IBH 4LD3/4BA3
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: LEADERSHIP CAPSTONE
Fall 2025 Course Outline

Human Resources and Management Area
DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The central objective of this course is to expose students to the field of leadership development (both theory and practice) and to provide a transformative learning experience using our state-of-the-art neurophysiology lab. We will apply models and concepts from the established leadership development literature through experiential exercises. Students will become adept at analyzing, interpreting, and responding to situations that involve leadership and/or followership. This course equips students with an understanding of general leadership principles as well as tools for self-reflection on their own unique leadership abilities and styles.

Specific Objectives are to:
- Expose students to the key concepts, approaches, models and theories of leadership development
- Provide opportunities for self-assessment of leadership.
- Engage students in problem identification, critical-analytical thinking and problem solving.

INSTRUCTOR AND TA CONTACT INFORMATION

Lectures: Mondays from 2:30 PM – 5:20 PM
Room: KTHB124

Yair Berson, Ph.D.
Professor
bersony@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours: By appointment

Imogen Weigall, Ph.D.
Teaching Assistant
weigalli@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	Yes	Global view:	Yes
Avenue:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	Yes	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	Yes	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	NO

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of the course is to expose students to the concept of leadership in organizations. To this end, it reviews the key concepts, approaches, models and theories of leadership. It develops students' understanding of major elements of leadership research and will equip students to critically evaluate the popular writing on leadership. In addition, it introduces fundamental leadership skills and provides opportunities for students to reflect on their own unique leadership potential and development through educational experiences. Students will be introduced to leadership in a number of ways, including through case studies, class discussions, workshops, and exercises using neurophysiological equipment. Student teams will interview practicing managers about leadership. Content is delivered through text readings and lectures. Class participation is critical and marked.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand key principles of leadership.
- Understand the role of leadership in organizational effectiveness and career progression.
    - Recognize leadership thinking and behaviour styles (self and others) and know how they are likely to either facilitate or impede leadership effectiveness.
    - Understand how physiological processes underpin the leader-follower relationship.
- Develop knowledge of the established leadership literature, and apply the models, concepts and critical learnings from this literature
- Identify effective leadership responses to suit varying situational circumstances.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

PDFs to all the readings and case studies are available on Avenue, or can be downloaded from the **course information webpage**: https://lucklein.notion.site/leadershipcapstonecourseinfo

Case Studies

- Satya Nadella at Microsoft: Instilling a Growth Mindset. London Business School. LBS128-PDF-ENG.
- Amazon: Cult or Culture. 421008-PDF-ENG.
- Antegren: A Beacon of Hope. Harvard Business School. 408025-PDF-ENG.

Required Readings

- Akstinaite, V. (2023). Understanding hubris and heuristics in CEO decision-making: Implications for management. Organizational Dynamics, 52 (2), 1-11.
- Antonakis, J., Fenley, M., & Liechti, S. (2012). Learning charisma. Transform yourself into the person others want to follow. Harvard business review, 90(6), 127-30.
- Bazerman, M. H. (2020). A New Model for Ethical Leadership. Harvard Business Review, 98(5), 90-97.
- Benjamin, Beth, and Charles O'Reilly. "Becoming a leader: Early career challenges faced by MBA graduates." Academy of Management Learning & Education 10.3 (2011): 452-472.
- Bligh, Michelle C., and Jeffrey C. Kohles. "The enduring allure of charisma: How Barack Obama won the historic 2008 presidential election." The Leadership Quarterly 20.3 (2009): 483-492.
- Cannella, S. F. B., Hambrick, D. C., Finkelstein, S., & Cannella, A. A. (2009). Strategic leadership: Theory and research on executives, top management teams, and boards. (Oxford U. Press). Chapters 1,2.

- Casciaro, Tiziana, Francesca Gino, and Maryam Kouchaki. "Learn to love networking." Harvard Business Review 94.5 (2016): 104-107.

- Corritore, M., Goldberg, A., & Srivastava, S. B. (2020). The new analytics of culture. Harvard Business Review, 98(1), 76-83.

- Oreg, S., & Berson, Y. (2018). The impact of top leaders' personalities: The processes through which organizations become reflections of their leaders. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 27(4), 241-248.

- Rangarajan, Deva, Betsy D. Gelb, and Amy Vandaveer. "Strategic personal branding—and how it pays off." Business Horizons 60.5 (2017): 657-666.

- Vroom, V. H. (2000). Leadership and the decision-making process. Organizational dynamics, 28(4), 82-94.

- Waldman, D. A., Ward, M. K., & Becker, W. J. (2017). Neuroscience in organizational behavior. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 4(1), 425-444.

- Watkins, Michael D. (2012). How managers become leaders. The seven seismic shifts of perspective and responsibility. Harvard Business Review 90, 64-72.

- Yukl, G. (2009). Use power effectively to influence people. Handbook of Principles of Organizational Behavior, 349-365.

