MMC5465 – Communication Leadership

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Purpose of Course:

The mass communications industry is facing leadership challenges that are unequaled in other industries. From journalism and broadcasting, to public relations and advertising, companies and their leaders are experiencing digital disruption and technological changes that have upended how communication professionals do their jobs.

For example, workers are being expected to adopt new digital communication tools at an ever-increasing pace. Employees who generate communications content can be exposed to hundreds of new tools in a year and are often expected to immediately master and use the tools deemed most worthy while also trying to determine which of these will or won't become obsolete in a matter of weeks or months.

At the same time, these content creators are expected to generate more content to keep up with the demand of their digital audiences. Because the communications industry has experienced digital upheaval and narrowing profit margins, content creators are also expected to be experts in marketing, design, SEO, and audience demographics and analytics. This has exponentially increased both the pressure to perform and the ability to lead. Content creators at all levels are expected to work above, below and across newly-restructured hierarchies and adapt to new team roles that are often not clearly defined.

This rapid change has also eroded the security in inherent in the well-defined hierarchical authority structures of the past. While workers at all levels are experiencing more decision-making latitude, they are suffering from a lack of leadership and team training, job insecurity, stress and high rates of burnout.

This course will help students prepare themselves to become leaders of these media organizations and embark on paths of personal leadership development that will guide them through this rapid industry change and the consequent pressures to perform.

The course also explores communication and the variables involved when leaders attempt to influence members to achieve a goal. Topics include power, credibility, motivation, research on leader traits, styles, and situations, and current theories and models of leadership such as trait theory, behavior theory, the SLII model, the situational approach and authentic leadership. The different leadership challenges posed by community and institutional settings will also be explored. All of these variables will be discussed and assessed in relationship to the digital communications industry.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to explain trait theory and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as assess an individual's leadership traits.
- Students will be able to explain the skills model and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as evaluate an individual's skills and deficiencies using the skills model.
- Students will be able to explain the principles of behavior theory and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as evaluate a leader's skills by using behavior theory
- Students will be able to explain the SLII® model and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as determine the appropriate style for a leader using the SLII® model.
- Students will be able to explain the situational approach and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as recognize some of the complexities and limitations of the approach.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of authentic leadership and be able to apply its main concepts to a leader.
- Students will be able to explain servant leader behavior and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as evaluate a leader's skills based on the servant leader approach and understand some of the strengths of being a servant leader.
- Students will be able to explain adaptive leadership and its strengths and weaknesses, as well as analyze whether a leader's behavior comports with effective adaptive leadership behavior.
- Students will be able to understand what a holding environment is and see how the wrong holding environment diminishes potential for adaptive change.

- Students will be able to professionally negotiate for a salary increase.
- Students will be understand the importance of happiness in the workplace and how to create a happy work environment for employees.
- Students will understand the importance of body language and how to apply it effectively.
- Students will understand the concept of Emotional intelligence and be able to evaluate themselves based on Goleman's criteria.
- Students will learn the importance of creativity in the workplace and how they can develop their own creativity and that of their colleagues and subordinates.
- Students will learn the art of brainstorming and how to apply it successfully in the workplace.
- Students will learn the SCAMPER technique and how to apply it.
- Students will learn about the "Crucibles of Leadership" and how to identify their own crucibles.
- Students will learn how to develop an effective team and will apply these concepts to their final projects.
- Students will identify their motivated capabilities and learn to apply them in their work lives.
- Students will understand the concept of work-life balance and how to apply it in their lives.
- Students will learn about factors that can cause projects to fail and how to overcome those obstacles.
- Students will learn about problem employees and how to make them more effective in their jobs.
- Students will learn how to overcome media industry leadership challenges through their in-depth interviews with media leaders who will range in experience from expert to new employees in their fields.
- Students will learn how to align the company's operating model with its leadership avoid the blurred lines, power struggles and confusion that have been associated with the rapidly-evolving digital information industry.

