

Leadership and the Social Sciences

LDST 102, Fall 2025

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| INSTRUCTOR | Volha (Olga) Chykina |
| CLASS TIME | Section 11118: WED, FRI, 9:00 am – 10:15 am Section 12851: WED, FRI, 10:30 am – 11:45 am |
| CLASS LOCATION | Jepson Hall 120 |
| COURSE WEBSITE | blackboard.richmond.edu |
| CONTACT INFORMATION | vchykina@richmond.edu (email) |
| OFFICE HOURS | WED 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, or by appointment |
| OFFICE | Jepson Hall 131 |

Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of leadership from a social scientific perspective. Using readings from across the social sciences (psychology, sociology, political science, and others), we will examine topics that are central to leadership. For example, we will discuss what individual and contextual characteristics make people more or less likely to emerge as leaders. We will also consider issues of power, politics, social justice, and cross-cultural differences through the lens of leadership. Throughout the course, we will place a special emphasis on empirical studies of leadership. In the process, we will learn to think as social scientists.

Learning Outcomes

- 1). Students will demonstrate knowledge of leadership theories, as well as patterns of group and organizational behavior.
- 2). Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and critique methods used to analyze human behavior, as well as choose ways to analyze human behavior in leadership-related settings.
- 3). Students will understand the limitations of leadership theories and social scientific methods covered in class.

Required Texts

Steele, C. M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. New York, NY: WW Norton & Company.

All other materials will be provided via Blackboard or Boatwright library's website.

Course Grades

Your grade will be based on your performance across a range of assignments. You will complete a bluebook exam (30 points), a contemporary issues essay (10 points), ten random quizzes (2 X 10 = 20 points), a group presentation and book discussion (10 points), a final reflection essay (10 points), and engage in active class participation, assessed within a week after the Fall break and at the end of class (10 + 10 = 20 points). Points for each assignment translate directly and with equal weight into the percentages towards the final grade. I do not offer extra credit or make-up work, no exceptions.

Passing Letter Grades are Assigned as Follows

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|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
| A+ = 98-100% | B+ = 88-89% | C+ = 78-79% | D+ = 68-69% | |
| A = 94-97% | B = 84-87% | C = 74-77% | D = 64-67% | F <60 |
| A- = 90-93% | B- = 80-83% | C- = 70-73% | D- = 60-63% | |

Assignments and Class Activities

Exam (30 points). You will take a bluebook exam on **November 21st**. You can bring a hand-written index card (3 x 5 inches) of notes, you can hand-write on both sides. No printed or electronic notes will be allowed during the exam.

Contemporary Issues Essay (10 points). Many topics and concepts discussed during the course will appear in the news and other media. This essay is an opportunity for you to use class material to understand the broader world. During the semester, you will write an essay (about 4-pages long not counting references, with 1" margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font) connecting course concepts to (your choice of) real-life issues and events. Please note that I will grade your essay based on the quality of contribution, not its length. Given this, if you think that you need more or less space, you can write a shorter or a longer essay. As long as the discussed issue or event is current (i.e., occurred during the semester), you can write about it. A **rubric** for this essay is provided via Blackboard. The due date for the essay is **October 17th, at 11:59 pm**. I will reduce your grade by 1 point for each day the assignment is late.

Final Reflection Essay (10 points). This final reflection essay (3- to 4-pages long, with 1" margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font) will require students to engage critically with a topic addressed in the course, which will be announced during the final class session. As is the case with the Contemporary Issues Essay, I will grade your essay based on the quality of contribution, not its length. The assignment is designed to encourage students to synthesize and evaluate their learning, drawing connections across multiple themes and concepts explored throughout the semester. Students will complete it as a take-home assignment. This assignment is due during **the finals period**.

Random Quizzes (2 X 10 = 20 points). Throughout the course, we will have ten short random quizzes. These tests or short responses are aimed to ensure that you come to class prepared. In order to receive full points on these quizzes, you do not have to understand everything in your home readings, just reading them attentively will suffice. If you have an excused absence during class when the quiz is given, you will be provided with an opportunity to make up this work.

