

NYU DC

The Meaning of Leadership

UPADM-GP-9221 DC1

Fall 2020

Instructors

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Office Hours: by appointment

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Overview and Goals

“Leadership is about how we shape futures that we truly desire.” Peter Senge

The Meaning of Leadership is a multi-disciplinary, experiential course that explores the nature of leadership in our 21st century global society and the capacities required to contribute effectively. For too long, we’ve imagined leadership as belonging to a select few. In every sector, we’ve focused our support and attention on individual leaders, and yet, the rapid transformation of our workplaces and communities requires a new and more expansive approach. Whether it’s addressing issues like climate change and income inequality or generating breakthrough innovations in science and technology, tackling today’s challenges requires capable and responsive leaders, as well as broadly distributed leadership that is ethical, inclusive and collaborative. The purpose of this course is to expose you to the trends that are driving this shift and to prepare you to more effectively exercise leadership in your own life and meaningfully contribute to work on complex challenges across a variety of sectors.

This course will be the academic component of your internship or other experiential learning engagement. You will analyze contemporary leadership frameworks and develop your perspective on what it means for leadership to be ethical, inclusive, and collaborative. You will use the seminar to reflect critically and analytically on your experience to further your academic and professional goals. You will be asked to evaluate various aspects of your internship or experiential learning site, including but not limited to its mission, approach, policies, leadership culture and the local, regional and international contexts in which it operates. You will also be asked to reflect critically on the roles you take and your application of class learning in your internship or experiential learning placement throughout the semester. Hands-on course activities such as simulations, team projects and peer-to-peer consultancies will support you in developing self-awareness and critical leadership skills. You will be graded on the academic work produced in this course.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to meet the following learning goals and objectives.

Learning Goal I: Analyze leadership across contexts

Objectives:

- Identify contextual factors that drive leadership
- Recognize how contemporary leadership is an ongoing dynamic response to a complex world
- Recognize the individual and collective dimensions of leadership

Learning Goal II: Prepare yourself to exercise leadership

Objectives:

- Practice self-reflection to build self-awareness, clarify career goals and enhance leadership skills
- Express the personal values that influence your leadership
- Use developmental relationships to narrow the gap between where you are and where you want to be in your leadership

Learning Goal III: Enact relational leadership practices

Objectives:

- Use multiple lenses to analyze the context in which leadership takes place
- Develop strategies for addressing adaptive leadership challenges
- Create inclusive leadership processes
- Develop strategies for addressing values conflicts

Course Requirements

Class Participation: 20%

You must complete all readings and associated activities on NYU Classes before the session in which they are due and engage actively in the discussions and classroom activities. To participate fully, you should reflect on how your experience supports or challenges the concepts presented in those readings in preparation for each class. You are expected to actively engage in experiential exercises conducted during class time.

Leadership Learning Site: 20%

The Leadership Learning Site is your place to reflect on how the ideas in the course relate to you and your work. You will be expected to complete a post prior to most class sessions. Note that posts must be completed by Sunday at 11:55 pm prior to the session in which they are due. Your posts should be well organized and written in a professional style.

Think of them as short reflective essays. All assignments are listed in the Course Schedule and Outline section of the syllabus and described in detail on your customized Leadership Learning site and in NYU Classes. You will share your blog with your instructor who will support your development by offering feedback and guidance through the comments section of the blog over the course of the semester. To maximize this opportunity, please be as candid as possible in your posts. Later, you can selectively share components of your blog with others if you find that helpful. For now, know that your posts are being read by someone who wants you to stretch yourself, take risks and ultimately succeed. Instructions for accessing and setting up your blog will be provided on NYU Classes.

Individual Development Plan: 10%

An important aim of this course is to prepare you to exercise leadership. To do that, this course will offer you opportunities to increase your self-awareness, clarify your sense of purpose and the values that guide your leadership, and identify the strengths you bring to the work and the skills you want to enhance. The Individual Development Plan, which you will access through the same site as your blog, offers you space to set development goals for yourself, chart your progress and get feedback along the way from your mentor, instructor and peers. At the end of the semester, you will make a final progress report and identify goals for the future. The same guidelines outlined for the blog apply here — to get the most out of the IDP, you need to be willing to stretch, take risks and get honest feedback.

Team Project: 50%

You will work in a team to write a paper and deliver a presentation about an adaptive challenge of your choosing. Your team will define a challenge, investigate it, and propose an approach to addressing it. It should be a problem that at least one member of your team has a direct stake in and some ability to play a role in resolving. (e.g. it may be a challenge at school, in your community, or in your internship.)

