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**To: Students enrolled in HUS 530 Creating New Human Services Organizations**

January 15, 2016

**Subject: Greeting Letter**

Dear Students,

Welcome to our class. Saint Leo University has hired me to help you work your way through this course. I look forward to working with you. While this will be my first time teaching HUS 530, since 2000 I have taught over 100 courses, with about 40 titles. I understand there will be ten students in our class.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce you to the instructor team and provide you with some other information that you may need.

I am listed as the instructor, and I am a part-time employee of Saint Leo. My contact information is:

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M. Louise Walters will be working with us as a guest speaker. She is an expert on management of nonprofit organizations, and she has three decades of experience. She is completing her doctorate in organizational leadership with a specialty in nonprofit organizations. She also has deep experience in the for-profit corporate world.

**SCHEDULE.**

We will be working together for eight weeks from Friday, January 15 to Friday, March 4. We will be meeting from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

## **WHY IS THIS COURSE INCLUDED IN YOUR CURRICULUM?**

I suppose there are several reasons. If we assume that you will be working in human services for, say, the next four decades, it seems logical that part of your time will be spent working for existing organizations, and part of that time will be spent working for new organizations. So the University wants you to be prepared to establish new human services organizations.

Something similar happened to me. My career began in a government laboratory. Then my laboratory was shut down, and I lost my job. So I moved to a series of existing private companies. Later, I worked for two startup companies for eight years. So my career has included work for existing organizations and work for new organizations.

Louise's career took a similar path. She worked for existing nonprofit organizations (chambers of commerce, a museum, economic development agencies). But she also started new organizations (a marketing and communications firm, an association management firm, an education foundation, and an economic development nonprofit agency).

## **BACKGROUNDS.**

Why did Saint Leo select me to be your instructor for this course? I think there are a couple of reasons. First, I have lots of experience in entrepreneurship – starting new businesses. I worked for eight years for two startup companies. I have mentored over 100 entrepreneurs seeking to start businesses. I also worked as an intrapreneur (yes, you read it correctly) – a person who helps existing organizations find new lines of work. I, too, have professional experience managing a nonprofit organization (I was Executive Director of a trade association), but most of my nonprofit experience has been as a volunteer (e.g., with environmental organizations).

Louise founded her company, The Leadership Center, three decades ago. Her company helps nonprofit organizations (mostly trade associations and professional societies) solve many kinds of management problems. Louise has also helped nonprofit organizations by working as a volunteer. For example, her Rotary Club in South Dakota owned and maintained Storybook Island, a very nice theme park/ playground for local children which served the dual purpose as a fundraising operation.

Like you, Louise, is a college student. She has been a full time student for ten years. Since 2008, she has completed an AAS and BS in Legal Studies, MS in Management, and most of a PhD in Organizational Leadership. She hopes to complete her doctorate by mid-2016. Her dissertation research examines the relationship between the nonprofit CEO (Executive Director or the head staff person) and the Chair of the Board (the head volunteer) and organizational impacts.

A couple other things may be of interest. I went to school for 25 years. My 13 years of college education include:

- BS Civil Engineering, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, 1970

- MS Environmental Engineering, Northeastern University, Boston, 1974
- Juris Doctor, Suffolk Law School, Boston, 1978
- MS Management, Pepperdine University, Los Angeles, 1998

All of my graduate work was completed on evenings or weekends. Both Louise and I were nontraditional students just like you.

I try to work full time as a college instructor. Since 2000, I have taught over 100 courses, with about 40 titles, including topics in business, management, law, ethics, math, environmental science, and engineering. My courses have included graduate level courses and undergraduate level courses. I have taught at nine universities (one as a full-time professor and the rest as an adjunct professor), including five in Savannah (as an adjunct professor).

- For Saint Leo University, I have taught undergraduate Business Law II. I am teaching undergraduate Business Law I during this term on Monday evenings.
- For Webster University (Fort Stewart and Hunter AAF campuses), I teach graduate courses in ethics, law, and management.
- For Savannah Tech, I have taught math courses for GED students and people in industry.
- For Embry Riddle Aeronautical University (Pooler campus), I taught undergraduate Business Law.
- For Armstrong (Savannah campus and Liberty campus), I have taught in the graduate program in Professional Communications and Leadership (courses in Management of Nonprofit Organizations, American Law, and Business Ethics), the Political Science and Criminal Justice Department (Ethics in Criminal Justice and Ethics in Government), and the Math Department (Developmental Math).

### **TOUGH BACKGROUNDS; RECIPIENTS OF SERVICES.**

Louise and I grew up in families that knew hard times. None of our four parents graduated from college. I was born prematurely with a few birth defects. I became seriously ill when I was four years old, and my parents had to borrow money to pay for the surgery that saved my life. My parents lost every cent they had in a failed Buick dealership in 1952. We had serious money problems for the next eight years. In about 1960, my parents were fortunate to change to better paying jobs. We did not have many money problems after that. But my father never recovered from professional setbacks during the 1950s. He became an unhappy man and a heavy drinker. It was remarkable that he lived to age 83, when booze finally killed him. Fortunately, my mother was a loving, steady, intelligent person. She made the best of a bad situation, and she protected my sister, brother, and me from my troubled father. My mother had been born into a prosperous family. She was the only sibling who did not complete college, and she regretted it, because she could see the negative financial impact of weak education on our family. So she was determined to make it possible for all three children to attend college. Each of us graduated and entered the professions. My sister is a nuclear scientist, my brother is a lawyer, and I am an engineer/lawyer. None of us have experienced poverty during our adulthood.

