Communication 463-50 (Online)

Leadership and Communication (WR)

Summer 2015

Instructor: Dr. Joy L. Hart
Office: 310 Strickler Hall, West Wing
Office Phone: 852-6976
Electronic Mail Address: joy.hart@louisville.edu (best method of contact)
Office Hours: By appointment for summer
Meeting Time and Place: Online

Readings and Materials:

Hackman, M. Z., & Johnson, C. E. (2013). *Leadership: A communication perspective* (6th ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland.

A biography or autobiography of a particular leader (details given in class)

A movie about leadership (details given in class)

Nature of the Course:

This course addresses leadership as a communication phenomenon—one that is fundamental to groups, organizations, and societies. We will examine how leadership takes place through communication, how leaders are recognized communicatively, and how we "cue" others to take leadership roles via our communication. In short, we will explore leadership as a communicative process—a process of people interacting with and through symbols as they: (1) attempt to influence each other, (2) set and accomplish goals, and (3) create change. More specifically, our focus in the course will be on leadership and followership as we examine the symbolic acts and processes of meaning creation by leaders and followers. Additionally, we will explore assumptions and beliefs about, theories of, and perspectives on leadership.

Course Objectives:

This course aims primarily to develop the student's understanding of leadership and communication.

By the end of the course, students will:
• be familiar with the relationship between communication and leadership;
• understand several theories of and perspectives on leadership and followership and be able to apply them to specific communicative situations;

- be able to explain how power and influence relate to leadership;
- understand how conceptualizations of, practices in, and research on leadership have differed historically and culturally;
- develop an appreciation for leadership in groups and organizations as well as in the public sphere; and
- conduct original research on leadership and communication.

Organization of the Course:

The course is designed as a seminar. Thus, we will discuss the assigned readings and related issues in several ways in the online environment. Several times during the term, you will analyze leadership situations and present your conclusions to the class. Our discussions will include both theoretical information and practical analysis. This course fulfills a WR general education requirement (i.e., a writing requirement); thus, you will have several writing opportunities during the term.

In order to facilitate answering student questions, there will be an "Ask the Professor" forum where you may post questions about the class. This method of asking questions will be especially useful if you have a question that you believe pertains to all or a number of students (i.e., one where the answer will be of interest to many students). In each case, I will respond as quickly as possible, usually within 72 hours (unless I am traveling and do not have email access—such travel will be infrequent and the dates will be posted on Blackboard).

Assignments:

Discussion Forum Participation = 45%
Discussion Leader Assignment = 10%
Discussion Leader Chapter Review Paper = 10%
Movie Analysis Project = 13% (10% for paper; 3% for presentation)
Book Analysis Project = 22% (17% for paper; 5% for presentation)

Grading:

The following grading scale will be used in the course –

A+ = 97% and higher
A = 93-96%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76%
C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%

D = 63-66%
D- = 60-62%
F = below 60%

Description of Assignments:

Discussion Forum Participation = 45% -- This portion of your grade will be based on your participating in the course discussion forums. Of course, in order to participate, you need to have completed the assigned readings. Participation will be based on making meaningful contributions to class discussions and case analyses. I will typically post lectures and course information on Tuesdays (unless otherwise noted). It is your responsibility to retrieve this material and respond to the discussion forum accordingly. Below I describe the specific requirements for these discussion forum postings. So that you do not miss opportunities to post, you will also want to **monitor times that Blackboard is down** for scheduled maintenance, etc. You are NOT required to attend any face-to-face classes. All work is completed online.

You are required to visit the course discussion forums **at least twice a week and make at least 3 different posts** (please feel free to post more; in fact, I encourage you to post often). You can respond to the lecture, readings, questions from student leaders, or to another student's comments/concerns/arguments. **One** of these posts should be **at least 150 words** and the **remaining two** must have **at least 75 words**. Further, you shouldn't simply agree or disagree with a comment. Rather, you **must make a coherent argument/comment** when you post to the discussion forum. For high quality posts as well as ones that might further discussion on a topic, you might seek out additional research articles in the area or link to relevant current events. If you bring in outside information, be sure to add the link to the relevant information when you post. Although we all have opinions and many of us will have related leadership experiences, these posts shouldn't primarily be a discussion of your opinions or your experiences. Rather, try to **concentrate your writing on facts, theories, and concepts**. Of primary concern is that your post **furthers the course discussion** (i.e., adds value to the discussion of the course material)—this dimension will be considered in evaluating discussion forum posts for credit.

