THEORIES AND MODELS OF LEADERSHIP
LDST 300 – Spring 2026

Class Time   Section 1
                        Monday/Wednesday 9-10.15 am
                        Section 2
                        Monday/Wednesday 12-1.15 pm
Location   Jepson 120

Instructor and contacts

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Jepson Hall 130
Office hours: by appointment

Course website: https://blackboard.richmond.edu

Contents

Course Description
What are different approaches to understanding leadership? How can theories be applied to various situations and questions you might have? This course builds upon LDST102 and other Jepson courses you have taken earlier to help you develop familiarity with various theories of leadership – and practice applying that knowledge.

Course goals and learning outcomes
After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Effectively identify key findings in empirical research of leadership.
- Discuss theory application across different situations or contexts, understand the scope and limitations of specific theoretical explanations.
- Work in a team to collect empirical data from a real-world group or organization, understand the use and limitations of data collection methods.
- Formulate empirically supported arguments in written form and defend them in front of an audience.

Social Inquiry Learning Outcomes:
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of theories and/or patterns of human behavior appropriate to the discipline.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate methods to analyze human behavior.
- Students will assess the limitations of the theories, explanations, and methods they study.

Prerequisites
LDST102 (Social Foundations of Leadership) and LDST249 (Quantitative Social Science) or equivalent. LDST249 or an equivalent course can be taken concurrently with LDST300.

Reading
Class readings will come from two sources:
- Course textbook: Forsyth, D. R. (2025). Leadership: Theories and applications. Waveland Press, Inc.
- Published empirical research

Students are expected to have a copy of the course textbook. All the other readings will be provided on the class Blackboard site.
You will be expected to do the assigned readings before the class meeting and be ready to discuss them and ask questions about them.
The readings in the class schedule provided below are subject to change. The course website will always have the most up-to-date readings.

What to expect in this class

This class meets twice a week. One meeting (Monday) will be dedicated to conceptual discussions relying on the course textbook. Another will focus on application: during our Wednesday "labs", we will discuss empirical studies, engage in interactive activities, talk about methods of data collection, etc. Several class meetings will be dedicated to in-class work on your applied projects.

If you have to miss a class for any reason – it is your responsibility to make sure you have notes and to catch up with anything you missed. Don't disappear – as long as you stay in touch, I can suggest ways to help you stay on track. If you miss graded activities or assignments completed in class, you need to discuss with me the possibility of making it up, and I reserve the right to deny any such request.

A group project is a major part of this course. I will assign you to groups early in the semester. As a team, you will decide which group/organization you will focus on for data collection, discuss what questions you want to answer, and brainstorm a theoretical approach that makes sense for those questions. You will collect data (conduct interviews, surveys, and/or observation) and then work together to write up your findings. Use this as an opportunity to tackle interesting and difficult questions and use each other's strengths to do more.

Laptop policy

All class meetings are laptop-free to encourage engagement and discussion. This means that:

- You should take handwritten notes during class – both on the content I provide, and on the ideas/takeaways from group discussions and activities. If you need your laptop or a tablet to take notes – please talk to me in the beginning of the semester.
- You should take notes on assigned readings and bring them to class to help you remember the main takeaways from the readings and participate in reading discussions effectively.
- You can also use the course textbook and printed out assigned articles in class, but I strongly suggest combining that with notes.

Assignments and grading

To be successful in this course, you should expect to devote to it on average 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities[1].
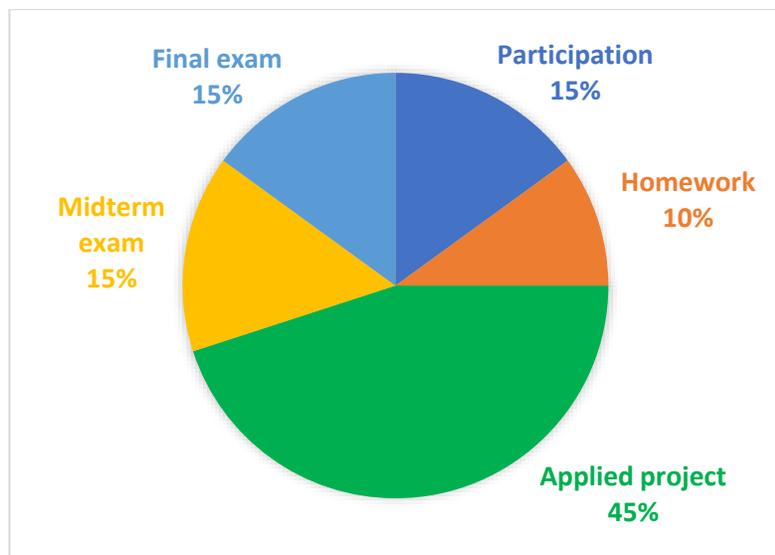
Point range	Letter grade
980-1000	A+
940-979	A
900-939	A-
870-899	B+
830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
630-669	D
600-629	D-
0-599	F

Pie chart labels: Final exam 15%, Participation 15%, Homework 10%, Applied project 45%, Midterm exam 15%.

