**4700 Contemporary Issues in Management & Leadership**

**Spring 2019**

**Text and Readings:** I will provide a few case exercises and readings as handouts. Concepts are in ppt files on classdat.

**Course Description** : This course on **leadership** focuses on skill-development, rather than theories. The “skills|” include: public speaking, managing conflict, perspective taking, critical thinking, cross-cultural understanding and having resilience (The ASU HR dept. offer a course on these topics to selected support staff at ASU). I would add that good leadership in the private or public sector involves integrating ethics with strategy (I have written books on this) and that there are several concepts you should learn, including the various forms of leadership. We will discuss these and use some of the cases.

**Learning goals:** Improving your skills in all the above areas. Also (i) your ability to discuss and write justifications for various decisions, (i) engage in public debate. (iii) give presentations that make a difference, and (iv) write clear critical reviews (of books or movies on leadership)

**Assessment:**

**(**i) 10% Class attendance & participation. There is a sign-up register. You must attend 10+ sessions.

(ii) 5% The written notes that you bring to class each week from week 2-6. These are (i) notes on what we did last time (ii) your notes on your leadership book/movie review and presentation. I will view them in class and record the 1%, each week.

(iii) 25% A written in-class test, on concepts and cases

(iv) 10% Your personal leadership performance in one-on-one discussions in front of the class (in parts 2 &3).

Graded on: Clarity (elocution and grammar) pace and style (non-verbal cues, dress); persuasiveness; responsiveness and sensitivity to the other; use of humor; encouraging generative discourse (devising new solutions).

(v) 5% Performance in the ‘president’s debate’

(vi) 5% Your recital in front of class of poem or song. Bonus marks if you sing (like the Spartans).

(vii) 20% Your presentation of your review of a “work” on leadership. This means any media content involving any aspect of leadership. The “work” can be any book or novel, movie, play (perhaps a suitable video game) or historical account in which a character shows some form of leadership. There are many suitable movies with strong leader characters. A few of my favorites for this purpose are: *The Sound of Music, Mutiny on the Bounty, Lonesome Dove, The Perfect Storm, The Guardian, Ladder 49* and *Frozen 2010*; but there are many others. You should give out a 1-page note of key points to the class. Be aware that you might be selected as one of the early presenters, in late March or early April (I take this timing into account when grading the presentations).

(viii) 20% Your written leadership book review (at least 4 single space 11pt pages) with at least one diagram. The review will be assessed on DBQCD. This should be an independent critical review, which means that you use your own structured thoughts and words (although quotes are allowed).

**Preparation for classes:** Write the two “notes” (see (ii) above) and bring them to the class.

**Class structure:** Classes are structured to encourage participation and discussion. Class-list circulates for signing (remind me). If you miss a class for any reason you miss roughly 1 to 1.5% of the total course marks. There is plenty of chance to make that up on the other assessed items. You are encouraged to participate in all the sessions but you must attend at least 10.

**Test**

(i) The major test will be in the 6th or ***7th double-session*** (TBC). It is in two parts. About half on the concepts and the diagrams and about half on the case justifications.

(ii) The test will cover whatever we manage to complete in the first six sessions. Answer all questions.

(iii) No books or materials are allowed in the room. Answer books are provided for you.

**Note on grading :** The grading is based on the scope, depth, clarity, quality, and sometime the distinctiveness, of the written answers. I make an upward adjustment to the class attendance/participation score for those students who have frequently demonstrated good levels of engagement and overall in-class contributions. Here, I make every effort to ensure that only the demonstrated abilities count.

**Part I: Concepts & cases.**

Lecture topics then include: forms of leadership, “the good, the bad and the ugly” in leadership (i.e. what is truly good or bad for human followers.

When a case-question says “justify the viewpoint…” this does not necessarily mean that you currently agree with that viewpoint. Being able to give good reasons for a proposal or position is an important part of leadership (and ethics). Also, by publically justifying a “viewpoint’ that you feel uncomfortable with, you develop some empathy and your negotiation skills. Any justification can be expanded by critiquing (directly countering) arguments that might be used by the other side.

**1 Five decision-making dilemmas (From WC p86) *general management***

These represent general management situations. We will have 8 groups of 3 approx. Each does a justification for a position that I specify.

