

## LS 200 Leadership Studies: Theory and Practice

T TH 12: 00-1:20

Humanities Center

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"Leadership is usually little more than the systematic exploitation of the weaknesses of others."

- *Leadership and You* by Dave Mulcahey

"Democratic leadership at its best recognizes the fundamental—unexpressed as well as felt—wants and needs of potential followers, encourages followers to a fuller consciousness of their higher needs, and helps convert the resulting hopes and aspirations into practical demands on other leaders."

- *Leadership and Democracy* by Thomas E. Cronin

### Background

"Zhu explained that he hoped first to describe and discuss the various theories of history that had been proposed through the centuries, and then to analyze those theories, not only by testing them in the description of actual events, 'difficult since events as such are remembered for how well they prop up the various theories,' but also for how the theories themselves were structured, and what sort of futures they implied, 'this being their chief use to us. I take it that what matters in a history is what there is in it we can put to use.'"

-*The Years of Rice and Salt* by Kim Stanley Robinson

As Zhu does with history, we will do with leadership: first describing the theories and approaches that have been offered, followed by an analysis not only of their usefulness in explaining leadership events, but also of how they are structured and what sort of leadership they imply. What matters in the study of leadership, I assume, is what we can put to use in shaping the future of leadership.

Towards this end, the course structure is straightforward: after arriving at a tentative definition of leadership and an introduction to critical terminology essential to leadership study, we'll turn to specific leadership approaches (trait, behavioral, situational, contingency, transformational, visionary, charismatic, service, and cultural). Throughout, we will read stories, view films, and discuss hypothetical incidents as a way of considering each theory's applicability and its implied understanding of leadership. These "shared" leadership scenarios will serve as the basis for our shared discussion of leadership.

The Academic discussion of leadership attempts to do systematically what we do regularly in our daily lives: to answer questions about the leadership process. Here are some of the

questions we will pursue in this course: Does leadership require certain traits of the leader? Do the traits vary from leader to leader or context to context? How is leadership different from management or administration? How are leaders and followers related? What obligations does the leader have to followers, to organizations, to communities, or to constituencies outside their domain of influence? Likewise, to what are followers obligated? What are the goals of leadership? Who establishes those goals and how should they be established? How does context, including cultural values, influence the leadership process? Whose interests should the leadership process serve? What are the ethical and social responsibilities of leadership? On what grounds should leaders and followers engage these ethical and moral questions?

**Objectives** By the end of this course you should be able to...

- Differentiate between leadership theories and approaches.
- Analyze leadership incidents, including specific goals and outcomes, constituent needs, and influence tactics employed.
- Apply theories and approaches of leadership to specific leaders and leadership scenarios.
- Identify the implications and assumptions of leadership theories, particularly in terms of goals, relationships to power, community, transformation, and service.
- Evaluate leadership theories—their applicability and their implications—critically and ethically.
- Write critically about theories and approaches of leadership.
- Teach others about leadership.
- Articulate your own understanding of the processes, practices, and purposes of leadership.

All of these objectives work to improve critical thinking skills. Stephen Brookfield identifies four activities of critical thinkers: 1) they identify and challenge assumptions; 2) they identify the importance of context; 3) they imagine and explore alternatives; and 4) they exhibit a reflective skepticism (or are skeptical of claims to universal truth). All people think critically in some situations, particularly those where they are knowledgeable or have been challenged by life experiences; the challenge is to think critically outside our areas of comfort.

### **Required Textbooks**

Schmidt, Jeff. *Disciplined Minds: A Critical Look at Salaried Professionals and the Soul-Battering System That Shapes Their Lives*. (304 pages)

Sunstein, Cass R. *Why Societies Need Dissent*. (246 pages)

Wren, J. Thomas. *The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages*.

LS 200 Introduction to Leadership Studies Course Pack Readings (available at book store)

## Assignments

### Response Essays (5% each)

You will write four, short response essays, no more than one-and-one-half pages. Each response essay will ask you to consider a specific question or problem raised by our readings; I'm likely to offer more than one choice per essay, but you should anticipate having to synthesize various readings, our class discussions, some observational research, and your own experiences.

