Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service
New York University

Fall 2015
Leadership and Social Transformation, PADM-GP 2186-001

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Teaching Assistant: Cristian Carreño, cristian.carreno@nyu.edu
Class: Tuesday, 6:45 – 8:45 pm
Office Hours: Ospina: Wednesdays, 3:30–5:30 pm and by appointment

Course Description

In this course we explore collective leadership as a tool for advancing social change in the context of democratic governance. Students use frameworks to reflect on their own leadership potential and capabilities as effective change agents. The course is available to students in all Wagner specializations—management, policy and finance—and programs—International, PNP, Health and Urban Planning.

Traditional approaches to leadership define it in reference to single heroic individuals who influence followers. The course introduces a new perspective, more consistent with the demands of today’s complex problems—collective leadership, which fosters a collaborative mindset. In this view, leadership happens as members of a group produce collective achievements towards making real a shared vision. This requires awareness of the constellation of relationships, structures, processes and institutional dynamics within the larger system. It is these where individuals are embedded, and where leadership emerges to create the conditions for members in a group to find the direction, commitment and alignment needed to transform their individual efforts into collective achievements.

The course explores the role of leadership in organizational efforts aimed at changing thinking, systems, and policies, as participants search for inclusive, transparent and democratic solutions to today's intractable social problems. This approach takes into consideration the contested arenas where the responsibility to address these problems is negotiated and distributed among social actors with differential access to resources and power. The primary focus is on the organizational level of action, but connections to the individual and policy levels are also considered.

Using real examples from the US and around the world, the course is firmly anchored on frameworks and key concepts around the constructs of leadership and systemic social change. Students will also explore the practical implications of developing collective leadership capabilities in their leadership repertoire and assess the pitfalls and promises of enacting this type of leadership in public service institutional contexts. However, those searching for a hands-on, experiential, leadership development personal experience are urged to consider other leadership courses aimed at directly practicing leadership skills and competencies.
Course objectives and requirements

By the end of the course:

1. You will recognize your own mental models and assumptions about leadership and social transformation; and, having clarified their implications for practice, you will identify key personal strengths, gaps and strategies to develop leadership capabilities as an effective social change agent.

2. You will be able to articulate how a new perspective of leadership (emphasizing its collective dimensions) contrasts with more traditional perspectives (emphasizing its individual dimensions); and you will clarify the contributing benefits and challenges of this perspective to produce effective social change.

3. You will identify examples of the leadership practices that help individual efforts become collective achievements in organizations committed to social change; and you will appreciate the power of leadership work that weaves individual, organizational and policy levels of action.

4. You will have explored one organization (and will be exposed to others through your team work) that addresses a public problem in a particular policy arena of your choice; you will assess its approach—and use of leadership practices—toward advancing social transformation.

5. You will have engaged in teamwork with a small group of peers who share the passion for a similar policy problem, to develop a joint understanding of the practice of collective leadership through sharing insights from the study of your organizations of choice.

Course requirements and expectations

The course is structured as a seminar. Classes are a mix of brief lectures, case studies and exemplars, in-depth discussion based on readings and written assignments, and a few guest speakers. It is, therefore, very important to prepare the reading assignments prior to class and to participate actively in the discussions. Reading guides for each session highlight key concepts and ideas for class discussion.

All required readings (journal articles, case studies/applications, links for required review and suggested readings) are available electronically via NYU’s and Wagner’s online electronic services per NYU student library privileges.

You will be graded based on:

- Your class participation, grounded on the readings;
• Three sets of journal entries where you discuss your reactions to the readings of two classes each;
• An individual mid-term report where you reflect on your capabilities (personal reflection);
• A brief team memo describing the team’s fieldwork plan;
• A final team report of what you learned about collective leadership from the project.

Assignments build cumulatively. Please refer to your NYU Classes separate tab called ASSIGNMENTS. You will find there the complete instructions, expectations and grading criteria for each assignment. It is your responsibility to study these documents as part of your preparation for the course.

Summary of assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT?</th>
<th>CREDIT</th>
<th>WHEN?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Through-out the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal entries</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8 points x 3 entries (6 classes), due 09-22, 10-06 and 12-01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual mid-term report</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Friday October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Memo</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Friday November 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team final report</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Tuesday December 22</td>
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Absenteeism, punctuality, and in-class conduct

You are expected to attend all classes, and arrive on time. If you miss a class due to unavoidable circumstances, please send a message in advance and contact another member of the class to get what was covered in class. Missing more than two classes without excuse will affect your class participation grade. Systematic tardiness, disruptive behavior (including unrelated side conversations, use of cell phone or computer for information withdrawal that is not related to class) is unacceptable and will also negatively impact your grade.
Overview of Course Contents

I. New vistas on Leadership: from individual to collective

1. Introduction: exploring our assumptions (September 8)
2. From leaders to leadership: implications of new thinking (September 15)

