

LDST 101
Foundations of Leadership Studies

Dr. Wren
Fall Term, 2005

Course location: Jepson Hall 102 **Office hours:** MW 2:15-3:30
Class meeting time: TTH 2:15-3:30 **Office location:** Jepson 241
Contact information: Telephone 287-6098; e-mail twren@richmond.edu

Course Synopsis

This course is intended to be a beginning point for the examination of the issues and concepts involved in the study of leadership. Note that this is a course addressing the *foundations* of leadership studies, and is not an *introductory survey* of existing literature on leadership studies. This means that our efforts this term will involve the careful reading of several classic texts that touch upon the problems and possibilities of leadership as a manifestation of – and response to – the problems and prospects of the human condition. The readings and class discussions will focus on a series of central questions designed to isolate the basic premises of leadership, which will in turn enable us to apply our new-found understanding to contemporary leadership issues and challenges. Completion of this course should also lay an appropriate “foundation” for further work in the field of leadership studies.

Texts

Plato, *The Republic*, trans. and intro. by Desmond Lee, 2d ed. (London: Penguin Books, c. 375 B.C.E./2003)

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. and intro. by David Wooton (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1513/1995)

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. and intro. by C. B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1690/1980)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, trans. by Donald A. Cress, intro. by Peter Gay (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, c. 1756/1987)

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* 2 vols., ed. By Phillips Bradley (New York: Vantage Books, 1835/1840/1990)

Robert A. Goldwin, *From Parchment to Power: How James Madison Used the Bill of Rights to Save the Constitution* (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1997)

In addition, on occasion there will be supplemental readings assigned, which will be placed on electronic reserve.

Course Requirements

- (1) **paper #1: textual analysis.** Your first assignment will be to write a brief (2-3 page) textual analysis of a passage from Plato's *Republic*. The purpose is to hone your analytical skills and to gain experience in writing clearly and persuasively. **(5%)**
- (2) **midterm examination.** The purpose of the midterm examination is to allow you to pause and pull together the various strands of thought we have been pursuing. The process of review and, hopefully, the act of responding to the examination itself are intended to help you to consolidate your learning in the course. **(25%)**
- (3) **paper #2: response to argument.** You will be asked to write a relatively brief (4-5 page) response to an argument we have encountered in the readings. In it you will summarize the author's argument concisely and then craft a substantive and analytical response. The purpose is to help you to think critically and to develop skill in constructing a persuasive argument. **(15%)**
- (4) **paper #3: original analytical essay.** In this assignment, the objective is for you to systematically and persuasively present recommendations and conclusions for a contemporary leadership challenge. You must first identify a question or problem related to our material confronting our modern era, specifying the implications for leadership as you understand the concept. Then, drawing upon the insights of this course, you will formulate a proposed solution. As you do so, you should take care to identify your assumptions regarding fundamental premises that we have focused upon in this course. The purpose of the assignment is to help you to build upon the learning of the previous writing assignments, and to achieve the further objective of gaining experience in applying the lessons of the classroom to leadership challenges of the world. This paper should be 8-10 pages in length. Your instructor will work closely with each student as this project progresses. **(20%)**
- (5) **final examination.** The purpose of the final exam is to cause you to reflect upon the larger issues of the course. It also is intended to help you refine your own individual conceptualization of leadership. It will be comprehensive. **(35%)**
- (6) **class attendance and participation.** The essential approach of this course is best captured in the phrase "shared learning experience." The implication is that instructor and students will be fellow sojourners in the search for insights into leadership. This means that it is imperative that you complete the assigned readings prior to each class. You will be expected to attend class, and to enlighten us with your insights. Attendance will be recorded. You will be allowed one unexcused absence. Unless you have a legitimate reason for being absent (which must be communicated to the instructor prior to class), any absences beyond what is indicated in this paragraph will lower your final grade.