Group Presentation (10 points). You will prepare a group presentation based on *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. I will assign groups randomly. You will work on the presentation as a group during the December 3rd class. You must read the book before the December 3rd class. During the December 3rd class, I will provide prompts that your presentation should cover. I will join each group during class to facilitate in-group discussion of the book material. You should submit your presentation via Blackboard or email (as a Google Doc link, PDF, or a PowerPoint) by 5:00 pm on December 4th. One person can submit on behalf of the group. On December 5th, we will use your presentations during a general book discussion. 10 points for group presentation will include both the assessment of group presentation and your individual participation in the discussion of the book. As such, if you have not participated sufficiently in the book discussion, your grade for this assignment will be lower than that of your groupmates.

Class Participation (assessed twice during the semester, 2 X 10 = 20 points). Each student should come to class having carefully read the assigned materials. Students should be prepared to engage with the instructor and each other in a respectful manner appropriate for a professional setting. You are expected to come to every class, and your participation grade will suffer if you do not. With that said, I will grant excused absences with ease if you reach out before class and explain the nature of your absence. I will grade participation twice, once within a week after Fall break and once at the end of the course. The first grade will assess your participation before Fall break, and the second grade will assess your participation after the Fall break.

Additional Assignment and Grading Policies:

If a student disagrees with their grade for any of the assignments, they **must** discuss it with me within a week after the grade is returned. The two exceptions to this are the final essay and the final participation grade, for which students must contact me as soon as possible (I will specify that deadline when returning these assignments / grades).

Recap of Assignments and Due Dates

| Assignment | How to submit | Due date | Notes |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Random Quizzes (10) | In class, either via Blackboard or on paper. | Random dates, in class. | |
| Contemporary Issues Essay | Via Blackboard. | 11:59 pm on October 17 st . | You pick for what class material you prepare this assignment. |
| Exam | Bluebook | November 21 st , in class | You can bring a hand-written index card (3 x 5 inches) of notes, you can hand-write on both sides. |
| Group presentation | Presented in class, submit presentation via Blackboard or email. | Presentation should be finalized and submitted by 5:00 pm on December 4 th . | You will work on preparing this presentation during the December 3 rd class session. |
| Final Reflection Essay | Take-home assignment, submit via Blackboard | Section 11118 (9 am class): by 12 pm on December 12 th Section 12851 (10:30 am class): by 12 pm on December 8 th | |
| Class participation | In class. | Throughout the semester; assessed within a week after the Fall break, and at the end of the course. | |

Weekly Schedule

Students should come to class having read (or watched) all assigned materials. With the exception of the required text, all materials are on Blackboard or are publicly available.

Introduction

August 27:

- No required readings.

What is Leadership?

August 29:

- Northouse, P. (2016). *Chapter 1: Introduction* (pp. 1 -17). In P. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (7th Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Social Scientific Approaches to Studying Leadership

September 3:

- Antes, A. (2009). *Methods in Leadership Research* (pp. 53 – 85). In M. Mumford (Ed.), *Leadership 101*. New York, NY: Springer.

September 5:

- Jordan, C., & Zanna, M. (2004). *How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology* (pp. 583-588). In H. Reis & C. Rusbult, *Close Relationships: Key Readings*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Read the article below, keeping in mind the suggestions for reading a journal article provided by Jordan & Zanna. We will discuss the article vis-à-vis their suggestions in class.

- Soria, K. M., Werner, L., & Nath, C. (2019). Leadership Experiences and Perspective Taking among College Students. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 56(2), 138-152.

Individual Characteristics of Leaders

September 10:

- Gerring, J., Oncel, E., Morrison, K., & Pemstein, D. (2019). Who Rules the World? A Portrait of the Global Leadership Class. *Perspectives on Politics*, 17(4), 1079-1097.

