

**SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP
LEADERSHIP STUDIES 102- FALL 2026**

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COURSE TIMES & LOCATION: Tues/Thurs: 9-10:15am, 10:30-11:45; Jepson Hall 102

COURSE WEBSITE: <http://canvas.richmond.edu>

THIS SYLLABUS IS INTENDED TO GIVE STUDENTS GUIDANCE IN WHAT MAY BE COVERED DURING THE SEMESTER AND WILL BE FOLLOWED AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MODIFY, SUPPLEMENT, AND MAKE CHANGES (TO READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DATES, ETC.) AS COURSE NEEDS ARISE.

READINGS:

The readings for this course consist of a mix of empirical social science articles and more popular readings based on social science research. Most of the readings will be available through Canvas. The readings may change slightly, and other readings may be assigned during the semester. The assigned readings provide the context for classroom lecture and discussion, therefore, please read the readings **before** the class period during which they are discussed.

You will also be required to read **one** of the four books below:

- Land, S. (2019). *Maid: Hard work, low pay, and a mother's will to survive*. New York: Hachette Books.
- Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and profit in the American city*. Crown Publishers.
- Skloot, R. (2010). *The immortal life of Henrietta Lacks*. Crown Publishers.
- Stevenson, B. (2014). *Just mercy: A story of justice and redemption*. Penguin Random House.

DESCRIPTION AND GOALS OF THE COURSE:

This course is designed to introduce you to the theoretical and empirical foundations of social interaction. Drawing on research from across the social sciences including psychology, economics, political science, and sociology, we examine leadership as a social process shaped by individual minds, relationships, groups, and broader systems. Across the semester, we ask how rational and unbiased people really are, how situations and social contexts shape behavior, how power and legitimacy operate, and how beliefs and ideologies sustain social hierarchies. We also explore how leaders are perceived and chosen, how persuasion and authority influence behavior, why people can be vulnerable to toxic leadership, and what it takes to challenge unjust systems and promote meaningful social change. Through the study of fundamental conceptions of the human condition and social interaction, we will gain a basic understanding of social science theories and methodology. And, we will apply the theoretical and empirical work to relevant policy issues. The ultimate goal of the course is to advance your understanding of leadership through an increased appreciation of the rich complexities of human behavior.

Social Inquiry 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (PAPER: 25%; REACTION PAPERS: 5%): You will be required to write one paper and submit reaction papers to the readings for 7 class sessions. Details for the paper will be provided during the course.

Reaction papers (RPs): You will be assigned to either Group A or Group B and will submit a short reaction paper (1/2 page, single-spaced or 1 page double-spaced; ~250 words) in Canvas for **7 of the 8** reaction paper days assigned to your group. You may choose which one of the 8 reaction papers to skip. Reaction papers are **due in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. the night before class**. In these reaction papers, you should attempt to analyze the readings for the day. **Do NOT summarize the reading. The idea is for you to provide an analysis of the topics.** Reaction papers will be graded as: excellent effort, you clearly read and thought about the readings (3), good effort, you somewhat demonstrate you read and thought about the readings (2), minimal effort (1) or not submitted (0).

Some potential discussion points might be (in no particular order):

- Discuss connections across the readings. How does the research that you are reading relate to previous topics that we have discussed? How are the themes in these readings similar or different to other class readings?
- Discuss alternative explanations for the findings. Do the explanations provided by the researchers make sense to you? Are there other explanations that seem compelling?
- Under what conditions would different results be found? What are the "boundary conditions" of these ideas/findings? How might other variables (e.g., race, gender, status) qualify or change these findings?
- How can these readings be applied to real life? Do they explain why a social phenomenon or problem exists?
- What are the implications of this research - for social interactions, for public policy?
- What additional research questions does this work stimulate? What questions need exploration?

2. EXAMINATIONS (25%, 30%): There will be two exams in this course, one midterm and one cumulative final (see final times at the bottom of the schedule below). The exams will cover information from in-class lectures and discussions and reading assignments. The exams will focus on your factual, applied, and conceptual understanding of the material.

