**Leading Teams**

**Course code:** MGT263

**Semester and year:** Fall 2025

**Day and time:** Tuesdays, 11:15-14:00

**Instructor:** Daniel Padolsky, M.A.

**Instructor contact:** [daniel.padolsky@aauni.edu](mailto:daniel.padolsky@aauni.edu)

**Consultation hours:** Tuesdays, 14:00-14:30

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| **Credits US/ECTS** | 3/6 | **Level** | Intermediate |
| **Length** | 15 weeks | **Pre-requisite** |  |
| **Contact hours** | 42 hours | **Course type** | Bachelor required (PML concentration) |

# Course Description

This course is about how teams develop, the roles of team members, team dynamics, conflict management, and how to create, lead/manage and assess an effective team. Students participate in team experiences in order to apply the theory, skills, and concepts taught in the classroom. In addition, when teams are virtual, meaning not co-located, there are different dynamics that come into play for leading teams, often making it more difficult. Adding to the range of dynamics for team leadership of all types of teams is the fact that today many teams will be also multi-cultural. Leading and managing these types of teams will also be covered in detail.

All aspects of leading and managing all types of teams are covered from the perspective of leading and managing effective and efficient teams.

# Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

* Describe and demonstrate an understanding of the various roles for team members and leaders /managers
* Understand and demonstrate knowledge of what criteria are most important when building effective teams and leading them.
* Understand and demonstrate knowledge of the key role that effective teams play in the organizations of today and the importance of leading and managing these teams
* Describe and demonstrate an understanding of the basics of team roles, team dynamics, and team decision-making in order to function constructively in team settings.
* Demonstrate an ability to evaluate the effectiveness of a team;
* Understand and demonstrate an ability to explain how high-performing teams develop and how leaders/managers influence that development;
* Demonstrate an ability and understanding of how to recognize negative behaviors and roles of a team, and offer solutions to remedy them;
* Understand the importance of teamwork and utilizing the skills of building effective teams in various situations;
* Demonstrate an understanding and ability to implement strong team communication skills in leading others and how to use those skills to influence others;
* Understand and use leadership theory to take actions that improve the effectiveness of a team and implement these skills in real world situations
* Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and difficulties inherent in leading and managing **virtual teams**
* Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and difficulties inherent in leading and managing **cross-cultural teams**

# Reading Material

## Required Materials

An assigned reading (and viewing) list will be provided in the first class session and students are required to read materials before class and to be fully prepared.

A variety of articles, case studies, excerpts from various books, videos etc. will replace a” traditional” text. The materials will be stored on the course web site and available for download. Students are required to download materials as the course progresses and to stay current with the readings. Case studies, articles and other handouts will also be used and posted on course web sites. Presentation slides will occasionally be used during lectures. Slides will be posted on the course web site usually 1-2 days before class.

This is a sample list of readings and case studies:

* Northouse, Peter G. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. 7th ed., international ed., Los Angeles: Sage, 2016. (one chapter)
* Komives, Susan R, Nance Lucas, and Timothy R. McMahon. *Exploring Leadership: For College Students Who Want to Make a Difference*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998. Print. (one chapter)
* Lencioni, Patrick M. *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. Jossey-Bass, 2002.
* Lencioni, Patrick. *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Field Guide for Leaders, Managers, and Facilitators*. Jossey-Bass, 2005.
* Required Articles:
  + “Discipline of Teams” by Katzenbach and Smith
  + “Demand Better Results – And Get Them” by Schaffer
  + “What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team“ by Charles Duhigg
  + “Improving Group Dynamics”
  + “Belbin’s Nine Team Roles”
  + “Tuckman’s Theory of Team Development”
  + “Want Collaboration? Accept—and Actively Manage—Conflict” by Jeff Weiss and Jonathan Hughes
  + “How Great Leaders Motivate Their Teams” by Vanessa Loder
  + “NCAA Basketball Coach Offers Lessons in Leading High-Performing Teams” by Kathy Gurchiek
* Other reading and case studies to be determined

# Teaching methodology

Group work, case studies, discussions, experiential exercises, and lectures.

The main teaching/learning emphasis of this course is of a “hands-on” workshop approach. Depending on the designated topics for each class session, students will be presenting, re-presenting, writing, re-writing and discussing and critiquing in class sessions (and out) each other’s work with the goal of improving day-to-day, “real life” management communication.

