Mindful Leadership
388 and 388N Commerce
Fall 2004

“Innovation is fostered by information gathered from new connections; from insights gained by journeys into other disciples or places; from active, collegial networks and fluid, open boundaries.”

Margaret Wheatley

Throughout our careers and in life we are called to lead. Many of us have little formal education in the skills of attention, concentration, listening and empathy that are necessary in the development of authentic leadership. Globalization, advances in communication and technology have changed the way we experience the world. These changes present new challenges for both individuals and institutions. Our new world is full of distractions; we are pulled in many directions. What is needed is the diligence to discern various types of information and make wise decisions, balancing intellect with intelligence.

Mindful leadership is a course where we are learning in community to be authentic, open, developing insight, clear-headedness and compassion through the practice of mindfulness (inquiring awareness) and developing a learning community through honest conversations & the practice of dialogue. Exploring mindfulness through the various academic disciplines and how it relates to being a leader will give us insight to the possibilities for the future of business. Poet David Whyte wrote, “The twenty-first century will be anything but business as usual.” Let’s begin a conversation in higher education where mindfulness and compassion are in the forefront of our deepest understanding of what it means to be leader in today’s world.

Course Description

This interdisciplinary course, for undergraduates of any discipline, opens the doors for students to explore and learn ways to create balance, build integrity and act from compassion in their roles as future business leaders in the for-profit and non-profit sectors. Drawing from science, religion, business, medicine and the arts this course will give students an overview of current research and literature in the areas of emotional intelligence, psychoneuroimmunology, positive psychology, mindfulness, compassion, aesthetics, systems theory and provide links to the skills of self-mastery that enhance mindful leadership as well as give meaning to the possibilities that exist to create a compassionate and sustainable society.

This course will emphasis the personal and professional development of students and ways they can effectively begin to contribute to an organization (be a leader at any level) as well as achieve personal fulfillment. The purpose of the class is to cultivate
mindfulness or inquiring awareness in students, training the mind to be effective. Students will be exposed to information and exercises to increase their capacity to listen deeply, demonstrate mutual respect, develop a sense of timing in group participation and be open to new emerging thought.

Using conversation & dialogue in class, students will be exposed to the benefits of mindfulness in real-time. Students will be given assignments and situations where they can explore the effectiveness of mindfulness in transforming difficult situations or relationships, look at ways to mediate differences among others, handle work conflict with compassion, support others to be effective and become increasingly aware of their own and others assumptions, beliefs or frame of references and have awareness of their actions and resulting effects.

**Pedagogy**

This course uses integrated education methods. In this framework there is an open and continual loop between teaching and learning activities, learning goals, feedback and assessment. Based on the principles of mindfulness and practices of emotional intelligence, the class offers a path of effective and compassionate pedagogy that is student centered and based on creating significant learning. This means interactive lectures and small group discussion, case studies, conversation & dialogue and other learning activities, such as contemplative or creative exercises in class. There is an emphasis on collaborative learning, skill building and knowledge creation in addition to fostering students to make interdisciplinary connections and do interdisciplinary work. There will also be an emphasis placed on finding our innate sense of joy and play as we engage new concepts and materials.

“For significant learning to occur there must be a change. And significant learning requires the change to be ‘lasting’ and ‘important’ in terms of the learner’s life.”

(Dee Fink)

**Instructor’s Statement on Mindful Learning:**

**The Radical Act of Simply Paying Attention**

As a sociologist, health educator, counselor and artist, I have observed how simply paying attention can create tremendous shift towards authentic living, often characterized as fully expressive, dynamic, and free: having a savoring contentment with each moment. The difficulty has been we are living in a culture which has a pervasive push towards distraction which can make it challenging for individuals to create for themselves the opportunity for the diligence required to refine attention. The structure of this class gives you the opportunity.

Learning strategies will be included that allow students to challenge themselves to explore inner resources that provide true freedom and personal power which is the essence of mindful learning. Honoring the human value of developing a good heart to
promote genuine harmony for all of us begins with self. Excavating personal compassion requires introspection and reflection. Creating a learning community that is supportive, fosters reflection and asks questions through the practice of conversation and dialogue will allow us to get to the heart of mindfulness as conversations deepen.