My family was the beneficiary of a number of human services organizations. The excellent people at Children's Hospital in Washington, DC kept me alive more than once. I contracted scarlet fever when I was six years old, and the County Health Department put our family under quarantine for a week. For 12 years, my public school lunches cost only 35 cents, because there were large government subsidies. My public school system was excellent, partially because there were "impacted area" funds flowing in from the federal government. I was a Cub Scout, and they provided an excellent summer softball league. I was trained as a Roman Catholic for two years. The County Recreation Department provided good facilities and services; with their help, I have competed in 30 sports. The county's public libraries were good. A bunch of my neighbors got together, formed a nonprofit association, and built a community swimming pool.

Louise's father and mother came from farm country, so one possible career path was farming (corn and soybeans). Her dad was a great athlete, and he had visions of becoming a pro baseball player. However, as a US Marine in a bloody battle during the Korean war, he was shot in the knee, and that ended his plans for baseball greatness. It also ended his career path in farming. His young family went through financial hard times, moving from construction job to construction job, with dad working as a welder. Louise's family finally settled down in Pierre, the state capitol of South Dakota. Louise's father took a job as a manager of a state park. Her mother took an administrative job with state government. Finally, they achieved financial stability. But, like my father, professional disappointments turned her father into an unhappy man who was not easy to live with. Louise's mother, like mine, was a steady, loving, intelligent, supportive person who kept the family glued together.

Louise's family was the beneficiary of the efforts of several organizations. After being wounded in Korea, her father was cared for in a San Diego Navy hospital for a year. Because her father was a disabled veteran, he was looked after by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Late in his life, the VA housed and cared for him in an Alzheimer's facility. Louise attended Roman Catholic schools for most of her K-12 years. She was a Girl Scout. She was a good student and a good athlete. Her parents were active members of the local Catholic Church, and they were both donors to and beneficiaries of that organization. They lived along the Missouri River, and the government provided recreational facilities like boat launching ramps, swimming pools, parks, camping areas, etc.

## **DISABILITIES.**

There are many definitions of "disability." As a person gets older, these things seem to accumulate. Louise was clobbered in a bad car crash about 20 years ago. The resulting back and spine injuries ended her tournament tennis playing and skiing days and has substituted pain as a constant companion. I am somewhat dyslexic, which is a learning disability. I also have some back trouble. Fortunately, we have learned how to manage these disabilities, and they have not prevented us from having rewarding careers and nice personal lives.

## TEXTBOOKS.

The University has selected three textbooks for the course. Fortunately, they are not hard to read. You are required to read parts of the first three books. The fourth book is optional.

Scott, L. (2013). *From passion to execution: how to start and grow an effective nonprofit organization*. 20 Channel Center Street, Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
ISBN: 13 978-1-4354-6012-6 ISBN: 10 1-4354-6012-X also available by e-book.  
eISBN: 10 1-4354-6013-8

Levenson, Keohane, G. (2013). *Social entrepreneurship for the 21st century: innovation across the nonprofit, private, and public sectors*. P.O. Box 182605, Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill Education.  
ISBN: 978-0-07-180168-3

Entrepreneurs Press (2010). *Start your own business: the only book you'll ever need*. 5th edition, 2445 McCabe Way, Suite 400, Irvine, CA: Entrepreneur Media, Inc.  
ISBN: 13: 978-1-59918-387-9 ISBN: 10: 1-599918-387-0

Mycoskie, B. (2011). *Start something that matters*. 1745 Broadway 12-1, New York, New York: Random House. ISBN: 978 0-679-60352-8

## HOW THE COURSE WILL OPERATE.

The grade that you earn will be based on your:

- Writing assignments
- Oral presentations
- Class participation
- Attendance
- Final exam

You will be doing lots of reading; you will be completing six big homework assignments (Step 1 through Step 6) which will be due in Weeks 2 through 7. You will be completing two small writing assignments (due in Weeks 2 and 8). You will be doing six oral presentations. It is important that you not fall behind in the reading, writing assignments or presentations.

You should try to get into a “rhythm.” That includes a pattern of: read, discuss and write Step 1; read, discuss and write Step 2; etc. Here it is in more detail:

- Complete the reading assignment (see below) before the Week 1 class. Discuss the reading assignment during the Week 1 class. After completing the reading and participating in the Week 1 discussion, prepare the Step 1 writing assignment and oral

presentation. Submit the Step 1 writing assignment and oral presentation during Week 2 class.

