

MLS 5360: Leadership on the Border

Spring 2023 BLK II

Instructor: Art A. Aguirre, Ph.D.
aaaguirre@utep.edu
Kelly Hall, Rm 220
In-Person/Digital Office Hours:
Mondays 2:00 – 4:00pm
Other days by appointment

I will be logging into Zoom via the link on our Blackboard homepage but can also be available via other platforms as well as face-to-face depending on what you need and what day/time you're available. Feel free to coordinate a time to meet if my office hours do not work for you.

Course Description:

This course is designed for us to study leadership expressions, processes, and values within the context of the US/Mexico Border. Students will develop and analyze the processes of leadership, including but not limited to, engagement, value-sharing, motivation, and decision-making that occur within organizations whose members span the border. We will engage in the study of leadership practices, theories, and questions involving by defining and discussing how people on the border connect with others, how people on the border consider leaders and their capacity to produce change, and how people on the border become aware of the many factors that affect leadership in their communities. This course focuses on making sense of how to build better relationships with others in groups in our border communities.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the cultural and national influences that shape organizations
- Develop messages to an identified audience that motivates change agents, creates context for decision-making; inspires organizational members to work toward identified goals
- Demonstrate ability to compare competing perspectives and approaches to communication theories to improve the lives of those on the US/Mexico border

Required Text:

I have decided it would be best to not add an additional textbook expense for this course. That said, all our readings will be academic articles and book chapters posted on Blackboard. All you'll need for the course is access to a computer, the internet, an active UTEP e-mail address, and an active Blackboard account.

****Please note - this syllabus is a guide and may be changed by the instructor, but notice will be provided. ****

Course Requirements:

Blackboard Discussions: 400 points (50 points each x 8 posts)

I will be posting a discussion post every week to Blackboard on an issue relating to the readings and/or other relevant topics. You must post your original response by Wednesday at 11:59pm MT, and you must respond to at least TWO classmates on each discussion post by Sunday night at 11:59MT (Your original post for week 1 is due by Friday at 11:59pm). Each original 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. Please keep in mind these posts should be well thought out and carefully constructed.

Mid Semester Assignment: 300 points

[Choose one of the following]

1) Leadership Interview

During the semester, each student will be conducting a 18 to 25-minute interview with a leader. The session will briefly cover a key concept in Border Leadership and engage in a discussion over how that leader succeeds on the border. The interview can be either an audio or a video format. I encourage students to be creative with their interviews and try to choose a leader that clearly incorporates the concepts from the course in their leadership style. Each interview will be graded on how well each student is able to effectively and ethically communicate, how well they administer the procedures of the task/project, & how well they incorporate concepts into the interview. You will need to submit your interview questions.

2) Leadership Demonstration

Select a reading or readings from this course, and you essentially record your own lecture making sense of the concepts discussed. You can use media examples, real life examples, a case study, etc. This would be similar to a face-to-face course when you present the readings for an assigned week. Given that many of us are still quarantined, you can incorporate your family/friends in your lecture and help your classmates and I understand the readings better. You will need to record a 12 to 14-minute lecture, upload it to YouTube and share it with the class.

3) Local Leader Profile

You will complete a 4 to 5-page paper on a local leader and how their innovation, communication, leadership style, unorthodox approach, etc. has led to their success on and in this border community. You can use local newspaper/magazine articles, leader/community testimonies, and even personal experience to make your argument. However, this still should read as an academic effort.

4) Create Your Own

I welcome all learning styles, so if the options above don't suit your needs or preference, submit an idea to me for what you would like to do for your mid-semester assignment. We can work together to make it comparable to the assignments above. And don't hesitate to be creative. If you're good at graphic design or illustration, you can complete a short graphic story. If you're good at video editing, you can create a video profile on a local leader. Feel free to pitch your idea within the first 2-3 weeks so we can finalize the details.

Final Paper (300 points)

This 10 to 12-page essay will ask you to answer one question; **“What characteristics, traits, and/or approach are necessary to successfully lead an organization or team that operates on the U.S./Mexico border?”** You will be graded on your ability to elaborate on key issues discussed throughout the semester, demonstrate ethical and effective leadership skills in your responses, and synthesize concepts with real world issues. Students will be graded on the quality of the writing, the depth of critical thinking presented in the essay, the strength of their argument, and on the overall organization of the essay’s main ideas. I ask that you use proper citation formatting (MLA or APA).

Instructor Policies

Coursework

All assignments and major projects are to be presented on the due date. 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 planning 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.

