

# SYLLABUS FOR MLSX 5361: Leadership in Diverse Cultures

**Patricia D. Witherspoon, Ph.D.**  
**Dean Emerita and Professor**  
**Emerita of Communication**  
**Lecturer, Leadership Studies**  
[withersp@utep.edu](mailto:withersp@utep.edu); 737-757-1103  
Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Sunday  
8-10 p.m. (CST) and by request

**WELCOME TO MLSX 5361!** Should you need to visit with me at times other than my office hours, we can schedule at a time convenient for you. I use email every week (via Blackboard) for assignment reminders and other information about the course. You can also directly email me at [withersp@utep.edu](mailto:withersp@utep.edu)

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The purposes of this course are to: 1) study the enactment of leadership to value and facilitate diversity in organizations, nations, and societies, and 2) analyze the effect of diversity on the process of leadership.

There are many faces of diversity that go beyond gender, race, culture and ethnicity. People in organizations and societies differ in how they were raised, who raised them, whether they are from urban or rural areas, the religious practices they observe if they observe such practices, and political beliefs, to name just a few sources of diversity. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, major demographic changes are occurring in the United States and organizations, nations and societies are undergoing rapid and substantive changes in economic and political relationships, as affected by continuously evolving communication technologies. These phenomena require an understanding of the effect of diversity on leadership, and the importance of valuing diversity in organizational and societal life.

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The learning outcomes for this course include, but are not limited to, the following stated outcomes. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Describe the multiplicity of “diversity,” understanding that many types/categories of diversity exist within organizations and societies.
- Describe the notion of identity and its relationship to diversity leadership.
- Compare and contrast the notions of “labyrinth” and “glass ceiling” as concepts related to women’s professional success in organizations.
- Describe 3 leadership strategies for creating more inclusive environments in organizations.
- Describe 3 best practices for leading an age-diverse workforce.
- Describe three technological trends affecting the leadership of diversity within the U.S.
- Describe and analyze at least three elements of organizations that affect the leadership of diversity within them.

-Describe and analyze at least three elements of community/societal contexts that affect the leadership of diversity within those contexts.

## **COURSE TOPICS**

**January 17—Leadership and Diversity—Defined and Applied**

**January 23—Gender and Leadership**

**January 30—Race and Leadership**

**February 6—Ethnicity and Leadership**

**February 13—Leadership and Age Diversity**

**February 20—Emerging Trends in the Leadership of Diversity**

**February 27—Leading Diversity in Organizational Contexts**

**March 6—Leading Diversity in Communities and Societies**

## **READINGS, BY WEEK**

**Texts:** Leading Diversity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, T. A. Scandura and E. Mourino-Ruiz (Eds.)  
Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2017.

On Diversity, HBR's 10 Must Reads. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2019.

**January 17**—HBR essays on p. 1

Scandura, et al, Introduction

**January 23**—HBR essays on pp. 97, 113, 125

Scandura et al, Chapt. 1 and 5

**January 30**—HBR essays on pp. 45 and 57

Scandura et al, Chapt. 3

**February 6**— Scandura et al, Chapt. 4

**February 13**—HBR, essay on p. 137

Scandura et al, Chapt. 6, 7, 8, 9

**February 20**—HBR essays on pp. 149 and 181

Scandura et al, Chapt. 10 and 11

**February 27**- HBR essays on pp. 29, 79, and 163

Scandura et al, Chapt. 2

HBR essays on pp. 29, 79, 137, 163

**March 6**-- Scandura et al, Chapt. 12

## **MINI-LECTURE TOPICS BY WEEK**

**January 17—Leadership and Diversity—Defined and Applied**

**January 23—Gender and Leadership**

**January 30—Race and Leadership: African American Leadership**

**February 6—Latino/a Leadership; A Study of Intersectionality and Leadership**

**February 13—Multiple Generations at Work**

**February 27—Enacting Diversity Leadership in Organizations: Key Factors**

**March 6—Enacting Diversity Leadership in Communities and Societies: Key Influences**

## **COURSEWORK**

**In addition to readings in our texts, I have posted videos for your review as well as mini-lectures. Additionally, there are 5 graded assignments in the course.**

## **GRADED ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Discussion Posts (totaling 20% of the final grade)**

**In weeks 2-6, I have posted a question for student response. Each student will comment on the question, and react to at least one other student post.** The questions are designed to facilitate interaction, shared interests, and perhaps networking that may be beneficial to you beyond the course. Posts should be the equivalent of one typed, double-spaced page; the response to another student has no required length. The questions are provided on Blackboard in each specified week.

