

**University of Delaware**  
**Leadership Program, School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy**

**LEAD 411: Topics in Leadership Dynamics: Leadership for Sustainability (3 credits)**  
**Spring, 2008**  
**T,R 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.; Gore Hall, Room 208**

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**Introduction and Course Description**

*“Everything that was is tripping over everything that is.” –Ron Heifitz*

Leadership is a process of influencing others toward a common vision. This course moves beyond the leader and process to explore the *common vision* of leadership, specifically a vision of sustainability at multiple levels. Can you as a leader envision an organization, or a world, that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations (or organizations) to meet their own needs”, as Rolf Jucker of UNESCO asserts? And, if sustainability is your vision, how do you inspire others to change their mindset and behavior?

Leadership for Sustainability (LEAD 411: Topics in Leadership Dynamics) integrates knowledge of leadership, change, and influence with the vision of nurturing a service ethic to sustainability. In simple terms, how do you as a leader best ensure future success – for you, your followers, your organization, your community, your society, and your world?

*Part I - What do I need to know to explore leadership for sustainability?*

Part I of this course focuses on building core knowledge in sustainability and the leadership theories that align with this service orientation.

*Part II - How do organizations and their leadership nurture a service ethic?*

After building their knowledge of vision-oriented leadership theories and the concept of sustainability, students will form research teams to explore a specific organization, sector, and/or sustainability issue, and the related leadership for sustainability. As part of this inquiry, students will first be informed by relevant research literature and end with an analysis, synthesis, and summary of data, from which applications and implications can be drawn.

*Part III - How do you nurture a service ethic in others?*

During the final segment of the course, students will draw on their knowledge of leadership and sustainability, as well as the data from the issues and organization they have been researching, to craft a plan to influence and inform others about sustainability. Students will continue to work in their research groups as they learn various change theories, identify a target population, and create and execute a plan for effectively influencing this population to a vision of sustainability.

**FUNDS!!** – There are limited funds available for groups to more effectively and creatively accomplish either their qualitative inquiry OR their strategic change and influence efforts. Interested groups should submit a detailed description of what they want to do, why they want to do it (what will it accomplish), and for what the money will be used. More information will be discussed in class.

## Learning Objectives

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and explain sustainability and related leadership theories and practices.
2. Analyze and evaluate an organization in terms of service, sustainability, and leadership.
3. Design, execute, and revise a strategic change plan.
4. “See” the relevant leadership and sustainability issues in an organization and its activities, effectively becoming more aware.

## Course Readings/Texts

Loeb, P. (1999). *Soul of a citizen: Living with conviction in a cynical time*. New York: St. Martin’s.

Greenleaf, R. (1991). *The servant as leader*. Indianapolis, IN: The Robert K. Greenleaf Center.

Additional readings to be distributed in class.

## Sequence of Classes, Topics and Assignments\*

Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Tuesday Feb. 12	Introduction to course and concepts Review of leadership theory and practice – overview	
2/14	Introduction to sustainability Introduction to Organizational Analysis assignment	Read: Loeb Ch. 1, 2 Bio Sheet and Footprint score
2/19	Sustainability Your “footprint” / the UD footprint Quick-Take guest: Ajay Prasad (Fuel Cell Bus)	LasT teams selected
2/21	Sustainability issues	Sustainability Issue Scavenger Hunt, Jigsaw
2/26	Sustainability issues Guest: Scott Douglass, UD Executive Vice President	LasT teams 1 and 2 present
2/28	Sustainability issues Guest: Dr. Bruck, Plant and Soils Science	Project Team selections LasT teams 3 and 4 present
3/4	Guest: DuPont Literature Review summary discussion	Issue Lit review sum Quiz 1
3/6	Introduction to Strategic Change Plan Project --Project planning and design – a PBL example Leadership for vision: Transformational Leadership and Servant-Leadership	
3/11	Leadership for Sustainability?... <i>The Inconvenient Truth</i>	
3/13	Transformational Leadership, Servant-Leadership and the analysis of inconvenient truths	Read: Greenleaf
3/18	<b>Quiz 2</b> Introduction to organizational systems and sectors Leadership and Individual change processes	Quiz 2
3/20	Issue Investigation <b>Summary Analysis Presentations</b>	Issue presentation
3/25	Issue Investigation <b>Summary Analysis Presentations</b>	
3/27	Strategic Change Plan Project Project review and discuss	Strategic Change Plan
<b>3/28-4/6</b>	<b>Spring Break – No class</b>	

