

# Sociology 398: Sociology of Leadership

## Class Information

Prerequisite: Sociology 101  
Credit: 3 Hours  
Semester: 3 Week Summer Session 2016 (May 16 – June 3)  
Course Time: Monday through Friday, 9:30-12:20  
Location: 124 Burnett Hall

## Instructor Information

Instructor: Scott C. Whiteford, Ph.D.  
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## Course Description

This year, leadership is front-and-center in the minds of Americans. The political environment is full of discussion about who is a good leader and who is not. Why are some people diehard fans of Donald Trump? His fans say he is a great leader. Is he? Based on what? Is Obama an effective leader? Some say yes, and some say no. Some of Hillary Clinton's critics claim she lacks leadership skills. Arguably she may be the best prepared candidate for US President that we've seen in decades, does this criticism have any merit?

We also see this in society. Is Warren Buffet a great leader? Or is he a great investor who leads others? In football, is the quarterback always the leader? Did Connor Cook's (Michigan State Spartans) draft status suffer because he wasn't elected captain of the football team his senior year?

Leadership is essential to the success of groups, organizations, and companies. The sociological perspective of leadership incorporates aspects of business, psychology, economics, and historical studies. Most disciplines focus primarily on the leader, their talents, knowledge, and behavior, but crucial to the study of leadership from a sociological perspective is understanding how leaders thrive in groups, organizations, society, and throughout history. This course will focus on what sociology has to contribute, and how this is relevant when, discussing topics such as stratification, race, gender, education, and government, and focus on the intersection of individual leadership talents, group dynamics, social structures, and time and place. This class is important for future leaders, those interested in careers in business, sociology, psychology, economics, and history as it will provide a more holistic understanding of leadership.

## Required Texts

Northouse, Peter G. (2012). *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Los Angeles: Sage.  
Sternheimer, Karen. (2010). *Every Day Sociology Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

### **Participation, Readings, Quizzes, Paper, and Presentation**

In many respects, this class will mirror meetings in the business world. I expect participation and your thoughts and ideas are very important to your (and our) success. We have two texts, and I expect you to complete the required readings by the start of class. We will have quizzes on Fridays covering the week's discussions and readings. A paper will be due on the last day of class. I will provide more detail about the topic, but it will include choosing a great leader and implementing what you have learned in the class. On the final two days, we will have presentations covering your research. We have a very short amount of time to cover a large amount of material. Please pace yourself appropriately.

### **Responsibility:**

You should treat this course like a job. For example, if you only showed up for work when you wanted, arrived late often, missed deadlines, and put minimal effort into it, you would likely be fired. Similarly, it is wise to attend class, to arrive on time, to turn in assignments on or before the due date, and to keep up with course material. You should also proactively take care of any problems that arise. Regular attendance and participation in class assignments is essential if you expect to do well in this course.

### **Respect for others:**

Be aware of how your behavior affects others around you. For example, please refrain from having conversations or engaging in recreational activities during class and lab, because this behavior disrupts other students' abilities to pay attention and to learn. Students are expected to act professionally while in the classroom. Carrying on conversation with neighbors, reading newspapers during lectures, texting, surfing the web (such as using Facebook), or other disturbances are viewed as discourtesies to the class. You are expected to arrive on time and stay in your seat until class is dismissed as the process of leaving while class is going on is disturbing to others in the classroom. **Please turn-off all phones.**

### **Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of UNL to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

### **Discrimination:**

Discrimination towards fellow students or research participants based on gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, disability or religion will not be tolerated. While not all students share the same values, I will ask that differences be tolerated within this class.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in failing an assignment or the entire course. Plagiarism occurs when you intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent another person's work as your own. This could occur in a number of ways: 1) by copying someone else's work word-for-word or just in part without quotation marks; or 2) by paraphrasing a source without citing the original author.

The Code of Student Conduct for University of Nebraska-Lincoln specifies the policy for cheating, plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty and misconduct.

**As a general rule.** If you are uncertain whether you are citing sources sufficiently and appropriately enough to avoid plagiarism, please consult your instructor or a tutor at the Writing Center. For help with the proper forms for citations, check with the UNL writing center in the Love Library (**Please avoid plagiarizing.**)

**Incomplete Policy:**

A grade of "Incomplete" will only be granted in the case of serious medical illnesses. Written documentation of illness may be required. An incomplete will not be given to cover up failure, if you have completed the course, or if you approach me at or near the end of the semester.

**Cell phones:**

Cell phones and pagers are to be turned off (not just placed on vibrate/silent mode) during class. You are asked not to text message – even if you think the instructor cannot see – because it is inconsiderate and incredibly distracting to those around you.

**Campus Emergencies:**

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Changes will be announced in class and/or via email.

**Statement for Copyright Notification:**

Copyright 2016 (Scott C. Whiteford, Ph.D.) as to this syllabus and all lectures: During this course students are prohibited from selling notes to or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course.

**Grading**

Your course grade will be based upon:

- 3 Quizzes (60% with 20% each)
- General Theory of Leadership paper (25%)
- General Theory of Leadership presentation (5%)
- Participation (10%)

Letter grades generally will be assigned using the usual decades

- A: 90.0% and above
- B: 80.0%-89.9%
- C: 70.0%-79.9%
- D: 60%-69.9%
- F: 59.9% and below

## **Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings for Class</b>
Mon, May 16:	Focus on You What is Leadership?	
Tue, May 17:	Introduction to Sociology Concepts Sociological Theory	Sternheimer Ch. 1
Wed, May 18:	Research Methods in Sociology General Theory of Leadership	Sternheimer Chs. 3&4
Thu, May 19:	Leadership & the Sociology of Self Leadership & the Sociology of Groups	Northouse Chs. 1-4
Fri, May 20:	Quiz #1 Leadership Power	
Mon, May 23:	Status, Authority, & Legitimacy Leadership & Stratification	Sternheimer Chs. 6
Tue, May 24:	Leadership & Race Leadership & Gender	Sternheimer Chs. 7&8
Wed, May 25:	Leadership & White Collar Crime Leadership & Organized Crime	Sternheimer Ch. 9
Thu, May 26:	Leadership & Education (Harvey Perlman guest) Leadership & Social Institutions	
Fri, May 27:	Quiz #2 The Smartest Guys in the Room	
Mon, May 30:	Memorial Day (No Class)	
Tue, June 1:	Leadership Development Effective Leadership	Northouse Ch, 6&7&11
Wed, June 2:	Leadership and Sport (Shawn Eichorst guest) Presentations	
Thu, June 3:	Your Leadership Presentations	Northouse Ch. 11
Fri, June 4:	Quiz #3	