

The Last Dance – CULTure Case Study
Sales & Negotiation Strategy | University of New Haven
Instructor: Angeli Gianchandani

🧭 **Why CULTure in the Classroom?**

Leadership today is not just about performance. It is about presence, empathy, and cultural intelligence. In my Sales & Negotiation course, I use the CULTure framework to help students explore how real-world leaders **Connect, Understand, Lead, and Transform** in high-stakes environments.

Film serves as a powerful lens for reflection and analysis, enabling us to examine the emotional dynamics, trust-building, and negotiation strategies that shape modern leadership.

🌍 **The CULTure Framework**

Connect	Understand	Lead	Transform
Build trust & identity	Decode context & culture	Set tone & model influence	Uplift systems & legacy

---

🎬 **The Last Dance**

Platform: Netflix | ESPN | 2020
Course: *Sales & Negotiation Strategy*
Teaching Focus: Leadership Identity, Influence, Performance Culture, Trust in High-Stakes Teams

---

🔍 **Overview**

The Last Dance chronicles Michael Jordan's final season with the Chicago Bulls — offering a case study in leadership under pressure, strategic influence, and the emotional toll of winning at all costs. It's more than a sports doc — it's a masterclass in how leaders negotiate identity, loyalty, and power in the public eye.

🎓 **Why I Use This in Sales & Negotiation**

This film helps students understand how leadership is a form of **ongoing negotiation** — with self, team, and external forces like media, sponsors, and fans. Jordan's persona as both teammate and brand ambassador opens a discussion on:

- **How leaders use emotional intelligence to drive team performance**
- **What it means to lead without compromising standards**
- **How narratives are negotiated to protect personal and team legacy**

We analyze how trust is built (or eroded) when stakes are high — and how effective communication frames a leader's influence.

🧭 **CULTure Tie-In**

Lead – Students identify how cultural tone is set through feedback, performance expectations, and conflict resolution. We explore what "leadership fluency" looks like in fast-paced, ego-driven environments.

🧠 **Teaching Prompts & Class Discussion**

- How does Jordan use influence — not just authority — to lead?
- What trade-offs exist between empathy and excellence in leadership?
- How does trust function in a team driven by high-stakes outcomes and personal brands?

✍️ **UNH Student Reflections – Sales & Negotiation**

- "This changed how I think about negotiation, it's not just contracts and deals, it's every conversation about performance, trust, and expectations."
- "Watching Jordan lead made me realize that even the best performers need coaching. Influence isn't about being loud, it's about being clear and consistent."
- "It showed me how emotional control and presence are key to winning people over, not just winning games."