3. CLASS PARTICIPATION (5%) AND GROUP PRESENTATION (10%):

This course is predicated on the active participation of all members. You are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and fully engage in discussions and activities. Class discussions and activities are highly dependent upon the assigned reading for the day. You must come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. A student who receives an "A" for participation comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An "A" student engages others with ideas, respects the opinions of others, and elevates the level of discussion. Finally, when we turn to examining how leadership matters for policy issues, you and a small group of other students will give a presentation to the class. Details for the presentation will be provided during the course.

RESTRICTED USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS

AI is a wide-ranging and powerful technology with important applications, but also significant costs. Its use in this course is limited because relying on AI for many of the course tasks can offload the very skills this course is designed to develop: thinking independently, critically, and creatively, and communicating persuasively in both written and oral forms.

Why pursue a liberal arts education if you outsource to a machine the very skills it is designed to develop? It is a little like going to the gym, pressing a button, and having a machine lift the weights for you. The task gets done, but your own muscles do not grow. A similar thing can happen when, for example, you put a reading into ChatGPT and rely on its summary rather than wrestling with the ideas yourself. In doing so, you offload the intellectual work of figuring out what matters, making connections, recognizing nuance, and developing your own understanding of the material.

This is not an argument that AI is inherently bad; the issue is much more complex. But offloading your learning to AI *is* bad for your own intellectual development and, on a broader scale, for a society that depends on people who can think critically for themselves. For that reason, you may use generative AI tools only in limited ways in this course. You may use spell check, grammar check, and synonym tools; ask for feedback on ways to improve writing you have already produced; and receive suggestions for rephrasing sentences or reorganizing paragraphs you have drafted yourself. However, you may not use entire sentences or paragraphs generated by AI.

There are no other acceptable uses of AI in this course. For example, you may not use AI to conduct a literature review, summarize assigned readings instead of reading them yourself, generate initial outlines or drafts, or turn an outline into a full draft. Doing so will be considered a violation of academic integrity.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

August 25: Introductions and all that jazz

Introducing social science approaches

August 27: Introducing social science approaches and methodology

Levitt S. & Dubner, S. (2005). *Freakonomics: The hidden side of everything*. Chpts. 3 & 4

September 1: Introducing social science approaches and methodology, cont.

Antes, A. L. (2009). Methods in leadership research. In M. D. Mumford's *Leadership 101*. Springer Publishing.

Aronson, E. (1999). Social psychology as science. In *The social animal* (chapter 9, pp. 427-435).

Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (2004). How to read a journal article in social psychology. In H. T. Reis & C. E. Rusbult (Eds), *Close relationships: Key readings* (pp. 483-492). NY: Psych Press.

September 3: Introducing social science approaches and methodology, cont.

Same readings as above

The individual mind

September 8: (Ir)rational beings: Where's the logic and accuracy? (RP1: GROUP A)

Ariely, D. (2008). *Predictably Irrational*. Five Chapters: The truth about relativity; The fallacy of supply & demand; The cost of zero cost; Beer & free lunches; The problem of procrastination/self-control.

September 10: I can because I'm special (RP1: GROUP B)

Tavris, C. & Aronson, E. (2007). *Mistakes were made but not by me*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt. Introduction and Chapter 1: Cognitive dissonance; The engine of self-justification.

Hoyt, C. L., Price, T., & Poatsy, L. (2014). The social role theory of unethical leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*.

September 15: Why the mind gets what it expects (RP2: GROUP A)

Ariely, D. (2008). *Predictably Irrational*. New York, NY: Harper Collins. Chapter: The Effect of Expectations: Why the mind gets what it expects.

Snyder, M., Tanke, E.D., & Berscheid, E. (1977). Social perception & interpersonal behavior: The self-fulfilling nature of social stereotypes. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 35, 656-666.

No (wo)man is an island

September 17: Social animals: The need to belong (RP2: GROUP B)

Baumeister, R. F., Brewer, L. E., Tice, D. M., & Twenge, J. M. (2007). Thwarting the need to belong: Understanding the interpersonal and inner effects of social exclusion. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 1, 506-520.

September 22: The good Samaritan is in the situation (RP3: GROUP A)

Darley, J. M., & Batson, C. D. (1973). "From Jerusalem to Jericho": A study of situational and dispositional variables in helping behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 27(1), 100-108.