Paying attention means listening deeply to ourselves (our thoughts, feelings, emotions and tendencies) as well as to others. “In listening deeply to others and taking in their meaning we choose the risk of being changed by what we hear. In a sense listening is a radical act. It requires humility, softening our certainties, allowing ourselves to learn and change in the company of one another.” (Brown and Bennett on Dialogue) You may notice that silence in the group that at one time seemed uncomfortable now holds new meaning and makes room for clear insight or new thinking. Deep attention requires compassion for self and others.

Change is the nature of things and of people. Big changes begin with subtle awareness. My hope is that you will participate and experience a profound change in the way you see the world and how the world sees you. It is only through this type a change that you can come to own your innate power and in partnership create a harmonious personal and professional life.

The student’s challenge
It is up to you how you will use the class and what level of desire, intention and will you demonstrate to know yourself. You will get what you put into the class. You will need to bring with you a spirit of inquiry, being open to explore new thinking, ask questions that come from a place of true curiosity and wondering. This will aid you in understanding your underlying assumptions and beliefs so you can come to a place of choice and conscious creation. Bringing along a sense of humor will be an honored companion. This is a tremendous opportunity. I encourage you to find the motivation and wisdom to use this time wisely. Investigating and training the mind to culture a clear awareness will be the cornerstone of this class. You must be ready and willing to learn through experience and interaction, not simply the memorization of theory or facts. If you are not, this is not the class for you. If you are ready, then make a commitment to do the work and experience the power of being a mindful learner. A mindful learner is the necessary component of being a mindful leader. I have met many people who profess a great desire and envy to have the opportunity to do what we will be doing in this class. The truth is many people would not ever actually accept the opportunity. The reason being that the exploration itself requires a kind of dedication, which most people lack. It seems easier to stay in the world of distraction. This type of embodied learning requires a compassionate discipline.

To support your efforts, you will be asked to make your life a priority in partnership with others in the class. As you progress in the class you will discover a level of ease and freedom that will support your commitment as well as surprise you! Leaving the world of distractions brings gifts allowing you greater freedom to create the life and work you are meant to be living. As you step into your authentic life you understand that pain is a condition of life and your values of inner freedom, equanimity and community allow you
the full expression of suffering as well as joy. Coming to know yourself fully you also come understand the absolute worth of every human being. Claiming your creative power, understanding our interdependency and giving meaning to your work in business to go beyond and find new areas, ideas and practices that work to create a shift in business that is sustainable and serves all. This is the heart of mindful leadership – compassionate awareness!

“We must help students to find the meaning in daily life, to feel connected to other individuals and to their community—past, present and future; and to feel responsible for the consequences of their actions. We must help them to achieve the state of flow—the balance between skills and challenges—which motivates individuals to return to a pursuit time and again. Plato understood this, 2500 years ago when he stated, “Through education we need to help students find pleasure in what they have to learn.” (Howard Gardner, An Education for the Future)

**Course Objectives:**

- Identify the major theme of ‘Mindfulness’ and ‘Compassion’ taken from various points of view and disciplines. Explain how they relate to both your personal and professional development as in relates to the business world. (Construct meaning from knowledge)

- Enhance self-awareness by developing an understanding of the mind and its innate resources for individual performance and productivity. (Balance intellect with intelligence)

- Increase skills in self-management (relaxation, awareness, perceiving, listening & empathy) Develop a plan to increase social awareness skills such as appreciation, empathy and service to minimize the effects of stress and pressure, maintain a greater degree of health and wellness, manage change and communicate effectively & compassionately. (Reach beyond what is known through experimentation and inquiry)

- Explore your role in community and belonging through life values, ethics, personal responsibility and commitment. Increase skills in relationship management such as active listening, dialogue, play, inspiration, team-learning and collaboration. (Recognize connections and interrelationships, Achieve mutual goals through collaboration)

**Required Course Materials:**

*Primal Leadership* by Daniel Goleman

*The Art of Possibility* by Rosamund & Ben Zander

*Leadership and the New Science* by Margaret J Wheatley

*Selected Articles on Tool-kit*

**Additional Recommended Reading:**
Class Structure, Times and Locations:

Class Size: 54 (27 commerce and 27 students from all majors and disciplines at the University)

Class Structure: Meet twice weekly. Large group for 2-hour class and in a small group of 14 for 1-hour.

