The Virtuous Organization, the Cardinal Virtues, and Catholic Social Thought: Exploration and Discovery in a MBA Program

Dr. Kenneth S. Mias - Dominican College

The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, to propose a strategy to incorporate both Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles, and Catholic Virtues (CV) into a part-time adult MBA program in management; second, to share the initial results of incorporating the Cardinal Virtues into a graduate level course in Organizational Behavior (OB). This paper proposes that a graduate level program with a majority of students who are working professionals requires an andragogical approach incorporating exploration, and discovery. This approach also offers an opportunity for ongoing action and qualitative research.

The milieu of a small college MBA program

From its inception the MBA program at Dominican College has focused on a concentration in management with the primary goal to tightly integrate the various courses and management sub-disciplines into a coherent whole. This is reflected in a program designed with a 9 credit capstone experience. As with a number of other graduate level programs in the college, a required course in critical thinking has also been added. We believe this focus on integration as well as improved critical thinking skills provides a good opportunity to explore and discover CST and CV within the business environment that goes far beyond just one course in business ethics (which we currently have).

The MBA program at Dominican College caters to mostly working class professionals who are looking to advance their careers, or career changers who are looking for opportunities to leverage their past skills and experiences. Many of these working class professionals are front-line employees, first level supervisors, or team leaders.

Over the last decade, and certainly accelerated by the recent economic crisis, my colleagues and I have seen a steady deterioration in the work environment characterized by not only stress, doubt and uncertainty but also fear. It also appears that our students are increasingly sensing that something fundamental and profound is wrong in the economic and business environment. However, they are struggling to understand the nature and cause of these intuitive feelings. At the same time we must acknowledge the dominance of a secular culture, and the lack of integration amongst the various academic disciplines even in Catholic higher education. We must also acknowledge the existence of a wide diversity of beliefs and values within our adult student population and academic institutions, as well as a lack of depth and rigor in forming and articulating one’s belief and values. This begs the following question:

How to introduce and advocate CST and Catholic Virtues in such a milieu
We suggest that there are strategic and tactical answers to this question, but all are based on an underlying principle: the professor first and foremost as a Catholic witness. The mission, identity, goals and culture of a business school in a Catholic institution remain just that unless they are embodied in the Catholic business professor. The formation of a Catholic business professional can be influenced by the witness of competent and coherent Catholic professors and other Catholic professionals. In essence, this is nothing more than the “new evangelization” in the context of the business college milieu.

However, this also means accepting students where they are, accepting who they are, and accepting institutions where they are, yet not being afraid to use reason, logic, intellectual rigor and even properly applied confrontation in proposing what may seem to be radical business views.

Fr. Henri J. M. Nouwen speaks of this in the chapter “Reaching Out to Our Fellow Human Beings: From Hostility to Hospitality”.¹ He details a form of hospitality specifically between teachers and students as well as articulates the two components of hospitality, namely receptivity and confrontation. While being receptive to the other is a more obvious component of hospitality, it is only one side of hospitality:

“The other side, equally important, is confrontation. To be receptive to the stranger in no way implies that we have to become neutral “nobodies”. Real receptivity asks for confrontation because space can only be a welcoming space when there are clear boundaries, and boundaries are limits between which we define our own position” (p.98)

“Receptivity and confrontation are the two inseparable sides of Christian witness. They have to remain in careful balance. Receptivity without confrontation leads to a bland neutrality that serves nobody. Confrontation without receptivity leads to an oppressive aggression which hurts everybody” (p. 99)

Nouwen further states that this balance between receptivity and confrontation is found at different points, depending on the individual position in life. We are proposing that the balance in the milieu of the small college MBA program can be found in the following strategies and tactics.

**Incorporating CST & Catholic Virtues in an MBA program - Strategies**

Strategically we can foster the exploration and discovery of CST and CV within the context of the adult student’s own business and personal experiences, problems, and challenges by:

1. adopting the Church’s tradition of “proposing and not imposing”, as so frequently repeated by Blessed Pope John Paul II, and in conjunction with the concept of hospitality as proposed by Nouwen (1975).

