

LDST 102: Leadership and the Social Sciences

SPRING 2025

SECTION 03:	Tues/Thu 9:00-10:15am
SECTION 04:	Tues/Thu 10:30-11:45am
LOCATION:	Jepson Hall 107
WEBSITE:	https://blackboard.richmond.edu
INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Chris von Rueden
EMAIL:	cvonrued@richmond.edu
OFFICE:	Jepson Hall 235
OFFICE HOURS:	Wed/Fri 9:00-10:30am Or by appointment at a different time
ZOOM:	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84575502410?pwd=K2E3N2NnZGxVaHpOaU9TVnArbStlQT094wLYKJ (password)

Course Description:

This course is a continuation of LDST 101, but from the perspective of the social sciences (e.g. anthropology, political science, sociology, psychology, economics, behavioral biology). This course also satisfies the general education Social Inquiry requirement, via the following learning outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of theories and/or patterns of human behavior appropriate to the discipline.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate methods to analyze human behavior.
3. Students will assess the limitations of the theories, explanations, and methods they study.

More specifically, the first half of the course will expose you to social science research on leadership and human political behavior more generally:

- How are our societies similar to other primate societies, particularly our closest relatives the chimpanzees and bonobos?
- What causes inter-group discrimination or conflict? We will explore the origins of ethnicity, gender, and political partisanship and how these group memberships can become sources of coalitional conflict.

- What enables us to cooperate with each other and form large, stable societies? We will discuss the psychological motives that produce cooperation, as well as concepts like fairness and justice.

The second half of the course will have you simulate the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, as a case study in leadership and political coalitions competing for power. We will then think about ways leadership can bring about change in the policy arena today, including immigration, wealth inequality, and education.

The goal of the course is not only to expose students to the empirical study of leadership but also to stimulate them to think critically about human behavior and the design of our societies in general.

Course Format:

Most classes will consist of a mix of lecture and discussion. In addition, we will engage in various activities, particularly the reacting game *Chicago, 1968*. Lecture and discussion will build off **assigned readings, which must be completed BEFORE the day they are listed** (see Class Schedule below). The readings (and occasional viewing assignments) are either available on Blackboard or linked in the syllabus. Readings include several chapters from the following two books (though it is not required you get copies of them):

- Boyer, P. (2018). *Minds Make Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

BEFORE most class periods, you must also complete a quiz (on Blackboard) on the readings assigned for that class day. During classtime, I strongly encourage you to comment, ask a question, or provoke discussion at any time. Recent lecture slides will become available on Blackboard as a powerpoint file. I ask that you not leave during class-time unless you are in physical discomfort. **Use the bathrooms before you arrive to class.**

How you will be graded:

1. Discussion (15% of grade)

Your discussion grade will depend on you attending class, attending class on time, frequently participating in discussions, not leaving to use the bathroom during class, attending Jepson Forum talks (unless you notify me of an outstanding commitment; see Class Schedule and Assignments section of the syllabus), submitting required materials during our reacting game, presenting on readings when scheduled to do so, and leading in-class debates when

scheduled to do so. **You may miss 3 classes (for any reason, including illness) without a penalty.**

Students will present on readings and lead in-class debates according to their presentation number (see bolded numbers following most readings in the Class Schedule and Assignments section of the syllabus). Sign up for your presentation number here (be sure to first select the appropriate class section tab):

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12WnqnDp3o0sicLooq7Ngu_oOSuR8kZer55kenX49Uew/edit?usp=sharing

a. Reading Presentations

When presenting on readings during Parts 1 and 2 of the course, presenters with **odd numbers** should:

- briefly identify and explain the main points of the reading
- describe the evidence used to back up the main points (i.e. what kinds of sources or studies does the author rely on?)
- prepare one question to ask class members, that asks for clarification on some aspect of the reading or addresses something unexplained by the reading

When presenting on readings during Parts 1 and 2 of the course, presenters with **even numbers** should:

- compare and contrast the reading with material you've previously encountered in class
- discuss how you think the reading relates to the study of leadership
- prepare one question to ask class members, that connects the reading to current issues or events

Each presenter should take NO MORE than 10 minutes, including your leading of discussion surrounding your prepared question. Also, use online presentation software (**paste your presentation link to the presentation sign-up google doc before the start of class, and make sure you make the link publicly available**). You can contact me before you are due to present if you want guidance, but don't feel like you need to be an expert. I will not grade the accuracy of the presentations, but the effort you put into them and how well you address the presentation requirements will factor into your discussion grade.

b. In-class Debates

Part 4 of the course will consist of a series of in-class debates. For each debate, presenters will act as debate leaders. Presenters with **odd numbers** should give a **5 minute** opening statement, and presenters with **even numbers** should give a **5**

minute closing statement. Do not use presentation software. In between the opening and closing statements, **other members of each opposing team must participate at least once** by posing a question, presenting an opinion, or responding to the opposition. Debate leaders coordinate their team members' participation, and teams must take turns speaking. Those students not assigned to teams for a particular debate will act as judges.

