MLS 5331: Leadership Communications
Syllabus Spring 2017

Section 001, CRN 28610 Tuesday, 5:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

Classroom: USASMA – Room TBA
Instructor: Michael Lechuga
Office hours: Tuesday from 4:00 to 5:00 or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This Section of Leadership Communications (MLS 5331) is designed for us to study communication expressions, media, and channels used in the process of exercising leadership with multiple audiences and within multiple contexts. Students will develop and analyze messages used in the processes of leadership, including but not limited to, motivation, inspiration, and decision-making. We will engage in the study of human communication practices, theories, and questions involving leadership by defining leadership, discussing how leaders connect with others; considering how leaders have a capacity produce change, and becoming aware of the many factors that affect leadership. This course is focused on making sense of how to build better relationships with others in groups at work, home, and out in our community.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
- Analyze audiences and contexts in selected communication situations
- Develop messages to an identified audience that motivates change agents, creates context for decision-making; inspires organizational members to work toward identified goals
- Identify optimal media for communicating context-specific messages.
- Demonstrate ability to compare competing perspectives and approaches to communication theories.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
I believe that students at this level of learning are on a self-guided path to knowledge. This means that no longer are students being told what to learn and how to learn it; students make choices that have real consequences that can affect the outcome of their careers. I expect students to communicate in class, whether as an entire class or in small groups. This class will involve a lot of discussion and problem solving, so I ask that students come prepared to add to lively discussions.

I encourage people to speak about topics and opinions openly in the class. However, I will not tolerate violent, degrading, or derogatory language directed at other learners, other community members, or myself. I foster a safe environment for discussion, but if there are contentious moments, I may intervene. Students are encouraged to collaborate in the learning process, and there will always be opportunities to raise concerns in class or in private.

REQUIRED TEXT AND TOOLS

Access to a computer, a printer, the internet, an active UTEP e-mail address, and an active Blackboard account are necessary. I will be posting additional course materials online for students to access.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Blackboard Discussions (160 Points (20pts. x 8 weeks))**
Each Sunday, I will be posting a discussion topic to Blackboard with an invitation to offer your thoughts on an issue relating to the readings. Each student must respond to the discussion thread no later than 10:00 p.m. Friday of the same week. Each response should address both my prompt and invite a dialogue between yourself and the others. I will be looking for you to contribute with ideas from the readings as well as your personal experience with leadership. The more responses with worthwhile discussions you make, the better your grade.

**Leadership Demonstration (300 Points)**
During the semester, each student will be leading the class in a 30 – 35 minute facilitation. The session will briefly cover a key concept in Leadership Communication and engage the class in a demonstration of the concept “in action.” I encourage students to be creative with their facilitations and try to choose a task or project that clearly incorporates the Leadership Communication concepts from the course. Each student facilitator will be graded on how well she or he is able to effectively and ethically communicate to the group, how well they administer the procedures of the task/project, and how well they incorporate concepts into the facilitation.

**Class Participation (140 Points)**
You are expected to attend every class. Your participation grade will be directly and negatively affected by your lack of attendance, tardiness, or early departure. More than many other courses, this is a highly interactive class. Not only will you be providing the class with information and input, but you will also be asked to interact with classmates and me regularly. Please be here ready to talk.

**Final Paper (400 Points)**
This 10 to 12 page essay will ask you to synthesize concepts and theories from the course with a case study, personal experience, or other extended example. You will be graded on your ability to elaborate on key issues in Leadership Communication, demonstrate ethical and effective leadership skills in your responses, and synthesize concepts in Communication with real world issues. Students will be graded on the quality of the writing, the depth of critical thinking presented in the essay, and on the overall organization of the essay’s main ideas. I ask that you use proper citation formatting (MLA or APA).

