The Culture of Leadership I: Heroes, Tyrants, Celebrities

Mondays 6 - 9 PM | Talbot College 141

Course Website: [http://www.uwo.ca/publichumanities/of_interest/leadership.html](http://www.uwo.ca/publichumanities/of_interest/leadership.html)  Twitter: https://twitter.com/LeadingCulture

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Teaching Assistants:
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“One of the main factors in their choice of social sciences over humanities, students report, is the desire ‘to contribute positively to society.’ Undergraduate education in the Arts and Humanities corrects the misconception that the social can be separated from the cultural. First, it offers students knowledge necessary for civic life and professional practice. Why would one choose to enter the world of medicine, we ask, without having encountered the thinkers who have expressed and explored pain, healing, empathy…or hubris? Why would one choose not to consider, before entering the world of business, what people have thought in various times and places about commerce, competition, enterprise…or greed? And how could one plan to practice law or politics without knowing how others have thought about the social good, the rights of individuals, what makes a good society…or a bad one? Obtaining such knowledge isn’t self-indulgence or an educational luxury: it is the very least we can ask of those who would lead us.”

-- “Mapping the Future,” Harvard University, Arts and Humanities
http://artsandhumanities.fas.harvard.edu/files/humanities/files/mapping_the_future_31_may_2013.pdf

**Course Description:** This course addresses the complex nature of leadership – the social, moral, and ethical dilemmas faced by women and men put in the hot seat of speaking and acting for others – as represented in key works of literature and culture. What role does a leader play: hero, manager, thinker, strategist, artist, figurehead, authority, imagineer, dictator, star? What does culture teach us about leadership, and how does it train us as leaders? Through lectures, discussions, and a variety of assignments from personality assessments to community leadership interviews, we will debate the diverse and often conflicting attributes of leadership: organization, intellect, power, intuition, wisdom, morality, feeling, empathy, creativity, charisma.

**Prerequisite(s):** This is a non-essay course open to all students beyond Year One.

**Required Texts** (available at the Bookstore, unless noted otherwise):

- *Citizen Kane*. Dir. Orson Welles. RKO Pictures, 1941. (screened in class)

You will also be required to pay a fee to take the Majors PTI (Personality Types Inventory) assessment -- $15 -- in order to complete your Leadership Self-Assessment assignment (below). Even if you’ve taken the test before, you’ll need to re-take it for this course. Weekly lectures and Powerpoints will include excerpts from supplementary readings. Some of the full texts of these readings will be provided on the OWL course site. You should also consult a good dictionary and thesaurus (the *Oxford English Dictionary* is available online at Western Libraries) and writing and reference handbook, such as *The Little Brown Compact Handbook* (10th ed.).

**Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives**

Students who complete the course successfully will be able to:

- Analyze the critical and cultural importance and relevance of literature in reflecting and shaping how society views itself.
- Understand and appreciate the role history plays in shaping our views of leadership.
- Think and write critically about leadership from a variety of approaches and forms.
- Think expansively and critically about issues discussed in class -- literary, historical, philosophical, economic, political, social – and ask key
questions about how these issues impact and influence one another.

- Reflect upon these issues by applying them to your personal and professional situations.
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively in written assignments.

CLASS SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Introduction, including a brief Orientation for Majors PTI test</td>
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<td>September 15</td>
<td><em>Gilgamesh</em></td>
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<td>September 22</td>
<td>Sophocles, <em>Oedipus Rex</em></td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>Majors PTI workshop (in class)</td>
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<td>October 6</td>
<td>Shakespeare, <em>King Lear</em></td>
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<td>October 13</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING</td>
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<td>October 20</td>
<td>Conrad, <em>Heart of Darkness</em></td>
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<td>October 27</td>
<td>Scott, <em>Gladiator</em> (in-class screening)</td>
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<td>November 3</td>
<td><em>Gladiator</em></td>
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<td>November 10</td>
<td>Rand, <em>Anthem</em></td>
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<td>November 17</td>
<td>Welles, <em>Citizen Kane</em> (in-class screening and lecture)</td>
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<td>November 24</td>
<td><em>Citizen Kane</em> and Fitzgerald, <em>The Great Gatsby</em></td>
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<td>December 1</td>
<td>Fitzgerald, <em>The Great Gatsby</em></td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

- **Leadership Self-Assessment Profile** (1000 words; app. 4-5 pages; due in class October 20) 20%
- **Leadership in Culture Interview** (1250 words; app. 5-6 pages; due in class November 17) 30%
- **Mini-Tests** (two, written in class; 10% each; written in class September 22 & November 10) 20%
- **Final Examination** (3 hours; date, time, and location TBA) 30%

Note: The Department of English and Writing Studies stipulates that students must pass both term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students who fail the final examination (regardless of their term mark) automatically fail the course.

1. LEADERSHIP SELF-ASSESSMENT PROFILE

Objectives and learning outcomes:

- To develop a critical understanding of what personality traits do or do not reflect your leadership potential;
- To locate this self-assessment in relation to a person whose leadership profile you strongly identify (or not);
- To understand the complexities of human nature and motivation that inform leadership;
- To assess what kind of leader you might make, or want to make;
- To appreciate how reflection and writing are forms of civic engagement, and thus engines for social change;
- To improve your ability to understand, organize, analyze, and articulate a broad range of data through a written report with a clear intent and clear structure supported by adequate evidence of research and reflection.

**Leadership Self-Assessment and Self-Profile**: During the first class the Student Success Centre will instruct you about taking the Majors Personality Type Inventory (Majors PTI -- [http://majorspti.com/what-is-the-pti/](http://majorspti.com/what-is-the-pti/)). Three weeks later they will conduct an in-class workshop based on your test results. The test results and workshop will form the raw data to write your self-profile, which should address the following:

1) Briefly recount for your reader the results of your Majors PTI in terms of the style of leadership these results reflect;
2) Critically assess these results in terms of what strengths but also deficiencies the test reveals;
3) Envision what kind of leader you are or hope to be, specifically by discussing your leadership self-profile in terms of a person from real life (either someone you know or admire) with whom you strongly identify. How does s/he reflect your notion of leadership?
4) How does this overall assessment of your leadership qualities, potential, or deficits reflect the kind of change you hope to effect in your future development and/or in that of others?
5) Are there any aspects of your leadership profile that the Majors PTI did not reveal?

2. LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT

Objectives and learning outcomes:

- To develop a critical understanding of leadership practices and processes;
- To understand how leadership ideas and concepts apply to real situations and decision-making processes;
- To build leadership and citizenship in order to enhance the public good;
- To improve understanding and analysis of leadership by using effective communication skills to write articulate and persuasive reports with a