Large Lecture
The format will include be the following:
Mindfulness exercises: silence, breathing, stretching & partner check in
Conversation, discussion & dialogue: Learning how to learn-creating new thought
Activity or storytelling & student sharing: Work in pairs to review, revise & reflect

    Time: Wednesdays, 5:00 – 6:40 p.m.
    Location: McIntire, Room 134

Small Lecture (4 Sections)
The format of the small class will include:
Mindfulness exercises: silence, breathing, stretching, partner check-in
Experiential Learning: Skill development exercises
Deep listening: All sessions will hone and harness the skills of being a deep listener

    Time: Monday and Thursdays 3-3:50 pm. and 4-4:50 pm
    Location: IRC Classroom, Mary Munford House

Grading and Class requirements:

Grading:
Completion and excellence of all assignments and full attendance to all classes expected.
1. Attitude and Contribution to others learning through discussion, drawing peers into conversation, expressing friendly opposition, avoid monopolizing the conversation, use of discussion group on tool-kit, welcoming and greeting each other and guests, as well as appreciating - 20%
2. Reflective Writings on reading, lectures and activities, practical application in your life, contemplative practices and assignments as given - 20%
3. Research Project – 20%
4. Learning team - 10%

Exams and quizzes:
There is a mid-term and final exam. They will be essay questions and short answer. 30%

Attendance:
Attendance is required. Missing class could result in poor grade or failure.

Strategies:
A large part of the class will be experiential, practicing the introspective & reflective skills of mindfulness to enhance emotional intelligence. These skills include breathing, stretching, relaxation, awareness and sensing, reflection, empathy, listening and team learning through conversation & dialogue. Emphasis will be given to the practical application of skills to enhance self-mastery and provide opportunities to experience an environment in which ethics and values are considered in leadership and business situations with inquiring awareness. Treating the class as a real-time process provides the student with an environment that supports them becoming increasingly ‘present-centered’ giving them the opportunity to experience the ‘realistic’ practice of making decisions and problem solving from perhaps a new and different vantage point. The following teaching strategies will be used.

Reflective Writing
This is to introduce you to the process of in-depth writing in a reflective manner and a place to facilitate greater personal and relevant understanding. Leader as reflective practitioner invites truthfulness through self-assessment and honest self expression. Through the practice of reflection the maturity of understanding your self increases your ability to have true humility and invites the self-efficacy that is needed to allow you to claim your place in the world graciously. (Example on tool-kit)

1. Clearly written or typed
2. Dates on page
3. 2 entries a week
4. Quality of writing includes originality that is showing us you have read and, thought about the materials, lectures and exercises. In-depth thinking, connecting topics with other life events or with other fields of study will be expected. What are you learning? How has this changed you? What value does in have in work and in life? How do you learn best? What else do you need to learn?
5. Length should be a 2-4 pages for each of the entries.
6. Due in large class. Oct 13 and Dec1

Introspection Practice
You will be introduced to a variety of introspective practices and will be asked to commit to a minimum of 20 minutes a day to an introspective practice for a minimum of five days a week. Introspection takes a sincere desire and commitment and is important to the development of self-awareness skills of emotional intelligence. Choose an introspective practice to quiet the mind of distraction and calm the body of stress. Introspection is used to cultivate a personal capacity for awareness, deep concentration and insight. Sitting quietly allows us the understanding that thoughts and emotions are fleeting.