You will work on this project throughout the semester and will receive feedback at each stage to help you refine your approach. You will be evaluated as a team on four components:

1. Project Proposal
2. Mid Project Report
3. Final Presentation
4. Team Contribution (a short survey in which you will evaluate your contributions and the contributions of your teammates to the effort)

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class Participation	20%
Leadership Learning Site	20%
Individual Development Plan	10%
Team Project	50%

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	94-100 %
A-	3.67	90-93 %
B+	3.33	87-89 %
B	3.00	84-86 %
B-	2.67	80-83 %
C+	2.33	77-79 %
C	2.00	74-76 %
C-	1.67	70-73 %
D+	1.33	67-69 %
D	1.00	65-66 %
F	.00	Below 65 %

View Grades

Grades will be posted to NYU Classes. Midterm and Final Grades will be posted to Albert.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

The following is a summary of topics and assignments. For complete details on sessions, reading, pre-work, and assignments, see the session page in NYU classes.

All assignments are due at by 11:55pm on the Sunday before our Tuesday class, except where otherwise noted.

Session 1: Exercising Leadership: Case Study of a Complex Leadership Challenge

Friday, Sept 4, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Remote Session (link to be provided)

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast of the US. The storm itself did tremendous damage but its aftermath was catastrophic. In New Orleans, levee breaches caused massive flooding that destroyed homes, businesses, and infrastructure, left thousands dead and tens of thousands displaced. Entire communities were devastated. In the months and years that followed, communities struggled to rebuild and recover. In this case study, we'll look at one small piece of the recovery. We'll talk about the people involved, decisions made, actions taken, and their consequences and consider the lessons learned about leadership in a complex, evolving environment. We will then use your exploration of this case to preview the different concepts we will address throughout the semester.

Assignments due:

To prepare for this class please watch this [12-minute video](#) about the experience of one family in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina. It is important for you to have this background and context for the event to fully participate in class. A word of caution: Hurricane Katrina was a catastrophic event that caused many deaths, some covered in this video. There is some deeply sad content.

Session 2: Preparing Yourself for Leadership: Self-Awareness and Developmental Relationships

Tuesday, Sept 8, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

This session will introduce the portion of the course focused on you as a leader. You will prepare your goals for the semester in advance to create an individual learning plan based on your emerging awareness of your strengths and areas for growth. We will discuss the role of emotional intelligence in leadership and why it is increasingly critical. You will have the opportunity to make sense of your Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Inventory results. In addition, we will discuss different types of developmental relationships that can support you as you pursue your goals and prepare you to effectively build connections and relationships as you engage in networking in D.C. Finally, we will review the syllabus and set norms for our learning community.

Reading/Preparation (30 min):

- Acquaint yourself with the concept of Emotional Intelligence
 - Watch [this video](#) (5 min)
 - Take [this short quiz](#) to assess your own EI (10 min)
 - Reflect. Give some thought to how you might strengthen your EI. We know that quiz is not perfect and it may have had some questions that bugged you but the results probably struck you as being mostly right or mostly wrong, which means you have an opinion about your own EI. Think about your strengths and weaknesses in this area and how you might like to further develop your EI. (10 min)
- Inspiration: Watch this video about [building your skills through work and experience](#) (5 min)

Assignment:

Develop your [Individual Development Plan](#) (IDP) (60 min)

Session 3: Exercising Leadership: Adaptive Leadership Practices

Tuesday, Sept 15, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

In this session we will focus specifically on “adaptive leadership” as an effective model for today’s environment. According to Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky, “adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive.” You will apply the adaptive leadership framework to a complex challenge that is important to you and have the opportunity to pitch your challenge to your classmates. Through this process, we will form our teams for the semester-long team project.

Reading/Preparation (30 min):

- Acquaint yourself with the term “[VUCA](#)”. It describes the world we live in today and is the reason for the leadership framework that we have adopted for this course. Read this quick summary and add your thoughts to the discussion at the end of the document. (15 minutes)
- Learn what we mean by [Adaptive Leadership](#). This one of many leadership frameworks and it is the one we have chosen for this class because of its relevance and flexibility (15 minutes)

Assignment (1 hour)

- For the rest of this semester, you will be working on a group project to address an adaptive challenge chosen by your team.
- In this session (#3), every student will present an idea for a project to the whole class. It should be a challenge that you care about and that lends itself to an engaging, impactful group project. Your challenge does not have to be a problem that you can actually solve

this semester (i.e. you can think big), but it should be one that you can research and propose solutions to.

- Examples: Past projects have included efforts to improve NYU (e.g addressing student financial challenges, sexual harassment, food waste), or solve problems in specific communities (eliminating food deserts in DC, improving transportation in a county in Florida) or address systemic problems (e.g. fixing flaws in the cash bail system, improving attitudes towards voting or recycling).
- To prepare your pitch, do this worksheet: [Adaptive Leadership “Pitch” Plan](#)

Session 4: Exercising Leadership: Team Dynamics

Tuesday, Sept 22, 6:15 - 8:45pm

The practice of leadership inevitably involves working with others. In this session, we will explore team dynamics, the nature of conflict and approaches to turning conflict into opportunities for communication and collaboration. Understanding how teams operate can help you avoid the pitfalls that hinder progress and maximize your odds of a successful project (including in this course).