EVALUATION

Components and Weights

Science Analysis 1 (Individual)	15%
Quiz (Individual)	25%
Case Analysis (Individual)	20%
Executive Interview Class Briefing (Team)	25%
Executive Interview Written Report (Team)	15%

Grade Conversion

The letter grade, percentage and grade point conversion scales for this course are as stated in the University's undergraduate calendar, as shown below.

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT	GRADE POINTS	LETTER GRADE	PERCENT	GRADE POINTS
A+	90-100	12	C+	67-69	6
A	85-89	11	C	63-66	5
A-	80-84	10	C-	60-62	4
B+	77-79	9	D+	57-59	3
B	73-76	8	D	53-56	2
B-	70-72	7	D-	50-52	1
			F	00-49	0

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Team Assignments

The purpose of the team assignments is to familiarize students with practitioner perspectives on the importance of leadership, the changing skills necessary to transition up the levels of leadership, and career tactics for navigating the transitions. Students will form teams, and *each team* will submit a written report of a case analysis, a class briefing and a written report about an interview they will arrange with a practicing manager/leader (see details for both team assignments below).

- Students will form teams of up to 5 during the first class.
- One person from each team will email Dr. Berson (bersony@mcmaster.ca) a list of team members' names (first and last) with their email addresses (CC all team members)
- If a team member does not make a fair contribution to the work of the team, the other team members may remove that person from the team by informing the Professor and not including that person's name on the team's submitted work.

Executive Interview Class Briefing (Team)

Each team will identify a middle manager or higher to interview about his/her leadership style and how it contributed to promoting the strategic goals of the unit he or she leads. To accomplish this task, you will first create an interview protocol based on any typology (e.g., transformational leadership, ethical leadership) that we discuss in class. You may also use surveys or other measures that capture the leadership characteristics associated with the typology you chose. The interview protocol should include questions about the manager's personal advice or recommendations about a successful career in leadership.

- The team must identify their interviewee to the professor by email **no later than the second class session;** including name and formal position/title, a contact email address, name of the firm and industry, as well as their current leadership position.
- Before you schedule the interview, you will submit the interview protocol for my approval. Ideally, you will videotape or record the interview with the manager, however, this is (of course) subject to the interviewee's approval and hence is not a requirement.

Each team will report the results of their analysis of their interview in a **20-minute briefing** on the last class session. The presentation will include, but is not necessarily restricted to, slides which clearly specify:

- A brief description of the organization in which the manager is employed.
- A detailed account of the unit (department, division, team, etc.) headed by the manager, emphasizing the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities of this unit.
- A detailed analysis of the leadership styles exhibited or explained by the manager and their contribution to addressing the challenges the unit he or she manages faces. If approved by the manager, I encourage you to use brief video clips from the interview to support your analysis.
- Three or more insights from the manager on strategizing for a successful career in leadership.

All members of the team must participate substantially in the presentation. Briefings should be formal—resembling those made to executives in work settings—and make use of audiovisual aids and/or presentation technology. It is the team's responsibility to control the timing of the briefing to under 20 minutes, including an appropriate wrap-up statement. The mark for the briefing will be 80% based upon the professor's assessment and 20% upon the class rating. The class will rate the briefing on the value of the discussion and the team's presentation skills. The professor's rating will include these criteria as well as the accuracy and depth of the content of the presentation, the degree to which it includes original analysis, the degree of participation by all members of the team, the degree to which the class was engaged, and whether the presentation ended within the time limit. An electronic copy of the slides for the briefing is to be emailed to the Professor (bersony@mcmaster.ca) on the day before the briefing.

Executive Interview Written Report (Team)

After the interview, each team will prepare a seven-page report (eight including the cover page) covering the same points as in the class briefing in greater detail (more details to be provided by class).

- **Cover Page:** The cover page should show the names of all students who are to receive credit for the report, the name of the professor, the name and number of the course and the submission date. No information on the cover page or in the report should identify the interviewee.

Please submit the project **electronically via Avenue.**

Science Analyses: Neuroscience Activities (Individual)

A unique contribution of this course is to facilitate students' understanding of the role of subconscious and often invisible processes that underlie the dynamic between leaders and followers in leadership development. What happens within the brains and bodies of followers as a result of their leader's influence? How do leaders' actions facilitate effective team processes? To explore this, students will first learn the basic principles of neuroscience and neuroimaging and then participate in group activities designed to demonstrate how leadership research can be conducted. These activities will take place at the Neuroscience of Leadership and Teams Lab (NLTL) at DeGroote Leadership Centre in MCCD. Two activities will be offered, both based on automated facial expression emotion analyses using FaceReader software. You will be asked to choose **one activity** (of these two) to participate in throughout the term. Below are summaries of the activities; detailed descriptions and dates will be provided later:

1. *Following a leader's vision*– Facial expressions synchrony in response to a leader's vision.
2. *Keeping it together under pressure* – Facial expression synchrony between group members while solving timed puzzles

Following participation in one of the activities, students will submit a report (up to two pages, double-spaced) that is composed of two sections. In the first section, you will draw on research literature to explain the biological processes behind the activity in which you participated (more details in class). In the second section, you will discuss how this experience can help develop your leadership self-awareness and thus, your leadership effectiveness.