- Complete the Week 2 reading assignment before the Week 2 class. Discuss the reading assignment during the Week 2 class session. After completing the reading assignment and the Week 2 class discussion, prepare the Step 2 writing assignment and oral presentation. Submit the Step 2 writing assignment and oral presentation during Week 3.
- Continue this cycle until Step 6 writing assignment and oral presentation are complete in Week 7.

### **ASSIGNMENT TO PREPARE FOR WEEK 1.**

Complete the following reading assignments in advance of Week 1. We will be discussing these materials during our Week 1 class, and that discussion will be more meaningful to you if you have completed the reading ahead of time. The writing assignment (Step 1) and oral presentation that you will be preparing for Week 2 will be based largely on these reading assignments:

Read this Greeting Letter. Come to class with any questions.

Read the Syllabus. Come to class with any questions.

Read the Agenda for Week 1

Read Scott Chapters 1- 4

Read Keohane Chapter 1-4

Read Start Your Own Business Chapters 1-3

You may want to prepare the following paper, which is due during Week 2:

Write a one-page, double spaced paper (about 300 words) that explains your plan to succeed in this course. Use the title *My Plan for the Course*. Answer the following questions in complete sentences using APA style formatting:

1. What are your plans and goals for the course?
2. What skills do you want to have when you complete the course?
3. What are you prepared to do to achieve your goals?
4. How much time do you plan to spend preparing for class?
5. What resources do you plan to use (library, Internet, instructor, classroom, other services provided by Saint Leo)?

You can earn up to 50 points on this assignment. Submit it during Week 2 class.

### **SOME ADVICE.**

In general, my history as an instructor indicates that students who keep pace with the class schedule (i.e., they complete the reading on schedule, come to class prepared to discuss the reading, write about what they have been reading and discussing, and provide effective oral presentations) tend to earn high grades and enjoy the course. Conversely, if students fall behind

the class schedule, they are not doing the reading, they are not ready for class discussions, they are not fulfilling their responsibility to contribute to the seminar, they submit weak writing assignments, they do not provide effective oral presentations, they do not enjoy the course, and they earn lower grades. You will be spending five hours per week in the classroom. You should plan to spend ten hours per week preparing for this course. To keep from falling behind schedule, you should put that “study time” on your calendar, just as you do for your class time.

### **OPINIONS.**

Some people believe that it is inappropriate for a college instructor to present opinions. The argument seems to be that instructors should only be presenting information. Frankly, that is not workable in a course on human services, because there is not complete agreement in society on what human services should be offered, how they should be provided, who should provide them, and who should pay for them. The atmosphere in our classroom will always be friendly, and you should not be shy about participating in class discussions and offering opinions. I will share my opinions with you, but I don't expect you to agree with me.

### **PROHIBITION REGARDING MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICES/ CELL PHONES.**

In the past year, I have become increasingly concerned that a significant number of students come to class, but they pay little attention and they do not participate in the seminar discussion. That is because they are looking down at the mobile devices/ cell phones on their desks or laps, and they are reading e-mails and communicating with their friends. **It is not acceptable for you to do that while our class is in session.** You need to know that there are 168 hours in a week. We will be spending about five hours of that time together in class (about three percent of your time). That means during each week you have 163 hours of time away from our classroom, and that will give you plenty of time to operate your mobile devices/ cell phones. The students and I will typically spend 10 hours preparing for each week of class. Thus, while you are in the classroom, I expect you to give your undivided attention to your classmates and me, and I want you to participate actively in the discussion. **Also, it is important that you turn off your mobile devices/ cell phones while you are in the classroom.**

### **WRITING.**

I have been a professional writer and editor since 1970. That includes scientific and engineering publications, legal documents, business documents, promotional documents, and others. In addition to grading papers, I try to edit them in order to help you improve your writing. Please view this course as a non-threatening opportunity to improve your writing skills. If you are not familiar with APA and other format guides, this class is also an opportunity for you to learn a format guide for writing your research papers.

### **SYLLABUS.**

I have prepared a Syllabus for the course. Please read it when you receive it and bring any questions to class on Week 1.

**AGENDAS.**

I e-mail agendas in advance of each week's class. Please read them before you come to class on Fridays. The agendas tend to be more current than the Syllabus, and they usually include more detail. If you find that the Syllabus and Agenda are inconsistent, use the Agenda.

**GUEST SPEAKERS.**

Saint Leo University believes that our course will be enriched if we bring in guest speakers. Do you know of local people who have created human services organizations? I am looking for your ideas and suggestions. In the typical case, the speaker will be in the classroom for an hour. I use a format that requires minimal preparation.

**WHEN TO CONTACT ME.**

If you have any questions, please call me. If you expect to miss class, send me an e-mail. If you have any problems that will cause you to be late on an assignment, please call me or send me an e-mail message. The best model for you to use is to believe that this college is your place of work, and that I am your boss. You need to keep your boss informed if you have a problem and can't come to work. You need to discuss it with your boss if you can't get your tasks done on schedule and you need extra time.

I am looking forward to a course filled with much participation, knowledge exchange, camaraderie and learning. We'll see you on January 15.

Sincerely,

*Bill Griffin*