Students will also need an active wi-fi sign in. Laptops will only be used during specific class times per instructor's guidance. Class participation is expected of all students. This means reading assignments in advance. Students will be presented with situations, topics and concepts for discussion in class.

# Course Schedule

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Class Agenda** |
| Session 1  Sep 2 | **Topic:** Introducing Teams and the Course  **Description:** Students will be introduced to the subject of leading teams by participating in a discussion and an activity. Students will also be oriented to the course’s syllabus, which includes the course assignments, learning outcomes, and schedule.  **Reading:** None  **Assignments/deadlines:** None |
| Session 2  Sep 9 | **Topic:** Why Teams  **Description:** Teams, and leading teams, are a critical and vital part of effective organizations today, the how, why, what and who are covered. When do you need a team?  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 2  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #1 |
| Session 3  Sep 16 | **Topic:** Team Member Roles  **Description:** All teams need members to play certain roles for the team to function well. What are those roles? One important role we will especially consider is the devil’s advocate.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 3  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #2, team contract and work plan |
| Session 4  Sep 23 | **Topic:** Team Decision-Making  **Description:** What are the different ways teams can make their decisions and what way is best for a specific situation?  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 4  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #3, Myers-Briggs results, proposal submission |
| Session 5  Sep 30 | **Topic:** The Five Dysfunctions of a Team Part 1  **Description:** We will begin discussing the most common dysfunctions that impair a team’s performance and what can be done to overcome them.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 5  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #4 |
| Session 6  Oct 7 | **Topic:** The Five Dysfunctions of a Team Part 2  **Description:** We will finish discussing the most common dysfunctions that impair a team’s performance and what can be done to overcome them.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 6  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #5 |
| Session 7  Oct 14 | **Topic:** Midterm **Description:** Students will take the midterm.  **Reading:** None  **Assignments/deadlines:** Midterm exam |
| Session 8  Oct 21 | **Topic:** Stages of Team Development  **Description:** All teams go through specific stages of development. As team Leader/Manager how do we recognize the stage your team is in and what can we do to advance them to the highest performing stage?  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 8  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #6 |
| Oct 28 | **Mid-term Break** |
| Session 9  Nov 4 | **Topic:** Managing Conflict/Difficulties in Teams  **Description:** All teams experience conflicts/difficulties at some point. What can the team Leader/Manager do to solve them?  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 9  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #7 |
| Session 10  Nov 11 | **Topic:** Virtual and Global Teams  **Description:** How do you build, manage, motivate and assess teams that are not co-located? The benefits and difficulties of managing virtual and global teams are considered.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 12  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #8 |
| Session 11  Nov 18 | **Topic:** The Team Leadership Approach Part 1  **Description:** Students will learn about a team leadership model that gives an overview of the complexities of leading a team. It describes how to analyze a team, what decisions need to be made when leading a team, and what can be done to improve the team after the analysis.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 11  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #9 |
| Session 12  Nov 25 | **Topic:** The Team Leadership Approach Part 2  **Description:** Students will continue to learn about the team leadership model.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 12  **Assignments/deadlines:** Journal entry #10 |
| Session 13  Dec 2 | **Topic:** Review  **Description:** Using experiential activities, we will review everything talked about so far. Also, groups will give their presentations.  **Reading:** Reading Module Session 13  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations and reports |
| Session 14  Dec 9 | **Topic:** Final Exam **Description:** Students will take the final exam.  **Reading:** None  **Assignments/deadlines:** Final exam |

# Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Workload (average)** | **Weight in Final Grade** | **Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes** | **Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes\*** |
| Participation | 42 | 20% | Students are expected to be present and timely, participate in all online activities, fill out surveys and questionnaires, give constructive feedback to the other students, and contribute constructively to discussions. | 1,2,3 |
| Journal entries | 18 | 10% | Comprehension of course material, and key concepts and application of those concepts to their experiences. | 1,2 |
| Group Facilitation (2) | 24 | 20% | Comprehension of course material and key concepts, ability to facilitate group discussions, ability to explain the researched topics to peers, identify key issues, and demonstrate subject knowledge. | 1,2,3 |
| Team Contract | 4 | 5% | Comprehension of course material, and key concepts and application of those concepts. | 1,3 |
| Work Plan | 8 | 5% | Comprehension of course material, and key concepts and application of those concepts. | 1,3 |
| Group Presentation and Report | 24 | 20% | Comprehension of course material and key concepts; ability to make professional, business presentations; ability to explain the researched topics to peers, identify key issues, demonstrate subject knowledge; and experience teamwork and group dynamics. | 1,2,3 |
| Midterm | 15 | 10% | Comprehension of course material, and key concepts. | 1,3 |
| Final Exam | 15 | 10% | Comprehension of course material, and key concepts. | 1,3 |
| **TOTAL** | **150** | **100%** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