All assignments add up to 1000 points – that is the maximum you can earn throughout the semester. There are no extra credit assignments. Your final course grade will be calculated by adding up the points you earn for each of the assignments throughout the semester. I will use the scale above to convert this final number into a letter grade. You need to cross the threshold to earn a specific grade (e.g. 979 is an "A", but 980 is an "A+").

1. **Class participation (150 points)**

Engaging in classroom discussions and activities is fundamental for your success and makes the class fun – for you, your peers, and me!

- In-class: contributing to class discussions, asking questions, participating in group work
  - You can earn up to 75 participation points before the midterm and the same amount after the midterm. To earn maximum participation points, you would need to make multiple meaningful contributions to the group discussion in almost every class. At midterm point, I will post your participation score (out of 75).
- Outside the classroom: talking to the instructor
  - If for some reason you weren't able to or weren't comfortable participating in class – you can substitute class participation in a specific class meeting with one-on-one discussion with the instructor in person or online. This does not apply to students missing class without a serious reason.
- I mark attendance just to see if someone disappears so I can reach out to other professors or their dean to make sure you're ok. Attendance is NOT part of your participation grade in the sense that attendance alone does not earn you any points.

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[1] registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html

2. Homework (100 points)

As we discuss theories of leadership, we will use examples of published research that uses specific theories to address a question. After this course, you should be comfortable interpreting research findings and understanding whether and how they might be applied to other situations. To practice and demonstrate that skill and to prepare for the applied project (see below), you will complete two homework assignments early in the semester. They will require you to reflect on two research articles and the way they test theoretical expectations.

- Homework 1 (due February 2, 11.59 pm), 50 points
- Homework 2 (due February 16, 11.59 pm), 50 points

3. Applied project (450 points)

How can we use leadership theories to answer real-world questions? A key element of this class is an applied project, which will require you to come up with theory-informed ideas, work with a group or organization to collect data, and test your ideas. This project involves a set of assignments – some of them individual and others completed in a group – that guide you through the process. Note that even for group assignments, it's your individual contribution that matters: all group members need to present and answer questions during an oral defense, and each element of your final report needs to be assigned to a specific group member responsible for its content.

Here are the elements of the applied project and their brief descriptions:

Element	Format	Approximate length	Due	Points
Individual proposals	In-class writing	~2 pages	March 2	50
Group proposal defense	Oral defense (group meeting with the instructor)	~40 minutes	March 23-27 (appointment)	100
March 30-April 14: collect your data and discuss it with your group; start drafting your report				
Individual reflection	In-class writing	~ 2 pages	April 15	50
Final presentation	Oral defense (in class)	10 minute group presentation + Q&A	April 20 and 22	100
Group report*	Independent writing	~ 10-15 pages	April 24	150
Total				450

Detailed instructions for all these assignments are provided on Blackboard and in class.

4. Midterm exam (150 points) and final exam (150 points)

The exams are written in class, on paper. If you need special accommodations such as using the Testing Center, make sure you plan for that in advance and inform me. If you can't take the exam on the date specified, talk to me beforehand so we can figure out a solution.

       a. The exams will be closed-notes and closed-book. You can use a hand-written cheat sheet (one two-sided sheet) during your exams.

       b. They will include multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

       c. The questions will require you to demonstrate understanding of the key theories discussed in class and to provide examples and/or apply those theories in provided scenarios.

Course Schedule

Lecture date	Topic and readings	Lab date	Topic and readings
January 12	Introduction Read: class syllabus	January 14	Leadership and social reality Read: Variables in Sociological Research
January 19	NO CLASS	January 21	What is the role of theory? Read: Chapter 1*
January 26	Behavior Read: Chapter 2	January 28	Observation Read: Havig et al. (2011)
February 2	Contingency Read: Chapter 3	February 4	Interviews Read: Förster et al. (2023)
February 9	Traits Read: Chapter 4	February 11	Surveys Read: Joly et al. (2019)
February 16	Intellectual Skills Read: Chapter 5	February 18	Patterns in qualitative and quantitative data Read: NONE
February 23	Social Perception Theories Read: Chapter 7	February 25	Group projects: project planning
March 2	Group projects: individual proposals (in-class writing)	March 4	Midterm exam (in class)
SPRING BREAK			
March 16	Leader-follower relations theories Read: Chapter 10	March 18	Leader-follower relations theories Read: Pellegrini et al. (2006)
March 23	Power and influence theories Read: Chapter 12	March 25	Power and influence theories Read: Galinsky et al. (2006)
March 30	Ethical leadership theories Read: Chapter 14	April 1	Ethical leadership theories Read: Moore et a. (2019)
April 6	Evolutionary and cultural theories Read: Chapter 15	April 8	Evolutionary and cultural theories Read: Moon (2013)
April 13	What else could you explore? Read: TBD	April 15	Group projects: individual reflection (in-class writing)
April 20	Group presentations	April 22	Final review

* All chapters come from the course textbook

Course Policies
Academic Integrity and Collaboration
Discussion and the exchange of ideas are vital for any intellectual community. For the oral or written assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics or seek advice from your peers. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit is the result of your own research and writing. You should also adhere to standard citation practices in the discipline by properly citing any written works that you reference in your assignments. You will be expected to pursue your academic studies with integrity and must follow the Honor Code. The shortened version of the honor pledge is the following: "I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."