**Due Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19, and Feb. 26**

### **First Written Assignment (totaling 20% of the final grade)**

An individual's identity comes from multiple sources. One way to think about it is to ask: What *about* me is *important* to me? For some of us, that might be our gender, or race, or ethnicity. For others of us, those might include our religion, where we were born (Texan), and what country or countries our ancestors came from. Some of us might count our political party or profession, or marital status as important. We take our identity with us when we go to work; we don't leave it at the door. We listen to jokes and stories with it. Our identities are with us when we compete for jobs, vote and interact with neighbors. What elements of your identity are important to you? Why? Did those elements become important over time? Did they only emerge in adulthood? Or after a specific event in your life?

Understanding our identity helps us remember that those around us, at work, in our community, in society at large, also have identities important to them. We cannot always see the parts of other individuals that are important to them, but they are powerful even if unseen. **Write an essay addressing these questions. Include relevant material from texts, videos, and mini-lectures. Minimum length of paper: 4 pages, typed double-spaced.**

**Due on January 29.**

**Second Written Assignment (totaling 20% of the final grade)**

We have focused thus far on gender, racial, and ethnic diversity, using the texts, mini-lectures, and videos. **As a leader or member of a profession, organization, or community, select one of these forms of diversity and discuss how it has affected the exercise of leadership by you or an individual you have observed. First, briefly describe the type/form of diversity. Then discuss how it has affected leadership you have observed or exercised yourself. Provide examples in your discussion and add relevant material from the texts, videos, and mini-lectures. Minimum length of paper: 4 pages (typed, double-spaced)**

**Due on February 12.**

**Third Written Assignment (totaling 20% of the final grade)**

In large, or even small, organizations, generational differences sometimes emerge. Sometimes we recognize those differences in politics, religious practices, retail purchase behavior and many other endeavors. The readings provide comparisons, based on research, among baby-boomers, Generation X, millennials, etc. **Select two different generations and compare them, in accordance with your experiences/observations, as members of the workforce or other types of organizations/communities. Add relevant material from the texts, mini-lectures and videos. Minimum length of paper: 4 pages (typed, double-spaced)**

**Due on February 26.**

**Fourth Written Assignment (totaling 20% of the final grade)**

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to describe an individual you deem to be an excellent example of leadership in one or more diverse cultures. You may choose to describe an example of how the individual enhances or facilitates diversity, OR how well he/she represents a diverse culture or cultures in the exercise of leadership. You may select a person from the past as the subject of the paper. **The essay should include a brief biographical sketch of the individual you select, and information from the readings, mini-lectures, videos, or other sources you choose, to support your opinions. The essay should be a minimum of 4 typed, double-spaced pages.**

**Due on March 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**(Note: All discussion posts and assignments are due by 10:30 p.m. on the**

**indicated date. Because students may be in different time zones, use the time zone of your choice.)**

Grading Scale: A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

### **LEARNING SYSTEM: BLACKBOARD**

For help with Blackboard: <http://help.blackboard.com/student/index.htm>

The phone number for the Help Desk is 915/747-5257.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AS APPLICABLE TO THIS CLASS**

This law requires that all materials needed for a course be made available to all students in that course, whether it is a face-to-face class or an online course. Please contact me at the beginning of the semester if you need accommodations; I am happy to work with the office on campus that provides accommodations to students with disabilities. That office is the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or you can contact staff via email at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu). The office is located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

### **LIBRARY INFORMATION**

Access the UTEP Library by visiting <http://libraryweb.utep.edu/>

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of rules articulated in UTEP's Handbook of Operating Procedures. It is also contrary to the process of organizational leadership itself, and includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

- *Cheating* may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports.
- *Plagiarism* occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents another person's words or ideas as his or her own.
- *Collusion* involves the unauthorized collaboration with another person or group to commit any academically dishonest act.

Violations of academic integrity will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for possible disciplinary action. More information can be found in the UTEP *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (Section 1.2.2.1).

