

CONF 659: LEADERSHIP IN CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

Semester: Spring 2016

Dates: March 19; March 26; April 9; April 16;
April 30 - May 1

Location: Arlington: Founders Hall 479

Class Time: 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Instructor: Robert C. Fisher, JD
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Office Hours: by appointment

Leadership in conflict situations occurs at the interpersonal, group, and systems levels. The role and importance of leadership frequently is an important ingredient in understanding and resolving conflict. Conflict often is analyzed as competing interests, values, and cultures, and sometimes deep-rooted needs, while the role of leadership in relation to those factors often is not recognized, considered, or understood.

We will explore leadership across a range of conflict scenarios, with an emphasis on collaborative leadership. In many instances, leadership roles are imbedded, not necessarily visible, in a conflict. We will examine different conflicts to expose how leadership contributes to the emergence, perpetuation, or resolution of conflict. We will use case modeling and experiential learning to understand leadership theories and identify leadership roles in conflicts. You also will integrate reflective practice with personal leadership development.

We will conduct the course as partners in learning and the class as a learning laboratory. Engaging with class members and taking primary responsibility for your learning constitute a vital part of the course. You are expected to examine your ideas and worldviews.

Course Emphasis:

- Understanding and studying leadership;
- Role of leadership in conflicts and conflict resolution;
- Characteristics of collaborative leadership and other leadership theories and models;
- Role of age, culture, gender, race / ethnicity, technology, etc. in leadership;
- Leadership skills useful in a conflict setting; and
- Leadership aspects of third party roles.

Course Requirements:

Participation

50 percent

- Participate actively in class and online in-between classes and demonstrate familiarity with the concepts discussed in the readings. Lively discussion is *expected*.
- Bring leadership examples to present and discuss during each class -- leadership in current events, a conflict you were involved in, or an example of failed leadership.
- Lead class discussions about leadership topics (leadership as a group activity).

Writing

50 percent

- Class Survey: on Blackboard, Assessments section. *Due:* before the first class
- Leadership Interview: to expose you to different perspectives on leadership in conflict situations, you will interview someone in a leadership role, submit a brief written summary, and present the results in class. *Due: March 26th.*
- Book Commentary: in addition to assigned readings, you will read and summarize another book tailored to your individual leadership interests. *Due: April 9th.*

- Reflective Essays: to further awareness of the role of leadership, you will prepare brief essays on leadership topics. *Due: TBD.*
- Paper: examining leadership in a conflict situation (length TBD). *Due: May 6th.* A brief synopsis including your leadership analytic approach is *due* no later than *April 16th.*

The guidelines for assignments will be discussed and established during the first class.

READINGS:

Texts

Gardner, John, *On Leadership*, Free Press, 1997 (paperback edition)

Jackson, Brad and Parry, Ken, *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book About Studying Leadership*, Sage Publications, Inc., 2nd edition 2011

Available on Blackboard:

Bellafante, G., "The Bohemian Capitalist," *The New York Times*, Online at http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/nyregion/thinx-underwear-underground.html?_r=0, February 26, 2016.

Deresiewicz, William, "Solitude and Leadership," Online at *theamericanscholar.org*, Spring 2010, <https://theamericanscholar.org/solitude-and-leadership/>.

"Hard Times: Leadership in America, Interview with Barbara Kellerman with Matthew Sowcik," *Member Connector, International Leadership Association*, January 2015, 9-16.

Hildreth, J.A.D. and Anderson, C., "Failure at the Top: How Power Undermines Collaborative Performance," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2016 Vol. 110, No. 2, 261-286.

Goleman, D., "What Makes a Leader?," *Harvard Business Review*, Nov/Dec, 93-102.

Kahneman, Daniel, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2011:

- Introduction (*excerpt*)
- Chapter One: "The Characteristics of the Story"
- Chapter Four: "The Associative Machine"
- Chapter Nine: Table – "Characteristics of System 1"
- Chapter Nineteen: "The Illusion of Understanding"
- Chapter Twenty: "The Illusion of Validity" (*excerpt*)
- Conclusions (*excerpt*)

Ladkin, Donna, *Rethinking Leadership, A New Look at Old Leadership Questions*, Edward Elgar, 2010 – Preface and Chapter Nine: "What has it meant to rethink leadership?"

Luke, Jeffery, *Catalytic Leadership: Strategies for an Interconnected World*, Jossey-Bass, 1998, Chapter Two: "Defining Public Leadership"

Maiese, Michelle, summarizing John Paul Lederach, "Levels of Action." Online at *Beyond Intractability*, eds. Burgess, G. and Burgess, H., Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder, posted: July 2003

Popper, M. Leadership as Relationship. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 34: 107-125 2004.