In general, written assignments, reading presentations, and opening/closing arguments during debates will be graded on a three-point scale: didn't complete (0); minimal effort/thoughtfulness and incomplete (1); effortful/thoughtful and completed requirements (2).

2. Quizzes (25% of grade)

By 9:00am of the majority of class days (see Class Schedule and Assignments section), you will take a short quiz (on Blackboard) on the readings assigned for that class day. Quizzes are open-book and can be completed with the assistance of other students currently in the class. Quizzes become available online at the end of the previous class. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice or short answer questions. You will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz, and you must complete each quiz in one sitting. You are not able to attempt the same quiz more than once. At the end of the semester, you may drop your 2 lowest quiz grades. **Missed quizzes (for any reason, including illness) count towards the 2 you may drop.**

3. Midterm Exam (30% of grade)

The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions having you compare and contrast material we've read and discussed.

4. Final Paper (30% of grade)

Based on your research and guided by material we've discussed in class, you will write a paper that makes an argument in favor of one of the innovations or policy ideas proposed by Muthukrishna. More specifically, **the paper should include the following content:**

- detailed description of the innovation/idea
- description of the problem it is meant to solve
- discussion of any potential risks if the innovation/idea is implemented, including potential mismatch with what you've learned about human behavior
- discussion of how the President of the United States could influence citizens, businesses, and lawmakers to implement it

The paper **must cite material from both the Boyer and Muthukrishna readings** and **at least two readings** not from the class reading list. Readings may include scholarly books or articles,

or long-form journalism and news reports from reputable, non-partisan media. The paper will be **graded based on the following criteria**:

- inclusion of the required content bulleted above
- clear and interesting thesis argument
- logical and well-organized defense of the thesis
- thoughtfulness and originality of your arguments
- accurate use of sources

You will NOT be graded on your politics. In other words, whether your interpretations or recommendations lean left or right will not matter in how I grade your paper.

The paper (excluding any Appendices) should include a **minimum of 7 pages** (double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) and be structured as follows:

- (1) Introduction, in which you present your thesis
- (2) Main sections of the paper, in which you present your evidence (use sub-headings where appropriate)
- (3) Conclusion, in which you summarize the evidence for your thesis
- (4) References, in which you list your cited articles (in-text citations and the reference list should be in APA format: <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/apa-citation-guide>)

Further details about the final paper will be provided towards the end of the semester, but key dates to remember are:

- Apr. 24 (by classtime on Blackboard): tentative thesis due
- Apr. 30 (by 5pm on Blackboard): final paper due

Notes:

1. **COVID-19/Flu:** If you have any symptoms that may indicate COVID-19 or flu (e.g. cough, aches, unusual fatigue) do not come to class that day and get tested for COVID-19. I will help you make up the material you missed.
2. **Generative AI:** The Honor Code prohibits the use of any unauthorized assistance on assignments. For this course, the use of generative artificial intelligence tools (such as but not limited to ChatGPT, Bard, DALL-E, AlphaCode, Stable Diffusion, Synthesia, Cohere Generate) is considered unauthorized assistance, and using them in connection with any assignment that you submit to me **will be an Honor Code violation**. This includes the use of generative AI for any stage of the assignment from conception to completion.
3. **Plagiarism/Cheating/Honor System:** Per the Honor System, you pledge with each assignment you submit that you “have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance”. 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), or is otherwise not the original work of the student for the specific assignment (without explicit permission). For this course, unauthorized assistance **also includes use of AI at any stage of an assignment, or consultation of tests or quizzes provided by students from past classes.**

<https://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/pdfs/statutes.pdf>

4. **Electronic Devices:** laptop computers and phones are in general **not allowed** during classtime (excepting a disability accommodation requiring use of a laptop computer to take notes). You may use a tablet if it is kept flat on your desk/table, for purposes of notetaking or to refer to notes when presenting. On some occasions I may ask everyone to bring a laptop or tablet to class, if we have an activity planned that requires their use.
5. **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
6. **Religious Accommodation:** Students should notify me within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.
registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html
7. **Disability Accommodation:** Students who are approved for academic accommodations must: 1) Submit their Disability Accommodation Notice (DAN) to me via the Disability Services Student Portal (sl.richmond.edu/be), and 2) Talk with me to create an accommodation implementation plan within the first two weeks of classes.