Reading/Preparation (30 min):

To prepare for this week's discussion on team dynamics, please read the following and consider these questions.

1. Familiarize yourself with the stages of team formation. Read [this summary](#) and give some thought to how your team will go through these phases.
2. Then consider why some teams are more effective than others. We tend to think that a team that functions smoothly and without disagreement is a good strong team. But, what if that is not true?
 - a. Read [this article](#), which proposes an entirely different idea. What do you think?
 - b. Then, read [this article](#) that identifies the qualities of an effective team. How can you incorporate these qualities into your team?
3. Finally, if you find team dynamics an exciting topic, here's some [additional optional reading](#). Google launched Project Aristotle to leverage its huge data sets to figure out what makes a perfect team. Their findings expand on the previous article to focus on a concept called psychological safety. We will be talking more about psychological safety in a later class, but it's worth a read now, if you've got an extra 10 minutes.

Assignments (30 min):

- You will receive an email tomorrow morning prompting you to complete the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Modes assessment online using the Thomas-Kilmann Instrument (TKI). **Please fill it out by Sunday night (Sept 20)!** It takes about 30 minutes and you will receive a report (paid for by NYU).

September 29 - No class

- **Co Curricular - Look for an email from Vicky with details**

Session 5: Exercising Leadership: Inclusive Practices

Tuesday, Oct 6, 6:15 – 8:45pm

We will examine the role of identity and power in leadership as we set the context for practicing inclusive leadership. We will look at how gender, race and other markers of identity influence access to leadership opportunities and discuss the implications of exclusionary practices on leadership effectiveness in today's environment. We will use a simulation in this session to practice humble inquiry as an inclusive leadership practice.

Reading and Reflection:

1. **Set the Stage:** Let's make sure we have the same vocabulary for this discussion. (15 min)
 - a. Please read this short summary of terms and ADD your own reflections to the [document](#).

2. **Get smart about how our brains work.** Watch this video by Dr Asma Abuzaakouk about how the brain works and how we are genetically programmed for bias. (15 min)
 - a. Write down at 2 - 3 questions to ask of Asma in class.

3. **Understand Psychological Safety.** Amy Edmondson explains why it is important and how we do it. We will discuss strategies for creating psychological safety in class. (15 min)
 - a. Watch [this TEDx Talk](#) about building a psychologically safe workplace.
 - b. Do a quick informal reflection: Do you have experience with places that fostered or hindered psychological safety? What were they like?)

4. **Explore the concept of Humble Inquiry.** Edgar H. Schein defines Humble Inquiry as the gentle art of asking, not telling. It means adopting a posture of inquiry to learn things from people, regardless of their stature or relationship to you in the organizational hierarchy. (45 min)
 - a. Read [this except from his book](#). (You can skip the first 12 pages, which include reviews, tables of contents, and blank pages. Your reading starts with the introduction, which begins on the 13th page of this PDF.)
 - b. **Think about how to improve your practice of humble inquiry.** The practice of humble inquiry takes some effort. It is harder for some of us than others, and we can all get better at it. It requires developing our ability to ask open ended questions. We'll talk about this in class. In preparation, check out two resources. They will help you formulate better questions.
 - i. Watch: [How to ask better questions](#) (Vaughan, Mike. (2015) TEDx Mile High)
 - ii. Read: [8 ways to improve a question](#) (Berger, Warren. (2015, December 11)

Assignments:

There is nothing to turn in this week. Simply do the reading and comment on the document under #1 above. Come prepared with questions and ideas to engage with our speakers.

Session 6: Preparing Yourself for Leadership: Personal Narrative

Tuesday, Oct 13, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

We will continue our personal development process with a focus on values and personal narrative in this session. Using the Public Narrative framework, we will practice telling stories of self related to the issues you worked on in the adaptive leadership session. You will get feedback from peers and your instructor and have the opportunity to enhance your delivery of a narrative that can move others to action.

Reading/Preparation:

Review readings and videos on the MoL Site in NYU classes. They include:

- Ganz, Marshall, *Why Stories Matter. Sojourners*, March, 2009.
- Ganz, Marshall, *Public Narrative Participant Guide*.
- Watch the videos on NYU classes
- Using the worksheet provided on NYU Classes, draft a story of self that helps you communicate the values that motivate you to take action on the adaptive challenge you discussed in the last session.