Training our minds from thoughts of past experiences and from any anticipation of the future allows one to be in the moment. Slowly you begin to experience the space between past and future. That space is the present moment. Culturing being ‘present-centered’ is cornerstone to this class. It is from this space that we experience clear consciousness: a profound clarity of mind. Leaders as introspective practitioner increases your ability to be fully ‘present-centered’ in real-time. This deepening of your ability to give full attention will open up surprising opportunities for change to occur for yourself and for the world. (See detailed handout on introspection practice)

**Conversation & The Practice of Dialogue**

In the large class room we will become a learning community and practice the art of conversation & dialogue. It is important that as a group we think of each other as “colleagues” and friends on a mutual quest for deeper understanding and inquiry. We will begin the first half of the semester in a circle conversation and as our skills of awareness are being developed the group may move deeper into the process of a true dialogue. In all of life we are in relationship. How we converse in our daily life is important as each moment brings forward the next, regardless if you are conscious of this or not. To be fully present in the moment is to beware of the ‘conversation’ we are having in relationship to that moment. To give our full attention is powerful. Conversation requires us to be self-aware, listening not only to others but having an awareness of our own thoughts, emotions, and feeling and body sensations. Becoming the witness requires a deep inner stillness, compassion and non-judgmental attitude. William James once said: “Genius is simply the ability to see the world from a different perspective.” It all becomes interesting and with curiosity we begin to see clearly, broaden our vision opening ourselves up to new possibilities. The Institute for Research on Learning has found that knowledge creation is primarily a social rather than an individual process. People learn together in conversation as they work and practice together.

As our skills develop, our conversations may deepen bringing us into a dialogue. “Dialogue is a way of helping people to see the representative and participatory nature of thoughts and...to become more sensitive to and make it safe to acknowledge the incoherence in our thoughts. In dialogue people become observers of their thinking.” The main point of dialogue is not to strive for some abstract idea or solution. It is rather for all participates to work together to unravel the incoherence. To be sensitive to the ways we are incoherent. “Incoherence may be indicated by the contradictions and confusion but more basically it is seen as by the fact that our thinking is producing consequence that we don’t really want.” (Senge, The Fifth Discipline) Lastly, dialogue is playful. It requires a willingness to relax and to play with new ideas, by examine them and testing them. Again the artist speaks “a symphony is about getting all of the voices sounding together, which
is what leadership is about. It is not winning or losing—but about sounding together,” Ben Zander, conductor. In this class we will come together in conversation and dialogue to explore and give meaning to the connections we encounter as we introduce mindfulness and compassion into our lives and to the future of business “Transformational management practices for the 21st century identify dialogue as a key approach for organizational communities to not only resolve strategic dilemmas but open themselves up to new possibilities.” (Brown & Bennett) (See detailed handout on Conversation & the Practice of Dialogue)

Research Notebook & Paper
The research will involve the study of an area of business/career/leadership you want to explore deeper as it relates to an aspect of mindfulness in the for-profit or non-profit world. Leader as researcher explores drawing connections from various sources and disciplines to gain a deeper understanding and create personal meaning not only for oneself but for the reader. Think about what is calling you to explore deeper, follow the nudging. Be open to explore reading additional books, visiting exhibits and exploring the relationship to current news events. Include 2 interviews with a business leaders (profit or non-profit) from the area you have chosen. Spend 2 weeks collecting a bibliography of possible sources, 2 weeks surveying the top 10, and 2 weeks compiling an 8–10 page paper on your findings. Each week your research notes should be extensive and demonstrate how you are going to approach your paper. Research Notebooks & Papers are due November 24. (See example on tool-kit)

The research notebook will document your weekly searches for materials, your findings, and your proposal for future work. Your research notebook needs a title page, table of contents, and the results of each week’s research. The research notebook is for you to learn to be a creative researcher. It represents the results of your PROCESS of finding good material about your topic. The goal is to learn to find good, meaningful, creative sources and material – not a good paper and bibliography, although that is important and will naturally occur in the process.

Peer review – Have peer from our class write a reaction statement to your work (notebook & paper) at least one week before due date. Include this reaction paper when turning in the project. This is an opportunity to share your work as well as learn from your classmates. Peer reviews are to be constructive feedback, suggesting further resources, areas of study or new directions.