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.

Participation Norms and Expectations

You are expected to treat the instructor and classmates with respect. This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors as gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant cultural identities. This course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating. *If I find that you consistently disrespect anyone or any group of people in the class, I will speak with you one-on-one to discuss how to remedy the situation. If the problem persists, I will drop you from the course.*

Students Accommodations and 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.

Etiquette for Online Discussions

- Always consider your audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- Respect and courtesy must always be shown to classmates and to instructor. No harassment, flaming, or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Do not use inappropriate language, all capital letters, or language short cuts. Online entries should be written in Standard English with edited spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Be sure to read everyone's responses before posting. Avoid repetition of what someone else has already said. Add something new to the discussion.
- No credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.

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.utep.edu site, the course catalogue, and is in the Dean's Office.
- 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.

Grading scale

A = 100-90%

B = 89-80%

C = 79-70%

However, please keep in mind that this is a graduate seminar. I'm less concerned with grades than I am with you engaging with the material, discussing the concepts with your classmates, and showing your comprehension of the material through your discussion board postings, mid-semester assignment and final paper. Focus on that, and you'll do well in the course.

Course Schedule

| Date | Objectives | Readings/Videos | Assignments |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Week 1 3/20 | Introductions, syllabus, questions, define the borderlands and the systems of power that are present at the border | Watch course introduction video; Intro to Routledge Handbook of Chicana/o Studies; Anzaldua Reading | Original DB by Friday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 2 3/27 | Understanding the identities and spaces along the border and what that means in terms of identity, education and culture. | Ch 6. McField: "Bilingual Education"; Ch 7. Maciel & Garcia-Acevedo: "Borderlands"; Ch. 24 Montes-Alcala: Bilingualism & Biculturalism | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 3 4/3 | Understanding the immigrant identity and experience Perceptions of immigrants in the media. Challenging borders. | Ch. 8 Chavez: Immigration, Latina/os & the Media; Ch. 10 Tabuenca: Violence & Peace; Ch. 11 Zavela: Reconstructing Home | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 4 4/10 | Understanding the "in-betweenness" of the border and how that space shapes identity of the people who live there. | Upton: Communicating Nepantla; Upton: Nepantla Activism & Coalition Building Wright: Maquiladora Mestizas | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 5 4/17 | Make sense of why identity matters. How culture affects anxiety and conflict styles. | Chang: Cultural & Personal Identities; Gudykunst & Nishida: Anxiety, uncertainty, etc.; Cai & Fink: Conflict Style; YouTube: Juvencio Maeztu "Inclusive leadership" | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night Mid-Semester Assignment due Sunday (4/23) at 11:59pm |
| Week 6 4/24 | Define & describe inclusivity. Understand the role of inclusivity & diversity in leadership. | Bourke & Espedido: Inclusive Leaders Inclusive Leadership Framework | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 7 5/1 | Building diverse teams. Holding diverse teams together through inclusive processes. | Rockstuhl et. al.: Cultural intelligence; Shaban: Managing & Leading a Diverse Workforce | Original DB by Wednesday night; Responses by Sunday night |
| Week 8 5/8 | Course recap and describe the major takeaways. Making meaningful and impactful change. | Reading(s) TBD | Original DB due by Wednesday night Responses due by Sunday night Final paper due Sunday (5/14) @ 11:59pm |

| Basic Rubric for Coursework | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Grade | Content | Form | Mechanics |
| A | Shows outstanding comprehension of material covered; exceptional insight and originality. "This was awesome." | Superbly organized; reflects a logical, coherent flow within paragraphs and major sections. "A joy to read." | Contains no major errors in grammar and form (including spelling, punctuation, word usage, sentence structure, paragraphing). |
| B | Shows very good coverage of material; "competently done" but not "exceptional." "This was good." | Reflects an overall logical flow, although it could be clearer and more coherent. "A good read." | Contains few major errors in grammar and form |
| C | Shows adequate coverage of material. "You completed the task." | Suffers from problems in coherence and organization. "I had to work to get through it." | Contains several major errors in grammar and form. |
| D | Shows some knowledge of material, but coverage is inadequate (incomplete or shallow). "You put forth an effort." | Suffers from major problems in organization and coherence. "I really struggled to follow you." | Contains serious, persistent problems in grammar and form. |
| F | Coverage of material is unacceptable, indicating little or no comprehension of what is covered. | Problems in organization render the paper virtually incoherent. | Contains numerous major problems in grammar and form. |