The Questions of Leadership

Our efforts in this course will take the form of a continuing inquiry into some of the central questions of leadership. By parsing some of the great works of the (Western) tradition, we will glean a variety of answers. To these we must add our own reasoned responses. Because there will always be differences in the answers to the central leadership questions, this class will be one of intellectual engagement, where each of us must contribute to a reasoned dialogue. Although undoubtedly other questions will spring up, the following queries will guide our discussions. By the end of the term, we should be able to respond to these queries in an informed manner. We will know not only how our chosen commentators answered these questions, but we will also *begin* to devise our own responses. I stress *begin* because this course is intended to be just that: a beginning in your thinking about leadership, hopefully a part of an intellectual quest that will occupy you for life.

The “questions of leadership” can be separated into three categories:

A preliminary question

The most basic question we will address is also one of the most important:

What is leadership?

Although we will address this issue in a preliminary way at the outset of the course, in reality the answering of this query will occupy you throughout the term, and, indeed, for a long time to come. The reason that our response will be so long in coming is not that leadership cannot be defined – in fact, we will have an adequate starting point before we complete our initial class – but because the topic is so rich and complex that I will encourage you not to take a simplistic and reductionist approach. Part of the joy of the class will be our continual uncovering of further nuances about the nature of leadership.

The leadership template

The heart and soul of our analysis this term will center around the questions contained in something I call the “leadership template.” For those of you who eventually take LDST 300, Theories and Models of Leadership, you will find that modern leadership scholars study something called “implicit theories” of leadership – that is, “implicit beliefs and assumptions about the characteristics of effective leaders” that “influence the expectations people have for leaders and their evaluations of leader actions.” (Yukl, 2006, pp. 129-130). For purposes of this course, I have co-opted (and to some extent expanded) the term “implicit theory of leadership.” To me, implicit theories of leadership are the result of an individual’s answers to a series of fundamental questions about leadership, and, indeed, the human condition. How one responds to these central questions will, in turn, determine one’s definition of leadership, the ends it serves, the

respective roles of leaders and followers, and indeed, one's fundamental values. Applying the template of leadership to our texts will allow us to perceive the "implicit leadership theory" of each commentator we encounter. And, because we will continually be debating the wisdom of the responses we come across, in the process you will be developing your own implicit theory of leadership.

Now, a word about my use of the term "template." The dictionary defines "template" as "a gauge, pattern, or mold used as a guide." Back in the day, before the use of icons on computers, there used to be a thin plastic overlay that we placed over the "function" keys at the top of our keyboards to tell us what "F1" could do, etc. Those days are (thankfully) over now, but the questions of the "leadership template" perform a similar function. By, in effect, placing the questions of the leadership template alongside the texts we will be studying, we can use the questions of the template to make sense of our texts from a leadership perspective. Because few of our readings address the central issues of leadership in a direct fashion, our template can help us puzzle out the implicit leadership theories of each commentator, and to thereby gain an expanded knowledge of leadership for ourselves.

Below, I set out the ten questions of the leadership template, together with a brief elaboration. Further explication will come in class.

1. What is the leadership challenge?

Another way of putting this question is: "What causes the need for leadership?" In other words, what perceived problems or challenges sparked the individual to consider a reaction that we might label a leadership response? The perceived nature of the challenge quite logically has a great impact on the content of the response. Having identified the challenge at the outset, after completing our study of the text we can look back and consider whether or not the commentator's leadership response was adequate and appropriate. This question also invites analysis of the role of context in leadership.

2. What is the perception of human nature?

In a phenomenon like leadership which is dependent upon a relationship between leaders and followers, the assumptions one makes about the human condition become critical. Subtopics that should occupy our attention include: is human nature essentially individualistic or communal? are humans unregenerate or perfectible? are they capable of governing themselves? The answers to such questions fundamentally shape the conception of the leadership relation.