2. adopting the andragogical framework by Malcolm Knowles (See Appendix) to foster exploration and discovery within the context of the adult student’s own business and personal experiences, problems, and challenges.²

3. mapping the principles of CST to the key components of various courses within the MBA management concentration as advocated and illustrated by Porth and McCall.³

4. mapping the cardinal virtues and business practices advocated and illustrated by Cornwall and Naughton (2008)⁴ into appropriate business courses; use the concept of virtue as competence and the integrated whole in appropriate business courses as advocated by Haring (1997).⁵

5. further developing the skills around critical, holistic, and integrated thinking as a foundation for more rigorous exploration and discovery of the rationality and applicability of Catholic principles and virtues in business from Dyer (2006)⁶ and Schoenberg (2007).⁷

6. utilizing the more secular literature and research that is increasingly acknowledging the positive role virtuous behavior can play in business (positive psychology). For example, Manz, C., Cameron, K., Manz, P. and Marx, R. (2008) claim that virtuous management can help organizations succeed in times of crisis, ordinary times, and even exemplary times.⁸

**Incorporating CST & Catholic Virtues in an MBA program - Tactics**

Tactically, and for the MBA program at Dominican College, we have begun the same exploration and discovery process when it comes to planning and implementing the strategy

---


³ Porth, S. and McCall, J. The Evolution of Management Theory in Relation to Catholic Social Thought. John A. Ryan Institute for Catholic Social Thought


discussed above. This brings us to the second half of this paper where we discuss our first steps in implementing this strategy and the results to date.

The course MB507 – Organizational Behavior is a required course within our MBA program which draws from content and teaching materials that is remarkably consistent across the major publishers. A course in organizational behavior typically consists of 4 components: individual behavior and performance; teams and teamwork; influence processes and leadership; and organizational culture and context (See Appendix).

Using the framework developed by Port and McCall that relates management theory to CST, it is no surprise to see the many linkages between organizational behavior and CST. It clearly gives us a good foundation to explore the impact of CST on all four components of the organizational behavior topic.

Organizational Behavior and CST

| Principles of CST |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Dimensions        | Human Dignity   | Common Good    | Subsidiary      | Option for Poor & Vulnerable | Dignity of Work Rights of Workers | Solidarity | Stewardship |
| Individual Behavior & Performance | X | X | X | X |
| Teams & Teamwork | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Influence Processes & Leadership | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Organizational Culture, Structure & Design | X | X | X |

However, when one views the 4 OB components in a more holistic and interrelated way, we believe additional insights and opportunities arise. The following diagram helps to visualize some of those interrelationships. For example, individual behaviors can influence team dynamics; influence processes such as power, politics, and collaboration can have an impact on team performance; and organizational culture can reinforce or inhibit individual behaviors.
The bidirectional relationships between individual behavior and the 3 other OB components form a very dynamic and complex system of interactions. This provides an opportunity to explore and discover the impact that the cardinal virtues could have on a business organization, but in a more structured and deliberate way. The work by Cornwall & Naughton (2008) defines, applies and illustrates the cardinal virtues within the context of founders or entrepreneurs and start-up organizations, as summarized below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardinal Virtue</th>
<th>Business Application</th>
<th>Possible Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Justice        | Creating Right Relationships| • Just Wages & Benefits  
                  |                                                                      | • Personal & Professional Growth  
                  |                                                                      | • Family First  
                  |                                                                      | • Integration of Work & Faith  
                  |                                                                      | • Participation in Equity  
                  |                                                                      | • Just Firings  |
| Prudence       | Being Wise Stewards   | • Stewardship of Resources  
                  |                                                                      | • Pursuit of Morally Good Ends  
                  |                                                                      | • Pursuit of Morally Good Means  
                  |                                                                      | • Seeking Counsel; Foresight; Displaying Caution  |
Courage | Taking Risks to Achieve Good Ends

• Having versus Becoming
• Doing versus Being
• Courage versus No Fear
• Risks of Failure & Defect
• “Nobility of the Mundane”

Temperance | When Is Enough, Enough?