In addition, one of your posts should be **spaced at least 24 hours apart** from the others (i.e., all of your posts should not be made on the same day). Also, the **majority** of your posts should **not** take place **on the last day of the week (our weeks begin on Tuesday and end on Monday, so Sunday and Monday are the last days of the week)**. There is no way a good discussion can happen if most people wait until the last day to post. Although there may be a few times when you choose to post toward the end of the week, please remember that the majority of your posts shouldn't fall into this timeframe (a tip here – begin the term by posting early each week, then you'll have more flexibility toward the end of the course). You have until Monday midnight to make your posts for each week. After 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday mornings, I will not read/grade any posts from the previous week.

Contributions to these class forums should increase understanding and retention of the course materials (both your own and that of your classmates). Because we will not be meeting face-to-face, these forums are our method of discussing course materials and key concepts. Thus, your **participation is critical** (and nearly half of the points for the class can be earned through this discussion). If you miss more than 5 regular posts (Note: You are assigned to **respond at least 3 times a week for 10 weeks** for a minimum of 30 different posts – not including assignments) during the semester, your final grade will be lowered by one letter for every absence thereafter (i.e., that is, a grade of B- becomes a C-). Please also note that simply "making" all of your assigned posts does not mean you'll automatically earn an A (i.e., **both the quality and quantity of these posts will be evaluated**).

Also, because at least three posts are required for each of the 10 summer term weeks, **you will begin posting this week (the first week of the course) and continue for each week of our course**. See instructions each week on areas to cover in your posts.

I will periodically post new information within the **announcements page of Blackboard**. Thus, it is important to **log into the system regularly**.

Discussion Leader Assignment = 10% -- Each week I will assign specific students to lead a discussion on the material for that week. Each discussion leader will be responsible for writing questions related to that week's assigned reading and posting the questions in the week's discussion forum. **These question posts are in addition to the required posts**. For example, beyond the three posts required for each week, when you are the discussion leader, you will have **additional posts due that week (at least posting five times that week)**. The **questions should be posted no later than Thursday** of your assigned week. There are no extra points given for additional questions (or follow up questions); however, you are **encouraged to present multiple questions (a good minimum would be 5-7 thoughtful and thought-provoking questions) to engage other students and to encourage/maintain an active discussion**. The discussion questions should inspire critical thinking. I will post an announcement assigning the discussion leader roles during the first or second week of class. Depending on how many people we have enrolled in the course, there likely will be 1-2 discussion leaders each week. Each person is responsible for doing the assignment. Plenty of topics will be covered in each week's readings; thus, overlap in questions is unlikely (however, you may want to review questions posted by other discussion leaders prior to posting yours, so that you don't have duplications or substantial overlap). When you are assigned as discussion leader, I encourage you to post as soon as possible that week to engage other students and to make sure another leader doesn't focus on your preferred areas of the readings for that week.

Discussion Leader Chapter Review Paper = 10% -- By the **end of the week** that you are a class **discussion leader**, you will **submit a 2-3 page chapter review paper**. (Note: The due date for this assignment will vary for each student based on discussion leader assignments. Also, please remember that our class week ends on Monday; thus, your papers need to arrive on or before 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday mornings to be counted on

time.) In these papers, you will summarize the key ideas from the chapter as well as make additional comments on the readings. More details on this assignment will be given in class.

Movie Analysis Project = 13% (10% for paper; 3% for presentation) – For this assignment, you will select a movie (your selection needs to be approved prior to beginning the project) and analyze it in terms of leadership. Details will be given in class on movie selection and the process of analysis. You will submit a written analysis of 750-1,000 words as well as summarize your conclusions in an online presentation. *Note*: I will make some suggestions on possible movies to analyze for this project as well as books to analyze for the project below. However, you will want to identify other possibilities. For each project, you must have your selection approved prior to beginning (to make sure that it is not already assigned, that it will work for the project, etc.).