3. What is the proper end or purpose of leadership?

This question is often related to the initial query regarding the leadership challenge; that is to say, the intended "end" of leadership is often some form of solution to the perceived problem. But this question is really getting at a deeper issue. It asks about the aspirations that drive the leadership relation, and about the moral purpose of

leadership. Uncovering these can yield enormous insight into the consequent structures, relationships, and processes.

4. What is the epistemology of leadership?

This is another term that may require explanation. By this I intend to ask the question: “How do we know what to do, and if what we are doing is correct?” Usually this involves identifying some external standard to guide behavior and measure success. For example, that standard may be the common good, the actions of the market, or truth, or the commentator could even look to the outcomes of certain appropriate *processes* as the appropriate guide for behavior. Although the potential for overlap with other questions exists here as well (e.g., the “common good” could be both end and measure of success), our focus here is on what the participants in the leadership process look to as they seek to realize their ideal of leadership.

5. What is the role of the leader?

This question includes such issues as who should be chosen as leader, as well as role expectations for the leader. It is worth noting that this single question is really the sole focus of the modern social science version of “implicit theories of leadership.” This demonstrates, in turn, how much more widely we are casting our net.

6. What is the role of followers?

This query explores the other side of the leadership equation: the followers (in the public sphere, this will be “the people”). Since most of our readings this term are set in historical periods prior to the rise of important private organizations (like corporations), most of our discussions will revolve around the role of the people in the public sphere. Therefore, we will address such issues as: where does sovereignty reside? what are the expectations of the people? when can the people legitimately resist their leaders? Later, as you think about the role of followers in modern organizations [not our focus this term], parallel issues will come up, but the themes will be “empowerment,” “followership,” “whistle-blowing,” and the like.

7. How should leaders and the people [followers] interact?

This clearly relates to and derives from the previous questions, but the focus is different: instead of looking at leaders and followers (the people) in isolation, we will look at the nature of the relations between them, and what might be called the leadership *process*, in which leaders and followers interact as they seek to achieve societal or organizational goals. Several issues will arise: what is the nature of this relationship (should it be one of deference or equality)? In the public sphere, this means that we will need to contemplate matters such as these: what kind of “social contract” is there, and what are the implications? What is the role of representation? Although we will not be addressing such matters in this class, later, when you encounter more modern social

scientific scholarship on leadership, say, in the Theories and Models of Leadership class, you will encounter narrower, more focused approaches to the leadership process.

8. How is the matter of diversity and/or minority interests addressed?

This is an issue of paramount importance to us as we consider modern-day leadership, both in terms of the ends of leadership and in the nature of the relationships among the participants. You may be surprised to find out that concerns of this nature are of relatively recent vintage. For a very, very long time it was merely assumed that everyone had identical interests, and/or that those who did not were to be excluded rather than assimilated. Witnessing the early stirrings of concern for this issue will be one of the intriguing storylines of this course.

9. What institutions and processes must be designed to accommodate the premises and assumptions revealed in the answers to the questions in the leadership template?

Given the fact that most of the commentators we will be studying are seeking to address a perceived leadership challenge, it should come as no surprise to us that most also come forth with some specific institutional and/or policy recommendations to remedy it. Having parsed their work, using the template of leadership to identify their key assumptions and premises, we are in a better position to evaluate each commentator's proposed solution. Does it solve the problem? What other difficulties does it bring in its train? Is the proposed solution consistent with the commentator's underlying premises and values? This last leads us to the next template question.

10. What values become evident in the course of answering the preceding questions?

It is important to recognize that no stance on the preceding questions (or any question, for that matter) is value-free. In claiming that humans are individualistic or communal, perfectible or unregenerate, we are, in part, setting out different value claims that might be contested by others. In a similar vein, choosing appropriate actions by looking to the market rather than some version of truth is also making a claim that is subject to debate. These debates are all about values, and we will be engaged in trying to identify the values of our commentators (and of ourselves), and subject them to scrutiny. For example, we will identify (and label) such values in tension as freedom and order, hierarchy and equality, individualism and community, and the like. Many have acknowledged that values are at the heart of leadership, and part of our learning this term is to become better fitted to identify values and their implications.

