HESI 418E Strengths-Based Leadership - ONLINE
Winter 2016 - Leadership Studies Program
College of Education - University of Maryland

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor
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Instructor, Leadership Studies Program
1110 Stamp Student Union
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Course Description
Based on the Gallup Organization’s StrengthsFinder assessment, as well as theories of positive psychology and relational leadership, this course will encourage students to think critically about their personal strengths, the strengths of others, and how those affect their approach to engaging in leadership in personal, academic, co-curricular, and career settings.

This is a seminar-style, online course in which students will engage in individual reflection and small group discussion in order to develop understanding of course readings and apply theories and concepts to their own lives. Through the reflection and discussion processes, students will be expected to articulate connections between course material, their personal experiences with leadership, and their previous study of leadership as appropriate.

Learning Outcomes
In the process of this course, students will:
1. Demonstrate understanding of Strengths philosophy and the ability to make connections between this philosophy and relational approaches to leadership.
2. Demonstrate an increased awareness of the ways in which their personal talent themes affect how they engage in all aspects of life; personal, educational, and professional
3. Demonstrate increased confidence and skill in utilizing personal talents to practice effective leadership in relationship with others in a variety of group and organizational contexts

Required Readings
  ○ Note: If you have not yet taken the StrengthsQuest Assessment, you need a NEW copy of this book. It contains a unique, one-time use code for you to take the assessment online. Alternatively, you make purchase an assessment code at www.StrengthsQuest.com which includes an online version of the book. Please contact the instructor with questions about these options.
• Other readings provided on the course page on ELMS

Note: Items in this syllabus may change at instructor’s discretion with ample notice to students
COURSE POLICIES

Course Communication
This is an online, self-managed course, which means we will not have any set class lecture times. Instead, you will be required to submit work and post to discussion boards according to the deadlines indicated on ELMS and in the syllabus. **Students are expected to manage, complete, and turn in their work on their own according to the course requirements without prompting from the instructor.** Please be sure to check ELMS, as this will be the main method of communication for the class. Should you want time for a one-on-one conversation, please email the instructor.

Atmosphere and Participation
This course provides students with a full semester of credit condensed into three weeks. The workload over the course of three weeks is designed to match that of a regular 3-credit hour course. As such, students will appropriately feel that they are engaged in the course each day of the winter term, which may be different than how they regularly engage in a semester-long course. **Students should be prepared to “hit the ground running” and stay actively engaged throughout the entire three weeks.**

In addition, creating an atmosphere that is welcoming and supporting is the responsibility of both the instructor and students in an online course. Class members are encouraged to demonstrate an open attitude toward understanding and learning from views presented by fellow students. Class members are expected to act in a supportive manner with respect to fellow class members’ participation in online class discussions. Class members are expected to be open to learning the acceptance of alternate cultural perspectives, values, positions, and lifestyles. This open posture to diversity is considered imperative for work around issues of leadership.

Similarly, it is expected that student participation in the course will be characterized by active and honest discussion. Leadership learning in the areas described in the course objectives is maximized by frequent and active participation by all students. **Despite the lack of face-to-face meetings, it will be clear to the instructor who is and who is not actively engaged in the course, as well as which students have read and understand the material.**

Confidentiality
Students will be asked to share personal insights into various aspects of their lives as they apply to the course material. Students may not print out, share, or forward other students’ work to anyone not associated directly with this course; these issues are to remain confidential. Please be mindful of this as you engage in the course.

Readings
Class members are expected to complete all readings and assignments on time. Reading assignments for each week are posted on ELMS and/or in the syllabus. The instructor may not

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always cover readings in a formal way, but class members will be held responsible for infusing reading content in discussion posts and other class assignments. Your online discussion posts and written assignments are the way in which you demonstrate to the instructor that you have read and understand the material, and that you have thought about how the material applies to your own life and leadership experience.

**Academic Integrity**
In all class work and assignments, we expect the highest personal and professional standards that reflect the objectives of the University of Maryland. Students will be held accountable for violations of standards of academic integrity in writing and presentation of scholarly and professional ideas through University of Maryland procedures. Proper citations, paraphrasing and proper quotations are essential in all work. Any suspected violations of the Code of Academic Integrity such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty will be reported to the Student Honor Council and have a direct impact on your grade in this course. All students will be expected to abide by the University Honor Pledge. The pledge reads: I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination. For this online class, you will not be asked to sign each assignment, but will still be held to the standards of the pledge.

**Religious Observations**
Because we are a diverse community and enroll students with many spiritual beliefs, we will be sensitive to students’ requests for accommodations due to reasons of religious observances. Be mindful that it is the student’s responsibility to inform instructors of these needs immediately as the course begins. As this course is offered online and work can be done at your own pace, students should be able to adjust their schedules to meet course deadlines.

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructors so reasonable accommodations can be made to assist learning and evaluation in the course. In addition, students should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) to document their disability and identify appropriate accommodations. DSS (301-314-7682) provides a variety of services to students with disabilities; staff are available to consult with students at any time. (www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS). It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor at the in the first week of the course of any documented disabilities that will need to be accommodated.

**Course Evaluations**
While we hope to create a learning environment that allows students to provide timely feedback to instructors, there are more formal ways we will engage in evaluation as a class. One of these is the university’s campus-wide online course evaluation system, CourseEvalUM. Your participation in this system will make a real contribution to our academic program. We value this student feedback, and other students will benefit from having evaluation data for all courses readily available. CourseEvalUM will be open for students to complete their evaluations at the end of the summer session and can go directly to the website

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(www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to do so. Students will be alerted via their official University e-mail account when the website is active for this term.

