

Leadership Effectiveness for Professionals in Agricultural Organizations

AEE 3014, Fall 2008

Dr. Eric Kaufman, Virginia Tech

Course Description*

This course is intended to assist students in identifying and defining leadership on a personal level. Students will learn through reading, observing, applying, creating, and evaluating leadership.

Course Instructor

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Class Meetings

Tuesdays, 9:05 – 11:55 AM
280 Litton Reaves

Course Materials

Required Text:

- Clifton, D. O., Anderson, E. C., Schreiner, L. A. (2006). *StrengthsQuest: Discover and develop your strengths in academics, career, and beyond* (2nd ed.). New York: Gallup Press. (ISBN: 1595620117) **THE STRENGTHSQUEST BOOK MUST BE A NEW BOOK.**
- Neck, C. P., & Manz, C. C. (2006). *Mastering self-leadership: Empowering yourself for personal excellence* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (ISBN: 0132213443)

Other Required Materials/Resources:

- Select readings from scholarly journals. (These will be shared on Blackboard.)

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Define leadership in the context of agriculture
2. Identify, discuss, and apply leadership theory in relation to personal practice
3. Identify leadership traits and leadership styles in self and others
4. Identify, define and develop personal vision, mission, and goals
5. *Lead by example*

Special Needs

If you are a student with special needs or circumstances, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Honor Code

The Virginia Tech Honor Code (<http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/>) will be followed and enforced in this class. Violations of the Honor Code include: copying another's work, cheating on exams or quizzes, and plagiarism of another's work, whether another student's or something found online.

* The syllabus is a guide for the course, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes in assignments and expectations will be announced during class and on Blackboard.

Course Assignments and Expectations

1. Readiness Assurance Tests

The first in-class activity in each instructional unit is the Readiness Assurance Test (RAT) over the set of assigned readings for that unit. The RATs will typically consist of short true-false or multiple choice questions that assess awareness and understanding of the key concepts from the readings. Each RAT will first be taken individually and then as a team. The individual test will be submitted for scoring prior to starting the team test. During the team test, group members must reach agreement on each question. The discussion required to choose a team answer serves both as an excellent review of readings and provides the opportunity for peer teaching.

2. Case Study Reflections

During the semester, we will engage in several case studies in agricultural leadership. The case studies will require you to consider options and make appropriate choices and/or recommendations. In most cases, your participation and reflection on these case studies will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

3. Leadership Philosophy Paper

You will prepare a final paper (of about 1500 words) to discuss the fundamental and powerful concepts of leadership derived from the course. This paper will serve as your final exam for the course. The paper should include a well developed definition of leadership (10%), your philosophical approach to leadership with key components articulated (30%), discussion of class readings and resources that support or contradict your personal philosophy (30%), and discussion of your personal/professional experiences that have influenced your leadership philosophy (30%).

4. Learning Matrix

Over the course of the semester, your team will construct a matrix of leadership concepts and theories that are derived from guest speakers, readings, and activities in this course. Your team will design this matrix and determine its specific content. Weekly entries in the matrix should identify the reference or source of the information. The matrix should be maintained in a wiki format (such as *Google Docs*) so that all team members can easily contribute and have access to the most up-to-date version. The wiki will also make it easy to recognize and evaluate contributions from individual team members. This team document will be an extremely important resource when preparing your leadership philosophy! In order for the matrix to be most useful, it should be kept to 30 pages or less in length. When the matrix is evaluated, all team members will receive the same score.

5. Service-Learning Project

Your team will select an organization, group, or “cause” for which you can apply the leadership concepts and skills learned in this class to improve a real situation in a particular community. You will be responsible for identifying a need (with the assistance of the organization), developing alternative solutions to meet the need, selecting an alternative to implement, implementing the solution, evaluating the results of the activity, and making recommendations for future endeavors related to the situation you addressed. This is intended to be a **real** activity that addresses a **real** need. THIS COURSE REQUIREMENT WILL TAKE A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AND EFFORT TO COMPLETE. Your team will prepare a final report (oral and written) that discusses the planning process, the activity itself, and an evaluation of the activity (with recommendations for improvement). The oral report will be limited to 15 minutes, and the written report will be limited to 1500 words. The assignment will be evaluated using the following criteria: need identification and planning (15%), project implementation (20%), project evaluation (25%), awareness and application of related leadership concepts and theories (40%). All team members will receive the same score.

6. Case Study Project

You will work with your team to develop a case study in agricultural leadership. Example case studies in agricultural leadership will be presented during the first few weeks of the semester. Your case study will be presented to the class sometime during weeks 10-13. In addition to the oral presentation of the case study, your team will prepare a written submission with teaching notes. The written submission should include a narrative that describes the situation, questions that can guide student discussion, and teaching notes that explain the connection between the case study, possible question responses, and at least two leadership concepts discussed in this class. The case study should be written in a wiki format (such as Google Docs), so that progress and contributions of each team member can be easily recognized and evaluated. Although case study narratives can be in many different formats and lengths the target for this class should be about 500 words, keeping it short enough for participants to read the narrative within a few minutes and turn rather quickly to discussion of the questions. The teaching notes would likely add another 1000 words to the written submission of the case study project. More information about writing good case studies will be provided on the course Website. When the project is evaluated, team members will receive the same score.