Required Materials:

Text 1: Northouse, Peter (2015), *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th Ed. Sage Publications, Inc.
ISBN: 9781483317533
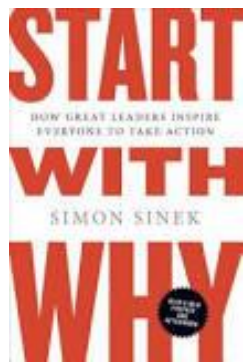
Text 2: Sinek, Simon (2012), *Start With Why,* 2nd Ed. Portfolio (Penguin Group)
ISBN-10: 1591846447
ISBN-13: 978-1591846444

Assignments and Evaluation:

Quizzes	25%	700 points total (100 per quiz)
Class Participation	10%	100 points total
Industry Leader Interviews	20%	100 points total
Midterm Project (Book Review)	15%	100 points total
Final Project	30%	100 points total

Class Participation

Students will begin the course with zero participation points. Throughout the semester, they will be credited 10 points for each question answered in class when the instructor poses questions to the class. They can also earn 10 points for contributing to a class discussion with a comment. They can also earn 20 participation points for on-time attendance throughout the semester. They can earn a maximum of 100 points.

Quiz Schedule:

Quiz 1 – Monday, September 10th
Chapter 2 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Study 2.1

Quiz 2 – Monday, September 17th
Chapter 3 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Study 3.1

Quiz 3 – Monday, September 24th
Chapter 4 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Studies 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3

Quiz 4 –Monday, October 1st
Chapter 5 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Studies 5.1 and 5.3

Quiz 5 – Monday, October 8th
Chapter 9 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Study 9.3

Quiz 6 – Monday, October 15th
Chapter 10 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Studies 10.1 and 10.3

Quiz 7 – Monday, October 22nd
Chapter 11 in Leadership: Theory and Practice
Be prepared to discuss Case Studies 11.1 and 11.2

2 Industry Leader Interviews – Due: Monday, October 1st - 50 points
2 Industry Leader Interviews – Due: Monday, October 15th - 50 points

This project requires each student to interview a total of four communications industry professionals, three of whom work in leadership roles and one who is relatively new to the industry (i.e. working in the field for less than two years.)
Students will write a 1-page assessment based about each interview that will detail the interviewee's:

- job description or job expectations
- leadership challenges surrounding employees, peers and supervisors
- obstacles to overcoming these leadership challenges
- effective solutions to these leadership challenges
- insights about digital media/technological challenges
- obstacles to overcoming these digital media/technological challenges
- effective solutions to these digital media/technological challenges
- predictions about future leadership and technological challenges that might develop as the industry continues to evolve

Midterm Project – Due: Monday, October 29th - 100 points
A book review does not only tell you what a book is about, but also whether it achieves what it is trying to do. Therefore, a book review is more than a summary of the content (even though this is an important component), but a critical analysis of the book and your reactions to it. While you are reading the book, take notes about the following issues:

What is the author's main goal in writing this book?

What are the author's main points?

What kind of evidence does the author provide to make his or her points?

How convincing is this evidence?

Is the book well written? (Easily understandable? Good style?)

Your book review must include the following components:

1) Introduction (one or two paragraphs)…a brief overview of the theme, purpose and your evaluation

2) Summary of the content (about two pages) – Brief summary of the key points of each chapter or group of chapters – Paraphrase the information, but use a short quote when appropriate

3) Evaluation and conclusion (about one page) – Give your opinion about the book. Is the book easy to read or confusing? Is the book interesting, entertaining, instructive? Does the author support his arguments well? What are the book's greatest strengths and weaknesses? Who would you recommend the book to?

<u>Final Project</u> – Due: Monday, November 26th   - 100 points
The final project requires the development of a digital communications company that serves an audience in either content marketing, journalism, public relations, or advertising. Students will design their company plan using the information and leadership skills they learn in the course and from the media professionals they interview. They will develop a team and plan, taking into account their strengths and weaknesses as a leader. They will turn in a 12-page paper detailing their organization, its structure, leadership plan and the details listed below:

The details of this project will include:

- Who it will serve and why (its benefits and goals)
- A leadership structure for the company… top-down vs. side-by side, defined vs. shared, and the rationale for the structure based on desired and perceived outcomes.

