

**Syllabus: The Heart of Leadership**  
**FE-722**  
**Winter 2013-2014**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Class Meets:** Winter Trimester, 2013, Wednesday elective session

**Appendix:** (I) Course Bibliography  
(II) Course Schedule, Themes and Readings

**1. Course Description**

Leadership is a core competency of any military officer and developing a deep understanding of leadership and building critical leadership skills is a life-long pursuit. Officers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be faced with expanding missions, life-threatening circumstances and difficult environments where they will be forced to solve both technical problems and lead adaptive change -- often without well-established organizational boundaries and most often in front of and among people with diverse backgrounds, agendas and personal biases.

**The challenge of this course.** While this course builds on many of the foundational academic and practical skills you will learn here at the college and have acquired elsewhere, this particular course will push you to examine yourself as a leader and stimulate you to think about all of personal elements that have gone in to shaping you as a leader.

If you have the desire and disposition to be truly self-reflective, want to understand yourself as a leader and are willing to share your experiences and open yourself up to your peers --

**THEN THIS COURSE IS FOR YOU.**

But, if you believe you need more time and exposure to other leadership elements before taking a class like this or if you are not prepared to do a bit of difficult critical self-examination and undertake a frank assessment of yourself as a leader--

**THEN DO NOT TAKE THIS COURSE.**

This course will build on and augment established and well-researched elements of leadership to expand and deepen the student's understanding of leadership outside situations already encountered in their professional lives to-date. It will attempt to develop within each student a self-awareness of their own specific leadership narrative and identify their own individual strengths and vulnerabilities. Also, the course will identify methods for understanding complex and difficult leadership challenges and provide opportunities to use these methods in examining specific cases.

Understanding yourself as a leader, obtaining an accurate assessment of the environment you will be required to operate in and understanding the motivations, goals and operating modes of those you are attempting to lead are keys to success as a leader. Moreover, as the demographics of the services changes it will become increasingly important for leaders to understand how to reach across generational, gender and ethnic orientations within their own service or joint organization to motivate the people they are charged to lead and to mentor them to their fullest potential while meeting the goals and objectives of the organization.

The course will draw on a variety of written source material. Appendix II, the Student Guide, outlines the primary and secondary readings required for each class session. Particular emphasis should be given to the primary readings. **Primary readings should be done in the order that they are listed in the guide; the secondary readings can be read in any order determined by the student.**

Readings include: *Leadership Without Easy Answers* by Ronald A. Heifetz and *Leadership on the Line* by Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky. In addition, selected segments of *Organizing Genius* by Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman; *Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting out of the Box* by the Arbinger Institute and *That's Not What I Meant!* by Deborah Tannen round out the course reading. Other material designed to broaden the student's knowledge base on leadership studies and expose them to alternate sources of leadership knowledge will also be introduced. A full bibliography of material used in the course as well as other readings that may be of interest to students is provided in the bibliography provided in Appendix I.

### ***I-OPT Personal Survey Tool***

One key element of the class will be that each student will have the opportunity to take the I-OPT personal assessment tool questionnaire. I-OPT measures your information processing preferences. From this questionnaire several reports will be provided to you during both an in-class session and also in a one-on-one session with one of the course professors. This tool will provide you with feedback on your preferences in a number of key areas that influence your leadership style and preferences. It will also aid you as you develop your personal case study for presentation to the class. Other personal assessment tools may be utilized in the course at the discretion of the instructors to aid students in their learning with particular consideration given to the student's case study selection.

**2. Learning Outcomes.** This course provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences as leaders as a starting point to learning alternative adaptive methods of leadership and to expand their understanding of leadership theory and practice.

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

- a. Recognize their personal traits, strengths, biases and vulnerabilities as a leader within the context of their personal motivation and desire to lead.
- b. Understand the different narratives ongoing within an organization and harnessing that diversity to achieve the organization's mission.
- c. Critically examine past leadership failures and challenges as means of developing a foundation for life-long professional learning and personal growth.

- d. Apply an understanding of adaptive leadership to effect change or meet organizational goals in a dynamic and diverse environment.
- e. Further their understanding of leadership through continued self-study and exposure to an expanded library of leadership studies and academic material.

### **3. Course Requirements**

**Individual Case Study Paper (10 pages):** This paper should describe a personal leadership failure encountered by the student. It forms the core of individual learning outcomes for the class and is the foundation for the class presentation given during one of the last four sessions of the course. The case can be drawn from any professional or personal experience though careful thought should be given to the scenario and case selected with due consideration for how the case relates both to the core themes of the course and to the student's learning goals. The instructors will provide detailed written feedback on this paper for the student's use.

**One-on-One Tutorial with the Course Instructors (1 hour office call):** A one hour personal tutorial will be conducted with each student in the class. The foundation for this tutorial will be the ten-page case study paper written by the student. The goal of this tutorial is to sharpen the student's understanding of their individual case, cull out additional ideas and themes that emerge from the details of the case study and provide suggestions on which themes and ideas might be presented to the class.

**Executive Summary Paper (1 page):** This one page executive summary should identify a journal article, article in the popular press, a book or section of a book or a publicly available video that touches on a core theme of the course. The length of the actual source cited is not critical or considered. However, the executive summary should provide a clear and concise description of the work and how it resonates with the course. Students should expand their apertures to consider a wide variety of sources and professional fields as a means to recognize useful and applicable material that will aid them in their ongoing study of leadership. These papers will be collated into a single document and provided to each member of the class and may be used as the basis for future readings and material used in the course.

**Course Presentation (1 hour during class):** Students will be given a one-hour block during one of the final four class sessions to present their individual case studies. The instructors will provide a case study sample of their own during course session #5 as a guide for students. However, students can use whatever media or medium that they determine will best convey the facts (as understood), the themes and the learning points embedded in the case study.

**The success of this course for both the individual student and the class as a whole relies heavily on student contribution to seminar discussion – it is a vital aspect of this course. Contribution is not determined by how often students speak, but how well they demonstrate knowledge of the assigned reading, enrich discussion and promote a community of learning.**

#### **4. Schedule of Requirements and Feedback**

##### ***Product***

##### ***Due***

Individual Case Study Selected by the Student (10 pages)	18 DEC 2013
Case studies with comments and feedback returned to students. Also, a schedule of when students will brief their cases will be distributed to the class.	6 JAN 2014
One-on-one tutorials scheduled (one-hour, coordinated between the instructors and students)	9 -24 JAN 2014
Executive Case Studies Due (1 page)	15 JAN 2014
Individual Case Study Presentations	22, 29 JAN 5, 12 FEB

#### **5. Grading**

For this elective course, students will receive a Pass, a High Pass or a Fail based on the following criteria:

Individual Case Study	35%
Executive Summary	15%
Class Presentation	35%
Class Participation	15%

#### **6. Course Agenda**

Appendix II provides the course schedule, required reading assignments and topics, themes and questions that form the focus of each individual elective session.

## Appendix I

### Bibliography

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