**INSTRUCTOR’S POLICIES**

**COURSEWORK**
All assignments and major projects are to be presented on the due date. An absence means forfeiting the grade for those assignments. If you cannot attend class, you should make arrangements to submit your written work on time. I understand that at times, there may be an emergency, and I will consider extreme cases, however, reasons like not being able to access internet, personal travel, or illness should not impede you from making arrangements with me to get work done on time. If the homework is late, it will NOT be given a grade. For written assignments, I expect that students will consult APA, MLA, or
Chicago style manuals for the guidelines required for college-level academic writing. I expect that the course’s major speaking assignments will be well researched, rehearsed, and prepared with ample time. I will provide specific guidelines for each assignment in the course.

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism is academic dishonesty and will likely ensure your failing the class. Plagiarism means using another person’s ideas, language or other original (not common-knowledge) material without proper acknowledgement of its source. This includes taking information or ideas out of books, from articles, off the Internet, your telephone, from a friend or instructor, and so on. If the ideas or words come from a source or person other than you, you must indicate it in your writing or speech. Never use another student’s work. A plagiarized assignment will result in failure, and even further disciplinary action in accordance with UTEP policy is possible. Please become familiar with the guidelines outlined by the student handbook, and if there is any question about this topic, please contact me to schedule a meeting.

Grading Scale
90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D

OTHER POLICIES
Students are expected to know and observe the published deadlines for (a) dropping the course and (b) withdrawing from the course. These deadlines are published on the Academic Calendar, which is available in the my.utepe.edu site, the course catalogue, and is in the Dean’s Office.

No competing audio/visual technology in class. Laptops and smart phones may be utilized during our course, but these moments are integrated into the curriculum. Usage of these devices, apart from the course design, will be considered competing.

Official UTEP email accounts are encouraged of every student. All business not dealt with in class will be conducted through UTEP email accounts and students are responsible for checking their accounts for course updates and notifications.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

ATTENDENCE
Students who miss more than one (2) weeks of class will earn a failure in the course. There are no excused absences (includes illnesses, athletic competition, school retreats, etc.) Therefore, it is imperative that you attend class unless you are seriously ill, have a death in your family, are called for jury/military duty, or any other such event requiring your absence.
STUDENTS IN NEED OF ACCOMMODATIONS AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES
If you have a documented disability that may influence your performance in this class, please consult with The Center for Accommodations and Support Services. They will help determine appropriate, reasonable accommodations. Following the meeting, please make an appointment me during the first weeks of the class, in person, and provide documentation from Center. I will make any reasonable accommodations necessary to assure your success in this course.

CALENDAR

Week 1
Tuesday, Jan. 17
Introduction, course syllabus, class expectations, and discussion of RSA Video on Leadership. Discussion of leadership experience, expectations, and set some goals for the Term.
Reading Denning: Introduction “What is Transformational Leadership?”

Week 2
Tuesday, Jan. 24
Reading Denning: Chapter 1 and 2 “Language and Communication”
Online Reading Denning Chapter 3 and 4 “Leadership Stories and Audience Stories”

Week 3
Tuesday, Jan. 31
Reading Denning Chapter 5 and 6 “Narrative Truth”
Leadership Demo #1
Online Reading Denning 7 and 8 “Body Language and Attention Getters”

Week 4
Tuesday, Feb. 7
Reading Denning Chapter 9, 10, and 11 “Desire and Reasoning”
Leadership Demo #2
Online Reading Fairhurst Chapter 1 “What is Framing?”

Week 5
Tuesday, Feb. 14
Reading Fairhurst Chapter 2 “Skill of Framing”
Leadership Demo #3
Online Reading Fairhurst Chapter 3 “Science of Framing”

Week 6
Tuesday, Feb. 21
Reading Fairhurst Chapter 4 “Art of Framing”
Leadership Demo #4
Online Reading Fairhurst Chapter 5 “Emotion of Framing”

Week 7
Tuesday, Feb. 28
Reading Chapter 6 “The Ethics of Framing”
Leadership Demo #5
Online Reading Fairhurst Chapter 7 “Leadership Context of Framing”

Week 8
Tuesday, March 7
Reading Fairhurst Chapter 8 “Applications of Framing”
Leadership Demo #6
Thursday, March 9
Final Essays Due

I reserve the right to change any aspect of this syllabus and schedule, within reason, if there is an unforeseen change at any point in the course.