- Logistics – students will detail the management of the creation-to-completion process for the goods (content) they will create for their audience. This will include an organization calendar for content creation, content management and content publication.
- Timetable – students will detail the timeline for writing their business plan, consulting with professionals, securing permits and licenses, hiring employees and marketing the new company
- Budget
- Other Necessary Resources beyond the details listed above
- An assessment of the student's strengths and weaknesses as a leader and how that could affect the plan
- An explanation of how the student intends to overcome any weaknesses that could negatively affect the company

Weekly lecture plan

Week 1:
- Syllabus Review
- Midterm and Final Project review
- The purpose of leadership theory
- Leadership assessment quiz
- "Why 30 Is Not The New 20" – Meg Jay

Week 2:
- Trait Theory: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Employee Happiness and Productivity
- "My Preparation for Leadership" exercise

Week 3:
- The Skills Model: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Body Language: How it shapes who you are/Tips to use it effectively
- "Learning About My Leadership" exercise

Week 4:
- Behavior Theory: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Emotional Intelligence

- Students will evaluate themselves against Goleman's criteria of emotional intelligence and examine their personal challenges in becoming a leader. They will look at their leadership strengths and shortcomings and development needs.
- First two media leader interviews due next week

Week 5:
- The SLII® Model: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Salary Negotiation

Week 6:
- The Authentic Leadership Model: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- "Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe" – Simon Sinek
- "Everyday Leadership" – Drew Dudley
- Salary Negotiation Role Play Presentations
- Final two media leader interviews due next week

Week 7:
- The Servant Leadership Model: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Developing your creativity and that of your colleagues
- The art of brainstorming

Week 8:
- The Adaptive Leadership Model: Strengths, Weaknesses and Applications
- Effective team building
- "Crucibles of Leadership"
- Class discussions about lessons learned and best practices for digital media industry leaders

Week 9:
- Finding Your Motivated Capabilities
- Book Review due next week

Week 10:
- Empowering others to lead
- Living an integrated life

Week 11:
- Leadership and legacies: leading with purpose
- Final Projects due next week

Week 12:
- What causes projects to fail?
- Workplace zombies
- How to bring workplace zombies back to life

Grade Scale:

The UF grading policy can be found in the undergraduate catalog online.

	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent
A	100-93%	B	86-83%	C	76-73%	D	66-63%
A-	92-90%	B-	82-80%	C-	72-70%	D-	62-60%
B+	89-87%	C+	79-77%	D+	69-67%	E	59-0%

Attendance

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences

Attendance is mandatory. In accordance with UF's attendance policy, "absences count from the first class meeting." There are a number of acceptable reasons for absence that will not count against the students grade:
"In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.

Unexcused absences will count against the student's grade as follows: More than six unexcused missed class periods will reduce the student's final grade by one full letter grade. More than 12 unexcused class periods will reduce by two full letter grades. More than 18 unexcused missed class periods will result in course failure. Because this is a leadership course, students are expected to attend classes and engage in discussions. Much of the learning in this course is predicated upon student engagement. Those in leadership roles are expected to show up in the professional world. That is expected in this course as well.

Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
Students cannot participate in classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.
If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and he or she has not contacted the department to indicate his or her intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.
The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences."

Late attendance will be noted. After three offenses, anyone coming late (after a 5-minute grace period) loses a half-letter grade for the course. Coming in late is extremely disruptive.

Academic Integrity
University of Florida students pledge to abide by an honor code that prohibits academic dishonesty such as fabrication, plagiarism and cheating. You have an affirmative obligation to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. You also must report to appropriate personnel any condition that facilitates academic misconduct. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.
When I discover cheating, my default policy is to fail all involved for the entire course and report the details to the Dean of Students Office.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the professor when requesting accommodation.

Help With Coping

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The UF Counseling and Wellness Center is a terrific, free resource for any student who could use help managing stress or coping with life. The center, at 3190 Radio Road on campus, is open for appointments and emergency walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is also available. To make an appointment or receive after-hours assistance, call 352-392-1575. If you or a friend is in distress, you can also contact umatter@ufl.edu so the U Matter, We Care team can reach out to the student in distress. The U Matter, We Care team can also help connect students to the many other helping resources including, but not limited to Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. You will be notified by email when the evaluations are open, near the end of Summer C. Summary results are available to you and the public.

Student Complaint Process

Students who have complaints about any course can use the links below for information about filing a complaint:
Residential Course: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf
Online Course: http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process