

# Syllabus

**Course Name and Number(s):** MLS 5380 Crisis Leadership

**Semester Offered:** Spring 2024

**Meets:** (Online) January 16, 2024 to March 8, 2024

**Instructor:** Dr. Areli Chacon Silva and Andrea Tellez, M.A.

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**Office Location and Office Hours:** Kelly Hall suite 223B. MW 12-1 p.m. and online by appointment.

## Course Description

This 8-week, online course will provide a broad overview of Crisis Leadership with a focus on human behavior. Specifically, we will discuss the factors of effective Crisis Leadership, the impact of Crisis Leadership on organizations, and Crisis Leadership models that apply to individuals and organizations equally. Using Leadership, Communication and Critical theories, students will analyze the process of leadership in various case studies of recent crises. We will discuss the historical, institutional, and social forces that influence crisis leadership responses, including but not limited to, culture, technology, and globalization.

## Expected Learning Outcomes

- Define and recognize effective Crisis Leadership.
- Differentiate between Crisis Management and Crisis Leadership.
- Explore the structure and categories of crises such as but not limited to normal, abnormal, and natural disasters.
- Expand perspectives on categories of identity such as but not limited to race, gender, and class and their interconnectedness to the systemic roots of modern crises.
- Describe and understand personality differences and the impact of human behavior on Crisis Leadership.
- Understand the tools and processes of Crisis Communications including sense-making, decision-making and framing, for example.
- Increase knowledge of leadership, communication, and critical theoretical perspectives.
- Name at least three Crisis Leadership exemplars.
- Develop and improve critical thinking and writing abilities through a reflection of topics.
- Enhance communication skills and develop conflict resolution skills through class discussions and case studies.

## Required Materials

**NOTE:** All textbooks are currently available online through the UTEP Library.

- Fink. (2013). *Crisis Communications: The Definitive Guide to Managing the Message*. McGraw-Hill.
- Mitroff. (2001). *Managing crises before they happen: what every executive and manager needs to know about crisis management*. Soundview Executive Book Summaries.
- Mitroff, I. & Kilmann, R. H. (2021). *The Psychodynamics of Enlightened Leadership: Coping with Chaos*. Springer International Publishing AG.
- Digitized readings in the form of PDFs and hyperlinks from the UTEP Library to cover additional class content and materials will be available via Blackboard.
- Documentaries, films and other videos accessible through the UTEP Library and online.

## Technology Requirements

- PC or MAC laptop/computer
- Webcam, speakers and microphone (if not already integrated)
- Internet connectivity Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard.
- Blackboard, Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader

## Accommodations Policy

Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#). “The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.”

## Course Structure

This course is offered asynchronously, online via Blackboard. You will interact with the course content, your peers and instructor for approximately five (5) hours each week, where you will access readings, watch videos, post Discussion Board submissions and responses, complete quizzes, and submit assignments.

## Communication

I will host face-to-face office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12 to 1 p.m. and online by appointment through Blackboard Collaborate. I will post a Blackboard announcement every Monday with our scheduled activities for the week. Please feel free to contact me through Blackboard messages as I will check my e-mail, at minimum, every day during the week. I will respond to messages and questions within 24 hours. However, if you send a message over the weekend, I may not respond to you until the following Monday.

## Student Resources

- For any technology related questions or issues, please contact Technology Support at [helpdesk.utep.edu](mailto:helpdesk.utep.edu) or (915) 747-4357 (HELP) or visit [https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/Student\\_Services.html](https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/Student_Services.html).
- For assistance with your writing skills, writing assignments or tutoring visit with the University Writing Center at <https://www.utep.edu/uwc/about/index.html>.
- For mental health, personal development and other services contact the UTEP Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) office at [caps@utep.edu](mailto:caps@utep.edu) or (915) 747-5302.
- For health care needs contact the UTEP Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC) at [studenthealth@utep.edu](mailto:studenthealth@utep.edu) or (915) 747-5624.
- For access to basic food and other items, contact the UTEP Food Pantry at [foodpantry@utep.edu](mailto:foodpantry@utep.edu) or (915) 747-8053.
- For assistance with COVID-19 related issues visit <https://www.utep.edu/utepcares/>.
- For any other assistance or questions about student services at UTEP, please visit the Dean of Students Office website at <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students-office/wellbeing/index.html>.

# STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

## Netiquette

Topics and materials shared in class are strictly for educational purposes and presented in a respectful manner that upholds the dignity of all people. Similarly, your online interactions and communications must always strive to be polite, professional and represent your best self. If you would not say something to another human being that was not acceptable in real life, do not do it online either. As a social justice educator, I also urge the thoughtful use of language to convey a message noting that profanity and other specific words may denote oppressive intentions. For additional guidance, read [NETIQUETTE GUIDE FOR ONLINE COURSES](#).

## Scholastic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

## Plagiarism Detecting Software

Your course work and assessments may be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

## Copyright Statement for Course Materials

Copyright law protects all materials used in this course. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

## Deadlines, Late Work, and Absence Policy

All assignments are due by the indicated date as well as the following: Discussion Board submissions are due each Thursday at 11:59 p.m., Peer responses are due each Saturday at 11:59 p.m., and Quizzes are scheduled for Sundays at 11:59 p.m. Deadlines may change to accommodate holidays or for other reasons. I will not allow late work or extensions for quizzes without a documented university excuse, medical reasons or family emergencies. This class does not meet at a scheduled time thus, you will independently be responsible for adhering to the established weekly deadlines.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

You may request an incomplete grade only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately, preferably no later than two weeks before the last day of class, if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed within an acceptable deadline.

## Assignments

Due dates and specific instructions on all assignments will be provided in the Course Calendar and on Blackboard. Please use the syllabus as an overview of the course only as some assignments and due dates may change.

- **Introduction Video**  
One basic task of Crisis Leadership is presenting complex information and this exercise will provide practice for you in managing a presentation. You will produce a short, approximately 2 minute, video introducing yourself to your fellow classmates. Please follow the assignment instructions.
- **Personality Exercise**  
Personality differences provide critical information to leaders in understanding human behavior in a crisis. This online assessment will uncover your individual strengths using an asset-based approach. Complete the online assessment tool and attend the reflective workshop.
- **Discussion Board Participation**  
These will be your brief responses for all the readings, films, and other course content for the week. Each submission must be a brief analysis, bulleted thoughts, or open-ended questions that demonstrate your understanding of all the materials presented for the week. Do not simply summarize the readings. What I am looking for is that you show your comprehension of the materials by establishing connections between concepts, making original statements, or proposing alternative viewpoints. Familiarize yourself with the grading rubric for Discussion Boards in order to determine if you have met all the criteria.
- **Peer Response Participation**  
You will engage with your classmates by responding positively to at least two other peer submissions every week.
- **Quizzes**  
There will be four quizzes this semester based on the readings to encourage understanding of major topics, theoretical frameworks, concepts, and definitions presented in each of the modules.
- **Final Paper and Presentation**  
The final project will require that you select and analyze a specific crisis in relation to the major components of Crisis Leadership presented in the course. In other words, you must discuss how your paper encapsulates, questions or advances the theories and topics covered in class. You will create a brief video presentation of your findings and separately submit an 8–10 page research paper in APA format. Guidelines and more detailed requirements will be provided on Blackboard.

## Evaluation of Student Performance

I will post grades for all assignments on a weekly basis. Each assignment listed below will have an accompanying grading rubric that you can reference to determine how points are assigned. Please submit all assignments online through Blackboard not to my e-mail address.

| ASSESSMENTS   | POINTS     |
|---|------------|
| 1. Introduction video   | 10         |
| 2. Personality exercise                                       | 10         |
| 3. Discussion boards and Peer responses (7 weeks x 10 points) | 70         |
| 4. Quizzes (4 x 15 points)                                    | 60         |
| 5. Final video presentation                                   | 20         |
| 6. Final paper  | 30         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>200</b> |

The maximum number of points that you can earn for this course is 200. The following is the grade scale for this course based on points earned:

| <b>GRADING SCALE</b>     |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Points Percentage</b> | <b>Letter Grade</b> |
| 100% to 90%              | A                   |
| 89% to 80%               | B                   |
| 79% to 70%               | C                   |
| 69% to 60%               | D                   |
| Below 59%                | F                   |