Theories and Models of Leadership

LDST300
Syllabus

Course Description
Examination of theories and models in leadership studies. Introduces role of theory in social science, and both classic and contemporary leadership theories/models are presented. Emphasis on critical analysis of theoretical perspectives.

Our motto: There is nothing so practical as a good theory.
— Kurt Lewin, 1951

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Course Goals

Sociologist George Caspar Homans, when considering the nature of science, explained: when “the truth of a relationship lies finally in the data themselves” and “nature, however stretched out on the rack, still has a chance to say ‘No!’—then the subject is a science” (1967, p. 4). Homans’s definition enjoins those who study leadership to “stretch nature out on the rack” by systematically measuring leadership processes and by testing “the truth of the relationship.”

But scientists do not just measure things and collect data. They also create conceptual frameworks to organize their findings. Homans recognized that “nothing is more lost than a loose fact” (1950, p. 5) and urged the development of theories that organize what is known, and not known, about social phenomena.

This course takes the scientific side of leadership studies seriously, for it reviews the many and varied conceptual frameworks that theorists have developed in the past 75 years in their scientific studies of leadership. Course goals include:

Content: Review of the primary theories and models in the field. At the course’s end students will be able to list the basic assumptions, hypotheses, and (in some cases) supporting evidence for the key theories and models dealing with leadership.

Process: Beyond declarative content—the facts, theories, and findings—students will also examine the process of leadership study: how social scientists generate theories and do research. We will not only learn things like “Theory Y predicts this will happen” or “Such and such study supported this hypothesis,” but also the assumptions that guide the research. We will therefore spend considerable time examining research methods per se, including the use of data and statistics to test hypotheses about leadership processes.

General Intellectual Skills: Those who participate actively in the class will likely develop a number of academic and scholarly skills, including gains in critical thinking, ethical thought, writing and communication, information search and retrieval, technological skills, and study skills. The course stresses the analysis of leadership processes, at a theoretical level, and so students will develop facility in theorizing: developing conceptual model’s of leadership process.

Application: Although application is not a central focus of this class, it will promote the development of a sophisticated and empirically informed understanding of leadership that will provide the basis for effective practice.

Curricular Note: This course is a required course for all Leadership majors and minors, who take the course only after they have completed basic course work on leadership in the humanities, social sciences, service learning, and critical thinking. It builds most notably on Leadership 102, the Social Science of Leadership, for it focuses on empirically based analyses of leadership conducted by researchers in such disciplines as psychology, sociology, economics, and management. The content coverage of this course is determined by the faculty of the Jepson School of Leadership Studies.

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.
Online Teaching and Learning

This course will be taught online. Although this kind of class has limitations, research indicates that online classes are superior to offline classes in terms of learning outcomes, particularly with advanced learners like yourself. The online format gives you all the resources you need to reach your learning goals, without the need to gather in a classroom at a fixed time and place.

Online Learning Is Different

Online classes, though, may initially feel odd. They can seem remote, for you are not interacting directly with other people as you would in a classroom. They also require more self-regulation—when universities started offering classes online they soon discovered that some students gradually fall out of sync and don’t stay on track. Online classes can also be dull, particularly when filled with grainy recorded lectures, forced discussions in online forums, and awkward Zoom sessions.

Maximizing the Online Class’s Potential

But motivated students who meet in an appropriately designed online class can overcome these limitations by creating social connections, making use of the course resources, and supporting one another in their work. To sustain a strong social presence in this class we will meet in synchronous sessions in Zoom and work closely in pairs or small groups with other students on assignments. Also, although a 100% online course, if you are local you can, of course, interact with other members of the class face-to-face. You could, for example, gather in study and review sessions, although if you do you will need to maintain your safety.

To eliminate uncertainty about what we will be doing each week, I have designed the course as a series of 5 units, with aligned but independent online learning modules so as to provide multiple avenues for you to engage with course materials. You can complete the activities in any order you prefer, at your own pace (so long as you get them done before the synchronous class session when we cover that topic).

Theories of leadership are intrinsically fascinating, but to further enhance our engagement we will be completing various activities, such as critiquing leaders, group-level quizzes, and a case study of specific leader of your own choosing. We will also be meeting in small groups via Zoom.

Prospering in the Online Class

For many students, online classes are an acquired taste—once you become practiced in the method, the advantages of learning online will make you wonder why all classes don’t take advantage of the efficiency of this approach to teaching and learning.

