



Academic Year 2016-2017

Syllabus

Group Interaction and Leadership Course:

About Leadership, Agility and Complexity Governance – Approaches and Models

An Interactive Educational Module

6 CFU

Lt. Gen. Fernando Giancotti

Course Description

Course aim is to develop a cognitive approach apt to promptly understand and elaborate on leadership issues, starting from small group dynamics up to the strategic leadership level, key for governance of complex systems. Leadership is a vital function of the collective action. It has originated in the ancestral human groups and was molded by hunting and survival needs. The basic leadership mechanisms are hence related to the small group and are largely based on emotional interactions. The need to extend leadership from the small group to complex organizations gives way to great challenges, still very often unresolved. Such extension demands specific cultural and cognitive skills, needed especially for leaders at the strategic level, who must operate on ample domains, up to far away time horizons, with great value at stake. The course will therefore touch upon small group leadership, useful to lead at the supervisory level and base of the dynamics of the collective action, to expand to complex organization dynamics and to strategic level leadership, with special reference to the strategic thinking needed in our volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous and rapidly changing world.

Teaching Method

The course will be based on interactive lessons, with highly encouraged student participation, on evaluation of real world cases, on “live” experiences focused on the educational objectives, on classroom exercises and seminars, with a requirement for student to produce reference material useful for the course and further self-development.

Schedule of Topics

The course topics are so articulated to achieve the following main educational objectives:

- understanding of the basic elements of emotional leadership, with reference to ethics and small group dynamics, relating it through class discussion to one’s own experience;
- acquiring an anthropological perspective of leadership and the collective action, able to link all main leadership theories;
- understanding of the organizational dimension of leadership, its challenges and ways to cope therewith;
- knowing the general evolution and the different approaches of leadership studies;
- focusing on fundamental elements of strategic leadership, with special reference to strategic thinking, and establishing a personal development plan for such skills;
- gain a clear appreciation of the influence of culture on the effectiveness of the collective action, also through an historical perspective, and being able to elaborate on actual cases;
- understanding of nature and scope of Mission and Vision statements and being able to actually use them in a class exercise;
- understanding of the conceptual base of the “New Science of Complexity and Chaos” and its value for strategic thinking, also through application to actual cases;
- understanding and utilizing strategic leadership cognitive models, aimed to complex, uncertain and rapidly changing environments;
- understanding change management, through knowledge of principles and actual cases, being able to conceive a change strategy;
- being able to link all above mentioned elements in an organic frame of reference.

The significance of ethics for leadership and the effectiveness of the collective action will be recalled throughout the course.

Textbook and Materials

The mandatory textbook for the course is the research:

Giancotti, Fernando and Shaharabani, Yakov, *The Relevant Warriors – Leadership and Agility in Complex Environments*. Un-published research, Washington, NDU-ICAF, 2006. The research has an ample and accurately referenced bibliography, to expand on topics of interest.

An electronic copy of the research will be issued.

Further readings include:

Giancotti, Fernando and Shaharabani, Yakov, *Leadership agile nella complessità - Organizzazioni, Stormi da combattimento*, Milano: Guerini e associati, 2008; it is an Italian expanded text based on the research.

Sashkin, Marshall and Sashkin, Molly G., *Leadership That Matters - the Critical Factors for Making a Difference in People’s Lives and Organization’s Success*, San Francisco: Berrett- Koehler, 2003.

Kotter, John and Cohen, Dan, *The Heart of Change - Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations*, Harvard Business Review Press, 2012.

Sanders. T. Irene, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Handouts will be issued throughout the course.

Assessment

The assessment will be conducted according to participation to classes and to the exercises, through written tests, papers and the evaluation of a leadership personal self-development plan, as a final work. Student's performance will be assessed using the following weights. The final Overall Course Grade is given in thirtieths.

Element	Weight (%)
Class Participation	30
Essays	30
Final Test (multiple choice)	15
Final Work	25
Total	100

Class Participation: 30% of final grade will be based on class interaction. Instructor will evaluate the following items:

TEAM WORK
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
QUALITY OF CONTRIBUTES
PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF COURSE CONCEPTS
STRATEGIC THINKING ABILITY
COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS - ORAL

Essays: 30% of final grade will be based on three essays to be produced by the student. Grading criteria and relative weight of the single essay will be announced in class.

As term of reference all written assignments (including the final exam) will be evaluated as follows:

KNOWLEDGE OF TOPIC
QUALITY OF CONTRIBUTION
ADHERENCE TO COURSE OBJECTIVES
COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS - WRITTEN

Final Test: 15% of the final grade will be assigned to a final multiple choice test, covering the main concepts of the whole course.

Final Work: 25% of final grade will be assigned to the final exam. The exam will consist of a written work, aimed to relate the course contents to the future life of the students. Detailed instructions will be provided in class.

Class interaction is key to the deep understanding of the concepts of the course. Evaluation of students who do not attend classes (.e. less than 80% participation in class) will therefore require all written works and tests of the course and furthermore a thorough examination, inclusive of the applicable practical exercises, to assess the actual level of understanding of the subject in comparison to the rest of the class.

Office hours

Students can interact with the instructor also outside the classroom, every time they deem it necessary. That should be done preferably through e-mail or text messaging. After or before classes, it will be always possible to interact personally with the teacher. To facilitate interaction, an advance notice of such need will be appreciated.

NOTE: Since the course is provided for a limited number of students, **Erasmus or non Global Governance students** who would like to attend this course and take this exam need to contact the Secretariat of Global Governance by e-mail global.governance@uniroma2.it for registration.