

**SYLLABUS  
THE PROGRAM MANAGER'S COURSE  
PMT 4010**

*“One's destination is never a place but rather a new way of looking at things.”*

-- Henry Miller

**About the course...**

You have attended acquisition courses before, expanding your knowledge of the policies and instructions to manage programs and improve acquisition outcomes. In your other acquisition courses, you may have learned certain concepts and processes and then demonstrated your skill in applying them. We will do that in PMT 4010, but you will find this course different in useful and challenging ways. The course structure is team-based learning which is a highly participative method. Together, we will explore how program managers think and make decisions in a variety of acquisition scenarios. Our focus on real dilemmas can help you more deeply understand management and leadership challenges in the acquisition environment. It also will prompt you to reflect on how and why you think and make decisions in your own program.

**What you'll learn along the way...**

Program Managers think a lot about how to manage program resources while leading acquisition teams and organizations. This course is designed to help you evaluate and develop habits to improve personal performance as well as program outcomes. Specifically, you will learn to:

- Improve critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills;
- Enhance ability to lead in an Acquisition environment;
- Develop a network of fellow practitioners to discover and apply smart practices; and
- Apply skills of reflection as part of leader development.

This course will be challenging, but if you fully engage, work diligently throughout the seven weeks, and continually practice your critical thinking skills, this experience will dramatically reshape how you think, act and lead in the acquisition environment.

**How you'll know you're learning...**

Throughout the course, you will have multiple opportunities to explore a variety of tools for problem solving, negotiating, stakeholder management, and leading change. We have frequent in-class discussions, small group activities, and simulations to foster learning. In addition, the following activities will help guide you through the learning process and help you measure your progress as you move toward deeper understanding.

**In-class Engagement.** Learning is hard work! Meaningful learning—the kind of learning that lasts well beyond the classroom—is takes work. You will have to struggle through complex ideas, reconcile misconceptions, validate your assumptions, take risks, and continually practice

skills as you learn them. At times this will be frustrating, but the more you engage, the more you will learn.

At a minimum, engagement in the course means that you read and analyze cases and articles before coming to class; prepare for, attend, and participate actively in every class session, including large group discussions, small group activities, simulations and seminars; and complete assignments to the best of your ability.

Deep engagement, the kind that leads to significant learning (and the kind you should strive for) involves...

- remaining consistently engaged through each class session and the course;
- daily reflecting to connect your in-class experience and learning to workplace application;
- being constructive and collegial, especially when you disagree with someone;
- taking a skeptical, but open approach to different or new ideas;
- focusing and helping your peers to focus on the course frameworks and tools

**Personal Development.** What do you have to show for that investment in your development? Do you make time to learn new things, experiment with different methods, challenge the status quo, "fail fast," and fine-tune your capabilities? Throughout the course you will have opportunities to learn tools and techniques you need to succeed professionally, while also honing your personal skills. In addition, you will be able to select specific elective sessions that are most relevant to your interests and personal development goals.

**Self-Assessment.** We will begin the course with a comprehensive set of assessments, which will form the baseline for your personal development throughout the course.

- **MBTI Step II Instrument.** This is a self-report questionnaire designed to indicate differing psychological preferences in how you take information from the world around you and how you make decisions. Prior to the start of the course you will complete the advanced version of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment. This version allows a more in-depth understanding of your preferences by shedding light on the components which make up each of your preferences. If you already have your MBTI results, you can provide that in lieu of taking the assessment.
- **EQ-i 2.0 Assessment.** This emotional intelligence instrument measures the interaction between you and your environment, and provides specific results that measure how well you perceive and express yourself, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way. This assessment will be administered prior to the first week of the course. After completing the EQ-i 2.0 assessment, you will have the option to complete an EQ360 which involves having 10-20 direct reports, peers, family/friends, and a supervisor to complete the assessment.

**Reflections.** Reflection is thinking about what you have seen, heard, felt or otherwise experienced with the purpose of increasing awareness, particularly self-awareness. Reflective

journaling captures your insights, curiosities, and new awareness “in writing” for future reference and reflection. Each student will receive a journal to support daily and weekly reflections. Each week you are required to submit weekly reflections to your small group advisor. Your reflections will include the top things that contributed to your learning, details on what it meant to you and how you will apply it, as well as things that contributed the least to your learning and why.

**Feedback.** Periodically throughout the course, you will be offered feedback on your in-class contribution, small group interactions and performance in exercises and simulations. This will include faculty and peer feedback with specific comments and suggestions for improvement. We will also help you track your progress towards improvement throughout the course.

**Faculty.** PMT 4010 faculty are the most important resource available to you! We can meet during office hours or by appointment to discuss any aspect of the course or any difficulties you may be experiencing. In our roles as Faculty Advisor and learning coach, we will work with you to ensure your best possible performance in the course.

### **What you’ll be reading...**

PMT 4010 is built on the expectation that students want to be active learners, and keeping up with the reading empowers you to take full advantage of class discussions and seminars. Every week, you will be given short out-of-class reading assignments (cases and articles) based on the upcoming class schedule. Our goal is to have no more than two (2) cases a day, to help you more fully analyze the readings and prepare for class.

**Cases.** A PMT 4010 cases detail a real-life program office situation, describing the dilemma of the "protagonist"—a real person with a real job confronted with a real problem. PMT 4010 cases are multi-service and cover the entire acquisition lifecycle. Cases help you sharpen your analytical thinking and decision-making skills, which directly affect your success as a program manager.

