class is intended to serve that purpose. I hope to bring more attention to what I see as the most important topic facing college students and many others: what do I want to do and how do I accomplish it?

Previously, I worked for nine months at a social gaming company called Zynga, where I studied the training needs of managers within the company. Over the course of my time there, I interviewed more than twenty key leaders in the organization, including the COO, CFO, SVP, Directors, and Team Leads. I found that many of the common issues that managers face reflect the challenges that students face: dealing with ambiguity, transitioning between roles, clarifying responsibilities, and becoming more effective in interacting with other people. It made sense to me that some of these topics could be taught and considered earlier on, when we're students rather than when we're on the job.

For two years, I was a teaching assistant for an entrepreneurship class, in which entrepreneurs came to speak about their experiences. I had the opportunity to hear from more than 30 entrepreneurs and VC's in industries such as high tech, biotech, consumer goods, and the social sector. I also worked with the professor of that course on concepting a book on how to pursue your passions practically in an entrepreneurial context. We analyzed interviews with entrepreneurs to assess the common themes in the research. From these experiences, I realized how relevant the entrepreneurial mindset is to students' lives and how beneficial it is to practice. Skills such as identifying opportunities, creating opportunities, and taking the initiative are hugely important in your personal and professional success.

Enough about me already—This course is about you! I hope you enjoy and benefit from this class. I spent most of my time in college caught somewhere between confusion and disappointment in the lack of preparation school provides for the “real world.” This class is intended to alleviate some of that for many of you. Feel free to approach me with any questions, comments, or suggestions!