Leadership and the Social Sciences

LDST102

Course Description
Introduction to the study of leadership through theoretical and empirical explorations of social interaction. Readings selected from anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology. Emphasis on advancing the understanding of leadership through an increased appreciation of the rich complexities of human behavior. This course may be taken before, after, or independently of, LDST 101.

The grand aim of all science is to cover the greatest number of empirical facts by logical deduction from the smallest number of hypotheses or axioms.

Albert Einstein

Course Goals

Content

Scholars and sages have long puzzled over the nature of leadership. Philosophers raised questions about the nature of leadership itself: its rationality, its utility, and its moral implications; political theorists examined such processes as justice, rights, law, and authority; historians studied the life course of those individuals who were able to change the outcomes of events both large and small. But in the 1900s these scholars were joined by researchers who took an empirical, social science, approach to leadership.

One of the primary aims of this course is to review the results of their work, as well as examine the methods they use to extend our understanding of leadership. We will consider basic questions about human behavior, in general, and leadership, specifically.

Topics will include:
- What is leadership, and how do different societies conceptualized leadership?
- How can leadership be studied, scientifically?
- Why do people follow leaders?
- Do leaders have distinctive personalities?
- How do leaders communicate with, and persuade, others?
- Why do leaders emerge within bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states?
- Are women and men equally suited to lead?
- Does leadership have genetic and/or evolutionary roots?
- What theories have been developed to explain leadership?

Learning Outcomes

Beyond declarative content—the facts, theories, and findings—we will also examine the process of leadership study: how social scientists generate theories and do research. We will learn things like "Theory Y predicts this will happen," but we'll learn to "think like a social scientist." In consequence, we are not only trying to learn facts and information, but also further develop the capacity to analyze and synthesize information; identify solutions to problems; and to think creatively and critically.

But that’s not all. I also hope you will participate actively in this course, and so develop a number of academic and scholarly skills, including gains in self-regulation, ethical thought, writing and communication, information search and retrieval, technological skills, skill in conducting scientific research (including data collection and literature review), and study skills. You may also develop leadership skills, but this course is not a “how to lead” course.

Course “Mission”

The course is a key component of the overall University of Richmond curriculum. Hence, it sustains “a collaborative learning and research community that supports the personal development of its members and the creation of new knowledge. A Richmond education prepares students to live lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a global and pluralistic society.” As a course in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, this course strives to educate people “for and about leadership”. The key word in the name is studies.
Leadership and the Social Sciences

Topics

LDST101 examines the philosophy, history, and political side of leadership. LDST102 (this course!) examines the science of leadership, so we will be searching through all the social sciences (anthropology, economics, sociology, history, political science, geography, psychology, and others) for theory and research pertaining to leadership in all its many and varied forms. We will examine theories of human behavior, in general, and how they apply to leadership processes. This course stresses empirical findings pertaining to leadership.

Examples of topics we'll be considering follow.
- Authority, Obedience, and Leadership
- Dark Side of Leaders’ Personalities
- Do Leaders Make a Difference?
- Do People Need Leaders?
- Empirical Procedures in Studying Leadership
- Endorsing Leaders
- Ethics of Leadership
- Evolutionary Perspectives
- Followership
- How Effective Are Leaders?
- Inequities and Leadership
- Influence and Persuasion
- Intelligence and Leadership
- Leadership across Cultures
- Leaders as Skilled Decision Makers
- Men, Women, and Leadership
- Neuropsychology of Leadership
- Origins of Leadership in Human Society
- Perceiving & Evaluating Leaders
- Personality, Situations, and Experiences
- Power and Leadership
- Research Methods
- Self-presentational Processes
- Social Identity and Leadership
- Status and Hierarchy
- Strengthening the Relational Side of Leadership

The Big Picture

University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end: it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, cultivating the public mind, purifying the national taste, supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life.

It teaches us to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophisticated, and to discard what is irrelevant.

It prepares us to fill any post with credit and to master any subject with facility.

It shows us how to accommodate ourselves to others, how to throw ourselves into their state of mind, how to bring before them our own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, and how to bear with them.