Learning Teams
Each student will be assigned a learning team outside of class that will foster collaboration and allow students to further practice skills through exploring various group relaxation exercises, contemplative practices, peer conversation (reflection and story telling). Students will be given assignments that promote team-learning, collaboration and decision-making. Each member will take a turn leading the group. The group will be a supportive environment where students can seek feedback and suggestions to increase their effectiveness at becoming aware of they behavior and the effect it has on others. Leader as team player allows you to explore the role as mentor demonstrating effective encouragement and motivation to your classmates. Each learning team will develop and
complete 2 team assessments. Due on Oct 6 and Nov 17. Your grade will be reflected from these assessments.

**Fall Semester 2004**

**Lecture Class 1**  **Wednesday, Sept 1**

*Introduction to class and to each other:* overview of class syllabus including in-depth discussion of class format, teaching methods and expectations.

**Small Class**  **Thursday, Sept 2 & Monday, Sept 6**  
Awareness Exercises

*Poetry Walk- Find the ‘Manifesto’*
*Research Agnes Denes*

**Lecture Class 2**  **Wednesday, Sept 8**

*Class Overview* – Introduction to Emotional Intelligence and course concepts

**Small Class**  **Thursday, Sept 9 & Monday, Sept 13**  
*Perceiving Exercise*
*Stress as a choice*

**Lecture Class 3**  **Wednesday, Sept 15**

*Compassion*

Adam Engle, Director
Mind Life Institute
http://www.mindandlife.org/

**Small Class**  **Thursday, Sept 16 & Monday, Sept 20**  
Compassion Exercise
*Cultivating Equanimity – Assumption of responsibility and respect for humanity*

**Lecture Class 4**  **Wednesday, Sept 22**

*Psychoneuroimmunology*

Dr. Julie Connelly

**Small Class**  **Thursday Sept 23& Monday, Sept 27**  
Empathy exercise
Lecture Class  5  Wednesday, Sept 29  
*Mindfulness*  
Dr. Matt Goodman, UVa Hospital  

Small Class  Thursday, Sept 30 & Monday, Oct 4  
Mindfulness Relaxation Exercises– (Dress to stretch)  

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Lecture Class  6  Wednesday, Oct 6  

*FLOW*  
Jeffrey Walker, McIntire Alum  
Managing Partner of JP Morgan Partners  

Small Class  FALL BREAK – no class  
Start your research  
Personal Strengths Exercise  
Cultivating positive traits  

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Lecture Class  7  Wednesday, Oct 13  

*Personal Visioning (Positive Psychology)*  

Small Class  Thursday, Oct 14 & Monday Oct 18  
Shared Vision Exercise -Working in community & partnership  

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Lecture Class  8  Wednesday, Oct 20  

*Mid-Term Exam*  

Small Class  Thursday, Oct 21 & Monday, Oct 25  
Asking Big Picture – Big Questions  

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Lecture Class  9  Wednesday, Oct 27  

Mary Ann Leeper, COO  
Female Health Company
Small Class Thursday, & Monday, “Pay it forward” exercise Making a contribution to your community

Lecture Class 10 Wednesday, November 3

Systems Theory
Betsy Dalgliesh
Corporate Consultant

Small Class Thursday, Nov 4 & Monday, Nov 8 Scenario Planning Exercise Taking responsible for your future with focus and intention

Lecture Class 11 Wednesday, Nov 10

Case Study
Tom Bateman, McIntire faculty

Small Class Thursday, Nov 11 & Monday, Nov 12 VOTE Story Telling Exercise

Lecture Class 12 Wednesday, Nov 17

Jim Quarles
http://www.harvestshelter.org/

Small Class Thursday, & Monday, Appreciation Exercises

Lecture Class 13 Wednesday, Nov 24

No Class-Take Home assignment
Thursday, Nov 25 & Monday Nov 29 – No class Thanksgiving
Take Home Gratitude Exercise

Lecture Class 14      Wednesday, Dec 1

   Play-Guest TBA

Small Class  Thursday, Dec 2 & Monday, Dec 6
Group Closure Exercise

Lecture Class 15      Wednesday, Dec 8

Honoring class
Wrap up/review/evaluations

Final Exam        Wednesday, Dec 15