September 24: The social foundations of wellbeing (RP3: GROUP B)

Baumeister, R. F., Vohs, K. D., Aaker, J. L., & Garbinsky, E. N. (2013). Some key differences between a happy life and a meaningful life. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8(6), 505-516.

Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2014). Prosocial spending and happiness: Using money to benefit others pays off. *Current directions in psychological science*, 23(1), 41-47.

The power of context and collective life

September 29: The importance of context (RP4: GROUP A)

Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers*. Introduction, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 3-115). Introduction: The Roseto Mystery. Chapter 1, The Matthew effect, Chapter 2, The 10,000-hour rule, Chapter 3, The trouble with geniuses, part. 1, Chpt. 4, The trouble with geniuses, part 2. NY: Little Brown.

October 1: The role of groups in leadership (RP4: GROUP B)

Reicher, S. D., Haslam, S. A., Platow, M. J. (2007). The new psychology of leadership. *Scientific American*, Aug/Sep, 22-29.

October 6: Does Power Corrupt? (RP5: GROUP A)

Galinsky, A. D., Jordan, J., & Sivanathan, N. (2008). Harnessing power to capture leadership. In C. L. Hoyt, G. Goethals, and D. R. Forsyth (Eds), *Social Psychology and Leadership*. New York: Praeger.

Whitson, J. A., Liljenquist, K. A., Galinsky, A. D., Magee, J. C., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Cadena, B. (2013). The blind leading: Power reduces awareness of constraints. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49(3), 579-582.

October 8: Midterm Exam

October 13 FALL BREAK

October 15: System justifying ideologies (RP5: GROUP B)

Jost, J. T. (2020). *A theory of system justification*. Harvard University Press. Chapter 1.

Van der Toorn, J., Feinberg, M., Jost, J. T., Kay, A. C., Tyler, T. R., Willer, R., & Wilmoth, C. (2015). A sense of powerlessness fosters system justification: Implications for the legitimization of authority, hierarchy, and government. *Political Psychology*, 36, 93-110.

Seeing, judging, and choosing leaders

October 20: Why we fall for tall, handsome, White male leaders (RP6: GROUP A)

Gladwell, M. (2005). *Blink*. Introduction and Chapters 1-3.

October 22: Perceiving leaders and the threatening nature of stereotypes (RP6: GROUP B)

Forsyth, D. R., & Nye, J. L. (2008). Seeing and being a leader: The perceptual, cognitive, and interpersonal roots of conferred influence. In Crystal L. Hoyt, George Goethals, and Donelson R. Forsyth (Eds), *Social Psychology and Leadership* (pp. 116-131). New York: Praeger

October 27: Women and leadership (RP7: GROUP A)

Hoyt, C. L., & Simon, S. (2024). Social psychological approaches to women and leadership theory. In S. Madsen (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Gender and Leadership* (pp. 85-99). Edward Elgar.

October 29: No Class

November 3: Choosing leaders: Who gets to vote? (RP7: GROUP B)

Bartels, L. M. (2008). Unequal democracy: The political economy of the new gilded age. Chapter 9: Economic inequality and political representation. (pp. 252-282). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

An interpersonal perspective: Understanding influence processes

November 5: The art of persuasion (RP8: GROUP A)

Olson, J. M., & Haynes, G. A. (2008). Persuasion and leaders. In Crystal L. Hoyt, George Goethals, and Donelson R. Forsyth (Eds), *Social Psychology and Leadership*. New York: Praeger.

November 10: Winning friends and influencing people (RP8: GROUP B)

Cialdini, R. B. (2003, August). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(4), 105-109.

Leadership to what ends:

Taking a social science perspective to contemporary social problems

November 12: Contemporary Challenges Group Work

November 17: Group 1 and Group 2

November 19: Group 3 and Group 4

November 24-26: THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 1: Understanding obedience to authority

Meyer, P. (1970). *If Hitler asked you to electrocute a stranger, would you?* Esquire.

Burger, J. M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today? *American Psychologist*, 64, 1-11.