Sandburg, S. and Grant, A., "Speaking While Female," *New York Times*, January 12, 2015

Sowcik, M., ed., *Leadership 2050, Critical Challenges, Key Contexts, and Emerging Trends*, Emerald Group Publishing 2015:

- Forward, Ron Heifetz
- Leadership in the Future (Chapter 1), Timothy C. Mack
- Social Artistry: A Whole Systems Approach to Sustainable Analysis and Leadership Practice (Chapter 14), Skye Burn and Jean Houston

Wiessner, P.W., Embers of society: Firelight talk among the Ju/'hoansi Bushmen, PNAS.org 2014

Additional Readings: other leadership reading materials will be available on Blackboard.

CLASS TOPICS / AGENDA

SESSION #1: March 19

Focus: personal approaches to leadership and conflict

- Introduction and expectations
- Ways of looking at conflict and leadership
- Explore leadership concepts, models, theories, working definition of leadership
- Explore leadership current events
- Organize our work together – activities, assignments, definitions, grading, protocols, etc.

Readings:

Gardner, 1-37 (Introduction, Chapters 1-3)

Jackson and Parry, 1-24 (Introduction, Chapter 1)

Ladkin, Preface

Luke, Chapter Two: "Defining Public Leadership"

Maiese summarizing John Paul Lederach's "Levels of Action"

Sowcik, Leadership 2050: Forward

SESSION #2: March 26

Focus: leadership aspects of culture, gender, race, etc.

- Explore leadership concepts, models, theories from readings
- Practice leadership styles, skills and abilities
- Interviews - brief presentations and discussion
- Explore leadership current events
- Examine the leadership aspects of a conflict (*presentation and discussions*)
- Personal reflection on leadership

Readings:

Gardner, 38-66 (Chapters 4-6)

Jackson and Parry, 25-94 (Chapters 2-4)

Kahneman, Introduction (*excerpt*) and Chapter One: "The Characteristics of the Story"

Kellerman Interview
Sandburg and Grant, "Speaking While Female"

SESSION #3: April 9

Focus: leadership and decision-making, including implications of neuroscience research

- Explore leadership concepts, models, theories from readings
- Practice leadership styles, skills and abilities
- Leadership book commentary - brief presentation and discussion
- Explore leadership current events
- Examine the leadership aspects of a conflict (*presentation and discussions*)
- Personal reflection on leadership
- Mid-Course Evaluation

Reading for Class:

Gardner, 67-111 (Chapters 7-10)

Jackson and Parry, 95-111 (Chapter 5)

Kahneman,

- Chapter Four: "The Associative Machine"
- Chapter Nine: Table – "Characteristics of System 1"

Popper, Leadership as Relationship

SESSION #4: April 16

Focus: leadership and decision-making continued and analysis framework

- Explore leadership concepts, models, theories from readings
- Practice leadership styles, skills and abilities
- Leadership book commentary - brief presentation and discussion
- Develop a framework for analyzing leadership in a conflict
- Explore leadership current events
- Examine the leadership aspects of a conflict (*presentation and discussions*)
- Personal reflection on leadership

Reading for Class:

Gardner, 112-156 (Chapters 11-13)

Jackson and Parry, 112-133 (Chapter 6)

Kahneman,

- Chapter Nineteen: "The Illusion of Understanding"
- Chapter Twenty: "The Illusion of Validity" (*excerpt*)

SESSION #4: April 30 and May 01

Focus: leadership in the future

- Collaborative leadership – opportunities / limits
- Future leadership trends and challenges (technology, etc.)
- Leadership integration exercise: TBA
- Explore leadership current events
- Examine the leadership aspects of a conflict (*presentation and discussions*)

- Practice leadership styles, skills and abilities
- Reflection
- Closing and evaluation

Reading for Class:

Bellafante, "The Bohemian Capitalist"

Deresiewicz, "Solitude and Leadership"

Gardner, 157-199 (Chapters 14-17)

Hildreth and Anderson, "Failure at the Top..."

Jackson and Parry, 134-151 (Chapter 7, Conclusion)

Kahneman, Conclusions

Ladkin, Chapter Nine: "What has it meant to rethink leadership?"

Sowcik, Leadership 2050: Leadership in the Future and Social Artistry

Wiessner, Embers of society: Firelight talk...(if this idea grabs you)

ACADEMIC POLICES AND INFORMATION

Academic Integrity

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-

CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace, or substitute for, it.

Disability Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please talk with me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Diversity

Mason promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Privacy

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages only to a non-Mason email address.

Please feel free to contact me, by phone or email, to discuss the class, your personal performance, or the conduct of others.