The essays should be critical and analytical. They are not mini-reports or summaries and they are not "impression" pieces. They will ask you to develop arguments, analyze assumptions, consider implications, evaluate theories, produce alternatives, and consider counter-views. Don't let the brevity of the essays fool you. I expect a lot from these pages. Not only will I expect some basic conventions of academic writing—coherence, development, and logical consistency—but I'll also keep asking for explanations, examples, counter-arguments, inferences, and judgments. I'm sure this will frustrate you and you'll want to say, but it's not even two pages! But communication is critical for the leadership process, so learn to economize your language by avoiding excess words and varying sentence structure to reflect your complex thinking. I'll allow one revision.

I've posted some suggestions for these essays on blackboard, though I also suggest Richard Lanham's *Revising Prose* for specific techniques on making your language clear and concise.

### Essay 1 (15%)

The first longer essay asks you to consider one specific situation or instance where you were involved with leadership—either as a leader, a follower, or some other role. *First*, tell the story of the instance. What happened? Who was involved? What did they do? Be specific, remembering that your readers do not know the events, context, or the people involved. I encourage you to choose an incident you can “distance” yourself from.

*Then*, evaluate the incident, paying particular attention to how this leadership process could have gone differently. Did it go poorly or well? Why? What factors lead to the success or failure of the incident? What factors could have changed to improve the incident if it went poorly? What factors were crucial for its success if it went well? Your evaluation should consider all the relevant components of the incident, not just your role.

*Finally*, draw some conclusions for the study of leadership. What does this incident and your evaluation imply for leadership as a whole? What questions, problems, or points does this occurrence raise about leaders, followers, or the leadership process? (Note that while self-reflection will likely play a crucial role in this essay, the assignment calls for more than reflection.) The essay will likely be four-to-six pages, depending on your incident.

### Essay 2 (20%)

The final longer essay asks you to write an argument about leadership. Arguments work to convince your readers to accept your point of view on a specific topic. In this case,

your argument is likely to take one of two forms: 1) a position statement about leadership or 2) a criticism or defense of a specific author or view.

In a position statement, you advance some idea about leadership. For example, “effective leadership requires leaders who are not committed to one vision, organization, or way of thinking—leaders, in fact, who are willing to abandon their leadership position.”

In a defense or criticism you defend or criticize another author’s (or set of authors’) advancement of some idea. For example a criticism might be: “while many theorists dismiss the importance of traits in leadership, all leaders—regardless of context or culture—must have certain skills to be successful, and the fact is that most people lack these traits.”

Application (applying a theory to a specific scenario) is likely to serve a function in both of these forms, but it is not the central form for the assignment. Do not, for example, try to argue that Ghandi was a Citizen Leader.

### Book Club Presentations (15 %)

This assignment is a small group presentation that examines the content, application, and evaluation of one of the following books. Your presentation should explain 1) the basic ideas expressed in the book (including who they are expressed to and by) 2) the similarities and differences of those ideas from other leadership ideas, 3) the sort of leadership implied by the ideas, and 4) your evaluation of those ideas. The presentation should last no longer than 30 minutes. Each group should meet with Jamie Lawrence in the speech center at least two weeks prior to the presentation time.

Alinsky, S.D. *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Reader for Realistic Radicals*. New York: Random House, 1972. (196 pages.) 0679721134.

Badaracco, Joseph L. Jr. *Leading Quietly: An Unorthodox Guide to Doing the Right Thing*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002. (200 pages) 1578514878

Rinehart, Stacy T. *Upside Down: The Paradox of Servant Leadership*. US: Navpress, 1998. (176 pages.) 1576830799

Wilson, Marie C. *Closing the Leadership Gap*. Viking/Penguin, 2004. (208 pages)

Gitlin, Todd. *Letters to a Young Activist*. (192 pages)

Chaleff, Ira. *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up to and for Our Leaders* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Barrett-Koehler Publishers, 2003. 15767524X (224 pages)

### Mid-term and Final Exam (10% each)

The exams will assess your understanding of the ideas we’ve discussed.