Quiz (Individual)

This in-class quiz will cover all classes till the test. It will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions about the material covered in the readings and classes. It will be conducted on 10/19.

In-Class Case Analysis (Individual)

Case: TBD

Overview of assignment. You will be given 30 minutes to read a mini-case and answer questions about the leader's style, regarding the impact that the leader's style might have on organizational processes, like culture or organizational change, and, possibly, about ethical considerations associated with the leader's actions. **Your grade is based on your ability to apply concepts from class.** You will be able to use class material, but not a computer or any online device.

Grading: To receive the highest grade, papers will...
- Demonstrate an understanding of course concepts through their appropriate application to the case.
- Ground the analysis in the content of the case (i.e., use the content of the case to support the claims in the analysis).
- Ideally, have a clear perspective/thesis

Class Participation (Individual)

Class discussions of student, professor and (possibly) industry speaker presentations are an important component of the learning experience in this course. Therefore, 20% of students' marks for the course will be based upon class attendance and substantive participation in the discussions.

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students that are uncomfortable in directly approaching an instructor regarding a course concern may send a confidential and anonymous email to the respective Area Chair or Associate Dean:

http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca/contact/anonymous/

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Administrative Assistant.

Instructors are encouraged to conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

ON-LINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to

demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Missed Mid-Term Examinations / Tests / Class Participation

Where students miss a regularly scheduled mid-term or class participation for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office, the weight for that test/participation will be distributed across other evaluative components of the course at the discretion of the instructor. Documentation explaining such an absence must be provided to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office within five (5) working days upon returning to school.

To document absences for health related reasons, please provide to Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and the McMaster University Student Health Certificate which can be found on the DeGroote website at http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-applications/. Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form as this is for Undergraduate students only. University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) medical certificates per year after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.

To document absences for reasons other than health related, please provide Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and documentation supporting the reason for the absence.

Students unable to write a mid-term at the posted exam time due to the following reasons: religious; work-related (for part-time students only); representing university at an academic or varsity athletic event; conflicts between two overlapping scheduled mid-term exams; or other extenuating circumstances, have the option of applying for special exam arrangements. Such requests must be made to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled exam along with acceptable documentation. Instructors cannot themselves allow students to unofficially write make-up exams/tests. Adjudication of the request must be handled by Student Experience – Academic (MBA).

If a mid-term exam is missed without a valid reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

http://sas.mcmaster.ca

RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of IBH 4LD3/4BA3 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

Course Schedule

Topic	Class	Date	Case/Exercise	Readings
Introduction: Making a Difference as a Leader	1	9/14	*Case: Jack Welch (no preparation required)*	How Managers Become Leaders (Watkins, 2012)
The Characteristics of Effective Leaders	2	9/21	Experiential Exercise: Values survey *Case: Satya Nadella at Microsoft*	The impact of top leaders' personalities (Oreg & Berson, 2018). Read Satya Nadella Case
Power and Influence	3	9/28	Assess your influence style	Understanding hubris and heuristics in CEO decision-making (Akstinaite, 2023) Use power effectively to influence people (Yukl, 2009)
Transformational and Visionary Leadership	4	10/5	*Case: Barack Obama's Visionary Leadership* **Submit Interview Protocol**	Learning charisma (Antonakis, Fenley, & Liechti, 2012) The enduring allure of charisma (Bligh, 2009)
Team Leadership	5	10/19	**Quiz** & Team Leadership Exercise	Why Teams Don't Work By: Diane Coutu, J. Richard Hackman
A Biological Approach to Leadership Development	6	10/26	Dr. Weigall	Neuroscience in Organizational Behavior (Waldman et al., 2017)
Strategic Leadership & Decision Making	7	11/2	Decision-Making Exercise	Read Cannella et al., 2009. Strategic leadership: Theory and research on executives, top management teams, and boards. Chapters 1,2. Leadership and the decision-making process (Vroom, 2000).
Ethical Leadership	8	11/9	**In-Class Case Analysis**	A New Model for Ethical Leadership (Bazerman, 2020) Read Antegren Case
Vision-Building Exercise	9	11/16	Vision-Building Exercise	Prepare a vision statement
Career Opportunities: The Leadership Pipeline	10	11/23	Self-leadership exercise	Learn to Love Networking (Casciaro, Gino & Kouchaki, 2016) Strategic Personal Branding – and How it Pays Off (Rangarajan, 2017) Becoming a Leader: Early Career Challenges Faced by MBA Graduates (Benjamin & O'Reilly, 2011)
Presentations	11	11/30		

Formatted: Not Highlight

Presentations	12	12/7		