II. Collective Leadership And Systemic Change

3. Systems thinking, leadership and social transformation (September 22)
   - First set of journal entries for classes 2 & 3, due on Sept 22
4. The nature of social change and the work of leadership (September 29)
5. Developing collective leadership for social transformation (October 6)
   - Second set of journal entries for classes 4 & 5, due on October 6

   October 13 – no class
   (NYU legislative day, classes meet according to Monday schedule)

III. Social change leadership: from individual efforts to collective achievements

6. The social change leadership framework (October 20)
   - Individual midterm report due on Friday October 23
7. Mechanisms and leadership practices 1: Reframing discourse (October 27)
8. Mechanisms and leadership practices 2: Bridging difference (November 3)
9. A parenthesis: preparing for fieldwork (November 10)
10. Mechanisms and leadership practices 3: Unleashing human energies (November 17)
    - Team Memo: Plan for fieldwork due on Friday November 20

IV. Exploring collective leadership tools, strategies and insights

11. Fostering a collective leadership culture through organizational change (November 24)
12. Hosting: a practical tool to develop collective leadership (December 1)
    - Third set of journal entries for classes 11 & 12 due on Tuesday December 1
13. Class crowdsourcing exercise: sharing learning from your research (December 8)
14. Conclusion: new directions in collective leadership and social transformation
    (December 15)
    - Final team report due on Tuesday, December 22, in lieu of final exam
Schedule of Assignments

I. New vistas on Leadership: from individual to collective

1. Introduction: exploring our assumptions (September 8)

   - Watch the following video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA8z7f7a2Pk&feature=related (3 minutes)


   - Watch: http://www.ted.com/talks/linda_hill_how_to_manage_for_collective_creativity (17:16 minutes)

   - Case example:

     o Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsg65PnymnE for further background (5:32 minutes)

   Suggested:

   - If you are really curious about the case example, you can also read

2. From leaders to leadership: implications of new thinking (September 15)

   - Overview of leadership theories:

• Key ideas grounding the notion of collective leadership:


  o Watch: Heifetz on adaptive leadership (link is too long, go to NYU Classes)


• Case example:


Suggested:

• If you are really curious about the theoretical assumptions of the DAC model, you can also read


• If you are really curious about other collective approaches, you can also read
II. Collective Leadership And Systemic Change

3. Systems thinking, leadership and social transformation (September 22)

Due today: First set of journal entries for classes 2 & 3


- Case examples:
  - From: Wheatley, Margaret and Deborah Frieze. 2011. Walk out, walk on: A learning journey into communities daring to live the future now. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc: Please read:
    - “Our invitation for how to read this book”, pp. xiv-xvii (you will need this brief intro to understand the “tone” of the chapter below; you might want to open the book from the beginning as it has a very beautiful outlook and design).
    - “Joubert Park: South Africa: From Problem to Place”, pp. 75-100.

Suggested:

- If you are really curious about systems theory applications for social interventions, you can also read
4. The nature of social change and the work of leadership (September 29)

In addition to the readings below, please spend no more than an hour conducting an image search on Google Image or Flikr for words that convey the idea of "social change," (e.g. "social change", "social transformation", "social justice," "social movements," etc) and choose ONE image that most meaningfully illustrates for you, what social change looks like. Print the image and bring it to class. Come prepared to discuss why you chose it and how it links to the class readings

[If interested, please find the tool that inspired this assignment in this link:]
http://www.buildingmovement.org/our_tools/detail/what_does_social_change_look_like


- Read these two and view video together:
  - Watch: http://cafeimpact.com/how-to-have-a-huge-impact/ (2:32 minutes)

- Case examples:
  - Electronic Hallway: “Preventing Homelessness and Creating Lasting Solutions through Housing Development, Service Provision and Advocacy: Staying the Course for the Right Cause. The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless” (8 pages)
Kivel, P. 2007. “Social service or social change?” In INCITE (ed). The Revolution will not be funded: Beyond the Nonprofit Industrial Complex. (pp. 129-149).

Suggested:

- If you are really curious about a social science view on change, you can also read

- If you are really curious about how to bring a social change orientation to a social service organization, you can also read
  - “Social Service and Social Change: A Process Guide” New York: Building Movement Project, 2006 [You will find many more resources on how to move from social service to social change here]: http://www.buildingmovement.org/blog/entry/140?news/entry/140

5. Developing collective leadership for social transformation (October 6)

Due today: Second set of journal entries for classes 4 & 5

This class will have two core activities, a panel of practitioners and a case study:

First hour: Panel of practitioners to explore what leadership development looks like today, from a practitioner perspective, and to distill the underlying assumptions about leadership that frame and shape the existing practices.


Second hour: Case study for class discussion. Please study in detail the following case (read both Part A and B and be prepared to engage in discussion about what Claudia should do next).


