15.990 *Practicing Management:*
Preparation, Action, and Reflection for Learning

**A brand-new course continuing the MIT Sloan innovation
of integrating real-world projects into MBA education**

**MIT Sloan aims to develop principled, innovative leaders who improve the world.
How will *you* improve the world?**

You've learned to analyze problems, generate solutions, and make recommendations. Yet the most effective managers go further: they know how to actually get things done. In 15.990: *Practicing Management* you'll develop, apply, and refine the skills, tools, and approaches essential for doing just that. The centerpiece of the course is a project that offers the ideal laboratory for you to learn how to be more effective as a manager.

Why focus on practical management? If you want to have a real impact on the world, you'll need to work with and through others - to manage effectively - in order to put your ideas into practice. This is a key step in becoming a real leader.

MIT's tradition of Lab-based education teaches us that great learning comes from linking your work in the classroom with hands-on experience. With this idea as our starting point, we designed a course that connects preparation, action, and reflection. Drawing from students' own experiences, relevant research, and theory, you will develop practical tools that you'll put to use right away in real-world projects. In the third part of the course, you'll reflect on your collective project experience to refine what you've learned into a useful and practical set of tools, skills, and approaches that could serve you throughout your career.

This innovative course has three linked objectives: to equip you to be the most effective manager you can be; to develop skills for learning from every experience; and to enable you to start making a difference *while you're still here* by designing and working on a project that goes beyond consulting to the manager's iterative cycle of strategy, implementation, evaluation, strategy, implementation.... a cycle that you can use to develop as a principled, innovative leader who improves the world.

The course combines plenty of in-class exercises, lively discussion, focused lectures, small-group meetings, consultations with experts and practitioners, novel web-based tools, and, of course, work within an organization, MIT group or lab, or other local setting on a real problem for which practical management solutions are urgently needed.

A flexible design accommodates a variety of projects, including scope for student-defined projects that meet the course criteria. You may already have an idea in mind! We're working on several exciting opportunities, too. The design for the latter part of the course is adaptive to respond to student interests and experiences. **You must, however, be prepared to work on your project over IAP, and you must take both half-semester courses to receive credit for the class, in Fall H2 and Spring H1.** (No grade will be

assigned at the end of the Fall portion of the course.) Anjali Sastry, who will teach the class, developed the course plan in partnership with various members of the MIT Sloan community to ensure that it complements the rest of your experience. Please contact Ashley Chiampo (ashley@mit.edu) or Anjali Sastry (sastry@mit.edu) for more information about the class or if you'd like to join the collaboration to shape the final form of the course plan.

Enrollment in 15.990, Practicing Management: Preparation, Action, and Reflection for Learning, is limited. A short application essay is required; please see below. **The *twelve-unit* course spans the second half of this fall, IAP, and the first half of the spring.** Units will be distributed as follows: 3 for Fall H2, 6 for IAP, and 3 for Spring H1. **The class meets Fall 06 H2, Monday, 2:30 - 5:30, with the Spring 07 schedule to be determined to best meet participants' needs**.

The application process
To secure a place in 15.990, please write two or three paragraphs explaining why you would like to take this class. Please submit your essay to Ashley@mit.edu to secure your place. We'll enroll students in the course on a rolling basis. Please remember that space is limited.

If you would like to submit a project proposal, please write a description of the proposed project in lieu of the essay above, keeping in mind the following criteria:

Criteria for 15.990 projects
Projects for 15.990 should:

1. Require the collaborative work of team of people (4+; please note that team composition is to be determined in the class);
2. Involve an organizational component, so that you will interact with various people within an organization or organization(s);
3. Center around a problem that is complex with multiple practical dimensions, rather than purely analytical;
4. Be amenable to your designing and running a "mini experiment" in which you test your proposed solutions in some fashion; and,
5. Go beyond a straightforward implementation, i.e. entail your carrying out something novel and untested for which there is not a preexisting infrastructure.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the instructor, Anjali Sastry at Sastry@mit.edu, or Ashley Chiampo at Ashley@mit.edu.