
PSYC 493 Issues in Psychology
“Leading Effective Teams”
Fall 2023 Course Syllabus
Wednesday 10:20am-1:10pm
Baker Hall, Room 555

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Dorothy Carter, Ph.D.
Office: Psychology Building, Room 316
Office hours: By appointment
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COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Team effectiveness—the capacity of a team to work together to accomplish shared goals—is essential in both work and non-work contexts. However, many teams struggle to achieve their goals because of ‘process losses’ (i.e., events and interactions among team members that prevent the team from achieving its full potential). **Team leaders** can have a disproportionate impact on the effectiveness of their teams by minimizing “process losses” and setting up the “facilitating conditions” teams need to succeed. Researchers in the field of Psychology—and especially the domain of **Industrial/Organizational Psychology**—have devoted substantial attention to identify phenomena, especially leadership, that help mitigate process loss and support team effectiveness. This course explores research on organizational teams with a particular emphasis on team leadership. The course will involve a series of lectures, readings, experiential team activities, and homework assignments designed to develop students’ understanding of what constitutes effective team leadership. Additionally, each student will complete a semester-long project focused on understanding and enhancing their own team leadership capacity through self-reflection and peer feedback.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Lecture Topic(s)	Activity	Readings & Deadlines
Aug. 30	Course intro	Team knowledge quiz	
Sept. 6	Teams + leadership 101	n/a	“Why teams don’t work” HBR; Thompson Ch 1 & 2
Sept. 13	Team behavior	Marshmallow tower	Marks et al. (2001)
Sept. 20	Team cognition	Moon survival	
Sept. 27	Team affect/motivation	Army crew case	Read: Army Crew Case before today’s class
Oct. 4	Team creativity Introduce model of team leadership, motivation, facilitating conditions	Food for thought Class discussion	Read: Catmull (2008) before today’s class
Oct. 11	Team leadership	Class discussion	Zaccaro et al. (2001) Hackman (2012)
Oct. 18	Team leadership Shared team leadership	Class discussion	
Oct. 25	n/a	Review 360 Interview Questions during Class Prep for Mount Everest	360 Interview Questions DUE today!
Nov. 1	Information sharing biases Team debriefs	Climbing Mount Everest	Edmondson (2012)
Nov. 8	Social network analysis 101	n/a	Barabási (2016) Burt (1992)
Nov. 15	Diagnosing, building, and leveraging your network	Network self-assessment Class discussion	Anand & Conger (2007)
Nov. 22	n/a (project workday, instructor available via email)	Complete your Leadership Development Project	
Nov. 29	n/a	Project Presentations	
Dec. 6	n/a	Project Presentations	

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Requirements and Grading: Letter grades will be awarded as follows:

4.0 = 90-100%	2.0 = 70-74%
3.5 = 85-89%	1.5 = 65-69%
3.0 = 80-84%	1.0 = 60-64%
2.5 = 75-79%	0.0 = below 60%

Instructor Availability: Although I do not have set office hours, I am available to meet with students by appointment. Please email me to schedule appointments. I check email frequently.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: The course is structured to encourage discussion and interaction – please treat other members of the class with courtesy and respect. If you are disruptive (e.g., talking when others have the floor, making inappropriate remarks, interfering with others’ learning), you will be asked to leave the class. Texting, emailing, game playing, and web surfing during class are counterproductive to learning, lessen your capacity to engage with those around you, and can be rude. Leave the outside world outside of class and be fully present. If for some reason you must arrive late or leave early (e.g., illness, car trouble), please take a seat near the door and minimize disruption of others with your arrival/departure.

Online and In-person Courtesy Expectations: As a seminar, you are expected to participate in class discussions. Although I encourage you to be yourself in your expressions, I also expect you to have courtesy and respect for others (online and in person). Please refrain from language that others might find offensive. There are topics we will discuss where individuals may have very different opinions and views – please express your dissenting viewpoint diplomatically. Uncivil behavior in a discussion may result in a 0.0 for participation points for an activity, as well as further sanctions and restrictions based on MSU Code of Conduct.