GRADING POLICIES

Grading Criteria
All assignments will be graded with the following criteria:

• **Content:** The degree to which the student responds to all the specific items in the assignment. The degree to which a student clearly indicates his or her recall and understanding of the material and concepts covered in the course.

• **Introspection, Elaboration and Synthesis:** The degree to which a student is insightful, thoughtful, innovative and self-aware in the application of course concepts to his or her individual experiences. The degree to which a student provides detail, depth and development in written work. Instructors will be looking for the student’s ability to reason and provide rationales for conclusions, the extent of critical thinking, the development of examples and analogies, and the application of leadership concepts. The degree to which the student “brings it all together” and incorporates leadership theory in the creation of new insights, unique products and/or creative solutions.

• **Form:** The care and clarity with which a student completes assignments and presentations. Written assignments should be of very high quality. Grammar, syntax, punctuation and structure of assignments should support and enhance the concepts that the student intends to convey. The organization, clarity and polish of the group presentation should do the same.

Written Assignment Format
All written assignments should be typed, double spaced, in 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins unless otherwise noted. Please choose APA or MLA style for in-text citations and reference/works cited pages. If you need assistance with these styles, visit https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ or the writing labs here at UMD. Online posts should adhere to word count guidelines provided.

Assignment Submission and Late Work Policy
All completed assignments should be uploaded to ELMS by the date and time indicated in the syllabus and/or in the Assignments section on ELMS. When submitting assignments online it is your responsibility to ensure confirmation of successful submission. The instructor reserves the right to change due dates as needed and will provide students with ample notice of adjustments. **Late assignments will be accepted only when the student contacts the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the original due date and time.** If your reason for needing more time is acceptable, I will work with you to determine an alternate submission day and time. Approved extensions will receive full credit based upon the new agreed upon due date. The instructor reserves the right to give partial credit or no credit at all for assignments that are submitted late without prior communication from the student.

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### Grading Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignments</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Personal Intro and StrengthsQuest Assessment</td>
<td>5 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Written Reflection on Personal Strengths</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>• written Analysis of Team/Group Leadership</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Group Discussion Posts</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Group Replies</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
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**Grading Scale**

- **A+** = 97 – 100% (4.0)
- **A** = 93 – 96.99% (4.0)
- **A-** = 90 – 92.99% (3.7)
- **B+** = 87 – 89.99% (3.3)
- **B** = 84 – 86.99% (3.0)
- **B-** = 80 – 83.99% (2.7)
- **C+** = 77 – 79.99% (2.3)
- **C** = 74 – 76.99% (2.0)
- **C-** = 70 – 73.99% (1.7)
- **D+** = 67 – 69.99% (1.3)
- **D** = 64 – 66.99% (1.0)
- **D-** = 60 – 63.99% (0.7)
- **F** = below 60% (0.0)

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**Assignments**

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**Individual Assignments** – due **MONDAYS by 11:59pm**

Individual assignments will take the form of reflection papers, online assessments, and/or other learning tasks that are not included as a part of the small group online discussions (described below.) Each of these assignments is designed to help students dive deeper into course readings and demonstrate to the instructor students’ understanding and synthesis of course content. Specific parameters and requirements for each assignment will be described in the Assignments section on ELMS. In general, these assignments include:

1) Personal Introduction and Online StrengthsQuest Assessment
2) Written Reflection on Personal Strengths Development
3) Written Analysis of Team/Group Leadership Using Strengths Philosophy

**Small Group Discussion Posts** – due **WEDNESDAYS by 11:59pm**

Students will be divided in to small groups with which they will engage in online discussions via the course ELMS site. The instructor will post prompts to the group’s discussion board on Sunday evening, and then ask the students to write and post a response that connects course readings with their personal experiences to help students learn from each other. Simply click the “reply” arrow under the instructor’s original prompt to post your response. Specific parameters and requirements for each post will be described in the instructor’s prompts. Students are expected to post their responses to the instructor’s prompts on their small group discussion board by the noted due date. Each response is expected to be between 800 and 1,000 words.

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It is good practice to write and save your posts in Microsoft Word or other document creation software, and then copy and paste your posts into ELMS. This ensures that you have your posts saved in case something happens with ELMS or your internet connection while you are attempting to post to the discussion boards.

*Note: it is imperative that you post your response by the noted due date and time, as your small group members are counting on you to give them ample time to reply to your post (see “replies” below.)*

**Small Group Replies – due FRIDAYS by 11:59pm**
Once small group members have posted their thoughts to the instructor’s prompts, each student will then read each other’s posts and reply to each group member with a comment. Simply click the “reply” arrow under the person’s original post to make your comment. You should share what you found interesting about what they said, anything they mentioned that you can connect with (similar thoughts or experiences, for example), and any questions or further ideas for consideration you may have for them. Students are expected to make their replies to each other’s posts by the noted due date. Each reply should be between 150-200 words.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

To best sequence course material in a condensed 3-week course, specific assigned readings relevant to each assignment and discussion will be noted on ELMS within the specific assignment listing and discussion prompt. All assignments, posts, and replies are due by 11:59pm on the due date unless otherwise noted.

**Week 1 – Intro to Strengths Philosophy and Your Signature Themes**
- Monday Jan 4: Individual Assignment 1
- Wednesday Jan 6: Discussion Post 1
- Friday Jan 8: Reply 1

**Week 2 – The Four Domains and Leadership**
- Monday Jan 11: Individual Assignment 2
- Wednesday Jan 13: Discussion Post 2
- Friday Jan 15: Reply 2

**Week 3 – Current and Future Applications**
- Monday Jan 18: Individual Assignment 3
- Wednesday Jan 20: Discussion Post 3
- Friday Jan 22: Reply 3

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