



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**PADM-GP 2186
Leadership and Social Transformation
Fall 2022**

Instructor Information

Professor Judy Pryor-Ramirez ("Professor J")

Email: jpramirez@nyu.edu

Office hours: In-person on Tuesdays 3-5pm; Virtual by appointment via my [calendar link](#).

Course Information

Time: Wednesdays, 6:45 - 8:35pm

Location: 12 Waverly Place L120 (Washington Square Campus)

Course Prerequisites

CORE-GP 1022, Introduction to Public Policy; CORE-GP 1020, Management and Leadership; PADM-GP 2106, Community Organizing

Course Description

This course aims to engage students in a transformative learning experience that contributes to challenge, deconstruct and reconstruct their understanding of social change leadership; this, with the purpose of reflecting on the implications for enacting their own leadership, as they engage in work that addresses some aspect of social inequality and exclusion. The course draws on research insights and practical lessons from leadership in social change organizations that want to transform existing thinking, policies and structures by pursuing democratic systemic solutions to problems associated with their communities' experience of exclusion. The course is available to students in all Wagner specializations—management, policy, finance, SI3 and Advocacy—and all programs—International, PNP, Health and Urban Planning.

The course challenges a traditional—single, heroic— approach to leadership that emphasizes the “leader-follower” relationship. Instead, it is grounded on a leadership perspective that fosters a collaborative mindset, a bottom-up participatory approach and relational principles to engaging the world, namely, collective leadership. In this perspective, leadership happens as members of a group make meaning together to act towards achieving a shared purpose. The group creates the conditions to find the direction required to transform individual efforts into collective results.

Because of the emphasis on inequality, the approach highlights the contested arenas where addressing these problems is a negotiated responsibility distributed among participants with differential access to resources and power.

While the conceptual emphasis is on action at the organizational level, connections to the individual and policy levels are considered. The course aims to sensitize participants to the self in relation to others, and to the constellation of relationships, structures, processes and institutional dynamics that shape leadership and may support or derail change efforts embedded within larger systems.

Students will use frameworks –of leadership and of social change– to challenge their leader centered understanding and reflect on how to implement their own leadership as effective change agents in their spheres of influence. Depending on their professional interests, students are invited to draw on insights from social change organizations to explore other public service institutional contexts; and to assess the pitfalls and promises of engaging in social change leadership. Students will also explore the practical implications of developing collective leadership capabilities as part of their leadership repertoire.

Course Design & Pedagogy

The course combines conceptual frameworks and experiential activities to bring theory to practice and thus is divided into three domains of learning and practice: (1) Contexts for Social Transformation; (2) Leadership Tools for Social Transformation; (3) Organizational Design Considerations for Social Transformation.

The course is structured as a seminar/workshop. Classes are a mix of mini-lectures, group discussions of cases, dialogues, and guest speakers. It is, therefore, very important to prepare both readings and media content prior to class and to participate actively in the discussions. In-depth course discussions, case studies, reflective memos, in-class exercises, and team presentations will provide opportunities to apply theories, concepts, and research findings to particular situations to hone your understanding of leadership for social transformation. The written assignments require you to consolidate your insight and practice your analytical and communication skills.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course you will:

1. Recognize your own mental models and assumptions about leadership and social transformation; and use these to identify key personal strengths, gaps and strategies to develop leadership capabilities as an effective social change agent.
2. Be able to contrast a perspective of leadership (emphasizing its collective dimensions) with traditional perspectives (emphasizing its individual dimensions); and articulate the benefits and challenges of a collective perspective to produce effective social change.

3. Assess examples of leadership practices in social change organizations to see how they help individual efforts become collective achievements; and appreciate the power of leadership work that weaves individual, organizational and policy levels of action.
4. Apply insights about collective leadership for social transformation in a team project that proposes and develops a social change activity or tool to support broader organized, collective efforts to address an intractable problem associated with inequality or exclusion in a particular policy domain of their interest.
5. Articulate and share lessons drawn from the process and product of the projects by engaging in deep conversations and team work with peers who share the passion for addressing shared concerns around some aspect of social inequality.