### Quizzes (10%)

I don’t enjoy quizzes, mostly because I forget to write them and grade them. But they seem important for two reasons: they ensure that people read and they help us assess your understanding of the materials. So, we’ll have quizzes, typically one per week, on the content of readings. If everyone consistently does well on them, I’ll stop giving them.

### **Attendance and Preparedness**

This class relies on discussion. As a result, it is important that you attend each class and come to each class prepared to discuss. Such preparation, obviously, helps to ensure your success on other requirements in the course. More than that, however, your absence—either physically by not showing up or mentally by not being prepared—damages the entire class. We miss your voice in the conversation. While I will occasionally offer background and orientation for the approaches and readings, I will typically work as a facilitator or participant in the discussions. Our shared object of study is leadership.

Each absence beyond three will lower your grade by one letter. Six absences are grounds for failure; three lates count as an absence. Should you miss a class, it is your responsibility to make up any missed work.

### **Discussion Policy**

Stay in the moment. We all have many and varied experiences with leadership, both as academic learners and as people in the world, that no doubt give rise to many opinions and views about leadership. As a group, however, we have fewer shared leadership experiences. Those will increase over the semester. While sometimes it will be necessary to consider experiences outside our collective purview, I want to encourage us here to stay in the moment and to stay within the bounds of our collective experiences. That is, rather than offer historical or personal examples with which the majority of the class is unfamiliar, work to support your ideas with examples we all share. Doing so allows for two things: 1) no one (including me) will feel excluded from the discussion; 2) everyone will be capable of verifying your claims.

### **Honor Code**

As a member of the Birmingham-Southern College community, you signed an Honor Pledge saying that you will not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate such behavior on the part of other members of the community. By attending this class, I assume you are aware of the policies and procedures outlining your commitment to that code.

### **Plagiarism**

When you use someone else's words, ideas, or data derived through experimentation or investigation without giving that person credit, you are plagiarizing. This is contrary to academic integrity and to the College's Honor Code. It is better to err in favor of too much documentation than too little. Failure to properly credit material will result in failure for that paper and may result in failure for the course and other disciplinary action.

## Essays

All essays will be graded according to clarity of **purpose** (including fulfillment of assignment requirements and articulation of central idea); **audience awareness** (including appropriate evidence or content and clear reasoning); **organization** (including paragraph development and coherence, and opening and closing paragraphs); and **language and style** (including sentence variety, precise vocabulary, citations, and “clutter”). In short, how well does the essay satisfy the needs and expectations of the audience?

If you are unclear about any of these criteria, please ask. Your audience for all of the essays in this class includes your classmates and the authors we are reading. That is, people who study leadership. You are one of these people. Your audience is a group of your peers.

As I’ve noted, the short response essays are likely to challenge you. Here are few tips for writing these short assignments:

- 1) Follow the writing process. Don’t fool yourself into thinking you can sit down and write these short essays in short period of time. Plan on working through several drafts of your ideas. Use the writing center. Revise.
- 2) Make your central point quickly – within the first 2-3 sentences – and move on. Avoid the temptation to provide a long and unnecessary introduction. You don’t have time. (But don’t assume this central point will pop out of your head onto the page. Again, use the writing process – before you can write the central idea clearly at the start, you need to explore and discover what it is.)
- 3) Eliminate the repetition of concepts. You have limited space, so don’t repeat your ideas with different words. Instead, develop them (through evidence, examples, etc.).
- 4) Provide specifics. Once you’ve given a claim, move quickly to examples and quotations to support it. Long quotations are unnecessary for these essays.
- 5) Reduce clutter. Tighten sentences. Cut what’s unnecessary.
- 6) Combine sentences to more clearly link ideas. (Don’t forget to vary sentence structure.)
- 7) Reduce “to be” verbs.