Book Analysis Project = 22% (17% for paper; 5% for presentation) -- The final project in the course is a book analysis paper and presentation. For this project, you will select a biography or autobiography (your selection needs to be approved prior to beginning the project) of a particular leader and analyze this book based on course information (e.g., concepts, theories, perspectives, etc. covered during the term). This analysis will be presented to the class online as well as submitted as a final paper (approximately 2,000 words, which is roughly 8 pages). More details on this assignment will be given later in the class.

Note: This class fulfills a WR general education requirement. Thus, we will discuss some components of good writing. In addition, please feel free to ask questions about writing as we move through the term. Papers will be assessed on both their content (e.g., quality of ideas, application of materials) and format (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation).

Suggestions for Successful Course Completion:

Several behaviors can facilitate your likelihood of success in the course. **First, check Blackboard often**. Be sure to **watch for course announcements**, including potential changes in course assignments. **Second, keep track of course assignments and deadlines**. Summer terms move quickly, so you'll want to carefully track due dates, etc. **Third, complete assignments early**, rather than closer to the deadline. **Fourth, avoid penalties for late work**. See information above on the necessity of posting on time. In addition, all material must be submitted by the due date. Each day a paper is late will result in a drop of one letter grade (e.g., a paper submitted two days late will be docked two letter grades). All **papers should be submitted under the Assignments section of Blackboard**. **Fifth, avoid plagiarism**. Plagiarism on any course assignment will result in (at least) a ZERO grade for the assignment. Please note that plagiarism includes the following: copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own, paraphrasing someone else's work and presenting it as your own, and collaborating with others and presenting the work solely as your own. In addition, be wary of websites where papers or work can be downloaded.

Note from the Disability Resource Center:

The University of Louisville is committed to providing access to programs and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and require accommodation to participate in and complete requirements for this class, contact the Disability Resource Center (Stevenson Hall, 852-6938) for verification of eligibility and determination of specific accommodations.

Note on Late Policies and Missed Work:

Due to the structure of the course, it is greatly in the student's best interest to complete and submit all assignments on time. If you find yourself in an extreme situation that you believe warrants an exception to the course late policies, you can certainly discuss this situation with me. You will need to provide documentation explaining the situation (and when possible, you will want to speak with me about such exceptions in advance). If necessary, such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, and you should not assume that extensions will be automatically or easily granted.

Course Outline*:

Week 1 (June 2-8)   [Note: June 5th is the last day to drop or add.]

        Course Introduction

Week 2 (June 9-15)   [Note: June 10th is the last day to apply for a degree.]

        Topic – Leadership and Communication
        Reading: Ch. 1**

        Topic – Leadership and Followership Communication Styles
        Reading: Ch. 2

Week 3 (June 16-22)

        Topic – Traits, Situational, Functional, and Relational Leadership
        Reading: Ch. 3

        Topic – Transformational and Charismatic Leadership
        Reading: Ch. 4

Week 4 (June 23-29)   [Note: Information posted on movie analysis project.]

        Topic – Leadership and Power
        Reading: Ch. 5

        Topic – Leadership and Influence

Reading: Ch. 6

Week 5 (June 30-July 6)   [Note: July 4th is a university holiday.]

        Topic – Leadership in Groups and Teams
        Reading: Ch. 7

        Topic – Leadership in Organizations
        Reading: Ch. 8

Week 6 (July 7-13)   [Note: July 15th is the last day to withdraw.]

        Topic – Public Leadership
        Reading: Ch. 9

        Topic – Leadership and Diversity
        Reading: Ch. 10

Week 7 (July 14-20)   [Notes: Information posted on book analysis project. July 15th is
        the last day to withdraw.]

        Present and submit movie analysis project

Week 8 (July 21-27)

        Topic – Ethical Leadership and Followership
        Reading: Ch. 11

        Topic – Leader and Leadership Development
        Reading: Ch. 12

Week 9 (July 28-August 3)

        Topic – Leadership in Crisis
        Reading: Ch. 13

Week 10 (August 4-10)   [Note: August 11—Course conclusions]

        Present and submit book analysis project
        Course conclusions (August 11)

* Outline is tentative; changes will be announced via Blackboard.

**All assigned readings should be completed prior to their assigned discussion dates.