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). Assignments or exams that appear to violate academic integrity receive a grade of 0 pending a conversation with me to determine the extent of violation and appropriate consequences.

AI Policy
In this class, I expect you to:
- Critically engage with theories of leadership, understand their applicability, interpret research findings that rely on different theories of leadership.
- Submit work that reflects your own understanding and skills so that I can provide useful feedback that you can use to improve.

What that means for AI use:
- You can engage with AI as long as those interactions leave something useful in your own mind. Ask yourself: Did that help me discover something? Did I learn? Did that encourage my own creativity?
- You must not use any AI tools to produce anything you give me for grading and feedback.
    - o This includes using AI to rewrite any part of your work. I do not grade you on grammar and vocabulary meaning you don't need AI tools for editing.
    - o If you can't formulate something clearly – that means you need to ask me questions, think, and improve your understanding of your own ideas.

Examples of <u>unacceptable</u> use:
- Copying anything from your interaction with AI into your assignments
- Using sources suggested in an AI output without additional verification

If your submitted work shows signs of unacceptable use of AI, you will get 0 points for an assignment pending a conversation with me to determine the extent to which you violated class expectations.

Tips for <u>acceptable</u> use:
- Don't have your interaction with AI and your assignment open at the same time. If you want – you can use AI to develop your knowledge or get additional feedback, then close

the interaction entirely, and use your updated understanding when completing the assignment.
- Check any ideas you developed while interacting with AI, using outside sources. This is a good habit to practice your critical thinking skills.

If you have any doubts about acceptable and unacceptable use of AI in this class – please talk to me right away.

Check these publications if you want to know more about AI's [environmental toll](#), [tendency to hallucinate](#), and AI [failing to correct the user's false beliefs](#).

You do not need to use AI to succeed in this class.

Late Policy for Assignments
All assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the designated date.
- 10% of the total points for the assignment will be deducted for each 24-hour period that the assignment is late. For example:
  - The final report (worth 150 points) can get a maximum of 135 points (150-15=135) if turned in 24 hours late, and a maximum of 120 points if turned in 48 hours late – before any points are deducted based on the grading criteria.
  - If the assignment is less than 24 hours late, the deduction will be proportional (e.g. 6 hours late=1/4 of 24 hours=1/4 of the penalty).
- Each of you has **2 (two) no-penalty 24-hour extensions** to use on any at-home paper assignments. You do not need to ask me or explain anything – just put a written note in your submission indicating that you chose to use one of your extensions. These extensions are available to all, because life happens.
- If you need an additional or longer extension, discuss it with me at least 48 hours before the deadline (the earlier, the better). I reserve the right to grant or deny an extension on a case-by-case basis.

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](#)

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/student-handbook/honor/index.html](#)

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](#)

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 are 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.

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 who 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 Student Center for Equity and Inclusion (SCEI) 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

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[2] 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

[3] 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

[4] 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

[5] 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

[6] https://inclusion.richmond.edu/

myself, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

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.

Academic Skills Center (asc.richmond.edu):
Assists students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement. Tutors will be available virtually. The on-call peer tutors available for these appointments are listed in the Box file: On-Call Online Tutors (https://richmond.box.com/s/dpe37chr2zodr3o1amtj8omjk72v2ktb). Email Roger Mancastroppa (rmancast@richmond.edu) and Hope Walton (hwalton@richmond.edu) for appointments in academic and life skills to request a Zoom conference.

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 library instruction, tutorials, research guides, and individual help. All research support will be provided online or by appointment and students can contact a librarian for help via email (library@richmond.edu), text (804-277-9ASK), chat, or Zoom (by appointment).

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 and psychotherapy, skills-building classes, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Disability Services (disability.richmond.edu)
The Office of Disability Services works to ensure that qualified students with a disability (whether incoming or current) are provided with reasonable accommodations that enable students to participate fully in activities, programs, services, and benefits provided to all students. Please let your professors know as soon as possible if you have an accommodation that requires academic coordination and planning.

Speech Center (speech.richmond.edu or 289-6409):
Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching, and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations. Remote practice sessions can be arranged; we look forward to meeting your public speaking needs.

Writing Center (writing.richmond.edu or 289-8263):
Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.