Topics

LDST300 examines the theoretical side of 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 theories and models pertaining to leadership in all its many and varied forms.

We will examine general theories of human behavior but also theories that focus specifically on leadership processes. Perspectives included in this review include:

- Style theories (e.g., Task- vs. Relationship-Oriented Styles of Leadership)
- Contingency Theories (e.g., Fiedler’s work)
- Hersey & Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Theory
- Trait approaches to leadership, including basic personality traits and “dark” qualities
- Cognitive theories of leadership, including Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT)
- Theories examining sex differences in leadership (included Eagly’s work)
- Psychodynamic approaches to leadership
- Leadership identity
- Charisma Theories of Leadership (including Weber)
- Power theories (French and Raven, Kipnis, Keltner)
- Transformational Theory (e.g., Bass)
- Cultural theories (House’s GLOBE Theory, Hofstede)
- Evolutionary Perspectives
- Ethical leadership theory (includes authentic leadership theory)

Instructor Information

Don Forsyth is a social and personality psychologist who studies leadership, ethical decision making, group dynamics, and a variety of other interpersonal processes.

He received his BS in sociology and psychology from Florida State University and his Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Florida. He holds the Leo K. and Gaylee Thorsness Chair in Ethical Leadership.

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This course utilizes the Internet for instruction—primarily Blackboard, Zoom, and email. To be fully informed, you will need to read your email daily, and develop skill in using Blackboard and Zoom.

This course also addresses research methods—the procedures used to test these theories. By necessity, we will therefore examine briefly research and statistical methods. Topics will include experimentation, correlational analyses, meta-analytic reviews, and structure equation modeling.
Course Design: What Will We be Doing Each Week in LDST300?

This is a student-centered class. The materials that you need are all available online, and you can complete the activities any time during the week and in whatever order you prefer (except for the synchronous Zoom sessions). This flexibility means you can adapt the course process to suit your own style.

Online classes work best, according to the experts, when they follow a pattern—regular activities, each week, to avoid ambiguity and confusion. So, each week we will examine a different theory or set of theories, by reading articles/chapters, completing various activities, discussing key ideas, and applying the theories to a specific case. Although each week’s activities will vary, most will include a mix of reading, watching, studying, reviewing, reflecting, discussing, and applying:

**Reading:** In Blackboard, each week you will read over the learning objectives for that week, and one or more (relatively) brief summaries of the week’s theory/theories.

**Watching:** Videos relevant to the week’s theory/theories will be posted in Blackboard. They will include a brief (I try to keep them less than 10 minutes in length) mini-lecture on the week’s topic. In some cases, I won’t be able to say all I need to say in just 10 minutes, and so there may be multiple videos to watch. I will, in most cases, post several other videos relevant to the week’s topic.

**Studying:** Some weeks an article or chapter will be posted in the module. I use the verb “study” for these readings, because they are in some cases dense or technical. All, though, will be selected because the provide key insights into the theories we are examining.

**Reviewing:** Each module will include a quiz on the material for that segment, no matter what its source (e.g., lecture, text, video). These quizzes are designed to give you immediate feedback about your progress, and can be re-taken. They will, in most cases, be multiple choice format.

**Reflecting:** Probably the most important learning outcome in this course comes from thinking about, mulling over, and contemplating the implications of each theory. To facilitate this reflection each module will remind you to sit back and think deeply about the course material, and generate at least one question, comment, or insight to share with others in the class.

**Applying:** This course requires you apply, regularly, the theories and models we are examining to a local leader—someone you can interview once (or twice) during the semester. Details of these assignments will be available in Blackboard, but this project will culminate in a final paper due at the semester’s end.

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**Responsibilities**

You are responsible for completing the assigned readings, studying the material, taking the quizzes, completing the assigned activities, logging into Blackboard regularly, and so on. 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 or a relative slow reader. Budget your time accordingly.

I am responsible for helping 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. If you have any questions about course material, please email me.

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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., final assignment) this feedback will not be dispositive. If logistical problems arise (or errors in planning must be corrected), then this system may be revised. You will be notified, via email, of any changes. There is no “extra credit” in this class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader Analysis 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement/Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Grades and Point Totals

- **A+** 198 / 200
- **A** 182 / 197
- **A-** 180 / 191
- **B+** 178 / 179
- **B** 162 / 177
- **B-** 160 / 161
- **C+** 158 / 159
- **C** 142 / 157
- **C-** 140 / 141
- **D+** 138 / 139
- **D** 122 / 137
- **D-** 120 / 121
- **F** <120
Disabilities and Sensitivities

(Not: The full list of University of Richmond and Jepson School of Leadership Studies Standards is posted on Blackboard.)

