

Fall 2023. Sociology 119L: **LEADERSHIP & SOCIAL CHANGE**

CLASS HOURS Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 10am-11am

LOCATION 159 Mulford

INSTRUCTOR Joseph Klett

EMAIL jklett@berkeley.edu (Read [this](#), and include "SOC119L" in subject line; do NOT contact me through bCourses -- I won't see it.)

OFFICE HOURS Tuesdays 10a-12p (by [Zoom](#))
Wednesdays 2p-3p (in Social Sciences Building XXX)

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 unless excused)

- A. **Weekly memos** (33%): You will write 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 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 to weeks 2-7 and 9-13.
- B. **Case studies** (36%): You will complete three case studies (3 pages each) that connect class material to examples in the leadership area(s) of your choosing. These are due at the end of weeks 7, 10, and 13. Complete instructions will be provided in week 3.
- C. **Midterm** (15%): You will complete a take-home midterm consisting of several short-answer (1-2 page) prompts covering the first half of class.
- D. **Final** (15%): You will complete a take-home final consisting of several short-answer (1-2 page) prompts covering the second half of class.

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). Attribution and proper citations are expected for all ideas that are not your own. If you have any doubts, please speak to me or your reader *before* your work is due.

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.

COURSE OUTLINE

Readings should be completed prior to the class meeting to which they are assigned. All readings can be found on bCourses under '[Files](#)'.

WEEK.DAY DATE: Topic

1.1 **Wednesday 8/23:** Introduction

1.2 **Friday 8/25:** Leadership? (Guest: Kristi Bedolla)

2.1-2.2 **Monday 8/28 & Wednesday 8/30:** Organizations

1. James March and Thierry Weil. 2005. "Introduction" from *On Leadership*.
2. Charles Duhigg. 2016. "What Google Learned from Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team."

2.3 **Friday 9/1:** Why followers matter (Guest: Sam Stabler)

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

Monday 9/4: NO CLASS

3.1-3.2 **Wednesday 9/6 & Friday 9/8:** The leadership challenge

1. James Kouzes and Barry Posner. 2018. "Introduction" from *The Student Leadership Challenge*.
2. Merve Emre. 2022. "The Illusion of the First Person."
3. Jessica Testa. 2022. "[The People's Republic of Shein.](#)"

PART I: Domains of leadership

4.1-4.2 **Monday 9/11 & Wednesday 9/13:** Leadership in industry

1. Sally Smith Hughes. 2013. "Creating Genentech."
2. Peter Thiel. 2014. "Follow the Money" and "Secrets."

4.3 Friday 9/15: Streaming and publishing (Guest: Clayton Childress)

1. Alice Gregory. 2016. "[FX President John Landgraf is the Quiet Genius Inside Your TV.](#)"
2. Vinson Cunningham. 2016. "[How Chris Jackson Is Building a Black Literary Movement.](#)"
3. Frank Pallotta and Clare Duffy. 2020. "[Quibi is Shutting Down.](#)"

5.1-5.2 Monday 9/18 & Wednesday 9/20: Leadership in the arts

1. Caroline Jones. 1991. "Andy Warhol's 'Factory'."
2. Katherine Giuffre. 1999. "Sandpiles of Opportunity."

5.3 Friday 9/22: The work of art (Guest: Alison Gerber)

1. Alison Gerber. 2014. "[The Nightmare Audit of an Indie Artist.](#)"

6.1-6.2 Monday 9/25 & Wednesday 9/27: Leadership in government

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

6.3 Friday 9/29: Military mistakes (Guest: Thomas Crosbie)

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

7.1-7.2 Monday 10/2 & Wednesday 10/4: Leadership in social movements

1. Martin Luther King. 1963. "Letter from Birmingham Jail."
2. Aldon Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg. 2004. "Leadership in Social Movements."

7.3 Friday 10/6: Organized Communities (Guest: Benjamin Snyder)

1. Benjamin Snyder. 2020. "'Big Brother's Bigger Brother.'"
2. LISTEN: "[Eye in the Sky.](#)" (Note to Self, 2016)

Sunday 10/8: Case study #1 due

8.1 **Monday 10/9:** Midterm Review I (online)

8.2 **Wednesday 10/11:** Midterm Review II (in class)

Friday 10/13: TAKE-HOME MIDTERM (**due Sunday 10/15**)

PART II: Struggles of leadership

9.1-9.2 **Monday 10/16 & Wednesday 10/18:** Newness

1. Lucy Suchman and Libby Bishop. 1999. "Problematizing 'Innovation' as a Critical Project."
2. William Alden. 2014. "[Venture Capitalists Coddle Entrepreneurs as Royalty.](#)"
3. Anna Wiener. 2020. "Incentives."
4. Erin Griffith. 2022. "[The Boy Bosses of Silicon Valley Are on Their Way Out.](#)"

9.3 **Friday 10/20:** Founders (Guest: TBA)

1. Peter Thiel. 2014. "The Founder's Paradox."

10.1-10.2 **Monday 10/23 & Wednesday 10/25:** Catastrophe

1. Karl Weick. 1993. "The Collapse of Sensemaking in Organizations."
2. Mónica Feliú-Mójer. 2022. "Advancing Inclusion Through Culturally Relevant Science Communication."

10.3 **Friday 10/27:** Emergency response (Guest: Ryan Hagen)

1. Jon Mooallem. 2023. "Three Years Into Covid, We Still Don't Know How to Talk About It."

Sunday 10/29: Case study #2 due

11.1-11.2 **Monday 10/30 & Wednesday 11/1:** Discontents

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

11.3 Friday 11/3: Best intentions (Guest: Shai Dromi)

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

PART III: Leading social change

12.1-12.2 Monday 11/6: Performing leadership

1. Tim Hallett et al. 2019. "Public Ideas."
2. Joel Best. 2009. "Sociologists as Outliers."
3. Andrew Carton. 2018. "How NASA Leaders Enhanced the Meaningfulness of Work by Changing the Meaning of Work." ([PODCAST](#))
4. Charles Fishman. 2019. "[The Race to the Moon Was So Unpopular...](#) "

Friday 11/10: NO CLASS

13.1-13.2 Monday 11/13 & Wednesday 11/15: Alliances

1. Mayer Zald. 1996. "Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing."
2. Peter Cole and Peter Limb. 2017. "Hooks down! Anti-apartheid activism and solidarity among maritime unions in Australia and the United States."
3. Cheryl LaBash. 2013. "[Tribute Honors Life & Legacy of Leo Robinson.](#)"

13.3 Friday 11/17: Making repairs (Guest: Jody Roberts)

Sunday 11/19: Case study #3 due

Monday 11/20, Wednesday 11/22 & Friday 11/24: NO CLASS

14.1-14.2 Monday 11/27 & Wednesday 11/29: The unit of leadership

1. Jo Freeman. 1972. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness."
2. Paul Graham. 2013. "[Do Things That Don't Scale.](#)"
3. Leidy Klotz. 2021. "Introduction" and "Scaling Subtraction."

14.3 **Friday 12/1:** Forecast

15.1 **Monday 12/4:** Final review I (in class)

15.2 **Wednesday 12/6:** Final review II ([ZOOM](#))

Sunday 12/10: TAKE-HOME FINAL (**due Wednesday, 12/13**)