



MLS - Masters of Leadership Studies

Leadership Communication: Media & Message Strategies

MLSX 5331

CRN # 18525 / 18526

Fall 2016

Fall – 2016

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Required Texts:

1. Denning, Stephen. (2007) *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action Through Narrative*. San Francisco, CA. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
2. Fairhurst, Gail T. (2011). *The Power of Framing: Creating the Language of Leadership*. San Francisco, CA. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Course Goals:

The purpose of this course is to study communication media and channels used in the process of exercising leadership, depending on audiences and contexts. Students will develop and analyze messages used in the processes of leadership, including but not limited to, motivation, inspiration, and decision-making.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze audiences and contexts in selected communication situations
- Develop messages to an identified audience that motivates change agents, creates context for decision-making; inspires organizational members to work toward identified goals
- Identify optimal media for communicating context-specific messages.

Discussion and Participation Expectations:

Students are expected to be respectful and supportive of other students. Many different ideas will be welcomed and encouraged. We might discuss some controversial topics, and students must feel that they are comfortable to express their thoughts, especially in an online forum such as this course. Please think about how your discussion posts might be interpreted by others; conversely, remember that an online post might have been intended in a different way than your interpretation. Your online participation will also be a significant portion of your grade.

Class Structure, Course Assignments and Evaluation:

- I. **Class Structure:** The course begins officially on Monday, Aug. 22nd, 2016, and runs through Saturday Sep. 10th, 2016.
 - A. I will be online regularly on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays in order to check your work, and to be available for discussions and exchanges between you, me, and your classmates. Because this is an on-line course, I am not requiring live face-to-face interactions. Although the course is on-line, it is extremely important for students to complete their on-line work on time and to be up to date with course events and materials. At student's request, I can also make myself available for live on-line communication through Skype or other software.
 - B. Reading questions are due by 11:00 pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays (MST).
 - C. Analysis and application: I may post case studies and other discussion activities on the "Blackboard" Online Learning System for you to analyze and reflect upon.
 - D. End of class: reflect on the following two questions:
 1. What were the most useful ideas from today's class? What do you want to remember from today's class?
 2. How might you use these ideas in your workplace or in your life?
- II. **Assignments:** There are several assignments in the course designed to meet the objectives of the course:
 - A. **Reading Questions.** Each set of reading questions is designed to focus your reading of texts, and to help build foundational knowledge of various readings. We will use the reading questions as a basis for class discussion of the readings.
 - For each reading assignment set (for each chapter or article), please answer the following questions:
 1. What do you think are the important points in the readings?
 2. Which arguments or points do you agree with or find persuasive? Why?
 3. Which arguments or points do you disagree with or find unpersuasive? Why?
 4. What questions do you have about the readings? What would you like to discuss further with others?
 - Please post your discussion responses in the designated location in the Blackboard system. As part of this assignment, you are also required to respond to at least two other people's reading response posts. Reading responses are also due by 11:00 pm on the designated day in the schedule. Responses to other people's reading questions are due by 11:59 pm on the same day. Since our university is on Mountain Standard Time (MST), all deadline times are MST.

II. Assignments: There are several assignments in the course designed to meet the objectives of the course:

B. Participation and discussions. Much of this class will be based on vigorous engagement online. “Vigorous participation” means that you have completed the reading, thought about it, formulated opinions, and are prepared to engage in discussion with one another about the material. Your participation and discussion grades will also be based on completion of online discussion activities that might include (but is not limited to) analysis of case studies, short reflection essays, and responding to your classmates’ reading responses and analysis exercises. Posts should include more than just short, non-responsive answers, like “interesting!” or “good point!” In other words, the task is to ask serious questions and/or to write a meaningful response that is designed to elicit conversation with me and the other students in this class.

- This is a significant part of your grade, so I expect that you will interact with me online and with the students online. On Tuesdays/Thursdays, I will be monitoring posts and class discussions. At student’s request, I will also make myself available for a Skype session or other live interactions on-line, in order to answer questions about assignments and case studies.
- If applicable, case study/power point slides should be reviewed on the day specified in the schedule and on the Blackboard system. Discussion activities must be completed by 11:59 pm (MST) on those respective days.

III. Final paper. Integration of ideas related to leadership, change, and communication. In this 8-10 page paper, you should reflect on the key ideas that you would like to carry forward in your workplace and/or in your life. You may use the readings questions, reflections, and analysis exercises to help you formulate the main ideas from this course. Ultimately, this paper should highlight the most important elements that you have learned from the course, and how you would apply them in your workplace and/or life. This is a reflection paper, so outside research is not needed, but include appropriate references to course materials (see last page of syllabus and syllabus appendix for more information). On the last day of class, each student will be asked to give a brief online post regarding the key themes to the paper. You will be required to respond to at least two other people’s paper summaries on the discussion board.