Recording: As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students are subject to the following conditions of use:

1. Students may record lectures/classroom activities and use the recordings for their own course-related purposes.
2. Students may share the recordings for others enrolled in this specific course section. Sharing is limited to using the recordings only for course-related purposes.
3. Students **may not** post the recordings or any other course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in this section of the class without the advance written permission of the course instructor and, if applicable, any students whose voice or image is included in the recordings. **That means you cannot post a photo or video or other recording of anyone in the class to any social media site (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) without their written consent.** Violation of this policy may result in a grade penalty up to a 0.0 in the course.
4. Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

Commercialization of Materials: Commercialization of any notes and materials from this course is not permitted.

Attendance Policy: For seminar courses, there are a lot of in-class exchange of ideas and discussion of readings. Missing class is problematic and will be considered in awarding of participation points. Absences will be excused only in accordance with the ombudsmen’s website on Attendance Policy (see www.msu.edu/unit/ombud). Information about requesting a grief-related excused absence is available at

<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/selected/grief-absence-policy>. If you will miss an assignment because of a religious observance, please let me know in advance.

Technical Support: For questions about D2L contact <https://help.d2l.msu.edu/> or Local: (517) 432-6200 Toll-free: (844) 678-6200 (North America and Hawaii). For other technical difficulties (e.g., WiFi or power outages), email me and let me know if this happens and has disrupted your learning.

D2L Tracking: Please be aware that D2L tracks all student login information. For example, it tracks when you have logged into D2L and when you have logged out. It also tracks when you submit assignments. This is helpful for the instructor because it allows me to resolve issues if there is a problem with the D2L system in terms of logging on and/or gaining access to the various sections of the site. Tracking can also help me resolve disputes about assignments.

Academic Integrity: Please refer to the General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. See Spartan Life Online (splife.studentlife.msu.edu) and/or the MSU Web site (msu.edu) and <https://ombud.msu.edu/academic-integrity/index.html#integrity> for details on academic integrity and your rights and responsibilities. Specific to this course, a penalty grade of 0 points is given on any assignment where an individual claims or submits work of another as one's own (including plagiarism of whole or part of another's work), completes or attempts to complete work for someone else, or in any way misrepresents one's completion of assignments or internship duties. Please review the Spartan Code of Honor <https://acadgov.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/SpartanCodeofHonor.pdf>

Accommodations: If you have a disability that will require accommodations, please contact me within the first week of class to discuss your needs. If there are accessibility issues with material that is linked through the MSU library, please contact the library. If there are other accessibility concerns you have please let me know.

Limits to Confidentiality: Students should be aware that I am unable to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with my responsibilities as a mandatory reporter within the university. That is, I must report to other University offices any information you share with me regarding (1) suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this abuse happened a long time ago, (2) allegations of sexual assault or harassment involving MSU students, faculty, or staff, and (3) credible threats of harm to oneself or others. These reports may trigger contact from a campus official; in almost all cases, it will be your decision if you wish to speak to that individual. If you would like to talk about any of the above in a setting that is confidential and not bound by mandatory reporting, please make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

Mental Health: Mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) website at www.caps.msu.edu.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation (25% of total course grade)

The class is structured around a series of in-class teamwork activities and discussions. It is important that you attend class and participate in the activities and discussions (25% of your course grade).

2. Reflection Paper – Leading Team Effectiveness (25% of total course grade)

The Reflection Paper will require you to write an essay response to the following prompt designed to assess your comprehension of the course material (i.e., readings, lectures, class discussions, team activities):

*Imagine you are a consultant working with an organization that relies heavily on teams. This company requires the teams to engage in a variety of tasks (e.g., creativity, problem-solving, action, negotiation). Based on what you have learned – through readings, lectures, and class discussions – about the factors that lead to team effectiveness, write an executive summary for the organization’s CEOs that outlines **5 evidence-based recommendations** for managers on how to improve the functioning of teams.*

Your response should be approximately 1-1.5 pages in length (12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins). Your response should not cite academic literature unless absolutely necessary and should be written in clear concise language (e.g., avoid the use of jargon). Imagine your reader is highly intelligent but less familiar with the academic literature on leadership and teams.