\*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

\*\*This assignment is only for master’s-level students

# Detailed description of the assignments

## Participation:

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Positive, constructive contribution to all discussions and presentations, and the application of relevant course concepts to any assigned work that takes place during class time, such as short written assignments, surveys and questionnaires. Also, students fill out all feedback forms in a constructive manner. | 100% |

## Journal Entries: Every day, except for the first day and last two days, students are required to reflect in writing their thoughts on that day’s readings. Also, students will write two additional journal entries reflecting on their group facilitation experiences.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Content/Quality of Ideas:  --Responses to the readings are reflective in nature and show an ability to apply the content to students’ personal experiences. | 100% |

## Group Facilitation: Students will be selected for two dates and topical readings from our readings to facilitate two in-class group discussions. At home, students will prepare to facilitate a discussion on the assigned date’s reading by doing a close reading of the reading and writing 5-7 open-ended discussion questions and an outline of the reading. The outline and questions should be submitted on NEO in electronic form the night before the group facilitation will take place. On the assigned facilitation dates, students will then bring 6 typed copies of the 5-7 discussion questions/outlines to class. Students will then lead a 15-20-minute discussion about the readings with the group so that students get a good understanding of the key concepts associated with the assigned topic.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Content: Questions are appropriate for the assigned reading, help students to understand key concepts in the reading, and cover the reading comprehensively. | 25% |
| Group Facilitation: The student effectively facilitates a comprehensive discussion of the reading | 50% |
| Outline: The outline covers the entire reading and is structured in an appropriate manner. | 25% |
| Accuracy: Penalty for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. | Up to -10% |
| Warning: If a group facilitation is missed, it cannot be made up another day. | |

***Group Presentation and Report***: Students are organized in teams. Each team will seek out a real team and act as a consulting group hired to assess and improve the functioning of that team. The real team could be from a business, sports, nonprofit, or student organization context. The final project is to be delivered as a presentation and report and to be submitted in print and electronic format. Group projects are to be presented by each team in front of their peers and, if possible, a representative of the read team. The presentations should be at least 10 minutes long and reports 6 pages.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Clarity and organization: The presentation/report is clear and develops in a logical manner. | 30% |
| Content: Application of course content | 20% |
| Team collaboration and participation | 20% |
| Creativity and depth of analysis | 20% |
| Peer/self-evaluation | 10% |

***Work Plan*:** Groups will write a work plan to identify the steps and responsibilities in completing the group presentation and report.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Content:  --The work plan details the tasks involved in writing the business plan and making the presentation, assigns at least one student to each one of them, and assigns due dates for each of the tasks. | 100% |

***Team Contract*:** Groups will write a team contract to set the foundation for how the members will work together on the business plan and presentation.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Structure: The team contract is well organized. It contains all of the sections required. | 20% |
| Content:  --The team contract details how group members will communicate with each other, how group decisions will be made, what are group members’ responsibilities, how the group will be led, how the group will ensure progress is made on their assignments, and what the consequences are for failure to fulfill their responsibilities. | 80% |

## Midterm Exam: An exam will be given to students at the midway point of the semester which covers all of the material covered in the readings and classes so far.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Comprehension and application of course material | 100% |

## Final Exam: Students will take a final, comprehensive exam.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Comprehension and application of course material | 100% |

# All assignments may receive a penalty of 10% each day they are late.

# General Requirements and School Policies

## General requirements

## All coursework is governed by AAU’s academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a [summary of key policies](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xoNETY9yqNMwNP-06wDzM2VmgMIOire-?usp=sharing) regarding coursework.

***Course specific requirements***

There are no special requirements or deviations from AAU policies for this course.

Prepared by: Daniel Padolsky

Date: 17/06/2025

Approved by:

Date: