A. Rationale

Competence is an important job requirement in today’s global economy. It is however not enough because requirements for specific jobs are constantly changing with new technologies and new markets. Adaptability to new job and environmental requirements is also necessary. The Ateneo Center for Organizational Research and Development (CORD) and some in-house corporate studies show that corporations look for these abilities: life-long learning, critical thinking and creative problem solving among its managers. But recruits with these qualifications are short in supply because of traditional stress on rote learning in most schools. This course will provide lectures, exercises and fieldwork that will help students live curious and develop creative problem solving skills necessary not only for careers in big corporations but also for in starting businesses.

B. Objectives:

The end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Exhibit passion in scanning the environment.
2. Diagnose individual problem solving and decision-making style.
3. Identify and articulate problems clearly.
5. Generate new ideas individually and with groups to arrive at decisions and solutions.
6. Create a business proposal.

C. Outline

I. Laying the Ground

A. Why this course? Methodology. Approach, Requirements.
B. What is Problem-Solving and Decision-making
C. Wonder! Notice, Explore
   Exercises
   Stop Look and Listen
   What’s going On???? Cast your net wide

Group Work 1: What’s going on, what are the latest trends
Group 1:
Newest orgs in the Ateneo; most exciting, innovative org

Group 2
Art Galleries
Rizal Library

Group 3:
Java Wireless
Business Resource Center (business incubator)

Group 4:
Ateneo Innovation Center

for each of the Reports

II. Learning Approaches

Class Presentations
A. What Kind of a Learner are You? How do we open ourselves to environment?
   Self-diagnosis—strengths; weaknesses
B. Whole-Brain Techniques
   Left and Right Brains
   Putting them Together: Techniques
   Exercises
C. Systems Thinking

**Individual Work 1: On Systems Thinking**

III. Problem Identification

A. What is a Problem
   Topic from first session: What is problem-solving and decision-making;
   What is my usual approach to a problem

B. Mess Finding
   Articulating Problems
   Exercises

**Individual Work 2: Philippine Airlines: What is its Problem**

IV. Problem Solving Technique: A Model
A. The Model
   What is the mess
What are the Facts
What is or are the problems
Who are the Stakeholders
What are the acceptable solutions
What is the decision?

**Group Work 2: Robinson’s East and PAL: Problem and Solutions**

**Individual work 3: Abusive Customer**

V. Creativity and Innovation

Class Presentations
   A. What is Creativity?
   Myths about creativity
   Components of Creativity
   B. What Is Innovation
   Kinds of Innovations
   Examples of Best Practices

V. Generating ideas
   A. What are the Sources of Ideas?
   New Knowledge
   Customers
   Lead Users

**Group Work 3: Sell Me**

**Individual Work 4: Smart and Globe**

VI. Working with Groups

Class Presentations
   A. Generating Ideas from a Group
   B. Characteristics of Creative Groups
   C. Creativity and Cultural Contexts: Disruptive Innovations and “Copying” innovations
   D. Tips on Motivation
   Optional
   E. Handling Conflicts and Difficult People

**Group Work 4: Toyota and Apple**

VIII. Will it Fly? Evaluating the Good Idea

Class Presentations
IV. Course Methodology

The course will combine the lecture, group work and workshop methods. Lectures will introduce topics but skills training for creative problem solving and decision-making will be through analysis of REAL problems and issues. The course will take the student out to the field and use many cases for practice in problem solving and decision-making. The course will also require students to constantly be on the look out creative initiatives, in the local, regional and international (particularly business) environments, which will be analyzed in class.

V. Course Requirements

A. Group Work (4)
   1. What’s going on out there: Ateneo 10%
   2. Problem Solving: PAL and Robinsons’s East 10%
   3. Sell Me 10%
   4. Innovations: Apple/Toyota 10%

B. Individual Work
   1. Systems Thinking 10%
   2. What is the Problem? 10%
   3. Case Study: Abusive customer 10%
   4. Smart and Globe 10%

C. Final Group Project: A Proposal 20%

VI. Readings

A. Required