

**University of Southern California  
Marshall School of Business**

**MOR-598: Leading with Mindfulness and Compassion**

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Spring 2016

1<sup>st</sup> section: January 13 to March 2, 2016, Wednesdays, 6:30pm – 9:30pm, ACC 303

2<sup>nd</sup> section: March 7 to April 25, 2016, Mondays, 6:30pm - 9:30pm, Hoffman 421

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This 1.5 unit course explores mindfulness (non-judgmental awareness) and compassion and their relationship to leadership. While leaders can view challenges and opportunities through many different perspectives, this course helps students learn another perspective based on mindfulness and compassion. Topics include how mindfulness enhances clarity in purpose and productivity in leaders and the connection between mindfulness and compassion. To have a direct experience of mindfulness and compassion, students will engage in a practical application of these perspectives through exercises from evidence-based programs developed in medical research. These programs use mindfulness meditation as a centerpiece and are currently being used by business and governments internationally to develop better leaders.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how mindfulness enhances clarity in purpose and productivity in leaders
2. Identify, describe and apply principles and practices of mindful and compassionate leadership
3. Explain and practice meditation techniques developed in evidence-based programs in medical research

**COURSE MATERIALS**

*Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom*, Rick Hanson, New Harbinger Publications; 1st edition (November 1, 2009), ISBN-13: 978-1572246959.

**COURSE ACTIVITIES**

**In-Class Participation:** Given the experiential nature of what and how we will be learning in this class, engaged participation in all of the classroom activities will be essential to demonstrating your learning.

**Home Practice:** Given that mindfulness and compassion can only be learned with practice, participants will engage in a daily home practice throughout the half semester. Each class session will be partly devoted to providing instructions on this daily practice and answering the various questions that arise from this practice.

**Reflection Papers:** You will be expected to submit 3 reflection papers on the dates that will be provided. Each paper should be 850-1000 words long and should report something specific and concrete that you tried during your home practice during the prior weeks. Discuss these experiences in relationship to the reading and classroom activities.

## **EVALUATIONS**

Participants will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. The determination of whether credit is assigned will be based on the evaluation criteria found in Appendix A.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu>

describes reporting options and other resources.

### **Support Systems**

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs [www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

### **Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

## **SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1**

**Topic for interactive discussion:** What is mindfulness? How can mindfulness enhance clarity in purpose and productivity? What is compassion? Introduction to the practice of mindfulness.

**Reading:** Hanson Chapter 1-3

### **Week 2**

**Topic:** Mindfulness of the body and the brain science of mindfulness.

**Reading:** Hanson - Chapter 4-7

**Guest Speaker** - David Black, PhD, Department of Preventative Medicine, USC, and Editor-in-Chief, Mindfulness Research Monthly

### **Week 3**

**Topic for interactive discussion:** Using Mindfulness to Avoid Leadership Burnout – Part 1, Mindfulness of emotions

**Reading:** Hanson - Chapter 5

### **Week 4**

**Topic for interactive discussion:** Using Mindfulness to Avoid Leadership Burnout – Part 2, Mindfulness of thinking and introduction of compassion

**Reading:** Hanson - Chapter 11-13

### **Week 5**

**Topic:** Compassion with an emphasis on self-compassion

**Reading:** Hanson - Chapter 8-10

**Guest Speaker** - Beth Sternlieb - Senior Teacher of the Mindful Self-Compassion Class at InsightLA.org

### **Week 6**

**Topic:** Mindfulness conflict resolution – Part 1, Introduction to compassion for others practice

### **Week 7**

**Topic for interactive discussion:** Mindfulness conflict resolution – Part 2 and a mindful approach to dealing with difficult people

### **Week 8**

**Topic for interactive discussion:** Reflection and practice insights – sharing what we've learned

Summary and conclusion, how what we've learned compares and contrasts with current leadership theories (traits, skills, behaviors, etc.).

## APPENDIX A

<b>MOR-598: Leading with Mindfulness and Compassion Evaluation Criteria</b>		
	<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>In-Class Participation</b>	Student actively participates in class discussions.	5
	Student shares personal perspective and experience with classmates in a whole class or small group format each week	5
	Student asks clarifying questions of instructor and classmates frequently	10
<b>Out-of-Class Practice</b>	Student practices meditation daily for 15-20 minutes (evidenced by logging of daily meditation practice - sent weekly.)	30
	Student reports experiences of such practice through check-ins at each class meeting.	5
<b>1st Reflection Paper</b>	Submitted on time with a 850-1000 word length	5
	Clearly and thoughtfully answers the reflection questions given the week before this paper is due.	10
<b>2nd Reflection Paper</b>	Submitted on time with a 850-1000 word length	5
	Clearly and thoughtfully answers the reflection questions given the week before this paper is due.	10
<b>3rd Reflection Paper</b>	Submitted on time with a 850-1000 word length	5
	Clearly and thoughtfully answers the reflection questions given the week before this paper is due.	10
	<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Passing Points for course credit</b>	<b>75+</b>
	<b>Insufficient contribution - no credit</b>	<b>&lt;75</b>