



First Year Leadership Class

Spring 2014-Monday/Wednesday OR Tuesday/Thursday
(January 13 – May 9, 2014)

*“It is easy to be brave from a safe distance”
-Aesop (Greek fabulist, c. 620-560 B.C.)*

Class Meeting Time: MW 2:00-3:15 OR TTH 2:00-3:15

Class Meeting Place: Whitley Classroom

Instructor: Lauren Krznarich

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Office: RSC 261

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Office hours: Fridays 10:00-11:30

Teaching Assistant: Kyle Hickman

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Office: RSC Cave-icle

Office Phone: 903-886-5825

Office Fax: 903-886-5891

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:00-1:00

Textbooks (required):

Articles will be assigned and can be found on e-College.

Class Description:

The purpose of this course is designed to provide valuable academic, social and leadership skills to ensure a successful first year in college. Concepts studied include communication, Servant Leadership, and multiculturalism. As such, the course focuses not only on significance of leadership and their applicability to leaders of the past and present, but also includes substantial hands-on, experiential learning opportunities in which leadership will be put into action. This course will help students see themselves as change agents in any environment.

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of leadership and the skills necessary for effective leadership
- Describe their own personal leadership orientation and philosophy
- Apply a framework of “social responsibility” to their practice of leadership
- Exhibit effective team skills and identify team building skills
- Increase your awareness of opportunities for campus and community involvement
- Recognize the various types of conflict and ways to manage and/or create it
- Interpret and evaluate the servant-leader’s role in leadership
- Communicate effectively through both oral and written presentations

Evaluation

Active learning involves more than just attending class and completing course assignments--it requires that you engage in the critical reflection of readings and class discussions, question unclear concepts and ideas, formulate individual perspectives on the issues raised in the course, and actively participate in the exchange of ideas with peers.

Grading Policy:

At the end of the semester, I will assign your earned letter grade according to the schedule below:

A= 90 and above

B= 80-89.9

C= 70-79.9

D= 60-69.9

F= 59.9 and below

NOTHING can be done to change your final grade once it is assigned. (NO extra credit, extra assignments, retaking tests, etc). Multiple opportunities are given to students to earn their course grade, and I suggest that you take advantage of every opportunity early.

Attendance

Class attendance is expected. For each unexcused absence, 3 points will be deducted from the final grade. An "excused absence" is defined as a documented university approved activity. The instructor reserves the right to change the content or format of all make-up work. The student is responsible for making up missed work.

If the absence is for one of the reasons listed below, you will be able to make up the work. To reserve this right, you MUST provide written documentation WITHIN ONE WEEK of the absence (a copy of the documentation that I can keep). Please notify me ahead of time if you know you will be absent. An excused absence includes:

- Participation in an activity appearing on the University's authorized activity list
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family
- Illness of a dependent family member
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence
- Religious Holy Day
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class (to be determined by Health Center or off campus physician)
- Required participation in military duty

Students are expected to be in class, ready to participate, on time. One point will be deducted from the final grade for each tardy up to 10 minutes after the start of class. After 10 minutes, the student will be considered absent.

Late Assignments Policy

Class assignments will not be accepted after the due date. The due dates listed for assignments are the LAST chance to submit them. Any student missing an exam or assignment without prior arrangement will receive a score of zero.

Communication

Email will be the official form of communication for this course outside of class time. You MUST check your e-mail regularly in case I need to communicate anything regarding the course with you. I will not e-mail you junk, and I request that you do the same for me.

Instructor Availability

I am here to help you become successful students and leaders. If you have a question or concern, TALK to me. I am here to help. I maintain an open door policy whenever I am available in my office. I encourage you to stop by my office hours, make an appointment outside of my office hours for this course, or drop in whenever my door is open. If you need to reach me and I am not in my office, please e-mail me.

Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Cell phones and all other electronic devices must be turned off and out of sight. This is a zero-tolerance policy. If you use a cell phone, iPod, etc. in class (or if your phone rings), you will lose 1 point per incident (off your final grade).

A Note on Spelling and Grammar

Professionals throughout the world state that one of the most important skills that they need to be successful is the ability to write well. Sentence structure, spelling, and grammar will be examined when determining a grade for any written project.

Statement on Student Behavior

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (see Student's Guide Handbook). Proper student conduct also includes maintaining a standard of academic honesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 or Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Assignment Requirements

Autobiographical Essay _____ 5%

This critical reflection paper should be no less than 700 words and no more than 1000 words. Be sure to dig deeper in order to explain why you are who you are and why certain values are important to you. Help the reader understand where your values and ideals come from. Complete papers should incorporate the following areas:

- a. Who are you? What are your values?
- b. What social identities are salient to you? Why?
- c. What is your personal philosophy in approaching ethical dilemmas?

Campus Change Paper _____ 10%

Students will choose any aspect of Texas A&M University – Commerce and critically examine how and why that aspect of campus could be improved with an increased practice of socially responsible leadership. Students are free to choose Student Organizations, administrative offices, campus events, and even informal organizations (permission for the use of informal organizations is needed from Lauren). Included in the paper will be a description of what needs to be changed on campus, how the campus would be different if the change occurred, and why the change would be important to campus. This paper will be no less than 1000 words and no more than 1500 words.

New Orleans Vlog (Video Blog) _____ 5%

Create a unique, engaging three minute vlog (video blog) summarizing your New Orleans experience. Vlogs should include: what the experience meant to you, what stood out about the experience to you, what you learned from the experience, and how you are going to use the experience in the future. Upload the video to eCollege. If for some reason you are unable to attend the New Orleans trip, discuss alternative options for this project with Lauren.

Movie Review _____ 5%

This reflection paper should also be at least 700 words. You will choose a central character from the film and analyze the character from the context of the course material and reflect on the character's presumed perspectives on social responsibility and their respective power and privilege.

Leader Project _____ 10%

Leaders can be found all over the world. This project is an opportunity for you to research a leader and present what you learn about them to the rest of the class. Everyone will choose a different leader, and you are all encouraged to choose someone that you or the rest of the class may not know much about—for example, Wangari Maathai, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Maya Angelou, or Desmond Tutu, to name a few possibilities. This is our opportunity to learn from each other and gain an understanding of someone that we might not have heard of before. Everyone will give an individual 5 minute presentation providing an overview of who the leader is, what they did, what their successes and challenges are or were, and what they did in response to challenges they faced. Leaders will be chosen on a first come, first served basis—make your request with Lauren by February 9.

Discussions _____ 15%

Roughly every other Sunday by 5 pm, students are required to post their discussions on the e-College learning management system. These discussions include reflecting on weekly events, drawing connections between activities and socially responsibly leadership, responding to the prompts provided within each discussion, and responding to at least two other classmates' posts each reflection week.

Final Project & Presentation 25%

Leadership is an unfolding process, one in which an individual is in relationship with a group dedicated to accomplishing certain goals. Each student will be expected to choose an out-of-class, service learning project in which the exercise of socially responsible leadership will be practiced. This will be a group project, with a minimum of 4 people per group. Students may choose to create a program geared towards social responsibility or service learning or collaborate with a preexisting or emerging group on or off campus. Students should spend a minimum of 20 hours engaging in socially responsible leadership within the group, either through attending and influencing group events or working for the success of these events. Students will complete a rough draft and final draft outline for the project, track service hours using the provided form, engage in online discussions regarding their projects, and present the learning gained from these projects at the end of the semester.

Presentation: Each presentation will last approximately 15 minutes (depending on group size) and will review the structure of the project, successes and challenges in the practice of socially responsible leadership, and what has been learned over the course of the project, grounded in course content.

Participation 25%

Active participation is a very important piece of the learning process in this course and takes on many different forms. Active participation requires preparation. You are expected to be prepared for each class session and actively participate in class discussions and activities. Participation includes:

Article Readings—come to class prepared to make connections between the readings and your own lived experiences. For each article reading, come prepared to share at least one thing you enjoyed about the article and one discussion question for the class.

Class Discussions—discussions are opportunities for you to enhance your critical thinking skills, gain new insights and understanding from your peers, and find ways to effectively communicate what you have learned from reading and reflecting on course material. I encourage you to bring to class your comments and questions that offer different perspectives, contribute to moving the discussion and analysis forward, build on other comments and insights made by others in the class, and moves beyond the typical “I feel” or “I think” statements that are not grounded in a deeper reflection on why we have had a particular reaction to course material. The course instructors do not have all the answers in these discussions, and you are encouraged to talk to each other and ask each other questions as we process the material together.

Other participation activities as discussed throughout the semester.

Outside of Class Time Expectations

- One Service Project Group Meeting with Lauren & Kyle
- One One on One Meeting with Lauren & Kyle
- One Word Showcase, Wednesday, February 5, 11 am-2 pm
- High Ropes Course- April
- Spring Banquet- April
- Guest Speaker(s)
 - Justin Jones-Fosu, February 11, 7:00-10:00 pm
- New Orleans, LA Service Learning Trip- Thursday, March 6-Tuesday, March 11

Course Schedule

Day	Date	Media	In-class Activity	Assignment Due
T	1/14		Introduction and Syllabus Review and Learning Environment	
TH	1/16		Citizen Leadership	<i>Article Due: Citizen Leader: A Community Service Option for College Students</i> DUE SUNDAY 1/20: -Autobiographical Essay
T	1/21		NO CLASS	
TH	1/23		Servant Leadership	<i>Article Due: Practicing Servant Leadership</i> DUE SUNDAY 1/26: -Final Project Rough Draft -Discussion 1
T	1/28		Leadership and Ethics	
TH	1/30		Leadership in a Global Context	
T	2/4		Leadership in a Global Context	
TH	2/6		Leadership Styles	DUE SUNDAY 2/9: -Discussion 2 -Leader Project Choice -Final Project Outline
T	2/11		Leadership and Social Justice	<i>Article Due: Reasons for Being Bad</i>
TH	2/13		Social Activism/Extremism	<i>Article Due: Village Politics</i>
T	2/18		Social Justice: LGBTQQIAA	
TH	2/20		Leader Project Presentations	Leader Project Due DUE SUNDAY 2/23: -Discussion 3
T	2/25		NO CLASS	
TH	2/27		Social Justice in Action Social Justice on Campus	DUE SUNDAY 3/2: -Campus Change Paper
T	3/4		Midterm Feedback	
TH	3/6		Introduction to Multiculturalism	
TTH	3/10-14		SPRING BREAK	
T	3/18		Multiculturalism	<i>Article: Culture and Communication</i>
TH	3/20		Identity and Personal Perspective	DUE SUNDAY 3/23: -Discussion 4
T	3/25		Multicultural Competence	
TH	3/27		Sources of Power	
T	4/1		Societal Privilege	<i>Article: Privilege, Oppression, and Difference</i>
TH	4/3		Societal Disadvantages	DUE SUNDAY 4/6: -New Orleans Vlog
T	4/8		Scales of Oppression	
TH	4/10		Breaking the Cycle of Oppression	
T	4/15		Leadership in Film	
TH	4/17		Leadership in Film	DUE SUNDAY 4/20: -Discussion 5 -Movie Review
T	4/22		Leadership and Social Media	
TH	4/24		Class Synthesis	
T	4/29		Final Presentations	
TH	5/1		Wrap Up	Final Project Due
	5/5-5/9		Finals Week	

Please note that the syllabus serves as a guideline for the course and is subject to change as necessary.