Overall Grade Criteria & Weights

Scores in three major performance areas will determine the grades in this class: **Individual Performance**, **Team Performance**, and **Team Contribution**. The percentage of the final course grade that will be determined by each performance area will be determined through class discussion during the first class meeting.

Grade Weights:	Grade Wts. & Percentages	
	% within area	% of total
1. Individual Performance		___%
a. Individual Readiness Assurance Tests	___%	
b. Case Study Reflections	___%	
c. Leadership Philosophy Paper	___%	
	100%	
2. Team Performance		___%
a. Team Readiness Assurance Tests	___%	
b. Case Study Project	___%	
c. Learning Matrix	___%	
d. Service-Learning Project	___%	
	100%	
3. Team Contribution (Evaluated by Peers)		___%
Total		100%

Setting Grade Weights

The percentage of the final course grade that will be determined by each performance area will be determined through class discussion during the first class meeting. The procedure will be as follows:

- 1) Teams set preliminary weights in each area and select a member to meet with other team representatives.
- 2) Team representatives will meet in the center of the room and develop a **consensus** (i.e. each representative has to be in agreement) about the grade weights for the class as a whole.
- 3) The only limitations on your grade weight decisions will be that a minimum of 10% must be assigned to each performance area.

Evaluating Team Contribution

At the end of the semester, each individual will anonymously rate the helpfulness of all the **other** members of their team. Individual Team Contribution scores will be the average of the points they receive from the members of their team. The criteria for rating will include the following:

- Team Player (Cooperation): Knows when to be a leader and a follower; keeps an open mind; compromises when appropriate; can take criticism; respects others.
- Helps Group Excel: Expresses great interest in group success by evaluating ideas and suggestions; initiates problem solving; influences and encourages other to set high standards; doesn't accept just any idea but looks for the best ideas; stays motivated from beginning to end of projects.
- Participation & Communication: Articulates ideas effectively when speaking or writing; submits papers without grammatical errors; listens to others; encourages others to talk; persuasive when appropriate.
- Preparation: Prepared for class/team meetings; has read course material and understands the issues and subject matter; completes team assignments on time; attends and is on time for class/team meetings.

Determination of Final Grades

The final grades will be determined for each student as follows: 1) a percentage score total will be computed in each performance, 2) the student's total score will be computed by multiplying the percentage score in each area by the grade "weight" set by the class, 3) the resulting percentages in each major performance area will be added and reported as a letter grade, based on the following scale:

A	90% - 100%	B	80% - 85%
B+	86% - 89%	C	70% - 75%
C+	76% - 79%	D	60% - 65%
D+	66% - 69%		
F	Below 60%		

Course Outline

Week 2 – Leadership Framing

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapter 1
- Report: *Everyday Leadership*
- Article: Allen, Ricketts, & Priest (2007)

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 1
- Ag Leadership Case Study

Out-of-Class Assignments:

- *Clifton StrengthsFinder*

Weeks 6 & 7 – Locus of Control

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapters 2-4
- Article: Berle (2007)

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 3
- Ag Leadership Case Study
- Service-Learning Project Planning

Out-of-Class Assignments:

- *Keirseey Temperament Sorter*

Weeks 10 & 11 – Team Leadership & Mentoring

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapter 7
- Article: Matta & Ashkenas (2003)
- Article: Fishman (2006)
- Report: *Effective Mentoring Relationships*

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 5
- Ag Leadership Case Studies, Teams A & B

Out-of-Class Assignments:

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Week 14 – No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Weeks 3, 4, & 5 – Strengths Development

Preparation Readings:

- *StrengthsQuest* pages 1-17 & 97-101
- Report: *Developing Leadership Strengths in College*
- Article: Birkenholz & Schumacher (1994)
- Article: Hoover & Dunigan (2004)

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 2
- Service-Learning Project Planning
- Ag Leadership Case Study

Out-of-Class Assignments:

- Learning Matrix Draft 1

Weeks 8 & 9 – Psychological Worlds

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapters 5-6
- Article: Robinson, Garton, & Vaughn (2007)

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 4
- Ag Leadership Case Study
- Service-Learning Project Planning

Out-of-Class Assignments:

- Learning Matrix Draft 2

Weeks 12 & 13 – Transformational Leadership

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapter 11
- *StrengthsQuest* pages 73-94
- Report: *Transformational Leadership*
- Article: Brown (1996)

In-Class Activities:

- Readiness Assurance Test 6
- Ag Leadership Case Studies, Teams B & C

Out-of-Class Assignments:

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Weeks 15 & 16 – Pulling It All Together

Preparation Readings:

- *Self-Leadership* chapters 8-10
- *StrengthsQuest* pages 281-295

In-Class Activities:

- Service-Learning Project Presentations

Out-of-Class Assignments:

- Learning Matrix (Final)
- Leadership Philosophy Paper
- Case Study Project Paper