Course Material

- Brightspace Page: <https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/206223>. You will find the course syllabus, assignments, exercises, and links to readings through the NYU library, surveys, and slides here.
- Readings: To keep costs down, I am providing you with most of the readings and case studies that copyright allows me to post in NYU Classes with the exception of one book. Please purchase the following book for the course.
 - Required text: [*The Purpose of Power*](#) by Alicia Garza

Course Schedule

Class Date	Topic	Texts & Assignments Due
9/7	Intro to Leadership for Social Transformation *RR Day	<p>Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freedom Dreams 20 Years Later by Robin D.G. Kelley (inspiration about radical imagination and freedom dreams) ● Chapter 1 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza <p>Assignment: Student online questionnaire</p>
Unit 1: Contexts for Social Transformation		
9/14	Social Transformation Conceptual Frameworks & Contested Terrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chapter 2, 3 and 4 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza ● Social Service or Social Change? By Paul Kivel in <i>The Revolution Will Not Be Funded</i> ● Not Always Movements: Multiple Approaches to Advance Social Change by Gienapp and Kalra ● Podcast: Elections vs. Movements: a strategy

		<p>showdown with Sunrise on the Healing Justice Podcast (1:02)</p> <p>Assignment: Critical Essay #1 due 9/17, 11:59pm EST</p>
9/21	Critical Histories and Contexts of Social Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza <p><u>Choose 1 of these case studies to read!</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study1: Caño Martín Peña: A Case Study in Community Action in <i>Brooklyn Rail</i> Case Study 2: North Star Report Streets to Statehouse <p>Assignment: Critical Essay #2 due at 5pm</p>
Unit 2: Leadership Tools for Social Transformation		
9/28	Leadership Frameworks for Social Transformation *RR Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 9 and 10 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza Enacting Collective Leadership in a Shared-power world by Sonia Ospina and Erica Foldy Chapter 6 in <i>Essential Capacities for Equitable Communities</i> by Susan Misra, Natalie Bamdad, and Natasha Winegar Chapter 12 in <i>Baker</i> by Barbara Ransby <p>Assignment: Critical Essay #3 due at 5pm</p>
10/5	Leadership Tool #1: Hearts & Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading at the Edge of Chaos by Blandin What Your Body Has to Do With Social Change by adrienne maree brown Bill Drath on Relational Leadership Mindset <p>Leadership Practice Facilitators: Jordan, Pati and Andy</p>
10/12	Leadership Tool #2: Storytelling & Narrative Change Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Sisters Story Webinar on Narrative Change (1 hour) Butterfly Lab Report 2022 (pages 4 - 26) Optional: Field Guide: Narrative Research Methodologies by Narrative Initiative Optional: Opportunity Agenda Communications Toolkit, pages 15-26 <p>Leadership Practice Facilitators: Jacqueline, Jahmair and Lars</p>

10/19	Leadership Tool #3: Facilitation & Mediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting Facilitation Guide by Seeds of Change ● Conflict and Movements for Social Change: The Politics of Mediation and the Mediation of Politics ● Conflict Booklet by Seeds of Change (read pages 31-37 only) <p>Leadership Practice Facilitators: Sunit</p>
10/26	Leadership Tool #4: Community-based Participatory Action Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listening to those who matter most SSIR article ● Resident experts: The potential of critical Participatory Action Research to inform public housing research and practice by Thurber, et. al. ● Podcast: Qualitative Research Summer Institute about CBPAR ● Optional: CBPAR Toolkit by NIN at Drew University <p>Leadership Practice Facilitators: Sahril, Megan and Hannah</p>
11/2	Topic: Leadership Tool #5: Radical Rest & Respite **RR Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invest in Rest by Kemi Ilesanmi (Wagner EMPA '12) ● "Unspoken Complexity on Self-Care" by Deanna Zandt ● Podcast: The Perfect Nap with Tricia Hersey of The Nap Ministry ● Optional: Trauma Stewardship Infographic <p>Leadership Practice Facilitators: Devan, Niya and Fatema</p>

Unit 3: Organizational Elements for Social Transformation

11/9	Org Shapes & Structures: Networks, Collective Impact, Cross-Sector Partnerships and Worker Cooperatives, Oh My!	<p>Required reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freeman, Jo. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness" in WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly, 41. 10, 1970. ● Shared Leadership by Allison, Misra, and Perry <p>Choose 1 of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership and Networks by LLC ● Collective Impact report ● City Community Partnerships Toolkit (cross-sector partnerships)
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Podcast Episode: Worker Coopers for Systems Change <p>Assignment: Team Launch Document</p>
11/16	Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Power Analysis - Petit ● Chapter 2 in Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership - Lakey, Lakey, Napier and Robinson ● From Constitutentes to Ownership ● Optional: Chapters 11, 14, 16, and 18 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza <p>In-Class Exercise: 1:1 Consultation w/Prof. J.</p>
11/30	People & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awake to Woke: Building a Race Equity Culture ● NPQ article Into the Fire: Lessons from Movement Conflicts ● Leading Systems Change pg. 3-50 ● Optional: Chapters 12, 13, 15 and 17 in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza <p>In-Class Excercise: Peer Feedback Loop</p>
12/7	Funding **RR Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction in <i>The Revolution Will Not Be Funded by INCITE</i> ● Introduction in <i>Decolonizing Wealth</i> by Edgar Villanueva ● Influence for Good (pg. 2-40 only) by Ashoka, McKinsey, Echoing Green, Generation Pledge, and Catalyst 2030 ● It's Time To Stop Coddling Our Donors: How Radical Transparency Makes Us Stronger by Yolie Contreras (CCF Blog)
12/14	Connecting the Dots: Final Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Epilogue in <i>The Purpose of Power</i> by Alicia Garza ● Podcast episode: On Being with Krista Tippett and adrienne maree brown ● Optional: Organizations that Embrace Interdependence in <i>Tikkun</i> by Jennifer Rau and Jerry Koch-Gonzalez <p>In-Class: Final Presentations</p>
12/21	Finals Week - no class	Final Reflection Essay due to Brightspace by 11:55pm EDT