The educated person is at home in any society, has common ground with every class, knows when to speak and when to be silent, is able to converse, is able to listen, can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably when he or she has nothing to impart.

Cardinal Newman, 1852

Teaching and Learning Methods

We will use a variety of structured learning experiences to achieve course goals, including lecture, discussions, demonstrations, activities, projects, and audiovisual events. Our class sessions serve several purposes: they clarify difficult topics discussed in the readings, raise questions about the scientific method, stimulate you to think critically about leadership, and provide you with the opportunity to express your understanding of leadership in your own words. It is essential that you prepare for class by doing reading, reviewing, and analyzing the assigned topic prior to the day class examines the topic. The amount of time you need to set aside to prepare will depend on your background in social science.

Please note these 3 special aspects of the course:
1. We will conduct research projects to further examine questions raised by readings.
2. You will be required to attend at least 2 presentations from the Jepson Forum series.
3. I will meet regularly in an executive session with a subgroup of students.

Text and Readings

This course uses books, articles, and online sources. The books are:
- Obedience to Authority, by Stanley Milgram. New York: Harper Collins (0-06-131938-x)
- How to Win Friends and Influence People. New York: Pocket Books (978-0-671-02703-2)

We will rely on both published books and on readings from scientific journals. Only “real” readings will be assigned: if we aren’t going to examine the reading, then I identify the reading as “optional” and you won’t be required to know its content. The readings are original source papers and chapters and selected to give you an “inside look” at how social science is done.

Instructor Information

Don Forsyth is a social psychologist who studies leadership, ethics, group dynamics, and a variety of other interpersonal processes. He received his BS from Florida State University (double major in psychology and sociology) and his PhD. in psychology from the University of Florida. He holds the Leo K. and Gaylee Thorsness Chair in Ethical Leader-
Activities, Assignments, Quizzes, Exams…

We will carry out a variety of activities during the semester, including quizzes, exams, papers, etc. In some cases some of these projects may be completed by groups rather than individuals.

**Quizzes**: usually administered online, open book, 10 questions typically

**Short papers**, journal entries, wiki postings, reaction papers, brief summaries of readings, self-assessments, reports on short term projects, and/or weekly reflections. Some will be written in class, others outside of class and submitted via Blackboard.

**Events**: This class is based on an academic “commons” model, so it assumes that students are engaged in learning both in and out of class. Students will be required to attend several events that occur outside of regular class hours.

**Exams**: We will have 2 or 3 examinations. Items on the tests will cover all course material, no matter what its source (e.g., lecture, text, video). Exams will be multiple choice and/or short answer.

**Research**: Students are required to take part in research and/or attend local and/or regional presentations of research. The research requirement is described in detail in Blackboard.

**Engagement**: Students are also given credit if actively engaged in the course and its material. Engagement is not merely showing up for class, but taking an active role in the course discussion, projects, and communications. The default grade for engagement is not an A; only the most unrelentingly active and informed students earn Bs and As.

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**Grades**

Your grade in the course depends on your successful completion of assigned tasks and overall engagement. A grade of B will be awarded to those who complete assignments skillfully and are fully engaged. Higher or lower grades will be awarded for superlative or lower quality work. I will warn you, by the date for withdrawal, if I consider your work to be of failing quality. However, because much of your grade in class is based on material turned in after that date (e.g., papers, final exam) this feedback will not be disposi

In general—but not entirely—grades will be criterion-referenced, individualized, and teacher-generated. First, most of the grading in this class is not normed, but in some cases members’ scores will be determined by relative rank. Second, scores will be based on individual and collective work. Third, in some cases a portion of your grade will be based on others’ evaluations of your work.

This course deals with complex subjects and is challenging and you should budget your time demands accordingly. Cut offs for grades are etched in stone, and based on the following percents.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99.1-100%</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>91 to 99%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.1 to 89.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>81 to 89%</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80 to 80.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79.1 to 79.9%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>71 to 79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to 70.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69.1 to 69.9%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>61 to 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 to 60.9%</td>
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If logistical problems arise (or errors in planning must be corrected), then this system may be revised. You will be notified, in class, of any changes. There is no “extra credit” in this class.