Campus Resources:

If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

Weinstein Learning Center (<https://wlc.richmond.edu/>):

- **Academic Skills Coaching** Meet with a professional staff member who will collaborate with you to assess and develop your academic and life skills (e.g., critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, test preparation, time management, stress management, and more).
- **Content Tutoring** Peer consultants offer assistance in specific courses and subject areas. They are available for appointments (in-person and virtual) and drop-in sessions. See schedules at wlc.richmond.edu for supported courses and drop-in times.
- **English Language Learning** Attend one-on-one or group consultations, workshops, and other services focused on English, academic, and/or intercultural skills.
- **Quantitative and Programming Resources** Peer consultants and professional staff offer workshops or one-on-one appointments to build quantitative and programming skills and provide statistical assistance for research projects.
- **Speech and Communication** Prepare and practice for academic presentations, speaking engagements, and other occasions of public expression. Peer consultants offer recording, playback, and coaching for both individual and group presentations. Students can expect recommendations regarding clarity, organization, style, and delivery.

- **Technology Learning** Visit our student lab dedicated to supporting digital media projects. Services include camera checkout, video/audio recording assistance, use of virtual reality equipment, poster printing, 3D printing and modeling, and consultation services on a variety of software.
- **Writing** Assists student writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Meet with peer consultants who can offer feedback on written work and suggest pre-writing, drafting, and revision strategies.

Boatwright Library Research Librarians: (library.richmond.edu/help/ask/ or 289-8876): Research librarians help students with all steps of their research, from identifying or narrowing a topic, to locating, accessing, evaluating, and citing information resources. Librarians support students in their classes across the curriculum and provide individual appointments, class library instruction, tutorials, and [research guides](http://libguides.richmond.edu) (libguides.richmond.edu). Students can [contact an individual librarian](http://library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html) (library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html) or ask a librarian for help via email (library@richmond.edu), text (804-277-9ASK), or [chat](http://library.richmond.edu/chat.html) (library.richmond.edu/chat.html).

Career Services: (careerservices.richmond.edu or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

Counseling and Psychological Services: (caps.richmond.edu or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include brief consultations, short-term counseling, skills-building classes, therapy groups, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Disability Services: (disability.richmond.edu): Students who are experiencing a barrier to access due to a disability and/or temporary condition are encouraged to apply for accommodations. Disability Services can be reached at disability@richmond.edu or 804-662-5001.

Class Schedule and Assignments

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP

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|--------|---|
| Jan 14 | Introductions |
| Jan 16 | Chimpanzee and Bonobo Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Viewing:</i> Episode 1 of <i>Chimp Empire</i> on Netflix
https://www.netflix.com/title/81311783 ▪ <i>Viewing:</i> Episode 2 (“Rainforest Queens”) of <i>Queens</i>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9c9H2bdnvPI |
| Jan 21 | Why Leadership? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Reading:</i> Van Vugt and Ahuja (2011). <i>Naturally Selected</i>, Chapter 2, pp. 42-64. 1, 2 ▪ <i>Written Reflection:</i> Why are you interested in leadership studies? |
| Jan 22 | Attend JEPSON LEADERSHIP FORUM (7pm, Modlin Center) |

- Jan 23 **Why Followership?**
- *Reading:* Van Vugt and Ahuja (2011). *Naturally Selected*, Chapter 3, pp. 65-93. **3, 4**
 - *Quiz*
- PART 2: BUILDING BLOCKS OF HUMAN POLITICS**
- Jan 28 **In-class game (bring laptop)**
- Jan 30 **Cooperation**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 5, pp. 163-186. **5, 6**
 - *Quiz*
- Feb 4 **Coalitional Competition**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 1, pp. 33-51. **7, 8**
 - *Quiz*
- Feb 6 **Group Violence**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 1, pp. 52-65. **9, 10**
 - *Quiz*
 - *Attend:* Jepson Leadership Forum, 5pm, Queally Center:
<https://jepson.richmond.edu/signature-programs/forum/index.html>
- Feb 11 **Gender**
- *Reading:* Benenson & Abadzi (2020). *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 33, 62-68. **11, 12**
 - *Reading:* (Mar 13, 2024). *Why young men and women are drifting apart. The Economist.*
<https://www.economist.com/international/2024/03/13/why-the-growing-gulf-between-young-men-and-women>
 - *Written Reflection:* Gender differences in career interests and political views on campus.
- Feb 11 **Attend JEPSON LEADERSHIP FORUM** (7pm, Queally Center)
- Feb 13 **Gender (continued)**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 4, pp. 150-162.
 - *Reading:* Eagly, A. (2020). Once more: the rise of female leaders. *APA Research Brief.* <https://www.apa.org/topics/women-girls/female-leaders>
13, 14

