



## First Year Leadership Class

Spring 2013-Tuesday/Thursday  
(January 15 – May 10, 2013)

*“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

Class Meeting Place: Whitley Classroom

Instructor: Lauren Krznarich

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Office hours: Fridays 10:00-11:30

Teaching Assistant: Kyle Hickman

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Office Fax: 903-886-5891

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:00-1:00

### **Textbooks (required):**

Weekly 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 and 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 reflection paper should be no less than 700 words and no more than 1000 words, and incorporate the following thoughts:

- 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.

### Critical Reflection Papers \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Total

#### Power and Privilege \_\_\_\_\_ 5%

Students will critically reflect on the power and privilege they hold in society, as well as how they might be discriminated against as a member of society. Reflections should be no less than 700 words and no more than 1000 words.

#### Future Vision \_\_\_\_\_ 5%

Students will critically reflect on what type of world they would choose to create. How will this world be different than the current one? What realistic steps can you as a student take now and in the future to create this world? Be sure to include why you have chosen to change a certain area. Reflections should be no less than 700 words and no more than 1000 words.

### Movie Review \_\_\_\_\_ 5%

This reflection paper should also be at least 700 words. You will be assigned a central character from the film. You will analyze this 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. The project consists of both an individual paper and an individual presentation. The paper should be a minimum of 300 words and a maximum of 700 words, and the presentation should be 5 minutes. Both should give 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 as soon as you have chosen a leader, and no later than February 15.

Discussions 10%

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 responsible leadership, responding to the prompts provided within each discussion, and responding to at least two other classmates' posts each reflection week.

Final Project 20%

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 bi-weekly reflections on their project, engage in online discussions regarding their projects, and present the learning gained from these projects at the end of the semester.

Final Presentation 10%

The last class sessions will be dedicated to students presenting their semester-long project to the class. Each presentation will last approximately 15 minutes, and will review the structure of the project, successes and failures in the practice of socially responsible leadership, and what has been learned over the course of the project, grounded in the course content.

Participation 20%

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, you will be expected to bring to class and turn in at the end of the class time, as a portion of your participation grade, a paper that includes:

1. Key points
2. Questions you have about the reading
3. Paragraph summary of the reading in your own words

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.

Participate in the planning of either the New Orleans service learning trip or spring banquet.

Other participation activities as discussed throughout the semester.

### Course Schedule

Day	Date	In-class Activity	Assignment Due
T	1/15	Introduction and Syllabus Review and Learning Environment	
Th	1/17	Citizen Leadership	<i>Article: Citizen Leader: A Community Service Option for College Students</i> <b>Autobiographical Essay Due</b> Opening Reflection due Sunday 1/20
T	1/22	Servant Leadership	<i>Article: Practicing Servant Leadership</i> <b>Final Project Rough Draft Due</b> First Reflection due Sunday 1/27
Th	1/24	Leadership and Ethics	
T	1/29	Leadership in a Global Context	
Th	1/31	Leadership and Social Justice	<i>Article: Reasons for Being Bad</i>
T	2/5	Social Activism/Extremism	<i>Article: Village Politics</i> <b>Final Project Outline Due</b> Second Reflection due Sunday 2/10
Th	2/7	Social Justice: Environment	<i>Article: To Be Announced</i>
T	2/12	Social Justice: LGBTQQIAA	<i>Article: To Be Announced</i> <b>Leader Project choice due no later than 2/15</b>
Th	2/14	Social Justice in Action	
T	2/19	Social Justice on Campus	<b>Campus Change Due</b> Third Reflection due Sunday 2/19
Th	2/21	Midterm Feedback	
T	2/26	No Class- L.E.A.D. Event	
Th	2/28	Leader Project Presentations	<b>Leader Project Due</b>
T	3/5	Introduction to Multiculturalism	<i>Article: To Be Announced</i>
Th	3/7	Multicultural Competence	Fourth Reflection due Sunday 3/17
T	3/12	SPRING BREAK	
Th	3/14	SPRING BREAK	
T	3/19	Multiculturalism	<i>Article: To Be Announced</i>
Th	3/21	Identity and Personal Perspective	
T	3/26	Sources of Power	
Th	3/28	Societal Privilege	<i>Article: Privilege, Oppression, and Difference</i> Fifth Reflection due Sunday 3/31
T	4/2	Societal Disadvantages	<b>Power and Privilege Due</b>
Th	4/4	Scales of Oppression	
T	4/9	Breaking the Cycle of Oppression	<i>Article: To Be Announced</i>
Th	4/11	Leadership in Film	<b>Future Vision Due</b> Sixth Reflection due Sunday 4/14
T	4/16	Leadership in Film	
Th	4/18	Leadership and Social Media	<b>Movie Review Due</b>
T	4/23	Class Synthesis	
Th	4/25	Final Presentations	Seventh Reflection due Sunday 4/23
T	4/30	Final Presentations	
Th	5/2	Wrap Up	<b>Final Project Due</b>
	5/6-5/10	Finals Week	

### **Outside of Class Time Expectations**

Two One on One Meetings

High Ropes Course- April

Spring Banquet- April

Guest Speaker(s)

New Orleans, LA Service Learning Trip- May 12-17

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