**2 The Parable Of The Sadhu (DW p287*) personal missions***

Blues: It was OK to leave him. The mission should take priority, especially over the needs of an outsider.

Reds: It was not OK. We should make sure that he is taken to wherever he can get proper care.

Blues: This parable has no relevance to business-leadership. It is a completely different context.

Reds: there are many close parallels between this story and business situations.

[Possible discussion of what can be learned from *Frozen 2010*]

**3 Foreign assignment (DW p409) *culture and gender***

*Round 1. leader-subordinate relations*

Blues: Vitam was doing the right thing, he handled it well.

Reds: Vitam was behaving badly. As a manager/leader he should have refused to tolerate the clients’ comments and he should require a more formal dress code for the assistants.

*Round 2. Self-leadership*

Blues: We think Ms. Strong (Sara) should just play the game, as explained by Mr Vitam.

Reds: Ms Strong should just quit the bank right now.

**PART 2:  Public-performance (selected cases involving leader-subordinate relations)**

This part of the course develops your ability to discuss issues properly with a boss or subordinate in front of an audience and to show grace under pressure.

1. I will make a list of (approx 12) student-pairs. Each pair should assign roles and practice for 10 mins (normally a ‘blue’ actor = boss, red = subordinate).

2. The first pair comes to front of class,

3. I give a brief summary of the relevant case (one of the above).

4. They try to influence each other as boss/subordinate. Actors must remain cool and calm. Approx. 10 minutes discussion, including settlement.

5. I grade each performer.

We should be able to do about 7-8 pairs in a double session. So if the class is around 26 we will do 2 sessions; then using a second list, List 2, *we all try again*, for a further 2 sessions.I will give 2/3 weight to the better performance, 1/3 to the not so good.

**PART 3:  Public-performance: perspective taking & conflict resolution:**

**(i) The Presidents Debate**:

* In groups of 3, prepare as many reason(s) as possible, why (your assigned president or candidate) might reasonably be considered as good, or bad (I will specify which one, for your group). Also prepare responses to possible counter-points to your reasons.
* Group spokespersons come to front of class and 1 on 1 debate a candidate: good *vs* bad
* I will select someone from the class to moderate each debate.
* Probably 8-10 groups, so 4-5 leaders get discussed each session; then repeat until we have done enough.

**Presidents and Candidates**: FDR (Roosevelt), Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Barak Obama, Joe Biden, George W Bush, Bernie Sanders, Jill Stein, Ralph Nader, Mitt Romney, Donald Trump, Mike Pence, Ted Cruz, Chris Christie, Rodriguez Duterte, Pope Francis, Noam Chomsky, “A.O.C.” (others can be added, as requested).

(ii) You recite in front of class: any poem or song-lyrics. Credit for longer or full poem or song. Bonus marks if you sing, especially if you think you can’t (like the Spartans).

**PART 4:  Your presentation of a ‘work’ on leadership**

Your personal 15-20 minute presentation of your written review of a work on leadership, using ppts with bullet points, excerpts from movies (4 mins max), diagrams, pictures. This is the same “work” that you are writing a review of. Make it instructive to the class, as if you were a Professor. Your written review should be based upon the presented material. This practice of “linking text to diagrams and summaries” is a very useful exercise in many contexts (students, one 15-20 minute presentation each, followed by Q&A session. So probably 2 to 4 sessions).

In any remaining sessions I will present some more ideas for discussion about the “blue and red components”.

**[end]**

**Appendix : other possible cases**

**4 Education Pension Investments (WC p405) *managing* *conflict.***

Blues: EPI should encourage Mike to stay

Reds: EPI should encourage Mike to ‘move on’.

Both: Any suggestions for managing the issue more effectively?

**5 Facing face (DW p437-8) (c*ulture& ideology*)**

Blues: Frank is correct, “if an employee isn’t cutting it he should be terminated and told why”

Reds: Frank is wrong. Chuck has the right idea

Both groups: They are both wrong: the right thing would be….

**6 What price safety? (DW p433-6) (*culture & ideology)***

Reds: Stan (head of HR) should do nothing now.

Blues: Stan should “buy out” Tommy and Victor.

