

201 Program & Portfolio Management

Course Syllabus

Course Textbooks

- *Program and Portfolio Management*, e-book by Dick Billows, PMP, GCA, 2010

Learning Objectives

Working with your personal instructor, you will master the tools and techniques of program and portfolio management and demonstrate your competence on assignments where you:

6. Make professional presentations and answer questions from executives
7. Manage a team of project managers and project office staff, demonstrating skill for creating a high performance team culture
8. Use sophisticated skills to manage a portfolio of projects
9. Train your project managers in a Best Practices Methodology.

How You Learn

You will practice what you learn on a project case study and receive written feedback from your instructor on all your work. Your instructor will ask you to correct or improve any assignment that is not at a professional level. You can ask your instructor questions whenever you wish via e-mail, phone call, or live web meeting. You are guaranteed a response within 24 hours.

Course Process

Each of the modules in the course has a reading assignment in your electronic textbook, a lecture video on the course website, and an assignment which you will complete and send to your instructor via e-mail. You will also work with your instructor on four live project presentations over the Internet. The course requires approximately 60 hours of effort for the reading, lectures, and case study-based assignments. You may take up to one year to complete the course.

Grading Criteria

To pass the course, you must earn a grade of 80% (B) or better on each of your assignments. Your instructor may ask you to redo any assignment which does not meet the professional standard and they will not grade new assignments until your earlier assignments reach the professional level.

Streaming Media Lectures

You will view the lectures from the course website. Our server will stream the high-definition videos to you using the latest dynamic technology and constantly monitor your available bandwidth, streaming the appropriate size file for your bandwidth. Students watching from their workplace or from home with a cable TV speed connection will not encounter any buffering.

Live Presentations and Simulations

Because effective interpersonal relationships are such an important skill for program and portfolio managers, you will practice presenting plans and status reports, and answering questions from executives. These project simulations will take place between you and your instructor by e-mail exchanges and in four live Internet meetings via web camera at mutually agreed upon times. In each of these simulations, you will play the role of the program manager and your instructor will play the sponsor and stakeholders from your case study. Your instructor will record your presentations and send you feedback on your speaking and presentation techniques.

Apply What You Have Learned to a Project Case Study

You will practice each course technique on the International Expansion Program case study, receiving coaching and written feedback from your instructor on all your work. While a summary of the case study is provided within each corresponding module below, you will read the entire case study in the actual course.

Course Sequence

Module 1: Critique of a Failing Program & Organization

1. Read Chapter 1 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
2. Watch the "Critique of a Failing Program" lecture video on the course website.
3. Read "A Failing Six-State Expansion Program" case study, provided below.

A Failing Six-State Expansion Program Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire summary):

You are the newly hired portfolio manager for Vailcrest Corporation, a very successful competitor with plans to grow into a multinational organization. These plans have been set back by disastrous project results. You meet with Dan Morton, President of Vailcrest, to hear the history of project failures which are holding back what should be an outstanding performer in their industry. You will need to fix the problems, deal with the turf wars between executives and deliver a program for international expansion.

You start by reviewing the recently failed Six-State Expansion Program which was plagued by poor performance, limited resources and executive conflicts.

4. Review the Vailcrest organization chart on the course website. Review the Microsoft Project® schedule for the Six-State Expansion Project and watch the “Meet the Executives” video, both on the Module 1 web page.
5. Using your course template, complete the assessment of the program and the organization’s project processes. Submit it to your instructor for written feedback.

Module 2: Portfolio Management

6. Read Chapter 6 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
7. On the course website, watch the “Bringing the Portfolio Under Control” lecture video, the software instructional video, and review the video of the executives from Module 1.
8. Set up your Vailcrest portfolio according to the instructions.
9. Read the “International Expansion: Corraling a Project Portfolio” Case Study.

International Expansion: Corraling a Project Portfolio Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire case study):

You are exhausted after your first week at Vailcrest when you get a call from Dan Morton at 10:30 on Friday night. He has just read your report and is shocked that so many projects are failing. He tells you that he has scheduled a meeting at 7:00 the next morning with all the Vailcrest VPs. He expects you to give a report on all the projects as well as a proposal for how to fix things. You immediately get out of bed and get to work on a PowerPoint presentation for what is sure to be a very hostile audience.

10. Using your course template, prepare recommendations and send the template to your instructor for feedback.
11. After receiving your feedback, prepare a PowerPoint presentation that includes an overview of projects and your recommendations for Vailcrest.
12. In a live webcam presentation made directly to the executives (role-played by your instructor), present your recommended project process changes and priorities to the executives. Answer their questions and deal with their objections, with the goal of securing a consensus on your proposal.