• Ordering of Desires Toward the Good
• The Workaholic
• Restlessness; Purpose; Meaning
• Solitude versus Loneliness
• Celebration and Service

While the work by Cornwall & Naughton (2008) does not specifically address the environment of a mature, existing organization, as portrayed in a standard organizational behavior course, we believe this poses no problem at the graduate level. In fact, this challenges the graduate student to apply, explore and hopefully discover the virtues in a different context, and gives the professor or researcher an opportunity to research the application of the cardinal virtues within the context of a student’s actual work environment. As the interrelations between the 4 OB components are numerous and complex, so are the interrelations between the 4 cardinal virtues. We believe this provides a rich educational milieu that can only be properly experienced through exploration and discovery and in the spirit of hospitality. Since the 4 virtuous behaviors obviously fall into the category of individual behavior, we can now use the above OB framework, and have at our disposal all the various concepts, theories and constructs to answer numerous questions with the “eyes” and “language” of OB.

Our first attempt at introducing the above tactic into our OB course is found in the “Independent Project” component of the course which is 20% of the final grade (See Appendix). The 4 virtues are briefly introduced within the context of a topic in emerging business research and popular books that is generally and collectively referred to as “The Virtuous Organization”. However, it is also made clear that the concept and ideas on virtuous behaviors have been around for millennia.

Students are then instructed to read the 4 chapters from Cornwall and Naughton (2008) on Prudence, Justice, Courage, and Temperance. For the purposes of this course and given the OB framework from the text, the 4 virtues are considered specific individual behaviors. It is acknowledged that the authors do not offer examples or claims on how the 4 behaviors should, could or would work in an existing firm from the point of view of a middle manager or front-line supervisor. The students are then challenged to analyze and propose answers to the following questions within the OB framework components consisting of individual behavior and performance; teams and teamwork; influence processes and leadership; and organizational context and culture:
Could these 4 behaviors actually be successfully displayed or promoted by a manager in an existing organization, as opposed to the founder or CEO? Are these behaviors realistic based on your past and present experiences? If these behaviors could be consistently displayed, what would the organization look like? That is, how would teams behave? How would decisions be made? How would conflicts and negotiations be handled? How would these behaviors affect the dynamics of power and politics in an organization? What would the culture look like if these behaviors were consistently displayed? Inversely, what would an organization have to do to support or enable these behaviors? That is, what kind of culture would be needed to support such behaviors?

Student Insights and Outcomes from the OB Independent Project

Key insights and findings are summarized below:

- The cardinal virtues could successfully exist in an existing, mature business organization
- The degree to which these behaviors influence the culture varies with the individual’s role and their level of power and influence
- The cardinal virtues should not be limited to leaders, managers or corporate leaders, but practiced by everyone and at every level in the organization
- The virtues require a lifelong commitment to critical thinking
- In a large company where there is more diversity in individuals and teams, creating a culture based on the 4 virtues would be a considerable effort
- It will take the four virtues themselves to institutionalize the four virtues into an organization’s culture
- The positive effects of prudence are subtle and it takes time before they are seen
- Learning from mistakes is part of prudence
- Prudence can lead to improved decision making, can reduce confusion and minimize unrealistic expectations
- The courage to speak out can help avoid “group think”, yet courage is also required in order to listen to different viewpoints
- Courage is a very risky behavior in the current uncertain and fearful environment
- Distributed justice is substantially decreasing in business firms, yet unions can create a sub-culture that does not lead to justice either
- Temperance can improve overall job satisfaction
- Temperance is counter-culture to our current work environment where the obsession to achieve results using any means possible is the norm

Interim Conclusions

While the learning outcomes of this exploration and discovery were positive, hopeful and helpful, the quality of inquiry and analysis on the part of our students was lower than desired. A number of linkages between the cardinal virtues and the OB dimensions were identified. Insights and applications based on individual work experiences were also identified. However, it appears that many of these linkages and insights were mediated by the student’s critical thinking skills;
holistic or integrative mindset; reflective capabilities and the breadth and depth of their own work experiences.

Based on these initial student outcomes, the assignment was subsequently changed in the next scheduling of the class from an independent project to a group project that involved in-class, and asynchronous, online student interaction. This would allow the instructor to better facilitate, guide and direct the student’s exploration and discovery process which could include the use of “contemplative”, “reflective” and “visualization” techniques such as those from Zajonc (2008).9 Counter-virtuous behaviors and other negative behaviors could also be introduced in order to better visualize the possible inter-relationships amongst the OB dimensions, and allowed students to better analyze their current working environment.

