

Sociology 119L: LEADERSHIP & SOCIAL CHANGE

CLASS HOURS Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays TBD

LOCATION TBD

INSTRUCTOR Joseph Klett

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- Read [THIS](#);
- Always include "SOC119L" in subject line;
- Email received after 2pm on Thursday will not receive a response until Monday afternoon *at the earliest*;
- DO NOT contact me through bCourses -- I won't see it.

OFFICE HOURS Mondays 12:30pm-2:30pm (in Social Sciences Building 484 or [Zoom](#))
Tuesdays 10am-12pm (over [Zoom](#))

- Please make office hours appointments [HERE](#)

READERS TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Leadership has many meanings. What works well in one context cannot always be applied in another. And contexts have history. What works well in one domain does not necessarily work for all time. In this course we will reflect on the meaning of leadership in society. Our focus will be modern ideas of leadership, and how these ideas evolved, succeeded or failed in moments of social change. We will read in the area of organizational sociology with a focus on interactions, institutions and culture. In addition, we will consider work from political science, management studies and history as we attempt to unravel what leadership looks like across a variety of social domains in different states of change. We will study a diverse variety of cases from business and administration, as well as disaster response, art making, organized labor and protests. Students are encouraged to find case studies in their area of interest, and to imagine how insights on leadership may apply to their future pursuits in society.

A central question will be: is leadership an individual or collective phenomenon? We begin with Max Weber's analysis of authority which identifies certain qualities of successful, yet unique rulers. These early sociological findings have shaped wisdom on what makes good

leadership in organizations, as evidenced by today's most popular books on business administration. Organizational studies have complicated this image of a skilled actor in politics or business to recognize the interpersonal and distributed nature of thriving organizations, particularly those that diverge in their mission.

Primed with questions we will look at several different domains of leadership (Part I). These case studies will show the breadth of the leadership question, and a variety of approaches to answering it. While profits over time is one measure of success in settled industries, new and evolving industries come entangled with conflicting practical, ethical and moral concerns. Conversely, profit is a dirty word in the art world, yet professional artists are always grappling with how to make a living. Successful efforts to collectivize risk entropy and require constant maintenance, making them comparable to the fragile alliances of social movements. For example, when pursuing then protecting civil rights, not all actors are equal though all must act. What kind of leadership is needed in these cases, and when such rights become a public concern, how do we evaluate their governance?

With these areas of organization in mind, we will turn next to struggles of leadership (Part II). Struggles come in various forms, from the slowly-shifting to the suddenly disastrous. The recent concentration of wealth and ingenuity in digital technologies provides one case of a long-building trend of leadership which is currently moving into a new phase of bust and regulation. Small teams of emergency responders trying to survive a disaster presents a much more immediate need for cooperation, and a very narrow margin for error. Social movements combine elements of both, bringing together gradual changes in consciousness with heightened moments of protest. And though warfare often starts with a bang, civil and international conflicts have long simmering histories which cannot be dismissed when leaders seek resolution.

What is a student of leadership to do, if they are interested in leading social change (Part III)? We will first approach this organizationally, to reconsider the roles and relationships required for leadership today. Next, we will consider leadership across networks, where alliances are made and new avenues for action emerge. Finally, we will ask how we might—if at all—establish measures of success for leadership in our present moment with our attention to the future.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS (% of final grade; all work submitted after the deadline will receive a 5% deduction per 24 hours)

- A. **Weekly quizzes** (20%): You will complete one quiz each week on the most recent lectures and readings. Starting Wednesdays at noon, you have 24 hours to take the quiz. Once you open the quiz you have 5 minutes to complete 3 multiple choice questions. You cannot change your answers once submitted. Quizzes will be assigned weeks 2-7 and 9-14. (No late submissions accepted for quizzes.)
- B. **Biweekly memos** (20%): You will write six memos connecting class material to a recent phenomenon of your choosing. For each memo you will summarize your example and provide a citation. You will then explain this example using a concept assigned from that week's lectures. Last, you will pose one unanswered question about the example that you would like to explore further. Memos will be assigned weeks 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, and 13. (Week 2 memo is a trial: you will receive a grade but it will not apply to your final grade.)
- C. **Case studies** (30%): You will complete three case studies (1000-1500 words each) that connect class material to an example in the leadership area of your choosing. These are due at the end of weeks 7, 10, and 14. Case study topic must be submitted for approval by Week 5.
- D. **Midterm** (15%): You will complete a take-home midterm consisting of several short-answer (1-2 page) prompts covering the first half of class.
- E. **Final** (15%): You will complete a take-home final consisting of several short-answer (1-2 page) prompts covering the second half of class.