**Articles.** Articles related to learning, leadership and management are included in the course. The topics covered in the articles provide the basis for a discussion in a seminar, exercise or simulation.

**Books.** We have selected several books to share with you that address leadership in general and some that deal with specific strategies and leadership skills.

### **What you’ll be doing...**

**Schedule.** The following is an example of a typical day in the course. Times and topics may shift slightly to adjust for emerging topics, speaker or room availability. All changes will be announced in class and posted on bulletin boards outside of our seminar rooms, as well, as on MS Teams.

Week 1	Eastern Time	Lesson/Activity	Location	Facilitator
VILT	0700-0900	Individual Assignments		
Thursday 9-Jan	0900-1015	Small Group	Small Group Meetings	FAs
	1015-1030	Break		
	1030-1145	M270A1 Case - Part I	Classroom A	Snodgrass
			Classroom B	Robey
	1145-1230	Lunch		
	1230-1345	M270A1 Case - Part II	Classroom A	Snodgrass
			Classroom B	Robey
	1345-1400	Break		
	1400-1515	O-6 Leadership DGP (Col Paul Ferguson, USAF SML DCMA)	General Classroom	Stein
	1515-1530	Break		
	1530-1645	Leader Development Project Part II: Leadership Message	General Classroom	Gadeken
	1645-1845	Individual Assignments		

### Typical Academic Virtual Day

Week 4	Eastern Time	Lesson/Activity	Location	Facilitator
Wednesday 29-Jan	0800-0930	Small Group	Small Group Rooms	FAs
	0930-0945	Break		
	0945-1100	Intro to Software Pathway	SR-5	Johnson
	1100-1200	Lunch		
	1200-1300	IP & Data Rights	SR-5	Dvorscak
	1300-1315	Break		
	1315-1430	P2P Learning: TBD	SR-5	TBD
	1430-1445	Break		
	1445-1600	Next Generation Supply Vehicle Case	SR-3	Husband
			SR-4	Dvorscak
	1600-1800	Individual Assignments		

### Typical Academic In-Residence Day

**Small Group Discussions.** Each student is assigned to a small group (6-8 students) that meets daily for exercises and preparation, for large group sessions (about 24 students). Small group participation creates more opportunities for critical thinking and learning and enhances communication and other professional development skills.

**Large Group Discussions.** After reading and analyzing each case study individually, students test their preparation, clarify understanding, and check insights with their assigned small group members. Students then discuss the case in a large group facilitated by PMT 4010 faculty. These large group discussions are intended to maximize the strength of the case method where the students become the teachers. Students learn from each other by listening to the contrasting analyses, opinions, and perspectives of their classmates—successful military, civilian and industry acquisition professionals.

**Exercises.** Successful decision-making and problem solving are at the heart of all effective teams. The exercises used in both small and large group settings require team members to

analyze information, negotiate and collaborate with one another. These activities encourage individuals and teams to develop their creative thinking, leadership and communication skills, while building group cooperation and consensus.

**Simulations.** We have integrated simulations throughout the course to replicate real-life scenarios to help students demonstrate their leadership skills and strategies in negotiating, communicating, and decision-making in different situations. These simulations provide first-hand benefits and consequences of your thinking, actions and decisions. They also provide insight into how their peers work, think and act which is invaluable to leading teams in an acquisition environment.

**Seminars.** Strong management skills are essential to successful leadership. You will face the continued challenge of maintaining a balance between achieving results and leading your people. During the course subject matter experts will present current information and emerging topics in acquisition management and leadership policies and practice. These sessions include financial management and execution, Agile methodology, contract management, building organizational culture, Middle Tier Acquisition, cyber security, and intellectual property.

**Distinguished Guest Practitioners.** We incorporate current and former senior acquisition professionals to speak to the class about defense acquisition from their perspective. Invited speakers range from the Program Manager (O6/GS-15), Program Executive Officer (O7/SES), Systems Command (O8/O9), Service Acquisition Executives, Small Business CEOs, and Prime Contractor Directors and Vice Presidents.

**Leader Development Individual Project.** You will be required to complete an Individual Project during the course. There are three components to the Leader Development Individual Project: Leader Transition Planning, Leadership Message, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

### **A few course policies...**

Your success in this course is important and is directly related to our establishing a non-attribution and safe learning environment. We all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let us know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

**Academic Freedom and Non-attribution:** These policies enable students, instructors and guest speakers to express their views freely and without attribution or embarrassment. We'll get into some healthy debates and disagreements, but our disagreements should never be personal. We also ask that specific statements or remarks not be attributed to specific speakers outside of the classroom setting.

**Electronic Devices.** You will need to be able to connect to DAU's MS Teams which may require disabling VPNs on government devices. DAU's MS Teams is accessible via personal devices, provided you know your DAU username/password and have access to the SMS device for two-factor authentication. A working camera and microphone is required for the completion of the course.

**With an electronic device friendly course there is a responsibility to use those devices appropriately during class time.**

**Attendance/Absences.** Full-time attendance (Day 1 through graduation) is required for all students. We recognize full-time attendance may not always be possible due to religious observances, mandatory military obligations, or illness (students or immediate family members). Requests to miss class for valid reasons must be submitted in advance to the Course Manager for approval. Excused absences do not alter the academic requirements for the course. Students are responsible for missed sessions and must complete make-up assignments prior to the end of the course.

**DAU Policy.** Excused absences that exceed five (5) percent of instructional time may require that the student self-withdraw from the class and take it at a future time when personal or work commitments do not interfere with class attendance.