4/8	Influence and Change Review/revisit Strategic Change Plan project Creating a template for assessment	
4/10	Implementation	
4/15	Implementation	
4/17	Guest: Dr. John Byrne, CEEP Director Debrief Strategic Change Plan review and discuss Contrasting views but complementary causes	
4/22	Debrief and Revise 1 Revising Strategic Change plans	Strategic Change Plan -Revised
4/24	Implementation	
4/29	Sustainability Design Challenge	
5/1	Debrief and Revise 2 To the future...Institutionalization!	Sustainability Design Challenge
5/6	Implementation, Assessment, Closure, Commitment	
5/8	Target organizations Peer roundtable/focus group	
5/13	<b>Strategic Change Plan Presentations</b> Analysis and Discussion	Final Presentations
5/15	<b>Strategic Change Plan Presentations</b> Analysis and Discussion	Final Presentations
5/20	Final Assessment, lessons, and future directions	Learning summary paper

**\*Schedule subject to change based on new information, opportunities, and/or interests of the class.**

### Assignment Overview

All assignments are due on the date noted. Assignments are complementary to class content and discussion, and build on one another throughout the semester. Further, because you are not first-year students, late assignments will not be accepted, and will receive zero (0) points even if turned in late.

### Grading Scheme or Weight Attached to Different Assessments

Assignment	Group or Individual?	Points	%	Grading Scale
Quiz 1, 2	<b>I</b>	<b>2 x 10</b>	<b>10</b>	A 186-200
Org and issue investigation Literature Summary & Analysis	<b>G</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	A- 180-185
Org and issue investigation Summary Analysis Presentation	<b>G</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	B+ 174-179
Strategic Change Plan	<b>G</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	B 166-173
Strategic Change Plan – Revised	<b>G</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	B- 160-165
Strategic Change Plan Presentation and Learning Sum	<b>G</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	C+ 154-159 C 148-153 C- 140-147
Course Contribution	<b>I</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	D+ 134-139
Extra Credit	<b>I</b>	<b>Up to 10</b>	<b>Up to 5%</b>	D 128-133 D- 120-127 F 119 and below

## **I. Organization and Issue Investigation into Sustainability Practices and Organizational Leadership**

*How do organizations and their leadership nurture a service ethic?*

### **Organizational Sustainability Investigation**

Students in groups of no more than three will identify and investigate an organization regarding either a specific issue related to sustainability or the overall picture of sustainability (economic, social, environmental) and the role of leadership. Students may investigate the organization as they like and are able – interview, observe, etc. – to get an accurate picture. You must be forthcoming with the organization about who you are and what you are doing – we will discuss this more in class. Your group’s efforts will result in two products:

**1. Relevant Literature Summary (20 pts.)** – Each group (3 students max.) will acquire, read, and summarize 6 articles related to sustainability in the sector or field of the organization of interest. Fifty percent (50%) of the articles must be RESEARCH articles (posing a research question and answering it with evidence). Each group should submit a 3-page summary giving the full reference of each article and a summary paragraph of key points for each, followed by a conclusion of the most important points across all articles.

**2. Summary Analysis Presentation (30 pts.)** – Each group will summarize and report the data from their inquiry in a brief professional presentation summarizing key findings from their investigation of the organization. Presentation must include artifacts and other evidence, interview protocols and other procedures for collecting information, and findings and recommendations based on information learned in class and in own research.

## **II. A Strategic Plan for Influencing and Changing Sustainability Conceptualizations**

*How do you nurture a service ethic in others?*

**Strategic Change Plan (20 pts.)** – Each group (up to 5 students) will submit a 2-page summary of the strategic plan for effecting change in a specific PEER organization. The “organization” must be a defined group (not just your group of friends) and cannot be the group that is this class. This plan should include the name and brief description of the organization; a full explanation of each of the components of the activities your group will undertake, and timeline (which includes who will do what by when), along with the justification of why you think those activities will be effective; and an assessment of progress design, which should include a very specific explanation of what evidence, measures, and procedures your group will use to assess whether change is occurring or not and how much.

This plan is designed to stimulate change with your peers or any of your “micro-societies” related to concepts of sustainability. A step by step strategy is required and should address your targeted area of change, your methods of human motivation strategies to be utilized to stimulate change within your targeted area, and the sources of intelligence you will be capitalizing on. Sources of intelligence can include organizational “insiders” and relevant theories on human or organizational change. The strategic plan must also include your methods for developing impact or feedback loops to analyze your targeted area’s reaction to your change initiative.