EXTENSION REQUESTS

You should familiarize yourself with the lecture calendar and all deadlines. Do not take this class if you cannot accommodate this schedule. I will not grant extensions for any reason. DO NOT ASK FOR AN EXTENSION. If you must submit your work late, take the late penalty and get on with your life.

APPEALING A GRADE

I believe grades are a bureaucratic convenience which provide little more than perverse incentives and needless stress. And evidence overwhelmingly shows they have little impact on

social mobility in terms of careers and earnings. [Yet here we are](#). I have designed thoughtful assignments to meet the University's grading requirements while helping you get the most out of the course material. They are not meant to be arbitrary or punitive. I intend for you to learn from them and not merely to get a good grade. That said, if you are unhappy with a grade and feel it needs to be reassessed, I will give you a fair review process.

If you would like to appeal a grade, please email me a brief statement (250 words or less) including 1) a list of the deductions you received, 2) a summary of the Reader comments justifying these deductions, and 3) why you believe these deductions to be unjust. In my review, I will make the final determination to either increase, decrease, or make no change to your initial grade. You must submit your appeal within one week after the grade is posted; after this the grade becomes permanent and I will not consider any further appeals.

CITATIONS

All written work should include in-text citations and a complete bibliography using [Chicago style](#). Missing or incomplete citations will be penalized.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

You are expected to follow the [University guidelines for academic honesty](#). Violations include cheating and plagiarism, as well as self-plagiarism (submitting your own work from a different assignment). Any assignment content composed by a resource other than you, whether human or digital, must be attributed using proper citation. If you have any doubts, please speak to me or your Reader *before* your work is due.

Artificial intelligence (AI) language models, such as ChatGPT, may be used to summarize or contextualize source materials with your thorough review, cross-referencing, and appropriate citation. You may NOT use AI to write your work for you. You may NOT use AI for the Midterm and Final exams. Unattributed use of online platforms is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.

SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

All students should be able to participate in this course. Please address any special needs you may have with me at the beginning of the semester, or when a challenge arises. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation plan from the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) to me by email, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester. Contact the DSP by phone (510) 642-0518 or by email to dsp@berkeley.edu.

DOING THE READINGS

To get the most out of this course it is important that you do the readings. I have carefully chosen each assigned reading to ensure it is a) accessibly written, b) mercifully brief, and c) relevant to the day's lecture. Expect to read around 45 pages per week, or 15 pages per lecture. Your engagement with the readings will be measured at regular intervals through quizzes, class discussion, reading responses and exams. I will offer guidance at the end of each lecture for the upcoming readings; I recommend you create a reading routine for the class so you are well-prepared for lectures and ready to complete your assignments on time.

COURSE OUTLINE

All readings can be found on bCourses under '[Files](#)' unless hyperlinked below.

WEEK.DAY DATE: Topic

1.1 Wednesday 8/28: Introduction

1.2 Friday 8/30: Leadership? (Guest: Kristi Bedolla)

Monday 9/2: NO CLASS

2.1 Wednesday 9/4: Organizations I

1. James March and Thierry Weil. 2005. "Introduction" from *On Leadership*.

2.2 Friday 9/6: Organizations II

1. Charles Duhigg. 2016. "What Google Learned from Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team."

3.1 Monday 9/9: The leadership challenge I

1. Anand Giridharadas. 2018. "The Critic and the Thought Leader."

3.2 Wednesday 9/11: The leadership challenge II

1. Merve Emre. 2022. "The Illusion of the First Person."
2. Jessica Testa. 2022. "[The People's Republic of Shein.](#)"

3.3 Friday 9/13: Why followers matter (Guest: Sam Stabler)

1. Max Weber. 1914. "The Types of Legitimate Domination."

PART I: Domains of leadership

4.1 Monday 9/16: Leadership in industry I

1. Sally Smith Hughes. 2013. "Creating Genentech."

4.2 Wednesday 9/18: Leadership in industry II

1. Peter Thiel. 2014. "Follow the Money" and "Secrets."

4.3 Friday 9/20: Streaming and publishing (Guest: Clayton Childress)

1. Alice Gregory. 2016. "[FX President John Landgraf is the Quiet Genius Inside Your TV.](#)"
2. Frank Pallotta and Clare Duffy. 2020. "[Quibi is Shutting Down.](#)"

5.1 Monday 9/23: Leadership in the arts I

1. Caroline Jones. 1991. "Andy Warhol's 'Factory'."

5.2 Wednesday 9/25: Leadership in the arts II

1. Katherine Giuffre. 1999. "Sandpiles of Opportunity."

5.3 Friday 9/27: The work of art (Guest: Alison Gerber)

1. Lewis Hyde. 1979. "Introduction" to *The Gift*.
2. Alison Gerber. 2014. "[The Nightmare Audit of an Indie Artist.](#)"

Sunday 9/29: Case study proposal DUE

6.1 Monday 9/30: Leadership in government I

1. *Congressional Management Foundation*. 2020. '90 Day Roadmap to Setting Up a Congressional Office; Section 2.'