**7 United wins approval to dump pension plans (DW p363) *justice, inequality***

Blues: By securing the deal with the pension agency the senior management were showing good leadership under the circumstances and doing what was “necessary’ (refer to Right-components)

Reds: If Glenn Tilton (CEO) was a good leader, the first thing he would do is cut his own $4.5m retirement plan to match the employees, then reduce his salary greatly, and thus save the company millions. (refer to Left-components)

**8 UNDHR (DW p453)**  *Leadership and human rights.*

Blues: Many of these are being upheld in USA in the 21st century (give examples and explain)

Reds: Many of these are not being upheld in USA in the 21st century (give examples and explain)

**ASU Course Regulations**

*1.* ***Registration****: "It is the responsibility of the student to be sure she or he is officially registered for this course.  Students who are not officially registered should not expect to be added late."*

*2.* ***Disabilities****: Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at* [*http://www.ods.appstate.edu/*](http://www.ods.appstate.edu/) *or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.*

*3.* ***Academic Integrity:*** *As a community of learners at Appalachian State University, we must create an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of each other. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of an Appalachian degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form and will oppose any instance of academic dishonesty.  This course will follow the provisions of the Academic Integrity Code, which can be found on the Office of Student Conduct Web Site:* [*www.studentconduct.appstate.edu*](http://www.studentconduct.appstate.edu)*.*

*4. Excused absences for religious observation will be granted in accordance with Appalachian State policy.*

**CASE 13 “Tallahasse Democrat Elite team” (WC p519)** *t****eams***

All: Why didn’t the ‘top-management team’ perform well?

All: Why did the ‘Elite team’ perform well?

For both Q’s try to find several contextual and theoretical reasons (e.g. about human nature, motivation, organisations, etc.)

**>>>>>**

Accordingly, the first part of the course equips you with concepts that help you to do that. We apply those concepts to general management case studies. The remainder of the course emphasizes leadership-related skills: (i) your ability to discuss strategic and ethical issues in front of an audience and to show grace under pressure, then (ii) your ability to make a presentation (of your book review) that really helps your team (i.e. the class) and finally (iii) your ability to write clear and compelling reports (e.g. critical book-reviews with helpful diagrams)

1. ***Revise and practice*** writing and drawing what we did the ***previous*** week, prepare answers to the questions on the cases (both “positions), because a selection of these will be on the test.

**CASE 3. Case: Plasma International (DW p156)**

Blues: “the bad publicity is grossly unfair and there is nothing wrong with what we are doing. In fact, we should be praised”

Reds: “Almost everything that Plasma Int. is doing (including buying blood) is disgraceful”.

Reds & Blues: “There are some specific aspects of this business that ought to be changed by Levin. (suggest some changes)

**[CASE 5. Kate: Dot-Com CEO (on classdat)**

Blues: Give a full & clear explanation (to a non-business person) of the situation with the “Accounting revenues”. What is the ethical problem here?

Reds: Give a clear explanation (to a non-business person) of the situation with the “Friends and family stock”, especially the request from Wall St analysts. What is the problem here?

*Possible discussion points*

1. Give reasons against Kate selling the customers’ names and email addresses.

2. It is good that society allows people like Kate to “cash out early” in order to pursue an early retirement. 3. People like Kate should focus their efforts on IT projects that are related to social and environmental problems, not just money for “friends & family”.

4. People like Kate should pay much more (personal and corporate) tax, especially estate tax.

**CASE 9 Gift giving and the African Elder (DW p462) *culture/ gift giving***

Blues: They should not give the gift.

Reds: They should give the gift.

**CASE 10. : Motorola in Russia** (on classdat)

Blues: Paying the $10 is the right thing to do, because…

Reds: They should not have paid the $10 because…

**CASE 12 Unkept promises hit retirees (DW p365 -7) *justice, inequality***

Blues: it is not the leaders’ role to make sure employee pensions are properly funded. The leader’s role is to serve the company’s shareholders and do whatever is necessary to avoid bankruptcy, including avoiding disclosures that might harm share prices.

Red: The leaders at united should now be forced (by a good law) to reduce their pensions at least to the level of the pilots’ pensions, if not below. After all, the pilots do the actual job of flying the planes, which is what really matters.