**Calendar**

**LS 200 Leadership Studies: Theory and Practice**

Fall 2003

12:00-1:20 HC

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	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1 August 26 & 28 <b>Defining Leadership</b>	No class	First Day Definition of Leadership Course Preliminaries
Week 2 September 2 & 4	Reading and Thinking Critically Wren 49 (379-388) Wren 9 (49-52), 11 (55-59)  KSR "The Lucky Strike" (coursepack)	What is Leadership? Wren 5, 6, 7, 8, 22 (25-46, 114-123)  View 12 Angry Men on your own by Monday  <b>Essay 1 Due</b>
Week 3 September 9 & 11 <b>Theories and Approaches to Leadership</b>	Sunstein: Why Societies Need Dissent	Sunstein: Why Societies Need Dissent  Groupthink Wren 47 (pp. 360-373)  Robert Heinlein "The Roads Must Roll" (coursepack)  By next Thursday, view <i>Babe</i> on your own or join the collective viewing on Wednesday (on reserve)
Week 4 September 16 & 18	Trait Approach Wren 23, 24 (pp. 125-143) Mulcahey "Leadership and You" (coursepack)	Style Approach & Motivation Wren 25, 44, (pp. 144-148; 327-338) Groups 46 (355-359) discuss: Babe <b>Response 1 Due</b>
Week 5	Situational Theory	Transforming Leadership

<p>September 23 &amp; 25</p>	<p>Wren 32, 33, 34 (205-230)</p>	<p>Wren 19, 20, 21, 61 (100-113, 483)        ----        Retreat, September 26-27.        Wren 62 (484-491)        Servant Leadership 4, (18-23)</p>
<p>Week 6        September 30 &amp; October 2</p>	<p>Citizen Leadership/        Leadership and Democracy        Wren 3 (11-17)        Wren 41, 42, (303-317)        King "I Have a Dream"        (coursepack)</p>	<p>Influence Tactics and Non-violence        Wren 16, 45 (72-77; 339-351)        Wren 43 (318-324)        King "Where Do We Go From Here?" (coursepack)   <b>Response 2 Due</b></p>
<p>Week 7        October 7 &amp; 9</p>	<p>Women in Leadership        Wren 26, 27 (149-167)        Pollitt (coursepack)         Followers        Wren 31 (193-204)</p>	<p>Contingency Theory &amp; Cultural Approaches        Wren 18, 36, 37 (pp. 83-99; 243-270)         Take home Mid-Term Exam due by Friday</p>
<p>Week 8        October 14 &amp; 16</p>	<p>Cultural Approaches (Minorities in Management)        Wren 28, 35 (168-182, 231-242)</p>	<p>Fall Break        No Class</p>
<p>Week 9        October 21 &amp; 23</p>	<p>Visionary Leadership and Business Liberation        Leadership        Wren 52 (402-407)        Wren 62 (484-491)        Tom Peters "Shared Vision" (coursepack)</p>	<p>Cultural Approaches cont.        Wren 38, 39, (271-296)  <b>Response 3 Due</b></p>



Week 10 October 28 & 30	Schmidt's cultural approach  <i>Disciplined Minds: Salaried Professionals...</i> Schmidt  How does the professional differ from the leader?	<i>Disciplined Minds...</i> Schmidt  Views of Organizations Wren 50 (389-394)
Week 11 November 4 & 6	Schmidt  Talent and Training for Leadership Wren 59 (464-471)	Schmidt  <b>Response 4 Due</b>
Week 12 November 11 & 13	Schmidt	Schmidt
Week 13 November 18 & 20	<b>Book Club Presentations</b> Groups 1 & 2  <b>Essay 2 Due</b> before reading day	Education and Leadership Freire "Banking Concept of Education" (coursepack)  Course evaluations
Week 14 November 25 & 27	<b>Book Club Presentations</b> Group 3 & 4	Thanksgiving Break Wed November 26 to Sun November 30
Week 15 December 2 & 4  Wed December 3, Last day of Classes	<b>Book Club Presentations</b> Groups 5 & 6	No class
Final Exams: Friday December 5 - Thursday December 11		Final Exam: Thursday, December 11 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon