MORS 430: Leadership in Organizations

Winter 2018

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Course Overview

The goal of this course is to enhance your leadership skills. The course is designed to prepare you to lead high-performing, successful organizations in the future and to effectively lead your own careers.

A key leadership task is to assemble the skills, talents, and resources of individuals and groups into those combinations that best solve the organizational problem at hand. You must manage people, information, and processes to accomplish organizational goals; you must make things happen, and often under conditions or time frames that are not of your own choosing. Leaders must also understand how to introduce their own skills and abilities into their teams. The successful execution of these goals requires leaders to be able to diagnose problems, make effective decisions, influence and motivate others, manage the diversity of their personal contacts, tap into and motivate the human and social capital of organizational members, optimize cross-functional teams, and drive organizational change.

This course prepares you to achieve these objectives. The course provides fundamental tools from the behavioral and social sciences that will improve your ability to analyze organizational dynamics and take robust action.

Course Format

Each day we will focus on a particular set of leadership skills. Our goal will be to distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies. We will accomplish this by discussing key theoretical concepts and analyzing related cases. In each class session, we will use a case or exercise to motivate our discussion.

This course reflects a dual focus on practical and conceptual training. The course packet articles introduce key concepts and useful ways of thinking about common situations in complex organizations. Case studies and class exercises provide opportunities to apply theories, concepts, and research findings to particular situations and to hone your skills in problem definition and problem solving.

You should come to class prepared to summarize key points from the day’s readings and to contribute to the case analysis. As you complete the reading, ask yourself:

- What is the basic argument the author makes?
- What are the key concepts/principles?
- So what? How does this matter for an organization?
- What are the implications for the kinds of challenges I face as a leader?
- How can I apply this to my firm, my job and my career?
## Course Requirements and Assignments

Your final grade is composed of:

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<th>Contribution</th>
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<td>2. Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>3. Senior Executive Case Analysis</td>
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<td>4. Final Exam</td>
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### Course Contribution (15%)

A significant portion of your course contribution grade is based on your attendance and in-class professionalism. This means showing up on time, both at the beginning of class and at the break, staying for the entire class, not using your phones or other electronic devices in class, and being an active participant in group discussion and exercises.

If you must miss a class, it is essential that you notify the TA as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements for the in-class exercises (which are conducted in pre-assigned teams) and you can be certain to get the materials that will be distributed during the class.

All class sessions involve active discussion. You should be prepared to share your ideas and to listen to and interpret the issues presented by others. Quality discussion comments possess one or more of the following attributes:

- Offer a relevant perspective on the issue, backed up by evidence or experience.
- Provide careful analysis.
- Apply concepts offered in the readings and lectures.
- Move the discussion forward by building on previous contributions with new insights; do not repeat points already made by others.
- Demonstrate respect for all other course participants.

In a class of 70 people, it is not always possible to call on every person who has a question or comment during class. If you have a question you would like to discuss further, please follow up with me or the TA before or after class or via email.

### Midterm Exam (20%)

For the midterm exam, you will be given a case and a series of questions to answer about the case. The midterm will take place **Class 5, February 10** in class. You are allowed 3 hours to complete the exam.

### Senior Executive Case Analysis (30%)

Your own career success will depend at least in part on how effectively you manage your professional relationships and social networks. These relationships will give you access to information, skills, and expertise and will help to determine your power, control, and
opportunities. This group-based written project provides an opportunity to spend some time reaching a deeper understanding of how the social relationships of successful leaders are developed, managed, and executed to get things done.

Each and every member of your project group is required to interview at least one executive regarding his or her experiences. These leaders can be from firms you previously worked for, from firms you would like to work for, or simply from industries that interest you.

Anticipate having to interview each leader at least once to gain an understanding of his or her situation, the nature of his or her network, how this network is managed, and how he or she uses this network to tackle the organizational challenges discussed in class. Following these interviews, your group will write an analysis of your leaders’ networks. In this analysis, you will compare and contrast the leaders’ strategies for building and managing social relationships, the structures of their social networks, and how they leverage their interpersonal relationships to achieve key organizational and career goals. The names of the leaders will be kept strictly confidential; you may use an alias when discussing your executives in your analysis.

Detailed information about this assignment is included at the end of this syllabus. The 10-page analysis is due via Canvas by the last day of class, at 9:00am on March 17. The page limit does not include the network maps, which can be added as an Appendix. As part of the assignment, you will be asked to evaluate the performance of all members of your group, including yourself. These evaluations are confidential and will not be shared with the rest of your team. The online evaluation form is located on Canvas under Assignments.

**Final Exam (35%)**
The final exam will be a closed-book, at-home exam that will consist of a series of short essay questions. You will receive the exam via email on March 24 at 9am. You will have three hours to complete the exam and return it via Canvas at or before 12pm that day.

**Office Hours:**
I will be available to meet with you by appointment. I am also available during the break and after class.

**Consideration for Classmates:**
A class of over 60 students requires careful attention to fairness and mutual respect for one another. You are expected to attend every class on time and to stay for the entire class session. If you have an unavoidable conflict, please do not disturb your classmates by arriving late, leaving early, or asking to have information you missed repeated during the class. Always let the TA know as soon as possible (preferably at least 24 hours in advance) if you will miss a class session so that we can make arrangements for any in-class exercises to be certain that your classmates do not suffer from your absence. This advance notice will
also allow us to make arrangements to ensure that you get all of the materials distributed in that class.

**Previous Knowledge of Cases**
If you are familiar with a case or an exercise introduced in class, please do not discuss your prior knowledge with other students as this can ruin the learning experience for them. Telling other students (in any section) about your experience with cases and exercises is an honor code violation. If you are concerned that your prior experience with a case might be an issue, please let me know before class.

**Recordings, Postings, Blogging, Tweets, Social Media, etc.**
Going online to find information on cases or exercises is an honor code violation unless you have been told explicitly that online research is part of an assignment. No audio or visual recordings can be made of the class without prior permission of the instructor (and in many cases) the students in the class. In addition, exercises and their solutions are confidential per the Kellogg Honor Code or copyrighted and cannot be circulated, (micro) blogged about, or posted in any form. If you are unsure as to the application of these rules, please see the instructor.

This course adheres to the guidelines established in the Kellogg Honor Code and the Kellogg Code of Classroom Etiquette.

**Course Materials:**
Assigned readings and cases are accessible via Study.net. No other textbook is required. This document details assignments due each day of class. Optional readings are not required; they are enrichment provided for students who are interested in learning more about a given topic.
Leadership in Organizations
Class 1
January 13

Objectives:
- Introduction to the course
- Develop a theory of leadership

Read Before Class (Required):
- “Why Should My Conscience Bother Me?” (case)

Assignment:
- Read *Speed Ventures* case before next class and bring to class a written, 2-3 sentence description in hard copy of whether or not you will race and why based on the case
- Complete *Decision-Making Quiz* (on Canvas) before completing the case/readings for next class
- Complete *Getting to Know You Survey* (on Canvas) before next class
Objectives:
- Identify and address common biases that corrupt managerial decisions

Read Before Class (Required):
- Speed Ventures
Objectives:
- Learning the art of persuasion
- Interpersonal and procedural tactics of influence

Read Before Class (Required):

In-Class Case:
- 12 Angry Men (excerpts in class; no separate case reading)
Objectives:
• Understand essential building blocks for high performing teams

Read Before Class (Optional):

In-Class Exercise:
• Lego (in-class exercise; no advance reading or preparation required)

Assignment:
• Prepare for Midterm Exam (pick up Flat Panel case and read it beforehand)
• Read Negotiations Abbas-Bussan case before Class 6
Midterm Exam:
- For the midterm exam you will be given a case and a series of questions to answer about the case.
- The case will be distributed one week prior to the exam; the exam will be distributed and completed in class.
- You are allowed 3 hours to complete the exam.

Assignment:
- Read *Negotiations Abhas-Bussan case* before Class 6
Negotiations
Class 6
February 17

Objectives:
• Assess your skills at negotiating
• Equip you with the core principles of expert negotiating tactics

Read Before Class (Required):
• Abhas-Bussan (written case, distributed during Class 4; read your assigned role; do not fill out worksheet in back)

Read Before Class (Optional):

Assignment:
• Bring a cultural artifact to next class. A cultural artifact is an object that reflects the culture and values of an organization to which you’ve belonged.
Motivation & Culture
Class 7
February 24

Objectives:
• Strategies for motivating people and building effective organizational culture
• Conducting a motivational audit

Read Before Class (Required):
• Bridgewater Associates article [“Pursuing Self-Interest in Harmony with the Laws of the Universe and Contributing to Evolution Is Universally Rewarded”]

Read Before Class (Optional):
• Chatman & Cha. “Leading by Leveraging Culture.” California Management Review.

Assignment:
• Complete Six Degrees of Separation Worksheet before next class
Objectives:
- Building collaborative networks
- Strategies for strengthening relationships among team members

Read Before Class (Required):
- *Teams as Networks* Wayne Baker
- Heidi Roizen case study

Assignment:
- Come to the next class with the EIS Simulation successfully downloaded on 2 PCs per team (contact TA at least 24 hours in advance if your group needs to borrow a PC)
Objectives:
- Gauge your performance in a simulated change program
- Acquire the skills for championing and leading large-scale organizational change

Read Before Class (Required):
- To Be Distributed

Read Before Class (Optional):

In-Class Case:
- Managing Change Simulation

Assignment:
- SECA final project assignment and SECA group evaluations due next class
Leading Change in Organizations
Class 10
March 17

Objectives:
• Leading change in dynamic environments

Read:
• The Heart of Change

Discussion Questions:
1. Which strategies were effective at securing adopters in the simulation? Which were ineffective?
2. Who do you target with a change initiative?
3. How do you figure out what tactics work with what targets?
4. When should you time your tactics for motivating and achieving change?
**Senior Executive Case Analysis (SECA)**

Your own career success depends in part on the effectiveness of your professional network. This project provides an opportunity to spend some time developing a sophisticated understanding of how successful leaders and senior executives initiate, develop, and manage their ties to accomplish their objectives. Your task is to analyze the social network of a leader using the concepts discussed in the course. You will interview a leader to gain an understanding of their situation, the nature of their network, and the way in which it is managed.

Each and every member of your Study Group will be required to interview at least one senior executive regarding their experiences. The choice of the leader is up to you. Try to choose someone who you believe will be candid, open, and insightful. Choose someone who might serves as a good contact in the future. These executives can be from your previous firms, from firms you would like to work for, or simply from industries that interest you.

Following these interviews, your group will write an analysis of the executives’ networks. In this analysis, you will compare and contrast the leaders’ approaches to meeting the challenges they face, apply concepts you have learned about social networks and power while also integrating the full range of other key concepts and frameworks from the class. Projects will be graded for their grasp of the class material, their insight into the manager's social situation, and clarity of their presentation.

**Key Elements of the Assignment:**

- Each Teammate must interview one leader on the role of networks in career success.
- Teammates then integrate their individual leader observations into one coherent analysis, using the theoretical material we covered in class as a reference point for best practices.
- Produce a 10 double-spaced page report with 12 point font and 1" margins all around for 5 person teams. 6 person teams get 11 pages.

The SECA project is due by 9:00am on March 17, the last day of class.

**Key Elements of the Analysis**

The paper should have a three-part structure:

1. **An introduction to your analysis and the executives.** What is your paper's thesis? Who are the leaders you interviewed? This introduction should include a brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of each executive’s situation, and if applicable, the problem being faced.

In an Appendix you should include a one paragraph description of every leader that was interviewed, describing their responsibilities and creating a network map of their network. Thus, every leader that was interviewed will have their own network map.

2. **Body of Analysis**

You should organize and focus your analysis in terms of course concepts, and should use those concepts to explain the similarities and differences you observed. That is, the experiences of
your leaders should be compared and contrasted to draw general lessons about which strategies are most useful under which conditions. See potential questions below.

3. There should be a conclusion section titled: “Recommendations for Kellogg Students.” This section should be one to two pages and include concrete recommendations for building value and capital for Kellogg students. These suggestions should focus on what students could do tomorrow in their teams, the next summer in their internships, and immediately after graduation. For example, describe how what you learned can help students do better in selecting company presentations; meeting company presenters; making contacts during their first summer jobs; switching fields or industries; preparing for the transition from employee to partner; and other critical activities related to career advancement or building company equity.

NOTE: The most informative analyses go beyond description (a story about or description of the executives' networks) to an explanation of why something happened the way it did using the concepts from class. Well-organized papers that stress the most important factors rather than simply provide a data-dump of all the possible factors are evaluated more highly.

In all other respects, the project is yours to define. Be creative, yet professional.

Here are some Questions to Consider in Developing your Analysis

1. How is the leader positioned for action and getting things done? How are barriers to action overcome? You could ask about a recent example of this (this could provide a focal situation for the analysis): For example, ask how she or he leveraged contacts to respond to a situation and why it worked or did not work. Probe for how networks could be better structured, maintained or used, in light of the pattern of dependencies the person faces.
2. What are the kinds of contacts and exchanges that the executive uses for different purposes and in different contexts? For example, to make decisions, to get a specific task accomplished quickly, to gain influence, to get information, to seize an opportunity to advocate or implement change?
3. How has trust and commitment been developed with their network contacts? What kind of information is shared with different contacts and why? What role does reputation play? Does he/she form many ties or few ties? How much redundancy is there in the person’s network?
4. How does the executive’s network (size, number of structural holes, clique, entrepreneurial, monopolist) match his or her objectives? How could it be improved? What is the strongest entrepreneurial opportunity (i.e., where can the most value be added)?
5. How is the executive positioned in terms of diversity of relationships? Where is the executive’s sponsorship or mentoring structure? How has this changed over his/her career? What was the person’s experience with “developmental” relationships—either as a protégé, mentor, sponsor, or combinations of these?
6. How does the corporate culture impact network processes?
7. How do the leader’s relationships map onto the formal organizational structure?