Assignments due:

- Team Project: Adaptive Leadership Challenge Proposal

Session 7: Exercising Leadership: Diagnosing the System

Tuesday, Oct 20, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

In the next few sessions, we will explore and apply the practice of adaptive leadership. This week, we explore the first step in practicing adaptive leadership, which is to “diagnose the system”. This session is about resisting the impulse to jump straight to a solution, and rather, to step back and figure out what is going on. To help with the diagnosis, we will use a framework, summarized in your readings, that allows you to look at organizations through several perspectives: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. We will apply it to your internship sites as well as a case study of profound organizational dysfunction at a GM car plant called NUMMI.

Reading/Preparation:

- Read the resources on NYU Classes
- This American Life, Episode 561: NUMMI- [Part 1](#)

Assignments due:

- Blog Post 3: Internship Overview

Session 8: Exercising Leadership: Mobilizing the System

Tuesday, Oct 27, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

In our ongoing application of adaptive leadership, we will move beyond diagnosis to look at ways to “mobilize the system”. In practicing adaptive leadership, you will make interventions aimed to change the dynamics and outcomes in your organization or system. Your interventions should be based on the results of your diagnosis, taking into account the structure, human resources, politics, and culture of your organization. You will have to engage politically and address conflict. To explore the notion of mobilization, you will continue your analysis of the NUMMI case study and analyze what happened as GM sought to mobilize its system and apply the lessons learned at NUMMI to the whole company.

Reading/Preparation:

- See the website for class readings.
- This American Life, Episode 561: NUMMI- [Part 2](#)

Assignments due:

- Team Project: Progress Report

November 3 - No Class

- Co Curricular - Look for an email from Vicky with details

Session 9: Exercising Leadership: Effective Communication

Tuesday, Nov 10, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

Leadership requires articulating a point of view, persuading and motivating others. So, let's talk about communication. How can you communicate effectively, leading with your values, and bringing others along with you.

Reading/Preparation:

- See NYU classes for assigned readings

November 17 - No class

- Co Curricular - Look for an email from Vicky with details

Session 10: Exercising Leadership: Ethical Leadership

Tuesday, Nov 24, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

We will explore how we can each lead in alignment with our own values. Using case studies, we will craft strategies for resolving values conflicts ethically and with integrity.

Reading/Preparation:

- See NYU classes

Session 11: Preparing Yourself for Leadership: Perspectives on Work and Life (Panel)

Tuesday, Dec 1, 6:15 – 8:45 pm

The contemporary workplace can be complex and challenging, with changing attitudes and workforce dynamics that require organizations to pay attention to and address issues including diversity and work-life balance. This class will feature a guest panel of professionals to speak about their varied experiences in and out of the workplace.

Reading/Preparation:

See NYU classes for a choice of readings. They include, but are not limited to:

- Slaughter, A. (2012). Why Women Still Can't Have it All. *The Atlantic*: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/> or, if you want an alternative to reading, consider Professor Slaughter's TED Talk: http://www.ted.com/talks/anne_marie_slaughter_can_we_all_have_it_all?language=en
- NYT: What it is Really Like to Risk it All in Silicon Valley: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/upshot/what-its-really-like-to-risk-it-all-in-silicon-valley.html>

Assignments due:

- Blog Post 4: Informational Interviews
- Team Project: Teamwork Survey

Session 12: Final Presentations

Tuesday, Dec 8, 6:15 – 9:15 pm

Our two sections will come together to present their final projects for the instructors, the DC Site Leadership and invited guests of your choosing (e.g., your internship supervisor, mentor).

Assignments due:

- Team Project: Final presentation

Session 13: Preparing Yourself for Leadership: Taking Your Leadership Forward

Tuesday, Dec 15, 2020 6:15 – 8:45 pm

This closing session will synthesize learning across the arc of the course and its three thematic areas: understanding leadership, preparing yourself for leadership and exercising leadership. We will work together to prepare you to continue developing your leadership once the course has ended. We will discuss how to incorporate what you have learned and experienced this semester in a cohesive manner that can be used in an elevator pitch, networking opportunity, and/or job interview or negotiation setting.

Assignments due:

- IDP: Final Progress Report

Course Materials

Course readings and activities are available online in the course site on NYU classes. Only one resource is not available on the site.

1. **You will need to order this instrument, but wait for direction from the professor:** Thomas, Kenneth W. and Gail Fann Thomas, [*Introduction to Conflict and Teams*](#) (note: You will need to order this booklet in advance at the link included here.)

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor's note with that day's date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Washington, DC expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave Washington, DC before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

Late Assignment

- 1) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
- 2) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.
- 3) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

- 4) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
- 5) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
- 6) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An “incomplete” is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of “incomplete,” present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of “incomplete” to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site’s academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University’s policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." **Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.**

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Washington, DC takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

- [NYU Policies and Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#)
- [NYU Library Guides](#)

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the Washington, DC Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.