

Instructor: **Pablo Hernandez**

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Lectures: TuTh 10:40AM - 11:55AM. Room A5-001.

Pre-requisites and Co-requisites

None

Course Description

Are social outcomes primarily shaped by prominent individuals or deterministic structural forces? Some claim leadership is a mere label used to justify social change stemming from structural forces of nature and culture. Others assert history can be found in the biographies of a few prominent men and women. In this course we examine this old and unsettled debate. Considering political, social, artistic and business perspectives, we dissect the concept of leadership. Students will learn to elaborate on the interplay between culture and leadership and to which extent societies create their own leaders. The course draws on the classic work of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Tolstoy, Marx and Carlyle, as well as modern thinkers such as Weber, Schumpeter, Russell and Lakoff, among others. We will also explore the life of prominent individuals, such as Gandhi, Mandela, Mother Teresa, Jobs, Soros, Churchill, Thatcher, and many others.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

- Understand what leaders do at the individual, group, and organizational levels,
- Recognize the difference between authority and informal leadership,
- Be familiar with theories of leadership and their practical implications,
- Identify situations in which leaders change individuals' beliefs,
- Enhance self-insight and add intellectual depth to own leadership skills.

Teaching and Learning Methodologies

The course comprises three main learning methods.

First, there will be weekly in-class interactions (on each Thursday) discussing theories and experiences of leadership. These interactions will hinge upon course readings (including excerpts from texts by Machiavelli, Hobbes, Tolstoy, and others) and will aim to understand how leaders motivate others by example, by inspiration, and by articulating principles and standards of behavior. Discussions will evolve into practice by simulating situations in which students are encouraged to anticipate how others will respond to arguments, how incentives interplay with arguments, and how emotions shape beliefs and behavior.

Second, there will be writing assignments. Students will write weekly one-page papers describing a contingent situation (e.g. from a newspaper article) involving leadership. In the middle of the semester, students must submit a four-pages draft describing the most relevant situation(s) chosen from the weekly papers. The draft must include an introduction (i.e. why the situation chosen is relevant), a brief description of the situation (i.e. the fundamental tension), an argument about why the situation entails “good” or “bad” leadership (i.e. the main thesis supported by theory and evidence), and a conclusion (i.e. what should we learn from that situation). The paper should be precisely written, avoiding any information that does not contribute to the main thesis. This paper will be assessed by the instructor and then returned to the students so that can be revised and then resubmitted as a final paper at the end of the semester.

Finally, there will be weekly in-class student presentations (on almost each Tuesday). Presentations will be short (at most five minutes each) and they should explain the audience why the topic chosen for the one-page paper is relevant and deserves exploration.

Course Materials

See course schedule below.

Assignments and Grades

The final grade will be determined according the following three criteria:

1. Class participation (discussions and in-class leadership practice): 10%
2. Weekly one-page reports and presentations: 40%
3. Midterm draft: 20%
4. Final paper: 30%

Course Schedule

The following brief course outline provides the list of broad topics to be covered and the sequence in which these will be covered.

Week 1. Introduction: What do leaders do?

- Llopis, The Most Successful Leaders Do 15 Things Automatically, Every Day. Forbes 2015
- Bryant, A. “Google’s Quest to Build a Better Boss.”

Week 2. Extremely successful people: Are they leaders?

- Gladwell, Outliers: The Story of Success

Week 3. The classics I

- Harrison, What can you learn from Machiavelli? Yale SOM 2011

Week 4. The classics II

- Watts, What Are Leaders Really For? HBR 2011

Week 5. Modern thinkers

- Lakoff, G. (2010). *Moral politics: How liberals and conservatives think*. University of Chicago Press.

Week 6. Self-interest

- Friedman, M. (2007). The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits (pp. 173-178). Chapter. *Corporate Ethics and Corporate Governance* pp 173-178

Week 7. Influence and lying

- Lepore. "Not so fast." *The New Yorker*.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2011). *Why leaders lie: the truth about lying in international politics*. Oxford University Press. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPe5f5dcrGE>

Week 8. Negotiation

- Bazerman, M. H., & Moore, D. A. (2013). "Chapter 10: Negotiation." In *Judgment in managerial decision making*. Wiley.
- Surowiecki, J. (2012, June 4). The fairness trap. *The New Yorker*.

Week 9. Leading for...

- **Innovation:** Isaacson, *The Real Leadership Lessons of Steve Jobs*, HBR 2012.
- **Political change:** Pearce, *The Leadership Lessons of Nelson Mandela*, Bloomberg 2013.
- **Design:** Prickett, *Who Is Marc Jacobs?* NYT 2015

Week 10. Leaders I

- Lives of political leaders. For example:
 - Gandhi, Mandela, Mother Teresa, etc.
 - Alexander the Great, Lincoln, Lenin, Hitler, and others.

Week 11. Leaders II

- Lives of business leaders. For example:
 - Ford, Jobs, Li Ka-shing, Soros, Slim, Zuckerberg, Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Ortega, Bettencourt, and others

Week 12. Do we need leaders?

- Jones and Olken (2005), *Do leaders matter?* QJE.
- Guterman, *Do We Need Leaders?* HBR 2011.

Week 13. Followership

- McCallum, *Followership: The Other Side of Leadership*, Ivey Business Journal 2013.
- Peterson, *Leadership 310: The Four Principles of 'Followership'* 2013.

Week 14. What have we learned?

- Goleman, D. "Leadership that gets results."
- Hogan, R., Curphy, G. J., & Hogan, J. (1994). What we know about leadership: Effectiveness and personality. *American psychologist*, 49(6), 493.

Additional readings

- Kahneman, Thinking fast and slow. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Lakoff, G. (2008). The political mind: A cognitive scientist's guide to your brain and its politics. Penguin.

Class attendance

Required. Cell-phones and laptops are not permitted in class, unless instructed otherwise.

Classroom citizenship

Students are expected to be diligent in the pursuit of their studies and regular in their attendance. If a student is unable to attend whenever she or he is scheduled to present, she or he must justify her or his non-attendance ahead of time—otherwise the presentation will receive the minimum score.

Students are responsible for any announcements made or information given during class, no excuses will be accepted. Late submissions of one-page papers, first draft, and final paper will be penalized with a 20% deduction in the score for each day past due date.

Student grievances and procedures

Complaints and questions about grades must be submitted in writing, written responses will follow. I strongly encourage students to reach out to me in case of any difficulty with the content or format of the course. I am always open to introduce changes in the course in order to enhance learning.

Disability Accommodation

Anyone who anticipates difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability should see me immediately in order to work out a plan.

Classroom etiquette

I would like to provide an excellent learning environment for everyone. This can be ensured if everybody observes certain basic ground rules.

- Do not use laptops or other electronic devices for anything during class time except when instructed otherwise.
- If you are attending the lecture, plan on being there for the entire duration of the class. If you absolutely must leave early for a good reason, on any given day, please sit near the door and leave quietly.

- Food or drink within reason is fine.
- It is always welcome to interrupt with questions related to the material being covered.

Plagiarism Statement

NYU Abu Dhabi expects its students to adhere to the highest possible standards of scholarship and academic conduct. Students should be aware that engaging in behaviors that violate the standards of academic integrity will be subject to review and may face the imposition of penalties in accordance with the procedures set out in the NYUAD policy.

<https://students.nyuad.nyu.edu/campus-life/student-policies/community-standards-policies/academic-integrity/>

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.