

Spring 2019 Semester Closing Note to My Students

By Don Sutherland

At the end of each semester, I provide my students with a closing note about the course. That note seeks to place the course, its content, and its requirements into a larger context. I do so, because I believe it is helpful for students to have one last opportunity to understand why they took the course and perhaps better identify what they might have gained from the course. Such understanding can perhaps reinforce learning for the long-term.

Below is the note to my spring 2019 students:

Dear Student,

With the semester is concluding, it is time to share some thoughts and insights to place this course into a larger context.

The world of today is awash in change. Scientists, entrepreneurs, and leaders are pushing the frontiers of innovation in a dizzying array of fields. Such advances are improving the human condition all across the globe.

Consider some of the developments that took place during the time you spent in your BBA 407 class:

- **Scientists found that matter can be simultaneously solid and liquid**
- **Scientists photographed a black hole for the first time**
- **Scientists decoded fruit flies' centromeres, which give chromosomes their distinctive shape and help move chromosome during cellular division**

Just as the universe continues to expand some 14 billion years (or some scientists now believe 12.5 – 13.0 billion years) after the Big Bang, knowledge, information, and technology continue to expand during this second decade of the 21st century.

These developments will confront companies and their managers with new opportunities and new challenges—and when challenges are framed effectively, they are really opportunities for improvement. The course concepts and research experience coupled with student life (for those who partook in such activities on campus), if leveraged effectively, will provide you with a solid foundation on which you can build professional success.

Even as you come from diverse backgrounds and have had diverse life experiences, you possess the character, persistence, and leadership potential conducive to career progression and success. Almost certainly, you know far more than you believe you do and you are capable of far greater things than you might believe. You are truly ready to begin the rest of your life's journey.

This course provided a starting point for that journey, one that can lead toward strategic management responsibility over time. Going forward, it will be up to each one of you to build upon its framework from future study, career progress, and life experience.

I wish all of you much success in your professional and personal lives.