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**Sensitivity.** This course examines topics pertaining to human behavior, so students should realize that they may acquire insight into their own personalities, actions, and tendencies as a result of participation. We will focus on sensitive issues, including religious values, human nature, morality, values, and what not. We will remain sensitive to the feelings and perspectives of others during these discussions. As a general rule, the goals of any particular exercise will be described beforehand except when full disclosure in advance will undermine the educational or scientific value of the experience.

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**Disabilities**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require I provide academic adjustments or accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams. Please note that students who require extended time for quizzes and examinations should not schedule classes and activities immediately following class, so that they can have additional time for their work. Students who require the use of computer for completing in-class assignments must use a non-networked computer for that purpose.
Instructor Responsibilities

As the instructor, I will help you learn the course material by giving lectures, leading discussions, assigning activities that ask you to think about leadership processes, answering your questions, and giving you feedback about your progress towards your goals. Remember that my primary responsibility is to help you learn about (a) leadership processes, (b) the social science of leadership, and (c) to think critically, and scientifically, about leadership processes (and claims about leadership processes). If you have any questions about course material, please email me, call, or come to my office.

Student Responsibilities

You are responsible for completing the assigned readings, coming to class, studying the material, taking the required examinations, completing the assigned activities, and logging into Blackboard regularly. Your task of learning will be much easier if you (a) ask me questions about the readings and topics; (b) keep up with the readings; (c) communicate with classmates regularly; (d) talk to me during office hours; and (e) take advantage of electronic resources available to you. This course will require between 20 and 25% of your week’s time spent on academics, and more if you are unfamiliar with the methods of social science, just beginning advanced studies, or a relative slow reader. Budget your time accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your learning in this class: if you earn an A you can be proud of your accomplishment, but should you fail you will have to bear the blame.

Policies

- If you must be absent from class for religious reasons, because you are involved in University-level athletics, or some other good reason, inform me by email of the conflict.
- If you are ill on the day of an examination, leave a voice mail message prior to the class.
- Please heed the basic rules of etiquette pertaining to class discussion.

Awarding of Credit: To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities. [http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

- Religious Observance: Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of class if they will need accommodations for religious observance. [http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html)

- Honor System: The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.” [http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/)

If you plagiarize, where plagiarism is direct copying of others’ work or your own previous work (any sequence of 4 words or more) or use others’ ideas without attribution, I will turn you in to the honor council or fail you for the assignment and/or course. Passing on materials from this class to others (e.g., depositing course materials in “test bank” or online at resources sites such as CourseHero) will be considered an honors violation. ALL work in this class is assumed to be pledged work and individual work unless you are explicitly asked to work collectively.

Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 26-28</td>
<td>What is leadership?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 2-4</td>
<td>What are the social sciences?</td>
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<td>Sep 9-11</td>
<td>What is the “science” of leadership?</td>
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<td>Sep 16-18</td>
<td>How can we mine data about leadership?</td>
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<td>Sep 22-23</td>
<td>Col. Leo K. Thorsness</td>
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<td>Sep 23-25</td>
<td>Why do some lead, and others follow?</td>
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<td>Sep 30</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Thurman, 7 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 30-Oct 2</td>
<td>Is leadership part of human nature?</td>
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<td>Oct 7-9</td>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
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<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Fall break</td>
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<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Is leadership in the eye of the beholder?</td>
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<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Maj. Gen Michael Lehnert, 7 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 21-23</td>
<td>How do leaders influence others?</td>
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<td>Oct 28-30</td>
<td>How do leaders establish their status and identity?</td>
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<td>Nov 4-6</td>
<td>What is the leaders personality?</td>
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<td>Nov 11-13</td>
<td>How do leaders claim identities?</td>
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<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Norrell, 7 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 18-25</td>
<td>What makes a leader?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 27-28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 2-4</td>
<td>How do leaders win friends and influence people!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>Final Exam, 2-5 PM</td>
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</table>

Questions and Notes:

- Please do not use any e-devices (e.g., laptops, cells, Ipads, etc.) in class.
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