

**Ethical Leadership
EXLR 5210 A**

Course overview

There are many definitions of ethical leadership. We will use the following one as working definition, to be explored and filled in over the course of our meetings:

Ethical leaders create positive cultures and orient collective activity around shared values and goals.

The coursework emphasizes tools for creating organizational cultures that foster individuals, personal relationships, and group development in the pursuit of shared goals and objectives.

The particular course objectives are the following:

- *first*, developing the habit of reflecting on your own leadership and developing a better understanding of your own leadership;
- *second*, recognizing and feeling the power of organizational culture on yourself and others; and
- *third*, working collaboratively with others to develop and make real a positive vision of organizational leadership.

To attain these objectives, we will discuss research that we will connect with your everyday leadership world. Each class and assignment supports one or more of these objectives. Together, the objectives support the goal of the course.

This course primarily addresses the first and third of the Executive Leadership Program outcomes:

1. A deepened consciousness of Self as a leader.
2. Superior leadership acumen (ability to influence individuals and orchestrate organizational change).
3. Leading with conscience and competence within the local and global Commons.

And this course primarily addresses Leadership Executive-MBA learning outcomes 3, 4 and 5:

1. Students will demonstrate strategic decision-making capability.
2. Students are capable of rigorous analysis of data and stakeholder concerns.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate a vision that will have significant and positive leadership impact (i.e., leading change).
4. In business and in personal lives, students will act to preserve or enhance the well-being of the commons (global, health, and social justice).
5. Demonstrate wisdom through judgment/decision-making that integrates the needs of multiple stakeholders and adapts personal behavior appropriately.

Class Schedule & Assignments

Date & Time	Discussion topics	Deliverable(s)
Session 1: Friday September 14 8:30-Noon	<p style="text-align: center;">Architecture of ethical leadership</p> Class Agenda A. Introductions B. Architecture of ethical leadership C. Course syllabus, information, future meetings D. Time to reflect on what you want from the course <i>Supports Course Objective 1</i>	No deliverable for this class meeting, no preparation. Assignment 1 , described below, due October 7
Readings: none		

FIRST ASSIGNMENT: CLASS TAKE-AWAY, THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF ETHICS

(to be completed *after* our first meeting, to be discussed at our second meeting)

Due **October 7**

This paper has three parts.

- (i.) Summarize one or two points we discussed in class that can help you make better ethical leadership decisions.
- (ii.) Identify a specific decision-making event/scenario, preferably from your work experience. Please do not use general issues, such as paying attention to relationships can make groups more effective. If your example is general in this way, then identify a specific event where relationships between specific people in the workplace aided or hindered group effectiveness or somehow affected the organization, and be sure to identify what you mean by effectiveness. Feel free to anonymize the examples to protect the guilty and the innocent.
- (iii.) Use the four dimensions of ethics to analyze your decision and how you can improve your leadership and that of others in the future.

Requirements: Three-to-five pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins.

Date & Time	Discussion topics	Deliverable(s)
Session 2: Friday November 30 10:30-11:45, 2:00-5:30	<p style="text-align: center;">The leadership perspective</p> <p>Class agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Debrief assignment one B. Discussion of "The parable of the Sadhu" to emphasize the role of reflection in leadership. C. Review of multi-dimensional leadership D. Reflections on leadership <p><i>Supports Course Objectives 1 and 3</i></p> <hr/> <p>Readings (all of these are in the course binder)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowen McCoy, "The Parable of the Sadhu," <i>Harvard Business Review</i> 75:3 (May-Jun 1997) • Carol S. Dweck, "Mindsets and human nature: Promoting change in the Middle East, the schoolyard, the racial divide, and willpower" <i>American Psychologist</i>, 7:8 (2012), pp. 614-622 	<p>No deliverable for this class meeting.</p>

Date & Time	Discussion topics	Deliverable(s)
Session 3: Saturday December 1 8:30-noon	<p style="text-align: center;">The organizational perspective</p> <p>Class Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The good news: ethical leadership works B. The bad news: unethical leadership works C. Building your vision of a positive organizational culture D. Reflections on the effects of culture <p><i>Supports Course Objectives 2 and 3</i></p>	<p>No deliverable for this class meeting.</p> <p>Assignment 2, described below, due December 16</p>