Major Assignments and Deadlines

This syllabus is subject to change with notice Page 6 of 10

There are (4) major assignments in this course: Essays, Leadership Toolkit Practice, and the Final Team Project. All readings, assignments, case studies, and preparation for class must be completed before the start of class as noted in the above schedule. Below you will find descriptions of the major kinds of assignments and their deadlines. Further detail about these assignments can be found on Brightspace in the Assignments Tab.

Critical Essays

In order to think more deeply about the grounding concepts of social transformation, you will write three Critical Essays to deepen your understanding. You will explore what the texts mean in the context of social transformation and how the texts help or not help you understand the broader aims of this course toward leadership and social transformation. Document requirements:

- 1-2 pages in length
- single-spaced
- 12-inch font (Arial, Times, Calibri accepted)
- 1-inch margins

Due Dates: These essays will be due to Brightspace

- Critical Essay #1 - 9/17 11:59pm EST
- Critical Essay #2 - 9/21 5pm EST
- Critical Essay #3 - 9/28 5pm EST

For more information, see Brightspace or this [assignment sheet](#).

Leadership Skill Practice (Due in class; due dates vary, see Brightspace)

In order to develop our leadership skills for social transformation work, we must practice it even if we don't get it right. In pairs, you will design an experience for the class to practice one of the leadership skills for social transformation as outlined in Unit 2 of the syllabus. As you prepare, be sure to find ways to attain equitable participation from class members. Your job is not to lecture, but instead facilitate an experience in which all class members can participate and come to a fuller understanding of the leadership practice for the week. For more information, see Brightspace or this [assignment sheet](#).

Strategic Consulting Memo + Presentation (Due Date: 12/14/22, in-class)

Students will form teams of 3 to complete the final project. Students will pretend to be management and strategy consultants. You will be provided a list of social transformation initiatives/organizations to consider as your "client". In your memo, you must:

- Provide background information about the initiative/organization, including a description of its structure, shape, and governance model
- Describe its organizational mission, vision, values, and program offerings
- Identify the policy or social issue(s) they address and the system of power it addresses
- Analyze and critique the extent to which their work is operating to address systemic or social transformation

- Analyze their narrative strategy by examining the stories they tell about themselves and their community based on their website, annual reports, social media accounts, events, and media/news pieces.
- Make final 4-6 recommendations to your client about potential organizational structures and/or leadership strategies or tools they might want to use to enhance their work to address social transformation.

Your team must write and submit a 5-page memo and create a slide deck due on the last day of class. Your team will have 10-12 minutes to present your organization and the strategic recommendations. For more information, see Brightspace or this [assignment sheet](#).

Final Reflection Essay (Due Date: 12/21/22 by 11:55pm EDT)

Reflect on the course keywords/phrases — social transformation, systems change, community liberatory leadership, systems thinking, narrative change strategy, organizational shape, organizational shape, and power. Then write a 2-page paper double-spaced based on the following prompts:

- What did you first think when you were exposed to these terms? What do you think of these terms now?
- In what ways has your perspective shifted (or not) based on our course readings, guest lectures, documentaries, teaching & learning sessions, and/or course projects? Write what you recall in sequence and include your confusions as well as your emergent understandings.
- Finally, conclude with what you will take with you as you move forward in your academic and professional career at Wagner and beyond.

Grading Elements	Percent of Final Grade
Weekly active in-class participation (Individual)	15%
Three Critical Essays (Individual)	15%
Leadership Skill Practice (Pairs)	20%
Strategic Consulting Memo + Presentation (Team)	30%
Final Reflection Essay (Individual)	20%

In-Class Participation

Each of us brings different and relevant experiences to the classroom, so we will be learning from each other, challenging our assumptions, and trying to understand the reasoning that underlies our colleagues' behavior. The only way to conduct a sharp case analysis and contribute insightful comments is to read the cases and articles carefully and complete the exercises, reflecting on how they inform situations you have experienced.

Statement of Academic Integrity

All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If you are unsure about what is expected and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

Prof. J's Classroom Policies

- *Attendance and Punctuality:* You are expected to attend all class sessions and arrive to class on time. Please email me if they will miss class and it is the responsibility of the student to make up all work if absent from class. If more than three or more unexcused absences, your final grade will be negatively reflected in your participation grade. For prolonged absences, the student must notify me, your academic advisor and/or The Dean's Office.
- *Changes to readings/assignments:* This syllabus is subject to change. Pre-assigned readings may be adjusted and occasionally supplemental reading or small exercises may be added throughout the course to enhance learning. If this is the case, I will update the assignments or make adjustments on Brightspace at least one week before the due date. My goal is to notify you with plenty of time for anything that might affect your schedule and workload.
- *Late assignments:* Please request permission from me at least 48 hours in advance of the due date if you expect your assignment to be late. Late assignments without prior notification will result in a Zero grade or F. If more than three or more assignments are late in the course without prior notification, your final grade will be negatively affected. Approved extenuating circumstances do not apply in this case.
- *Revise & Resubmit:* Towards the goal of continuous improvement, I welcome revised and re-submitted assignments for re-evaluation. This must be arranged with me in advance with a new deadline. Late assignments are not eligible for "revise and resubmit" consideration.
- *Eating & Drinking:* Eating and drinking are permitted as long as your meal does not interfere with teaching and learning (i.e., loud eating sounds and packaging, etc.)
- *Tech in Class:* Cell phones, smartphones/smart devices, tablets, and laptops should not be used during class unless otherwise specified.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please email me at least one week prior to the next class if you should be absent for a religious holiday.

Wagner Writing Center

The Wagner Writing Center offers writing support through tutors, workshops, and a writing series. Visit them at: <https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/advancement/writing-center#>

NYU Writing Center

NYU's general writing support center is a place where one-on-one teaching and learning occurs, and where the work always focuses on writing. Experienced consultants assist NYU students, faculty, and staff with their work at any stage in the writing process. They work with individuals on essays, lab reports, personal statements, poems, stories, and other written texts. Writers may schedule one appointment per week, up to two weeks ahead of time, using their online scheduling system. Appointments normally are 45 minutes in length. The Writing Center is located at 411 Lafayette, 3rd floor. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please go to NYU Writing Center's website: <https://www.nyu.edu/students/academic-services/writing-center.html>

Library Resources

There are comprehensive resources to complete assignments on the NYU Libraries website. Visit the public and nonprofit management research guide page: https://guides.nyu.edu/subject_nonprofit

If you are unclear about how to properly attribute research or ideas you are using in your work, please consult the visit the [NYU Libraries Citation Style Guide](#) or [Ask a librarian](#). For this class, any citation style is acceptable as long as you are consistent. As an example, Harvard Business School has a comprehensive [guide to Chicago Style](#). Also commonly used in the public service field is the [APA style](#).

Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

I want everyone to do their best work in this course and reach their goals. If you need formal accommodations, please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#), call 212-998-4980, or email mosescsd@nyu.edu for information. If you do not need formal accommodations but have learning needs I should know about, please let me know.

Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of truth and equity, it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the sacred homelands of the Lenape people, who are the original stewards of this land. We honor and pay respect to their ancestor's past and present, as well as to future generations and we recognize their continuing presence in their homelands. We understand that our acknowledgment requires those of us who are settlers to recognize our own place in and responsibilities towards addressing inequity and that this ongoing and challenging work requires that we commit to real engagement with the Lenape people to build an inclusive and equitable space for all. (*Adapted from Bard College*)

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

In this class, we seek to materialize our commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion through dialogue and rigorous study. We strive to create a learning environment that upholds values that meaningfully include the voices, works, and ideas of communities and cultures historically and systematically excluded from higher education. In this class, we will aim to work on the four levels of oppression (ideological, institutional, interpersonal and individual) to address the implicit and explicit ways racism, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and religious oppression among others impact the learning process.

As your professor, I am committed to fostering and maintaining an inclusive community in which all gender identities and expressions are valued and validated. To create a gender-inclusive environment for faculty, students, and visitors, I encourage all members of the class to indicate the pronouns they use for themselves, if desired, in class and in electronic communications, and in other settings, and I will encourage and enforce the respect of pronoun usage. (*Adapted from Bard College*)

“When everyone in the classroom, teacher and students, recognizes that they are responsible for creating a learning community together, learning is at its most meaningful and useful.”
– bell hooks, Ph.D. (1952-2021)