MLS 5300: ESSENTIALS OF LEADERSHIP

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MLS 5300 Contemporary Concepts of Leadership is an introduction and overview of the field of leadership. The course examines leadership in the context of classic as well as contemporary readings. The course will provide students with an opportunity to gain exposure to the language of leadership, major leadership theories, and leadership styles. Students will participate in activities and discussions related to contemporary leadership theories.

TEXTS

ISBN: 978-1483317533  ***If you have an earlier edition of the book you will have to figure out the chapters based on the topics, and also borrow someone else’s copy for newly added chapters. It’s a hassle, so try to get the current edition.


Supplementary readings on Blackboard.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Contemporary Concepts of Leadership is the first course of the Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MLS) program. It is an intensive reading course!

This is not a self-paced course; there are specific due dates for assignments throughout the course. Although MLS 5300 overlaps several other MLS courses, it complements those courses and will end prior to the start date of the Capstone Course (MLS 5350).

STUDENT'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Please read the materials covering a particular subject prior to discussions. Your active participation in class discussions is expected as a demonstration of your grasp of the material and is part of your grade. The success of this class is dependent upon the preparation of its members. Please contact me if you have any concerns about the material, the format or environment of the class. Upon completion of the course, students should understand:

- The major paradigms of leadership.
- The major classical theories of leadership.
- The traits of a good leader.
- Your natural leadership role.
- The factors necessitating organizational change.
**IMPORTANT:** Distance education demands a lot of self-discipline and motivation. There is flexibility in when you study and work on the course, but you must meet deadlines. If you require the structure of the classroom in order to stay engaged, the on-line courses are not for you. You must set up dedicated times to focus on the course materials in order to succeed in the course. Do not wait until the end of the section to do your work as discussion occurs all throughout the section. You balance many issues in your life and can fit distance learning to your individual circumstances.

**TIME MANAGEMENT:** The general rule of thumb for a course is that you need approximately 3 hours of your time for each week for every credit hour enrolled. Since there are no hours in the classroom, you will need to dedicate 3 hours per week online combined with 9 hours of study and prep time per week. There will be times when you will not need 12 hours, but there will be times when you need more than 12 hours, so plan accordingly and get caught up or ahead in slow times. Being that the entire course only covers 9 weeks, you need to do as much as you can early and keep up on assignments.

**INSTRUCTOR’S OBJECTIVES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

As your instructor I am responsible for clearly and explicitly establishing the parameters of the class. I will discuss material relevant to a broader understanding of the assigned readings, but I will not routinely summarize them for you. I will grade your work promptly and with attention to both specific performance and demonstrated improvement. All late assignments will be penalized one point per day late because it is not fair to other students who did not have extra time. I will be available to assist you with the material and discuss any course-related issues.

**RELEVANT WEBSITES**

All the course content will be delivered via Blackboard course management system, accessed from the [https://my.utep.edu](https://my.utep.edu) homepage. You can view all materials related to this course except the textbooks on Blackboard. This is also the space that we will use to conduct virtual discussions.

You must get into the habit of checking Blackboard at least once a day to ensure that you do not miss any important announcements. All students are required to read all discussion postings in each section.

**NOTE:** I will be checking Blackboard and my UTEP e-mail regularly each weekday of the course, but less frequently on the weekends. On a weekday, if I have not responded within 24 hours, please feel free to email me again as there may have been a problem with your message.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:

1. Weekly Reading Questions (WRQ). Each set of reading questions is designed to focus your reading of difficult texts and concepts. We will use the reading questions as a basis for discussing that particular reading set in an online format. Try to answer questions as you read, but also remember that your answers may change as you continue reading. Reading questions will be graded for completion and for your attempt to answer questions (meaning: you don’t always have to have the right answer, but you have to put forth a good faith effort). Reading questions should be submitted via Blackboard, by 11:59 pm (CDT) on Tuesdays. Your response should be 1-2 pages (single-spaced) in a Microsoft Word document; however, please save your document, and then copy and paste your response into the discussion board post format on Blackboard so that it is easier to read.

For each week of reading assignments, answer the following questions:

1. What do you think are the important points you would like to discuss from each reading? (Answer this question for each chapter of the reading assignment- each chapter that you are answering it for should be a new paragraph.)

2. Which points are most intriguing or persuasive to you? Why?

3. Which points do you disagree with or find unpersuasive? Why?

4. What questions do you have about the readings? What would you like to discuss further with your classmates?

5. What news articles, stories, or personal experiences have you seen/had this week that relate to the theoretical concepts in the readings? Give at least one example for class discussion.

Purpose: The purpose of the reading questions is to help you develop an understanding of the texts, so that you can build foundational knowledge and redefine the way we think about leadership and its scope. Questions #4 and #5 are designed to help you think about real world applications.

2. Critical thinking and research response paper. This course requires critical thought about the course readings and class discussions in order to critically understand and develop your own sense of what leadership means, so the paper will focus on your perspectives on leadership, drawing from the course readings and outside supporting materials. The paper assignment handout on Blackboard explains the requirements for the paper in more detail. Papers will be evaluated according to the evaluation form at the bottom of the paper assignment sheet. Each paper should be 8-10 pages in length, and requires the use of scholarly research.

Purpose: The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate understanding of leadership concepts, to compare and contrast theories and ideas, and to apply these concepts to contemporary leadership to better understand the function and nature of leadership.
3. Analysis/Participation Activities.

Your participation and group discussion grades will be based on completion of discussion board activities that might include (but is not limited to) small group discussions, case studies, and one to two paragraph short essays. Your participation grade will be based on the quantity and quality of your discussion board posts. Each week you should:

   a. Respond to at least two people’s Weekly Reading Questions: due by 11:59 pm (CDT), Thursday each week, of at least 50 words.
   b. Analyze at least two case studies and/or respond to discussion questions (as posted): due by 11:59 pm (CDT) Thursday each week, of at least 150 words.
   c. Respond to at least two people’s case studies/discussion questions posts, due by 11:59 pm, Friday each week, of at least 50 words.

Total analysis and participation posts per week (not including the Weekly Reading Questions) should be at least six times. These due dates are the same every week to help create a routine of reading, reflecting, writing, and discussion.

Purpose: The purpose of these activities is to engage each student in more active and significant learning rather than passive learning.

Grading Rubric for Analysis/Participation and Discussion Board Activities:

**Excellent** – active participation, completion of all activities; student contributes to the discussion without trying to dominate it, makes thoughtful contributions, and shows interest in and respects others’ views.

**Good** – some participation, completion of most activities; student makes some thoughtful comments, contributes occasionally without prompting, and shows interest in and respects others’ views.

**Satisfactory** – some participation, completion of some activities; student does not voluntarily contribute to the discussion and gives only minimal participation.

**Poor** – little or no participation, completion of few activities; student often does not participate, does not routinely use Blackboard, is not engaged and/or is unprepared to participate in meaningful ways on the discussion board.

**Grading Scale**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points for Assignments</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading questions</td>
<td>400 points (50 points each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper (#1 OR #2)</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis/Participation Discussion Board Activity</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
<td>800 points</td>
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As a graduate seminar, there will be a heavy emphasis upon intellectual engagement and participation. All assignments are due by 11:59 PM (CDT) on the date specified. There will be a ten point deduction for each day late.

**ONLINE SUCCESS:** You must participate to be successful. It is every student’s responsibility to fully participate, so that everyone can get the most from the experience. Some simple rules to follow for full participation and engagement in learning:

Ask questions: If you do not know an answer, someone else will. The HELP board is a forum for asking questions related to content or any problems you are having in the course.

Ensure that you clearly indicate the subject of your message.

Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article link or other item that can help others to learn something in the course.

Be appropriate: The online course is not the place for insults, insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will be subject to disciplinary action as well as grade reduction.

Be diplomatic: Tolerance and respect for the opinions of others should always be upheld, even when strong differences of opinion exist. When sending messages on emotionally-charged issues, make sure to pause after writing the message and reread the message before sending it. Always be constructive, never destructive.

Remember, there is a person at the other end.

Stay Focused: stay on topic to increase your learning.

Identify yourself and clearly summarize the contents of your message in the subject line of your email and your discussion board postings.

Avoid sarcasm in your postings and emails. Sarcasm does not translate well online and can start word wars.

Avoid using all capital letters. USING ALL CAPS MAKES IT SEEM LIKE YOU ARE SHOUTING AND IT’S DIFFICULT TO READ.

**GUIDELINES FOR WRITING**

Please use a standard term paper format including 1" margins, double-spacing, page numbering, standard 12 point, Times New Roman font (this font) and proper citation procedures (APA), at [http://www.apastyle.org/](http://www.apastyle.org/). More information will be available about the paper assignments in a separate document.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, collusion, and deliberately interfering with the work of others.

Plagiarizing means representing the work of someone else (such as another student or an author of a book, article, or internet site) as your own. If you use the ideas or words of someone else, you must cite the source of the original information in your paper or presentation. For this class, using your own papers completed for another class also would be considered plagiarism.
Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying answers from other students’ papers or tests, discussing test questions with students who have not taken the test, and/or using notes when taking a test. Another example of cheating is to use a source from a text book without obtaining the original author’s work. If you do not read a work in its entirety, you may misrepresent the original author’s work. Another example is to copy answers from another student or to allow another student to copy from your work. Collusion refers to collaboration with another student to commit any academically dishonest act. If you provide answers to someone or knowingly allow someone to copy your work, you will be held responsible.

Invented or plagiarized work can result in an F grade for the course and may result in possible disciplinary action at the university level. Students may be suspended or expelled for engaging in academic dishonesty.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND INCOMPLETE POLICY**

Late written assignments will receive a ten point deduction for each twenty-four hour period (including weekends) the assignment is late. If you are unable to submit your assignment on the day that an assignment is due, you must contact me before the due date to arrange to turn in your assignment. Generally, I find it unacceptable for students to turn in late assignments, unless there are extreme and extenuating circumstances. **Late final papers will not be accepted.** If your final paper is late, you will receive a zero for the assignment. A grade of incomplete will not be given for any reason, unless there are EXTREME extenuating circumstances AND you have talked to me in advance. An incomplete will only be given if some extenuating circumstance prevents you from completing the final paper by the deadline.
COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

The following is the sequence of topics and required assignments for the course. The readings are listed by author. Your professor reserves the right to alter this calendar as circumstances may dictate. All changes will be sent to students with at least 48 hours advance notice.

Texts will be referred to by the author(s)’s last name(s).

Keohane = *Thinking About Leadership*
Northouse = *Leadership: Theory and Practice*
Kotter & Rathgeber = *Our Iceberg is Melting*
Kotter = *Leading Change*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
<th>Readings &amp; assignments due (see Blackboard)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part I: Introduction to Leadership Studies</td>
<td>Week of July 31 Introduction to leadership</td>
<td>Discussion board posts on Blackboard: self-introduction, “Truths and Myths about Leadership” case studies</td>
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<td>Week of August 7 Introduction to leadership theory</td>
<td>Weekly Reading Questions, set 1: Northouse, Introduction (chapter 1) Keohane, Introduction &amp; chapter 1 Kotter, chapters 1 &amp; 2 Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part II: Approaches in Leadership</td>
<td>Week of August 14 Classical approaches to leadership</td>
<td>Weekly Reading Questions set 2: Northhouse, chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 2 – trait, 3- skills 4- behavioral 5- situational Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)</td>
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<td>Week of August 21 Theoretical approaches to leadership</td>
<td>Weekly Reading Questions, set 3: Northouse, chapters 6, 7, 11, 12 6 path-goal 7 leader-member exchange 11 adaptive 12 psychodynamic Keohane, chapter 2 Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)</td>
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| Week of August 28 | Contemporary leadership approaches | Weekly Reading Questions, set 4  
|                  |                                  | Northouse, chapters 8, 9, 10, 14  
|                  |                                  | 8 transformational  
|                  |                                  | 9 authentic  
|                  |                                  | 10 servant  
|                  |                                  | 14 team  
|                  |                                  | Keohane, chapter 3  
|                  |                                  | Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)  
| Week of September 4 | Gender and cultural influences | Weekly Reading Questions, set 5  
|                    |                                  | Northouse, chapters 15, 16  
|                    |                                  | 15- gender/women,  
|                    |                                  | 16 culture and leadership  
|                    |                                  | Keohane, chapter 4  
|                    |                                  | Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)  
|                    |                                  | **Paper #1 due by Saturday 11:59 PM**  

**Part III: Leadership and Organizational Transformation**

| Week of September 11 | Leadership and ethics | Weekly Reading Questions, set 6  
|                      |                        | Northouse, chapter 13 ethics  
|                      |                        | Keohane, chapters 5, 6, & Conclusion  
|                      |                        | Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)  
| Week of September 18 | Leading and creating change | Weekly Reading Questions, set 7  
|                      |                           | Kotter, chapters 2-10  
|                      |                           | Discussion board posts (see Blackboard)  

**Part IV: Forming Conclusions, Creating Synthesis**

| Week of September 25 | Conclusions | Weekly Reading Questions, set 8  
|                      |             | Kotter, chapters 11 & 12  
|                      |             | Kotter & Rathgeber, whole book  
|                      |             | **Paper #2 due by Thursday at 11:59 PM**  