IV. Grading. Please refer to the following grading scale and points regarding final grades.

<u>Points for Assignments</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
Final paper & brief summary	40 points
Reading questions (5 points each)	35 points
<u>Participation and analysis/reflection activities</u>	<u>25 points</u>
<i>Total points</i>	100 points

Tentative Schedule for Assignments:

All assignments are listed by author from the course's required books. Please have these texts accessible for our online discussions.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Activity</u>	<u>Assignments</u> (due @ 11:00 pm MST)
<u>WEEK #1</u>		
Tuesday, Aug. 23 rd	- Overview to course, Syllabus - Introductions, Strategies, Assignments	(a.) "Truths About Leadership" [Blackboard] (b.) Denning, <i>Introduction</i>
[No written assignments due, except for online introductions through Blackboard]		
Thursday, Aug. 25 th	- LEADERSHIP AS COMMUNICATION	(a.) Denning, Chapters 1 – 3 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 1
Saturday, Aug. 27 th	- AUDIENCE ANALYSIS	(a.) Denning, Chapters 4 – 6 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 2
<u>WEEK #2</u>		
Tuesday, Aug. 30 th	- LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP	(a.) Denning, Chapters 7 – 9 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 3
Thursday, Sep. 1 st	- LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP	(a.) Denning, Chapters 10 – 12 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 4
Saturday, Sep. 3 rd	- MESSAGES OF LEADERSHIP	(a.) Fairhurst, <i>Preface</i> + Chapters 1 – 2 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 5
<u>WEEK #3</u>		
Tuesday, Sep. 6 th	- RHETORICAL FRAMING/ MEDIA "RICHNESS"	(a.) Fairhurst, Chapters 3 – 5 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 6
Thursday, Sep. 8 th	- MEDIA "RICHNESS"/ LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION & THE MEDIA	(a.) Fairhurst, Chapters 6 – 8 (b.) Due: Reading questions, set 7
Saturday, Sep. 10 th	Conclusion to course	Due: FINAL PAPERS & FINAL POSTS

Late Assignments and Incomplete policy: Late written assignments will receive **a one point deduction for each twenty-four hour period** (including weekends) the assignment is late. If you are unable to submit assignments on the day that an assignment is due, you must contact me before the due date to arrange to hand in your assignment. Generally, I find it unacceptable for students to turn in late assignments, unless there are extreme and extenuating circumstances.

Late final papers will not be accepted: If your final paper is late, you will receive a zero for the assignment. A grade of incomplete will not be given for any reason, unless there are EXTREME extenuating circumstances AND you have talked to me in advance. An incomplete will only be given if some extenuating circumstance prevents you from completing the final paper by the deadline.

Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, collusion, and deliberately interfering with the work of others. Plagiarizing means representing the work of someone else (such as another student or an author of a book, article, or internet site) as your own. If you use the ideas or words of someone else, **you must cite the source** of the original information in your paper or presentation. For this class, using your own papers completed for another class also would be considered plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying answers from other students' papers or tests, discussing test questions with students who have not taken the test, and/or using notes when taking a test. Another example of cheating is to use a source from a textbook without obtaining the original author's work. If you do not read a work in its entirety, you may misrepresent the original author's work. Another example is to copy answers from another student or to allow another student to copy from your work. Collusion refers to collaboration with another student to commit any academically dishonest act. If you provide answers to someone or knowingly allow someone to copy your work, you will be held responsible.

Invented or plagiarized work can result in an F grade for the course and may result in possible disciplinary action at the university level. Students be suspended or expelled for engaging in academic dishonesty.

Disabled Student Statement: In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call 915.747.5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. You also can visit the DSSO website at www.utep.edu/dsso or the DSSO office in Room 108 East Union Building.

Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and The Disabled Student Services Office at The University of Texas at El Paso.

Being Successful in an Online Class: Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple rules to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

- Ask questions: If you don't know the answer, someone else will. The discussion board is the area for asking questions related to content OR any problems (related to the class) you are having. Make sure that you have clearly indicated the subject of your message.
- Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link, or other item that can help others learn something you can share.
- Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior can be subject to disciplinary action, as well.
- Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, I recommend that you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before re-reading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages helps to ensure that they are constructive, instead of destructive.
- Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.