Module 3: Strategic Design & Repositioning

13. Read Chapter 2 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
14. Watch the “Strategic Program Design & Repositioning” lecture video on the course website.
15. Read Part 1 of the “International Expansion Program” Case Study.

International Expansion Program Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire case study):

Two months have passed and despite the executives' resistance to having a program manager, you have made great progress on fixing the Six-State Expansion project and in controlling the initiation of projects. However, once you sit down at your desk, you notice a highlighted newspaper article titled, "After Big Expansion Vailcrest's Service Stinks." A note from Dan is at the bottom, telling you to forget the International Expansion Program and gather the executives together for an emergency meeting to plan a customer service disaster recovery program that you will manage.

16. Watch the "Individual Sessions with the Vailcrest Executives" video in Module 3 on the course website.
17. Using your course template, prepare an assessment of the decision-makers and their buying perceptions and performance pressures.
18. Complete a high-level design for the customer service improvement program and conceive one or more program measures of success. Send this assignment to your instructor for feedback.
19. After receiving feedback on your assessment, prepare a PowerPoint presentation for persuading the executives to support your program design and send it to your instructor for feedback.
20. After receiving feedback on your PowerPoint, schedule a live web meeting to present your program plan to the Vailcrest executives (played by your instructor).

Module 4: Forecasting, Estimating, & Managing Risk

21. Read Chapter 3 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
22. Watch the "Forecasting & Managing Risk" lecture video on the course website.
23. Read the "International Expansion: Numbers & More Numbers" case study.

International Expansion: Numbers & More Numbers Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire case study):

With the customer service program design accepted by Dan and the executive team, you work several late nights to plan the projects in your program. Dan approves your request for a Project Management Office with 5 project managers on the condition that they handle all of Vailcrest's projects; to which you wholeheartedly agree. You are acutely aware that your new team will meet intense resistance from the executives. So you go to work to teach your new project managers the tools for their projects and launch the process of estimating the new projects. You must also build a high performance team culture in the process.

24. Using your course template, develop analogous and parametric estimates and PERT estimates. Send them to your instructor for feedback.
25. Read the “International Expansion: Risk Management” Case Study.

International Expansion: Risk Management Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire case study):

Your next step is meeting with the stakeholders of the international expansion project to identify risks. This meeting produces a list of identified risks which allow you to begin work. You must assemble a quantitative risk analysis using information from a small group of industry experts.

26. Using your course template, develop a set of risk analyses and responses for the programs. Send it to your instructor for feedback.
27. After receiving feedback, prepare a PowerPoint presentation for Dan Morton and his executive team that covers the order of magnitude estimates, the risk analysis, and detailed risk responses for each of the four major risks. Your goal is to persuade the executives to act on the response plans.
28. Send your PowerPoint presentation to your instructor and schedule a live web meeting to present it to the executives (played by your instructor).

Module 5: Managing PMs, Teams, & the PMO

29. Read Chapter 4 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
30. Watch the “Managing PMs, Teams, and the PMO” video lecture on the course website.
31. Read the “International Expansion: A High Performing Project Management Office & Team” Case Study.

International Expansion: A High Performing Project Management Office & Team Case Study Summary (In the actual course, you will read the entire case study):

You are in a meeting with your new project managers, all of whom have varying levels of experience and skill. You observe each of these individuals, assessing their work attitudes and capabilities, so that you can make appropriate assignments of the projects in the organization’s project portfolio.

32. Using your course template, send your instructor a copy of your latest portfolio along with an assessment of each project manager, a description of the appropriate project or role for each project manager based on your assessment, and a reward system for the project managers in the PMO.

Module 6: Portfolio Tracking & Trade-offs

1. Read Chapter 5 in the *Program and Portfolio Management* e-book.
2. Watch the "Portfolio Tracking & Trade-offs" lecture video on the course website.
3. Review the software instruction video on the course website.
4. Using the project schedules in your portfolio, update the projects with actual results (provided by your instructor) and build a project schedule using your achievement network.
5. Develop your recommendations for responding to the status report issues with documented trade-offs. Consider changing priorities, hiring additional employees, and cancelling projects. Send it to your instructor for written feedback.
6. After receiving feedback, prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the Vailcrest executives on the state of the portfolio and your recommendations on priorities. The goal is to secure their agreement. Schedule a live web meeting with your instructor to present your proposal to the executives.

Upon successful completion of this course you will earn 60 PDUs (professional development units) from PMI (Project Management Institute). This fulfills your PMP re-certification requirement.