Suggested:
• If you are really curious about investments in leadership development today, you can also read

• If you are really curious about an example of specific activities for intergenerational youth leadership development for social change today, you can also read

October 13 – no class
(NYU legislative day, classes meet according to Monday schedule)

III. Social change leadership: from individual efforts to collective achievements

6. The social change leadership framework (October 20)


• Case examples:
  o Choose one of the following and be prepared to discuss at least two examples of developing constituents/recipients from the chosen reading:
    • Minieri et al, 2005, “From Constituents to Stakeholders”, Research Center for Leadership in Action, NYU/Wagner.
    • Building Movement Project. 2013. Developing the Leadership of Recipients. A Series of 5% Shifts. New York: BMP. Downloaded from
Suggested:

- If you are really curious about the multiple forms of power, you can also read

- If you are really curious about stakeholder engagement in the context of philanthropy, you can also read

**ATTENTION: Individual midterm report due on Friday October 23**

7. **Mechanisms and leadership practices 1: Reframing discourse (October 27)**


- Case examples:
8. Mechanisms and leadership practices 2: Bridging difference (November 3)


- Case examples:

Suggested:

- If you are really curious about inter-organizational collaboration, you can also read
9. A parenthesis: preparing for fieldwork (November 10)

Team work with feedback: Stepping back to prepare/share fieldwork observations, questionnaires and team memo.

**Assignment:** Come prepared with draft questions and observation protocol to discuss with team members. By now you should have confirmed appointments for interviews between November 18 and December 4.

10. Mechanisms and leadership practices 3: Unleashing human energies (November 17)


- Case examples:
  - Electronic Hallway: Center for Young Women’s Development: How Young Women Ex-Offenders are Transforming Themselves. A leadership story from the LCW Program Research and Documentation Component, RCLA, NYU/Wagner.
    - “Septima Clark: Learning to support the growth of others,” Pp. 72-81 at the end of the Chapter “Learning to support the growth of others”
    - Kuzunda Learning Village, Simbabwe: From efficiency to resilience, pp. 103-128.
Suggested:

- If you are really curious about applications to a more traditional health care setting, you can also read
  

- If you are really curious about the theory of popular education and/or practical guidance to implement trainings based on the popular education approach, you can also read
  
  

ATTENTION: Team Memo: Plan for fieldwork due on Friday November 20, send electronically to Shannon Deere Shannon.deere@nyu.edu by noon.

IV. Exploring collective leadership tools, strategies and insights

11. Fostering a collective leadership culture through organizational change (November 24)

These are all case examples of different ways to foster collective leadership in practice; we will focus on distilling the work of leadership in the context of the story told:

- Choose and read one of the following and be prepared to describe and discuss in class the organization and its actions for social change:
  
Case examples:

- The Electronic Hallway: Keeping industrial polluters out of Austin's Latino and African American Communities. PODER


Suggested:

- If you are really curious about how organizational structure can be designed to promote collective leadership you can also read


12. Hosting: a practical tool to develop collective leadership (December 1)

Due today: Third set of journal entries for classes 11 & 12 due on Tuesday December


- Check: [http://www.artofhosting.org/home/](http://www.artofhosting.org/home/) (art of hosting webpage)

- Please view the following short movies:
  - [https://vimeo.com/channels/393360](https://vimeo.com/channels/393360) (world café, 3:38 minutes)
  - [https://vimeo.com/channels/393360](https://vimeo.com/channels/393360) (four fold practice, 5:05 minutes)

- Case examples:

Suggested:

- If you are really curious about the Art of Hosting, you can also read

13. Class crowdsourcing exercise: sharing learning from your research (December 8)

Drawing from your research outside of class (including your interviews), we will use a ‘crowdsourcing’ exercise to develop collective insights in the classroom.


- To prepare, use further instructions in “Crowdsourcing preparation guide” in NYUClasses

14. Conclusion: New directions in collective leadership and social transformation (December 15)


- Please choose and read ONLY the material in one of the following clusters. Be prepared to describe and discuss in class (the links are also in NYUClasses):

  - Cluster 1: Leadership & racial justice: seeing race (and ethnicity) as a leadership resource
- Leadership Learning Community. 2010. Leadership and Race: How to support and develop leadership that contributes to racial justice. Oakland.

- **Cluster 2: Leading change through networks**
  
  
  - Click, read intro and listen to RE-Amp Network, Explained [http://www.reamp.org/](http://www.reamp.org/) (3:28 minutes) If curious or hooked (but not required) here is the full case study: [http://www.garfieldfoundation.org/resources/Monitor%20Institute%20RE-AMP%20Case%20Study.pdf](http://www.garfieldfoundation.org/resources/Monitor%20Institute%20RE-AMP%20Case%20Study.pdf)

- **Cluster 3: Leadership & transformative change: linking the personal and the political through spirituality**
  
  - Watch: [http://transformativechange.org/what-is-transformative-change/](http://transformativechange.org/what-is-transformative-change/) (4:39 minutes)
  

**ATTENTION:** Final team report due on Tuesday, December 22, in lieu of final exam