- **Differently abled students:** 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 (see [http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html) for more information).

- **Absences:** If you must be absent from synchronous class sessions that involve some type of assignment, contact me about making up the missed points.

- **Illness:** If you are ill please get in touch. Staying healthy is a primary initiative at this time. Stay well.

- **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 classes 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.” 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. *ALL* work in this class is assumed to be student work and individual work unless you are explicitly asked to work collectively.

- **Unauthorized Assistance:** Passing on or using materials from this class or previous classes (e.g., depositing or using course materials in “test banks” at a fraternity or sorority or posting material online at CourseHero) is an honors violation.

- **Blackboard:** This class involves online testing; so sharing of test information is prohibited. Passing on test information to others who have not yet completed the test will be considered an honors violation. Saving the tests for use by others is also a violation.

Special Issues and Concerns

Every attempt will be made to make sure that content examined in this course, and the processes used to examine this content, will cause no concern, upset, or harm to students.

- **Historical context:** This course examines theories of leadership, and so is in part a review of the historically prominent work in the field. In some cases that was written at a time where scholars adopted standards that are now considered inappropriate, dismissive, and harmful (e.g., the use of exclusionary language, such as the generic “he,” privileging certain viewpoints and perspectives that do not respect the rights of individuals from underserved groups, etc.). These works are reviewed as they represent the historical cannon of the field, but that review should not be taken as evidence that these views are condoned.

- **Personal reactions:** 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 consider issues that some might find sensitive, including values, injustice, human nature, morality, and values. (For example, we will examine theories that are based on evolutionary theory and some might find these perspectives to be personally objectionable.) We will remain sensitive to the feelings and perspectives of others during these discussions. **If at any time you are troubled by the content of the course, please contact me.**

University of Richmond Title IX Policy

From the UR Title IX webpage:

“The University is unwavering in its commitment to support survivors of sexual assault, to respond promptly to reports of any type of sexual misconduct, and to investigate and adjudicate reports in a manner that is fair and equitable to all parties involved. We understand that sexual violence can undermine a student’s academic success and we encourage students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need. Violations can be reported to the Title IX Office at report.richmond.edu. Reports to law enforcement can be made to University of Richmond Police Department at 804-289-8911.” Please see [https://prevent.richmond.edu/](https://prevent.richmond.edu/) for full details.

Much remains to be done, but progress is being made to redress many social injustices, including racial, ethnic, and identity-based biases (both implicit and explicit), aggression and violence, bullying and ostracism, and sexual harassment and sexual violence. I hope that, should you wish to discuss any matter regarding such injustices, personal or otherwise, that you will consider me a source of support and advocacy. However, please note that I am considered, by law, to be a “responsible employee” of UR. That designation means that I am required to report instances of sexual harassment and violence directly to the Title IX Office at the university. I can discuss most issues with you in confidence, but not issues pertaining to sexual assault.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This calendar is tentative</th>
<th>Updates and revisions will be posted on Blackboard. Blackboard dates always take precedent over the dates posted here.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Aug 24 (25, 27)</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Aug 31 (Sep1, 3)</td>
<td>Critiquing Theories</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Sep 7 (8, 10)</td>
<td>Behavioral/Directive</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Sep 14 (15, 17)</td>
<td>Contexts and Contingencies</td>
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<td>5 Sep 21 (22, 24)</td>
<td>Perceiving Leaders</td>
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<td>6 Sep 28 (29, Oct 1)</td>
<td>Personality and Individual Differences</td>
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<td>7 Oct 5 (6, 8)</td>
<td>Psychodynamic Approaches</td>
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<td>8 Oct 12 (13, 15)</td>
<td>Men, Women, and Leadership</td>
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<td>9 Oct 19 (20, 22)</td>
<td>Self and Identity</td>
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<td>10 Oct 26 (27, 29)</td>
<td>Persuasion and Charisma</td>
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<td>11 Nov 2 (3, 5)</td>
<td>Transformation and Change</td>
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<td>12 Nov 9 (10, 12)</td>
<td>Power and Influence</td>
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<td>13 Nov 16 (17,19)</td>
<td>Adaptation and Evolution</td>
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<td>Nov 25-29</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Nov 30 (Dec 1, 3)</td>
<td>Global Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Final Exam</td>
<td>Final Paper Due</td>
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