September 12:

- Blaker, N. M., Rompa, I., Dessing, I. H., Vriend, A. F., Herschberg, C., & Van Vugt, M. (2013). The Height Leadership Advantage in Men and Women: Testing Evolutionary Psychology Predictions about the Perceptions of Tall Leaders. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 16(1), 17-27

September 17:

- Graham, J. R., Harvey, C. R., & Puri, M. (2017). A Corporate Beauty Contest. *Management Science*, 63(9), 3044-3056.

September 19:

- Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., & Salovey, P. (2011). Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Personal, Social, Academic, and Workplace Success. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5(1), 88-103.

Gender and Race in Leadership**September 24:**

No readings assigned for today but please watch these two TED Talks:

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2I4tus05hI
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVzHBWoIGew

September 26:

- Tripp, A. M., & Kang, A. (2008). The Global Impact of Quotas: On the Fast Track to Increased Female Legislative Representation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(3), 338-361.

October 1:

- Lu, J. G., Nisbett, R. E., & Morris, M. W. (2020). Why East Asians but not South Asians are Underrepresented in Leadership Positions in the United States. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(9), 4590-4600.

The Importance of Diversity in Leading Successful Teams

- **October 3:** Page, S. (2007). *Diverse Perspectives: How We See Things* (pp. 23–51). In S. Page, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- **October 8:** Ely, R. J., & Thomas, D. A. (2001). Cultural Diversity at Work: The Effects of Diversity Perspectives on Work Group Processes and Outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46(2), 229-273.

Leadership and Politics**October 10:**

- Viviani, L. (2017). A Political Sociology of Populism and Leadership. *Società Mutamento Politica*, 8(15), pp. 279-303.

This class will be on Zoom.

Fall Break!

October 15:

- Cole, W. M., & Schofer, E. (2023). Destroying Democracy for the People: The Economic, Social, and Political Consequences of Populist Rule, 1990 to 2017. *Social Problems*, ahead-of-print.

Power, Persuasion, and Leadership Ethics

October 17:

- Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would People Still Obey Today? *American Psychologist*, 64(1), 1-11.
- Contemporary Issues Essay due October 17, at 11:59 pm.

October 22:

- Lipman-Blumen, J. (2005). Toxic Leadership: When Grand Illusions Masquerade as Noble Visions. *Leader to Leader*, 2005(36), 29-36.
- Agnihotri, A., & Bhattacharya, S. (2019). Executive Crisis at Lululemon: Who Is Responsible for Establishing Company Culture? *SAGE Business Cases*, 1-12.

October 24:

- Kubin, E., Puryear, C., Schein, C., & Gray, K. (2021). Personal Experiences Bridge Moral and Political Divides Better than Facts. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(6), 1-9.

Leadership and Education

October 29:

- Wang, F. (2018). Social Justice Leadership—Theory and Practice: A Case of Ontario. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(3), 470-498.

October 31:

- Pfaff, S., Crabtree, C., Kern, H. L., & Holbein, J. B. (2021). Do Street-Level Bureaucrats Discriminate Based on Religion? A Large-Scale Correspondence Experiment among American Public School Principals. *Public Administration Review*, 81(2), 244-259.

November 5:

- Douglas, J. (2021). Neo-Nationalism and Universities. In J. Douglas (Ed.), *Neo-Nationalism and Universities: Populists, Autocrats, and the Future of Higher Education* (pp. 22-42). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Additionally, you should read one of the following chapters from the same book (*Neo-Nationalism and Universities: Populists, Autocrats, and the Future of Higher Education*). We will decide in class which chapter each student will read.

- O'Malley, B. (2021). Chapter 3. The Mystery of Brexit: Tumult and Fatigue in British Higher Education.
- Fisher, K. (2021). Chapter 8. Nationalism Revived: China's Universities under President Xi.
- Chirikov, I., & Fedyukin, I. (2021). Chapter 10. The Role of Universities in Putin's Russia: Reinforcing the State.

You should access these book chapters directly through Boatwright library's website.

Leadership Across Cultures

November 7:

- Du, Y., He, H., & Chu, Z. (2024). Cross-cultural nuances in sarcasm comprehension: a comparative study of Chinese and American perspectives. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1349002.