### **Strategic Change Plan - Revised (20 pts.) -**

The revised strategic plan should report on your initial efforts to effect change through peer influence, and **more importantly make specific recommendations for improvements/changes to the activities**. The second strategic plan must contain an analysis of progress and setbacks from the initial change effort. Based on this knowledge, a new strategic “re-trenching” plan must be completed. As with the first portion, a new step by step strategy is expected with the same areas addressed. Your second strategic plan is expected to be more informed and decisive in nature. As with the first effort, it will be necessary to develop a means to evaluate change impact.

**Strategic Change Plan Presentation and Learning Sum (50 pts.)** – Specific requirements created in collaboration with you, the leaders.

**Course Contribution (40 pts.)** – As adults responsible for your own learning, your attendance and participation are your decisions. However, you will learn more, and contribute more to the learning of others, if you are present, involved, and engaged. Thus, while there is no daily requirement/penalty for attendance, attendance and participation are expected in all facets and phases of the course, both in the classroom and in experiences outside the classroom. A cost/benefit analysis of your overall contributions will determine your final contribution to the course. Group project efforts will also count toward your individual participation grade – just like in the real world. Group projects will incorporate a degree of peer assessment to be determined in class.

**General Course Expectations:**

- Be present and punctual. You can't lead if you can't manage, especially yourself.
- Be prepared, be awake, be willing to engage and sometimes lead.
- Changes in course content or schedule may be made during the semester. Changes will be emailed to the class list as applicable.
- No late work accepted. Electronic submissions are acceptable in advance of the class in which they are due ([tmiddleb@udel.edu](mailto:tmiddleb@udel.edu)).
- All written work should be word-processed, free from spelling and grammatical errors, and proofed by a peer for clarity prior to submitting. A simple staple will suffice – no plastic covers.
- All work is to be in the student's own words unless quotation marks and referenced pages are provided. Failure to do so is plagiarism and unethical.
- Cherish diverse perspectives, take the risk of sharing your own, conflict in the spirit of learning.
- Any person who may require alternative instructional and/or evaluative procedures due to a disability should feel free to discuss these needs with the professor so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Extra Credit Opportunities** – Successful completion of extra credit can be earned up to the noted points (or approximately 5% of your grade). Extra credit opportunities will be announced throughout the semester, however it is your responsibility to initiate, propose, and pursue extra-credit opportunities to enhance your education (and grade). See the next page for some ideas...

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1. Retail Interview: Make contact with the manager of any type of retail store (preferably where you frequently shop) and conduct an interview regarding the “origins” of the items you purchase. Determine what the manufacturing process waste by-products are, if the people who produced the items are paid a living wage, and if the site where the items were produced has any standards in place for worker safety and quality working conditions. Produce a report of your findings.
2. Jewelry Interview: Make contact with the manager of jewelry store (preferably where you shop) and conduct an interview regarding the “origins” of the gold and diamonds. Determine the impact of the mining procedures used for these items and the working conditions of the miners. Produce a report of your findings.
3. Carry your waste: Spend 4 days carrying every piece of waste that you generate. The waste must accompany you at all times. Produce a report of your observations and reflections.
4. Corporate Sustainability Plans: Contact (phone or web) three major corporations to access the company sustainability plan. Produce a report of your findings.
5. Complaint Activism: Initiate three consumer complaints against an agency or company of your choice regarding issues of sustainability. Produce a report of your observations.
6. Wardrobe analysis: Conduct an inventory of your clothing and develop a report of the amount of waste generated in the production of your wardrobe.
7. Examine website <http://www.playagreaterpart.org> and identify one project that you believe could benefit you in your academic learning goals. Prepare a formal proposal to have the project count for credit in one of your classes.
8. Research the LEED green building rating system. Citing your sources, write a paper describing the system and its advantages and disadvantages.
9. Identify and watch a film focusing on sustainability (e.g., Al Gore’s An Inconvenient Truth). Write a movie review (look at a review in a paper or magazine for the proper format). And answer the following questions: 1. Is the message of the movie persuasive? Why/not? 2. How does the information in the movie support the need for sustainable practices? 3. What personal leadership practice could you adopt as a result of viewing and reviewing this movie?
10. Explore the website <http://adbusters.org/home/> and write a paper discussing how and why the practices they advocate do and do not align with effective leadership and with sustainable practices.