Gladwell, M. (2008). Chapter 7 in *Outliers* (pp. 177-224), The Ethnic theory of Plane Crashes "Captain, the weather radar has helped us a lot." New York: Little Brown.

December 3: Our vulnerability to toxic leaders...and becoming one ourselves

Zimbardo, P. (1973). A Pirandellian prison. *The New York Times*.

Haslam, S. A., & Reicher, S. D. (2012). When prisoners take over the prison: A social psychology of resistance. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 16, only pages 154-160.

December 8: Course Wrap-up

FINAL EXAM TIMES:

9am class: Wednesday, Dec. 16, 9-noon

10:30am class: Friday, Dec. 11, 2-5pm

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

OFFICE HOURS

I encourage you to come see me during office hours as many times this semester as you need or want (email me to schedule). Office hours offer a great opportunity to clarify material, talk about upcoming assignments or those handed back, chat about careers, life, or anything else.

Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors

The Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors (PSMAs) are available 24/7 at (804) 346-7674 while in-person instruction is ongoing. PSMAs are students who offer confidential support to students who have been impacted by violence (such as sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and interpersonal violence), whether they're a survivor, an accused person, or a friend or family member. We can be reached by emailing psma@richmond.edu or calling/texting (804) 346-7674.

THE WEINSTEIN LEARNING CENTER

The Weinstein Learning Center is your go-to destination for academic support. Our services are tailored to help you achieve your academic goals throughout your time at the University of Richmond. To learn more and view service schedules and appointment times, visit wlc.richmond.edu. Available services are outlined below.

Academic Coaching

Work with a professional or peer coach to boost executive functioning. Refine skills such as time management, organization, study strategies, note-taking, and test preparation.

Content Tutoring

Connect with peer tutors who provide tailored support in a variety of courses within the School of Arts & Sciences, Robins School of Business, and Jepson School of Leadership Studies

English Language and Intercultural Learning

Meet with a professional or peer educator for one-on-one or group consultations, workshops, and other services focused on English, academic, and/or intercultural skills.

Quantitative and Programming Support

Enhance your quantitative and programming abilities by learning more about programming languages, data visualization, and statistical analysis for research projects.

Speech Studio

Prepare and practice for academic presentations, interviews, and other speaking projects with experienced peer consultants. Learn practical strategies for engaging your audience, focusing your ideas, and getting your message heard.

Technology Studio

Visit our Technology Studio for the tools and support you need to create multimedia projects. We offer consultations and access to creative software, video and audio recording tools, 3D and poster printing, VR, and camera equipment checkout.

Writing Studio

Collaborate with peer consultants who can offer feedback on written work and suggest pre-writing, drafting, and revision strategies. Student writers at all levels of experience and across all majors can attend.

Jepson School of Leadership Studies Common Syllabus Insert

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

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.

disability.richmond.edu/

Weinstein Learning Center

The Center integrates, amplifies, and co-locates Speech Studio, Writing Studio, Quantitative and Programming Support, Content Tutoring, Academic Coaching, English Language and Culture, and Technology Studio services. The WLC aims to provide next-level academic support, transforming our students' development in integrated and innovative ways and complementing our robust curricular and co-curricular offerings.¹

<https://wlc.richmond.edu/>

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."

<https://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/policies/honor/Honor-Code.pdf>

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 membership.² Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups.³ Furthermore, both students and faculty that are exposed to microaggressions more often are more likely to have depressive symptoms and negative affect (a negative view of the world).⁴ 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 racism.⁵

The University of Richmond is committed to building an inclusive community. To this end, the [Hub for Student Inclusion and Community](#) was created in 2021 and offers ongoing support and assistance for a diverse student body.⁶ With this in mind, as a community member at the University of Richmond, I pledge to address microaggressions in the classroom by holding myself, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

¹<https://wlc.richmond.edu/>

²Sue, 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.

³Bergom, 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.

⁴Nadal, 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.

⁵Rolón-Dow, R. (2019). Stories of Microaggressions and Microaffirmation: A Framework for Understanding Campus Racial Climate. *NCID Currents*, 1(1).

⁶<https://inclusion.richmond.edu/>