The ultimate query

Having worked through the types of analysis suggested above with regard to the chosen commentators (and ourselves), we will be in a position to contemplate a larger question:

How does the analytical approach that we have learned in this course help us to better understand and practice leadership?

The ultimate objective of our work is to enhance your understanding of leadership in such a way that you can utilize the insights in confronting your own leadership challenges. This will not be accomplished all at once, in one fell swoop. Instead, you are embarking upon a lifetime journey of further learning. However, we will begin the journey by working through an applied case study, in which you will have the opportunity to use our analytical approach to gain some insight into the leadership (even though the materials never mention the term explicitly).

Course Schedule and Assignments

Week 1

Aug. 30 Introduction: What Is Leadership?
 No assignment

Sept. 1 Exploring the Leadership Template
 Assignment TBA

Week 2

Sept. 6 Plato: Introduction and Preliminaries
 Plato, Part I, pp. 3-52
 Part II, pp. 53-66

Sept. 8 Plato: Guardians and Justice
 Plato, Part IV, pp. 112-129
 Part V, pp. 130-156
 Part VI, pp. 157-188

Week 3

Sept. 13 Plato: Philosophical Ruler
 Plato, Part VII, pp. 189-248

Sept. 15 Plato: Education
 Plato, Part III, pp. 67-111
 Part VIII, pp. 249-274

Week 4

Sept. 20 Plato: Concluding
 Plato, Part IX, pp. 275-334

Sept 22 Machiavelli
The Prince, Chaps. 1-19, pp. 5-63

Week 5

Sept. 27 Machiavelli
The Prince, Chaps. 20-26, pp. 63-80
Discourses (on reserve)

***** FIRST PAPER DUE *****

Sept. 29 Make-up Day

Week 6

Oct. 4 Locke
Chaps. I-IX, pp. 5-68

Oct. 6 Locke
Chaps. X-XIX, pp. 68-124.

Week 7

Oct. 11 Rousseau
Books I & II, pp. 17-48

Oct. 13 Rousseau
Books III & IV, pp. 49-103

Week 8

FALL BREAK

Oct. 20 Make-up and review

Week 9

Oct. 25

***** MIDTERM EXAMINATION *****

Oct. 27 Tocqueville
Vol. I, pp. vii-xi, 3-16, 26-54

Week 10

Nov. 1 Tocqueville
Vol. I, pp. 55-105, 125, 160, 168, 122, 138, 151-156

Nov.3 Tocqueville
Vol. I, pp. 173-180, 191-212, 230-231, 236-253

Week 11

Nov. 8 Tocqueville
Vol. II, pp. v-vii, 4, 8-12, 86, 89-110, 115-127, 140-142, 158-161,
175-176

Nov. 10 Tocqueville
Vol. II, pp. 243-248, 251-263, 287-302, 316-330

Week 12

Nov. 15 Make-up day

***** SECOND PAPER DUE *****

Nov. 17 Application: The Constitution and Bill of Rights
The Debate
Constitution and Bill of Rights (on reserve)
Federalist Nos. 37, 39, 44, 10, 49, 57, 68, 78, 85 (on reserve)
Anti-Federalist writings: "Federal Farmer"; "Brutus";
Melancton Smith (on reserve)

Week 13

Nov. 22 Goldwin
From Parchment to Power, pp. 1-54

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14

Nov. 29 Goldwin
From Parchment to Power, pp. 57-102

Dec. 1 Goldwin
From Parchment to Power, pp. 105-184

Week 15

Dec. 6 Back to the Future
 Assignment TBA

Dec. 8 Toward the Study of Leadership
 Assignment TBA

***** THIRD PAPER DUE *****

***** FINAL EXAMINATION THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 9A.M.-12N. *****