	<p>Readings (all of these are in the course binder except where indicated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• T. Tyler, J. Dienhart, and T. Thomas, “The ethical commitment to compliance: Building value-based cultures,” <i>California Management Review</i> 50:2 (2008), pp. 36-41• Adam Grant, <i>Give and Take: The Revolutionary approach to success</i> (Viking, 2013): Chapter One, “Good returns: The dangers and rewards of giving more than you get”• Charles Duhigg, <i>The Power of Habit</i> (Random House, Inc., 2012): Chapter Four, “Keystone habits, or the ballad of Paul O’Neil”• [[REVIEW, as preparation for the second assignment]] Peter Senge, <i>The necessary Revolution: How individuals and organizations are working together to create a sustainable world</i> (Doubleday, 2008). REVIEW: (i) pp. 263-266, “Protocols for balancing advocacy and inquiry”; (ii) Chapter 18, “Building shared commitment”; (iii) pp. 276-280, “Toolbox: The four-player model: Identifying current patterns in your working team.”• [[OPTIONAL, but recommended, and short]] Adam Grant, “The one question you should ask about every new job,” <i>New York Times</i> (December 19, 2015), available here: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/20/opinion/sunday/the-one-question-you-should-ask-about-every-new-job.html? r=0 . This article is based on a longer paper we can provide, let me know: J. Martin et al., “The uniqueness paradox in organizational stories,” <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> 28: 3(1983), pp. 438-453• [[OPTIONAL, for after class]] S. Ghoshal, C.A. Bartlett, and P. Moran, “A new manifesto for management,” <i>Sloan Management Review</i> 40:3 (1995), focus on pp. 12-17
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Note regarding the McCoy reading.

The article by McCoy was used in the original Harvard Business School course called, "Leadership and Corporate Accountability"—one of the first, if not the first, business ethics course taught in the United States.

That course used the Sadhu reading “to examine the role of personal values of leaders in motivating others to action; to understand the relationship between individual and collective or group responsibilities and ethics; and to increase skills needed to recognize a situation with ethical implications and avoid ‘moral blindness.’”

That curriculum pairs the McCoy paper with an essay by Martin Luther King, called “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” We haven’t assigned that essay as part of class, but it is one of the great documents of American democracy (https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html).

This is what the Harvard Business School curriculum says:
“This session’s goal is to inspire personal reflection on key themes of the course. For this class, students prepare two readings. ‘The Parable of the Sadhu,’ written by an investment banker and graduate of HBS [Harvard Business School], describes how the author dealt with an unexpected situation that arose while he was hiking in the Himalayas. Only in retrospect, after being challenged by another member of the climbing party, did he recognize that he had ‘hiked right through’ an ethical dilemma without even noticing. The second reading is the ‘Letter from a Birmingham Jail’ by U. S. civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Written as a response to his critics while King was in jail for his civil rights activities, the letter lays out King’s fundamental beliefs and his rationale for taking a non-violent approach to fighting injustice. This pair of readings invites students to consider what enables some people to ‘see’ ethical issues that are invisible to others; and why only a few of those who ‘see’ the issues are successful in mobilizing and inspiring others to action. The session highlights the importance of ethical awareness as the first step toward ethical action and gives students a chance to reflect on practical steps they can take to protect their ethical sensibilities from atrophy.”

ASSIGNMENT 2: ETHICAL CONVERSATIONS PRESENT

Due **December 16**

Part one: Analyze two conversations/ meetings. You can initiate the conversations and discuss topics from class, or you can analyze conversations/meetings that address substantive, difficult questions in your work. In one of those conversations you should act as a bystander—as Peter Senge defines that term—you should observe, ask questions, and comment but not advocate for a position. In the other you can advocate (in Senge’s terms, move, follow, or oppose). These conversations should be with different people. Describe the context/ question to be addressed in the conversation or meeting, explain your own position/role, and answer the following questions: (i.) Describe what went right and what went wrong using Senge’s categories. (ii.) Analyze the conversation using the four dimensions of ethics—meaning, was there disagreement you could ultimately explain in terms of the underlying values at stake? (iii.) Could you have used Senge’s tools to make the conversations more productive? And (iv.), what can you do differently next time?

Write three to five pages, double-spaced, and bring to our January meetings. We will debrief these assignments in class.

We focus on conversations for three sets of reasons. *First*, we can learn about ourselves, about our own management/leadership practices, and about our organizational contexts by observing what happens in conversations. *Second*, our thinking is very much biased by the opinions we already hold; according to our usual models of cognition, we are confronted by a question, we seek out facts, analyze those facts, and then arrive at an answer; but in practice our facts and our analyses are very much biased by the opinions—the answers—we already have. This is a descriptive/ empirical point: we should address facts and conduct analyses in an objective way, but our social inclination is to defend our views—the impulse to rationalize our pre-existing beliefs is very powerful. This is true of all cognitive activity, but it is often more true—the instinct to defend and rationalize our already-held beliefs is even stronger—in the space of ethical questions. So we focus on conversations so we can practice being open to others’ ideas, so we can practice listening (against

the usual impulse to advocate). *Third*, because of these cognitive biases, we make progress in dialogue with others, meaning that we come to understand problems, solutions, and ourselves better—when we listen to others, ask constructive questions, explain our own reasons, and try to understand the relationship between beliefs/judgments and reasons on all sides. This process can help us notice our own biases.