- *Quiz*
- Feb 18 **Misinformation, Rumors, and Conspiracy Theories**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 2, pp. 66-92. **15, 16**
 - *Quiz*
- Feb 20 **Fairness and Justice**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 5, pp. 186-202. **17, 18**
 - *Quiz*
 - *Attend:* Jepson Leadership Forum, 7pm, Queally Center:
<https://jepson.richmond.edu/signature-programs/forum/index.html>
- Feb 25 **Folk Sociology and Political Partisanship**
- *Reading:* Boyer (2018). *Minds Make Societies*, Chapter 6, pp. 203-244. **19, 20**
 - *Quiz*
- Feb 27 **Democracy and Deliberation**
- *Reading:* Pinsof (Dec. 9, 2024). Arguing is bullshit.
<https://www.everythingisbullshit.blog/p/arguing-is-bullshit>
 - *Reading:* Nyhan & Titunik (2024). Public opinion alone won't save democracy. *Science*, 386, 268-270. **21**
 - *Written Reflection:* beliefs you hold that are politically divisive
- Mar 4 **Review for MIDTERM EXAM**
- Mar 4 **Attend JEPSON LEADERSHIP FORUM** (7pm, Queally Center)
- Mar 6 **MIDTERM EXAM (in the classroom, on Blackboard)**
- Mar 11 **NO CLASS**
- Mar 13 **NO CLASS**
- PART 3: CHICAGO, 1968**
- Mar 18 **Setup**
- *Reading:* Chicago, 1968 game book, pg. 1-64
 - *Viewing:* *Trial of the Chicago 7* on Netflix
 - *Written Reflection:* Chicago, 1968 Role Questionnaire (**DUE Oct 21st by 5pm**)

- Mar 20 **Setup**
- *Reading:* Chicago, 1968 game book, pg. 66-155.
 - *Written Reflection:* Chicago, 1968 Character Investigation responses
 - *Quiz*
- Mar 25 **Parts 1-2**
- *Newspaper Column:* Wicker, Trohan (post to Blackboard Forum **before** class)
 - *Speech:* Daley, Bond, Byrd, Hoffman, Hayden (post to Blackboard Forum **after** class)
- Mar 27 **Parts 3-4**
- *Print Interview:* Bruno (post to Blackboard Forum **before** class)
 - *TV Interview:* Rather, Saarinen (play live)
 - *Speech:* Humphrey, Inouye, Dellinger, Abzug, Gregory (post to Blackboard Forum **after** class)
- Apr 1 **Part 5**
- *Speech:* McCarthy, Connally (post to Blackboard Forum **after** class)
- Apr 3 **Parts 6-7**
- *Newspaper Column:* Wicker, Trohan (post to Blackboard Forum **before** class)
 - *Print Interview:* Bruno (post to Blackboard Forum **before** class)
 - *TV Interview:* Rather, Saarinen (play live)
 - *Speech:* Muskie, Rothstein, Boudin (post to Blackboard Forum **after** class)
- Apr 8 **Debriefing**
- *Reading:* Chicago, 1968 The Aftermath
 - *Written Reflection:* **750-1000 words** reflecting on Chicago, 1968 (per your Role, drawing on at least **three documents from the game book**, and connecting to **two readings from Boyer**)
- PART 4: RETHINKING POLICY**
- Apr 10 **Immigration**
- *Reading:* Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*, Chapter 7, pp. 219-260.
 - *Quiz*
 - *In-Class Debate:* Should the US adopt a points-based immigration system (like Australia)? Pro: **1, 2** Con: **3, 4**
- Apr 15 **Governance**

- *Reading:* Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*, Chapter 8, pp. 261-282.
- *Quiz*
- *In-Class Debate:* Should the US adopt compulsory voting? Pro: **5, 6** Con: **7, 8**
- *Attend:* Jepson Leadership Forum, 7pm, Queally Center:
<https://jepson.richmond.edu/signature-programs/forum/index.html>

Apr 17

Wealth Inequality

- *Reading:* Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*, Chapter 9, pp. 283-313.
- *Quiz*
- *In-Class Debate:* Should the US adopt a land value tax? Pro: **9, 10** Con: **11, 12**

Apr 22

Innovation and the Internet

- *Reading:* Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*, Chapter 10-11, pp. 314-343.
- *Quiz*
- *In-Class Debate:* Should the University of Richmond reinstate the SAT as an application requirement? Pro: **13, 14** Con: **15, 16**

Apr 24

Education

- *Reading:* Muthukrishna, M. (2023). *A Theory of Everyone*, Chapter 12, pp. 344-371.
- *Quiz*
- *In-Class Debate:* Should the US government ban gender-based affirmative action in higher education? Pro: **17, 18** Con: **19, 20**
- *Submit:* final paper thesis (by 9am, on Blackboard)

Apr 30

FINAL PAPER due (by 5pm, on Blackboard)