6.2 Wednesday 10/2: Leadership in government II

1. Ivan Ermakoff. 2008. "Preface" from *Ruling Oneself Out*.
2. LISTEN: "[Mitch McConnell](#)." (*Throughline*, 2019)

6.3 Friday 10/4: Military mistakes (Guest: Thomas Crosbie)

1. Norman Dixon. 1976. "On the Psychology of Military Incompetence."

7.1 Monday 10/7: Leadership in social movements I

1. Martin Luther King. 1963. "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

7.2 Wednesday 10/9: Leadership in social movements II

1. Aldon Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg. 2004. "Leadership in Social Movements."

7.3 Friday 10/11: Organized Communities (Guest: Benjamin Snyder)

1. Benjamin Snyder. 2020. "'Big Brother's Bigger Brother.'"

Sunday 10/13: Case study #1 DUE

8.1 Monday 10/14: Midterm Review I (in class)

8.2 Wednesday 10/16: Midterm Review II ([ZOOM](#))

Friday 10/18: TAKE-HOME MIDTERM (**DUE Sunday 10/20**)

PART II: Struggles of leadership

9.1 Monday 10/21: Newness I

1. Lucy Suchman and Libby Bishop. 1999. "Problematizing 'Innovation' as a Critical Project."
2. William Alden. 2014. "[Venture Capitalists Coddle Entrepreneurs as Royalty.](#)"

9.2 Wednesday 10/23: Newness II

1. Erin Griffith. 2022. "[The Boy Bosses of Silicon Valley Are on Their Way Out.](#)"
2. Nico Grant. 2024. "[Google's Once Happy Offices Feel the Chill of Layoffs.](#)"

9.3 Friday 10/25: Global ambitions (Guest: Morgan Ames)

1. Morgan Ames. 2019. "Performing Development" from *The Charisma Machine*.

10.1 Monday 10/28: Crisis I

1. Karl Weick. 1993. "The Collapse of Sensemaking in Organizations."

10.2 Wednesday 10/30: Crisis II

1. Mónica Feliú-Mójer. 2022. "Advancing Inclusion Through Culturally Relevant Science Communication."

10.3 Friday 11/1: Emergency response (Guest: Ryan Hagen)

1. Jon Mooallem. 2023. "Three years into Covid, we still don't know how to talk about it."

Sunday 11/3: Case study #2 DUE

11.1 Monday 11/4: Discontents I

1. Klaus Eder. 1985. "The 'New Social Movements'."

11.2 Wednesday 11/6: Discontents II

1. David Leonhardt. 2023. "[The Failure of Progressive Movements.](#)"

11.3 Friday 11/8: Best intentions (Guest: Shai Dromi)

1. Alex de Waal. 2009. "Famine Crimes."

PART III: Leading social change

Monday 11/11: NO CLASS

12.1 Wednesday 11/13: Performing leadership I

1. Tim Hallett et al. 2019. "Public Ideas."
2. Joel Best. 2009. "Sociologists as Outliers."

12.2 Friday 11/15: Performing leadership II

1. Andrew Carton. 2018. "How NASA Leaders Enhanced the Meaningfulness of Work by Changing the Meaning of Work." ([PODCAST](#))
2. Charles Fishman. 2019. "[The Race to the Moon Was So Unpopular...](#)"

13.1 Monday 11/18: Alliances I

1. Peter Cole and Peter Limb. 2017. "Hooks down! Anti-apartheid activism and solidarity among maritime unions in Australia and the United States."

13.2 Wednesday 11/20: Alliances II

1. Mayer Zald. 1996. "Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing."

13.3 Friday 11/22: Making repairs (Guest: Jody Roberts)

Monday 11/25, Wednesday 11/27 & Friday 11/29: NO CLASS

14.1 Monday 12/2: The unit of leadership I

1. Jo Freeman. 1972. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness."

14.2 Wednesday 12/4: The unit of leadership II

1. Leidy Klotz. 2021. "Introduction" and "Scaling Subtraction."

14.3 Friday 12/6: Scale

1. Paul Graham. 2013. "[Do Things That Don't Scale.](#)"

Sunday 12/8: Case study #3 DUE

15.1 Monday 12/9: Final review I (in class)

15.2 Wednesday 12/10: Final review II ([ZOOM](#))

Sunday 12/15: TAKE-HOME FINAL (**DUE Tuesday, 12/17**)