Please look at the Toolbox from Peter Senge’s book, listed in the assigned readings. It provides a four-person model of conversation; the terms from Senge used above are explained in that very short reading. The assigned readings includes two other excerpts from Senge’s book that you might find helpful, but those are optional.

Part two: Look at the Third Assignment described below. Write up a one page, preliminary outline for that assignment so we can discuss it in class.

Date & Time	Discussion topics	Deliverable(s)
Session 4: Friday January 4, 10:30-11:30, 1:45-5:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Conversations, reflection, organizational direction</p> Class Agenda A. Debrief the conversation assignments B. Case: TBD C. Reflections on how conversations can help set organizational direction <i>Supports Course Objectives 2 and 3</i>	No deliverable for this class meeting.
<p>Readings (all of these are in the course binder except where indicated):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case—to be assigned. • D. Kiron et al., “Corporate sustainability at a crossroads,” <i>MIT Sloan Management Review Research Report</i> (May 2017) 		

Date & Time	Discussion topics	Deliverable(s)
Session 5: Saturday January 5, 1:15-5:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Developing Your Action Plan:</p> Class Agenda A. Level 5 Leadership: some surprising outcomes B. A manifesto for management or leadership? C. Group brainstorming for the Action Plan Assignment D. Reflection on our course <i>Supports Course Objectives 1, 2, and 3</i>	No deliverable for this class meeting. Assignment 3, described below, due January 27
<p>Readings (all of these are in the course binder except where indicated):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Collins, “Level 5 leadership: The triumph of humility and fierce resolve,” <i>Harvard Business Review</i> (July, 2005) • Debra E. Meyerson, “The tempered radicals,” <i>Stanford Social Science Review</i> (Fall 2004) • William Deresiewicz, “Solitude and leadership,” <i>The American Scholar</i> (Spring 2010), available at http://theamericanscholar.org/solitude-and-leadership/#.Ua-JV78sr0c 		

THIRD ASSIGNMENT: ACTION PLANS FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Due **January 27**

Apply some of the material covered in this course and devise an Action Plan for Ethical Leadership. This could be a small step, such as inspiring reports, peers, and/or superiors to be aware of how they influence the ethical culture of the business. It could be a plan to restructure meetings so ethical issues get raised and are discussed better. It could be a large step, such as rethinking business processes (like your supply chain management) or influencing marketing or growth strategies.

To make your Plan concrete, focus on either organizational work processes or organizational practices for interacting with/managing employees, and look for gaps between those processes/ practices and either the four dimensions of justice (self, relationships, group, justice) or the requirements for ethical culture described in the Tyler, Dienhart, and Thomas reading (voice, transparency, dignity/concern, objectivity). So, for example, you might find that some organizational work processes do not adequately support building business relationships and devise a plan to repair those processes (this is a work process/ ethical dimension analysis). Or, perhaps your organizations work processes could address something of concern in the broader community, and you propose to re-align those processes to serve that social need (such a plan would align organizational processes with community-oriented values). Alternatively, you might see that your organization's way of managing a certain group of employees does not treat them fairly and devise a plan to fix that (this example is an organizational practice/ethical culture gap).

You do not have to actually implement your plan, so feel free to think big, but also think realistically. And feel free to discuss other kinds of plans with the instructor, there is space for plans that pursue different kinds of issues/ opportunities.

In discussing why your Action Plan will be successful, please explain how you will include others; address the personal, relationship, and group resources that will contribute to your plan's success; and consider the obstacles you might face. Also, be sure to discuss: (1) resources you'll need and how you will acquire them and (2) obstacles, and how you will address them.

Requirements: Five to seven pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins.

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This prohibition includes sexual misconduct, which encompasses sexual harassment and sexual violence. Seattle U remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning, living, and working environment. Seattle U offers emergency, medical, and other support resources, as well as assistance with safety and support measures, to community members who have experienced or been impacted by sexual misconduct.

Seattle U requires all faculty and staff to notify the University's Title IX Coordinator if they become aware of any incident of sexual misconduct experienced by a student.

For more information, please visit <https://www.seattleu.edu/equity/>. If you have any questions or concerns, you may also directly contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Equity (**email:** oi@seattleu.edu; **phone:** 206.296.2824)

University Resources and Policies

Academic Resources

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>)
(This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)
Note: The Learning Commons does not offer tutoring for EXLR/EMBA/HEMBA-level students.
- Academic Integrity Tutorial *(found on Angel and SU Online)*

Academic Policies on Registrar website

(<https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/academics/performance/>)

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy *(only for those professional programs to which it applies)*

Notice for students concerning Disabilities

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.