**Student Insights and Outcomes from the OB Group Project**

Key insights and findings are summarized below:

- Positive relationships between the cardinal virtues and the following OB constructs, concepts or issues were identified: Stages of Team Development; Team Composition; Common Team Challenges; Disruptive Behaviors; Team Effectiveness; High Performance Teams, Organizational Power; and Leadership Dimensions
- Interestingly, Temperance and Prudence were seen as the most relevant to the group based on their experiences.
- Interestingly, Justice was seen as the least relevant to the group based on their experiences.
- Courage was considered critical in decision making processes and especially important in “asking the right questions” and “acknowledging when one was wrong”.
- Temperance was deemed the most challenging virtue for those at the higher levels in an organization. However, the exercise of temperance could lead to better informed and educated decision making, and could allow leaders to keep their focus on the “bigger picture” resulting in a more successful business.
- Prudence could be an “important tool” in better evaluation of new employees, retention of talented employees and the formation of teams.
- Courage can help minimize the fears and uncertainties associated with team formation, member collaboration, conflicts, discouragements, challenging circumstance and the setting of high yet realistic team goals and objectives.
- Courage without temperance can lead to unrealistic expectations, risky goals and even failure.
- Justice appears to be a central theme in organizational motivation theory, and is a prerequisite to leadership and organizational trust.
- High levels of organizational justice can lead to improved productivity, job satisfaction, overall performance and innovation.

---

Conclusions

The instructor led facilitation, reflection and visualization approach to the group project appears to have enhanced the student’s exploration and discovery process producing a more rigorous and holistic analysis and study of the relationship between the cardinal virtues and various OB constructs. It also appears to have resulted in a deeper learning experience for both students and the instructor as posited in Zajonc (2008). The apparent need to continue to counteract a fragmented academic mindset on the part of many students will be the subject of continued research.

A concluding discussion with the students of MB507 surfaced a related and important issue in contemporary business research and practice. Even though students acknowledged the value and possible positive effects of demonstrating the cardinal virtues, many were questioning or struggling with cases where well known firms were quite “successful” but did not necessarily have a good workplace or socially responsible reputation. This learning opportunity is discussed further in the next section.

Some Thoughts for the Future

The integrated incorporation of anything Catholic into the milieu of a small college MBA program appears to be a sizable challenge requiring considerable time, effort, patience and determination. However, we believe the above experiences do support our overall strategy, and discussions and planning will continue on other opportunities.

We have begun to explore the opportunity to incorporate CST principles and CV in our elective course MB607 – The Dynamics of Effective Leadership using the same strategy. Henri J. M. Nouwen (1989) appears to provide the foundation for a provocative exploration and discovery experience as illustrated in his three sections:10

- From Relevance to Prayer (Reflection): The Temptation to be Relevant
- From Popularity to Ministry (Service): The Temptation to be Spectacular
- From Leading to Being Led (Followership): The Temptation to be Powerful

The student discussion on organizational “success” discussed above appears to indicate that success in defined rather narrowly by many students and focuses primarily on financial ratios and market share. It is envisioned that a more rigorous investigation into organizational effectiveness using the Competing Values Framework will be included in the MB700 - Business Policy capstone course by including a required text by Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff and Thakor (2006).11 This work attempts to put value creation, both financial and human capital, in its proper

---


context. It also appears that the use of “Ontological Level Principles” with Catholic Intellectual Tradition (CIT) suggested by Grassl\textsuperscript{12} would allow us to address emerging student questions, such as this, in a deeper, more holistic way while still maintaining a CST framework.

In addition, the constructs and findings from my doctoral dissertation “The Relationship between Servant Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness Using the Competing Values Framework” will continue to be a topic in our MB700 - Business Policy capstone course which includes validation and findings for the construct of Leadership Wisdom.