November 12:

- Berger, E. (2018). *How a Community-Led Response to Sexual Exploitation in Uganda Led to Systemic World Bank Reform*. Accountability Note. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3jX0YeE>.
- Ross, E. (2013). The Role of Small NGOs: Building Quality International Education. *Harvard International Review*, 35(1), 40-44.

Leadership and Corporate Social Responsibility

November 14:

- Aguinis, H., Rupp, D. E., & Glavas, A. (2024). Corporate social responsibility and individual behaviour. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 8(2), 219-227.

Exam Preparation and Exam

November 19:

- Review for the exam

November 21:

- Exam

Thanksgiving Break (November 26 – November 30)!

Round-Up: Leadership, Stereotypes, and What We Can do

December 3:

- Steele, C. M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. New York, NY: WW Norton & Company.

While introducing some new concepts not yet covered in class, this book also offers a great capstone to many topics that we have discussed during this course. Please come to the December 3rd class having read the entire book. During this class, you will have dedicated time to discuss the book in groups and start working on your group presentations. I will join each group to answer questions and facilitate the discussion. I will share the elements that students need to include in the presentation at the beginning of the class.

December 5: Reserved for final group presentations and book discussion.

Finals

Deadlines to submit the Final Reflection Essay:

Section 11118 (9 am class): December 12, 12 pm

Section 12851 (10:30 am class): December 8, 12 pm

End Fall Term: December 16

Final Grades Due: December 19, by 9 am.

Other Policies

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.

registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html

Disability Accommodations

The University of Richmond's office of Disability Services strives to ensure that students with disabilities and/or temporary conditions (i.e., concussions & injuries) are provided opportunity for full participation and equal access. Students who are approved for academic accommodations must complete the following steps to implement their accommodations in each class:

- 1) Submit their Disability Accommodation Notice (DAN) to each of their professors via the Disability Services Student Portal available at this link: sl.richmond.edu/be.
- 2) Request a meeting with each professor to create an accommodation implementation plan. Disability Services is available to assist, as needed.

It is important to complete these steps as soon as possible because accommodations are never retroactive, and professors are permitted a reasonable amount of time for implementation. Students who are experiencing a barrier to access due to a disability and/or temporary condition are encouraged to apply for accommodations by visiting disability.richmond.edu. Disability Services can be reached at disability@richmond.edu or 804-662-5001.

Honor System

All assignments are expected to be the student's original work. The Jepson School follows the provisions of the Honor System as outlined by the School of Arts and Sciences. This means that no student is to use, rely on or turn in work that was paid-for, copied, excessively summarized without citation, created in collaboration (without permission), produced by AI, or is otherwise not the original work of the student for the specific assignment (without explicit permission).

Religious Observance

Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.

registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html

Addressing Microaggressions on Campus

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership¹. Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups². Furthermore, both students and

¹ Sue, S., Zane, N., Nagayama Hall, G. C., & Berger, L. K. (2009). The Case for Cultural Competency in Psychotherapeutic Interventions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 525–548. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651>

² Bergom, I., Wright, M.C., Brown, M.K. and Brooks, M. (2011), Promoting College Student Development through Collaborative Learning: A Case Study of Hevruta. *About Campus*, 15, 19-25. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20044>

faculty who are exposed to microaggressions more often are more likely to have depressive symptoms and negative affect (a negative view of the world)³. A comfortable and productive environment where meaningful learning happens can be collectively created through actions, words, or environmental cues that promote the inclusion and success of marginalized members, recognizing their embodied identity, validating their realities, resisting sexism, ableism, and racism⁴. With this in mind, community member at the University of Richmond should aim to address microaggressions in the classroom by holding themselves, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

³ Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The Impact of Racial Microaggressions on Mental Health: Counseling Implications for Clients of Color. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(1), 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00130.x>

⁴ Rolón-Dow, R. (2019). Stories of Microaggressions and Microaffirmation: A Framework for Understanding Campus Racial Climate. *NCID Currents*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.106>