

# Creativity and Personal Mastery

---

Subject Area	Marketing
Lecturer	Srikumar S. Rao
Course Code	E437
Term:	AUT06 / SUM07
Credit value:	2

---

## Aims & Objectives

Creativity and Personal Mastery is designed to produce profound change in your life. You bring about this change and the course gives you the tools you need to do so. It is expected that you will set out on a path of discovery that will last the rest of your life. The formal end of this course at the completion of the semester is a largely meaningless demarcation and many students who took it years ago are still actively pursuing their quest.

Professor Srikumar S. Rao is the sole instructor on the course. He is a Full Professor at Long Island University and an Adjunct Professor at Columbia Business School. Creativity and Personal Mastery has consistently been one of the highest rated courses at Columbia Business School. It is routinely oversubscribed despite the stringent application process and draws from Law School, the School of International and Public Affairs, Journalism School and other divisions of the university. Hundreds of applicants vie for about thirty seats.

## Topics Covered

This course gets students started in deciding what, exactly, they would like to get out of life and, in particular, out of work. It is an invitation for students to begin crafting their personal life and goes far beyond traditional goal-setting exercises. Students grapple with such taboo questions as: What does money mean to you? How much do you need/want, and what are you willing to do to get it? What are the core values of your life? Do you compromise them? What do relationships mean to you? How do you manage them?

We will talk about how to build efficient and extraordinarily strong networks and alternatives to traditional — think “placement office of business school” — methods of finding jobs. We will spend quite some time discussing what happiness means to you and how your job, relationships and other activities fit into your concept of happiness. We will talk about ethics, your ethics, and what you will and will not do in a work-related situation. We will discuss how to ensure that you do not land up in the headlines of major dailies in ways that would cause your family and friends to disavow you.

The course has been extensively covered in the media including articles in the *New York Times*, the *London Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Fortune* and many others. You may read these articles as well as comments by students and guest speakers at [www.areyoureadytosucceed.com](http://www.areyoureadytosucceed.com)

Do not attempt to register for this course without reading the entire syllabus: [www.london.edu/marketing/teaching.html](http://www.london.edu/marketing/teaching.html)

## Format & Teaching Methods

Each session is highly interactive. There will be ideas presented and discussed. There will be a number of group exercises. There will be multiple exercises each week and write-ups due on them. There will be video presentations and discussion of these. There will be an electronic discussion board to continue conversations on topics raised in class and by the

readings. There will also be a mandatory weekend retreat that commences at about 5.00 p.m. on Friday and ends about 4.00 p.m. on Sunday.

### Pre-requisites

Students must be available to attend all classes plus a compulsory weekend retreat (see below for details). Places on this elective are assigned on the basis of an application, not through the usual preference system used for all other London Business School electives. Details of the application process can be found below.

### Timetable Slots

This course runs during the Autumn term 2006 and Summer term 2007. As this is a double credit elective, there are six hours of classes per week. Four streams are available:

Autumn Term – All day Monday OR all day Saturday, 9am to 5pm for 10 weeks

Summer Term - All day Monday OR all day Saturday, 9am to 5pm for 10 weeks

ALL streams will also be required to attend a weekend retreat. Dates for the retreat will be announced, but it will be approximately four weeks into the term.

### Assignments & Assessment

There will be no exams. Evaluation will be based on the assignments handed in and participation in the activities listed above.

### Application Process

1. Students must read the complete syllabus and are encouraged to read other material such as student comments, media articles, etc. as well.

2. You should then send the following as your application:

- Cover note detailing your name, contact details (including phone number), which stream you wish to join
- An up to date resumé
- Answers to the seven questions listed below (answer each question separately):

i) Tell me something about yourself, something that will make you come alive as a person. You get to decide what you reveal and at what length.

ii) Why do you want to take this course? Give me as much detail as possible. How did you learn about it? If someone recommended it, who and why did he/she do so? If any part of the syllabus spoke to you strongly, which part and why?

iii) What specific - list them - learning outcomes would you like to take away from this course? An example of such an outcome is "I would like to learn how to stop being bothered by what I think others are thinking about me."

iv) What hesitations do you have? Are you nervous or concerned about anything you read in the syllabus or heard from others?

v) How will other persons who take the course benefit from having you in it?

vi) What really, really, really and truly matters to you? Why?

vii) This course requires an enormous commitment of time as well as emotional and psychic energy. If your participation slacks off, you will be doing a disservice to yourself as well as other members of class. Are you fully prepared to take responsibility to make this class a resounding success for yourself as well as for others?

Suggested length for the seven essays: One page is too short, and 30 pages is too long for all questions combined.

3. The above should be submitted to the MBA Programme Office in hard copy in a sealed envelope marked 'Professor Srikumar Rao – Application for Creativity & Personal Mastery' and which stream you wish to join. Don't forget your resume – your application will be rejected if you do not include this.

4. Closing date for applications is 5pm Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2006 although you are strongly urged to apply sooner if you are keen to take this course.

5. Recommendations from CPM Alumni are welcome and will strengthen your case.

#### Selection and Notification

Please be prepared for an interview. This is likely to be on the phone, either with Professor Rao or an alumnus (alumni of the course continue to be heavily involved).

Places will be confirmed two weeks after the closing date.

Conditions of any offer of a place include completing the required reading and two assignments prior to the start of the course.

Please note that this course will not be entered into the normal Add & Drop process. Once you have been offered a place, you are expected to honour the commitment unless there are exceptional circumstances.

CPM Alumni happy to talk about the course

London Business School Alumni:

Magnus Asbjornsson [masbjornsson.mba2005@london.edu](mailto:masbjornsson.mba2005@london.edu)

Ros Wilson [rwilson.jemba2005@london.edu](mailto:rwilson.jemba2005@london.edu)

Adam Morris [amorris.mba2006@london.edu](mailto:amorris.mba2006@london.edu)

Mar Doncel [mdoncel.semiba2006@london.edu](mailto:mdoncel.semiba2006@london.edu)

Columbia CPM Alumni:

Sho Albert [sho.albert@gmail.com](mailto:sho.albert@gmail.com)

Sreedhar Kona [SKona05@gsb.columbia.edu](mailto:SKona05@gsb.columbia.edu)

Stewart Glickman [stewart.glickman@us.pwc.com](mailto:stewart.glickman@us.pwc.com)

Emiliya Zhivotovskiy [EmilyZhiv@aol.com](mailto:EmilyZhiv@aol.com)

Howard Kaplan [hkaplan55@hotmail.com](mailto:hkaplan55@hotmail.com)

More can be found on the website: [www.areyoureadytosucceed.com](http://www.areyoureadytosucceed.com)

Any more questions?

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Professor Rao, but do not do so until you have read the syllabus. Tel: 631-864-3146 e-mail: [Srikumarsrao@cs.com](mailto:Srikumarsrao@cs.com).