\textsuperscript{12} Response to: Integration of Catholic Social Thought into Marketing Curricula, Wolfgang Grassl, St. Norbert College
### Appendix

**Andragogy versus Pedagogy – Malcolm S. Knowles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Concept of the Learner**            | • Learner is more self-directed  
• Learner is more responsible for own learning  
• Self-evaluation is more the norm |
| **Role of the Learner’s Experience**  | • Learner brings a greater volume and quality of experience  
• Adults are a rich resource for one another  
• Different experiences assure diversity in groups  
• Experience becomes source of self-identity |
| **Readiness to Learn**                | • Any change is likely to trigger a readiness to learn  
• The need to know in order to perform more effectively is important  
• Ability to assess gaps between where one is now and where one wants and needs to be |
| **Orientation to Learning**           | • Learner wants to perform a task, solve a problem, live in a more satisfying way  
• Learning must have relevance to real-life tasks  
• Learning is organized around life/work situations rather than subject matter |
| **Motivation for Learning**           | • Self-esteem  
• Recognition  
• Better Quality of Life  
• Self-confidence  
• Self-actualization |
| **Learning “Climate”**                | • Relaxed, Trusting, Warm  
• Mutually Respectful, Informal  
• Collaborative, Supportive |
<p>| <strong>Mode of Planning</strong>                  | • Mutually by learners and “facilitator” |
| <strong>Diagnosis of Needs</strong>                | • By mutual assessment |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting of Objectives</th>
<th>• By mutual negotiation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design of Learning Plans</td>
<td>• Learning Contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sequenced by “Readiness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activity Types</td>
<td>• Inquiry projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Independent Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experimental Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>• By learner collected evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Validated by peers, facilitators, experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Criterion referenced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Organizational behavior refers to the human relations dynamic occurring between individuals and groups within the context of an organizational setting, and to how those interactions contribute to or detract from the effectiveness of an organization.

In this course, attention will be given to topics such as motivation, values, teams, conflict and negotiation, communication, teamwork/group dynamics, managerial styles, power and politics, leadership, culture and other contemporary topics.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK


ADDITIONAL WORKS


See Blackboard Course Information for additional readings

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing the course, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify how individual differences in terms of values, traits, attitudes, perceptions, emotions and abilities impact organizational operations
2. Develop a better understanding and appreciation of one’s own learning style, values, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors in order to be more effective at work
3. Analyze and understand the role that team and group dynamics play within an organization and how teamwork and constructive conflict can contribute to the achievement of positive results within an organization
4. Demonstrate knowledge of organizational culture and structure and how they influence organizational effectiveness
5. Understand how decision making, communication practices, power, politics and leadership influence individual, group and organizational behaviors
6. Appreciate the dynamic interrelationships between the three “units of analysis” – the individual; the group or team; and the organization
7. Develop a more inquisitive attitude toward organizational behavior in order to apply the theories, concepts and best practices from this course to real-world situations
8. Keep informed of the latest developments in organizational behavior and consider the validity of emerging best practices such as character-based and virtuous behaviors and organizations.

GRADING POLICIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Exams (4)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Forums &amp; Assessments</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assessments &amp; Discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Differences, emotions, attitudes, perception</td>
<td>Assessments &amp; Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Motivation theories and performance</td>
<td>Online Exam 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teams, teamwork and performance</td>
<td>Assessments &amp; Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Conflict, negotiation, decision-making</td>
<td>Online Exam 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leadership and effectiveness</td>
<td>Assessments &amp; Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Power and politics</td>
<td>Online Exam 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Organizational culture and structure</td>
<td>Assessments &amp; Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Contemporary Topics</td>
<td>Online Exam 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group Project Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GROUP PROJECT

It is expected that individuals who are enrolled in the MBA program will learn to integrate and apply the concepts, theories and best practices in any course in a holistic way. In addition, the MBA program is designed with an independent component in which the student will be responsible for acquiring advanced knowledge, as well as integrating and applying the materials in this course.

This material will be in addition to any material that will be assigned and covered in class. Questions concerning the independent component may appear on exams as applicable.

For this course, the independent component will include an analysis of selected readings chosen to develop the student’s ability to apply and inter-relate the theories, concepts and best practices in a more holistic way. The details of this independent component are found in a separate document.
Introduction

This is an individual project. The MBA program is designed with an independent component in which the student will be responsible for acquiring advanced knowledge, as well as integrating and applying the materials in this course. This material will be in addition to any material that will be assigned and covered in class. Questions concerning the independent component may appear on exams as applicable.

For this course, the independent component or project will include the application of selected readings chosen to develop the student’s ability to apply and inter-relate the theories, concepts and best practices in a more holistic way.

So that students can devote the appropriate amount of time to their independent project, it is estimated that the amount of time that the project should take to complete is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Topic & Readings

Academic researchers as well as popular book authors in business are increasingly investigating a topic that is generally and collectively referred to as “The Virtuous Organization” - no doubt, at least partially, due to the many failings of leadership and organizations in the business world. Interestingly, even though the business world has recently discovered this construct and considers it a new development, the concept and ideas on virtuous behaviors have been around for millennia.

Read the 4 chapters from “Bringing Your Business to Life” by Cornwall and Naughton on Prudence, Justice, Courage, and Temperance. For the purposes of this course and given the framework proposed in our text, these 4 virtues can be considered individual behaviors and even competencies. The authors look at these 4 virtuous behaviors from the point of view of entrepreneurs who, despite their many challenges and responsibilities, has much discretion in making decisions. However, the authors do not offer examples or claims on how the 4 behaviors should, could or would work in an existing firm from the point of view of a middle manager or front-line supervisor.

Questions & Issues

Could these 4 behaviors actually be successfully displayed or promoted by a manager in an existing organization, as opposed to the founder or CEO? Are these behaviors realistic based on your past and present experiences? If these behaviors could be consistently displayed, what would the organization look like? That is, how would teams behave? How would decisions be made? How would conflicts and negotiations be handled? How would these behaviors affect the dynamics of power and politics in an organization? What would the culture look like if these
behaviors were consistently displayed? Inversely, what would an organization have to do to support or enable these behaviors? That is, what kind of culture would be needed to support such behaviors? **Proposing answers to these key questions is the topic of your independent project paper.**

However, this course has, and will continue to, provide you with the concepts, theories, constructs and frameworks for answering these questions! Recall in the first class in the course, we discussed a holistic framework for the topic of Organizational Behavior (OB): the components of which are:

- Individual Behavior & Performance
- Teams and Teamwork
- Influence Processes & Leadership
- Organizational Context

As we also discussed, these 4 components are highly related to each other, and interrelate to form a very dynamic and complex system of interactions. Since the 4 virtuous behaviors obviously fall into the category of individual behavior, you can now use the above framework, and have at your disposal all the concepts, theories and constructs to answer the above questions with the “eyes” and “language” of OB! That is, this project requires you to demonstrate your knowledge of the course topics as well as your ability to apply them in a coherent and clear manner.

Your paper should be a minimum of 12-15 pages, excluding title page, table of content or any references. Given the large number of concepts, theories and constructs in the course you will have to choose what you think are the most relevant to the topic – 15 pages is not much.

Granted we have not studied all the topics in the OB framework yet. However, that is all the more reason to read the documents as soon as possible, and to start drafting your paper outline based on the topics we have studied. You should be writing as we proceed through the rest of the course! We will discuss this more in our next class.

**Independent projects will be graded using the following criteria and in the following priority:**

- Appropriate application of concepts, theories and best practices learned in this course to the assignment materials above, as well as to your past and present real world experiences
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate and inter-relate the various concepts, theories and best practices in the course with the readings on virtuous behavior
- Understanding and analysis of the theory, concepts and best practices presented in the course.
- Critical, coherent, clear and feasible conclusions and recommendations
- Coherent and clear writing and presentation techniques, and correct grammar
Biography

Dr. Kenneth Mias is the director of an IACBE accredited MBA program and Assistant Professor at Dominican College of Blauvelt in New York. He also teaches senior level undergraduate courses at Manhattanville College, New York. Ken has 28 years of professional, managerial and leadership experience in Fortune 100 international firms, and 7 years of consulting in the areas of project management, change management and leadership coaching. He received his doctoral degree with honors from Pace University, New York with concentrations in management and international business in 2010. Work in underway to submit research to a peer reviewed journal based on his doctoral dissertation titled “The Relationship between Servant Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness using the Competing Values Framework.”