3. Developing Your Leadership Capacity Project

(50% of total course grade – 35% from the project packet, 15% from the presentation)

In your “Developing Your Leadership Capacity” Project, you will use examples and concepts from lecture, course readings, your own personal experiences, in-class team activities, and the results of three self-assessment activities (i.e., a leadership coat of arms, 360-degree feedback interviews, and a social network worksheet) to generate a document and a presentation describing an action plan for enhancing **YOUR leadership capacity**. Your project packet should be double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt Font, 1-inch margin. In addition to the project packet, you will prepare a **5 to 10-minute presentation** summarizing each of these components (to be presented during the last two days of the semester). Your project will contain the following components (PLEASE USE THESE LABELS!):

<u>Project Components</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>% of Course Grade</u>
<i>1. Leadership Coat of Arms</i>	1 page	5%
<i>2. Summary of Short-term and Long-term goals</i>	1-2 pages	5%
<i>3. 360-Degree Feedback Questions</i>	1-2 pages	5%
<i>4. 360-Degree Feedback Participants</i>	1 page	5%
<i>5. Summary and Reflection: 360 Degree Feedback Activity</i>	1-2 pages	5%
<i>6. Summary and Reflection: Network Mapping Activity</i>	1-2 pages	5%
<i>7. Action Plan for Enhancing My Leadership Capacity</i>	1-2 pages	5%
<i>8. In-class presentation</i>	5-10 min	15%
<i>Total:</i>		<i>50% of course grade</i>

Additional explanation for each component:

1. ***“Leadership Coat of Arms”*** – 1 page

The first part of the assignment is to create a leadership coat of arms. This is a single page visual depiction of you as a leader. There are no rules on how you create this; it can consist of words, drawings, photographs etc. The only restriction is that the coat of arms is contained on a single 8.5 x 11 page and is the first page of the assignment that you upload. Your leadership coat of arms is a visual depiction of your core values as a leader. A sample template is contained after these instructions. You can use this one or create your own. Use the quadrants of the template to represent each of the following:

1. Two of your leadership skills (these can be traits and/or behaviors).
2. The kind of work you most want to do OR the part of your current work that you like best.
3. Two values that influence how you lead others.
4. A recent success or accomplishment.

2. ***“Summary of Short-term and Long-term goals”*** – 1-2 pages

Please briefly outline your short term (less than six months from now) and longer term (5-10 years), goals. What types of “social capital” will you need to achieve these goals? (i.e., what kind of people do you need to KNOW in order to achieve your goals??)

3. ***“360-Degree Feedback Questions”*** – 1-2 pages

Develop a set of questions related to your leadership skills that you will ask three people to complete. The goal of a 360 is to gain insight from individuals who are your subordinates, peers, and supervisors. However, it is okay for the purpose of this activity to choose three individuals who you know in different capacities. For example, you might interview a classmate (peer), a manager or informal mentor (supervisor), and a younger professional (subordinate). The interview should take about 15 minutes. You might want to begin by introducing the purpose of the interview and what you hope to learn. You will want to take notes on the responses so that you can integrate them into your paper. In your project, you will list the questions you asked during your three interviews.

4. ***“360-Degree Feedback Participants”*** – 1 page

List the participants who completed your interview questions. Be sure to clarify the relationship you have with each participant (e.g., was this person a classmate/peer? Manager/supervisor, or subordinate/younger professional)?

5. ***“Summary and Reflection: 360-Degree Feedback Activity”*** – 1-2 pages

Summarize the way you see yourself as a leader (i.e., what does your coat of arms mean to you?) and the results of your interviews. Be sure to mention if any of the feedback you received from others was surprising to you and/or if the feedback aligned with how you see yourself as a leader.

6. ***“Summary and Reflection: Network Mapping Activity”*** – 1-2 pages

You will complete a worksheet during class that is designed to help you better understand the structure of your current social and professional network. YOUR WORKSHEET DOES NOT NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN YOUR PROJECT PACKET. Write a short summary of what you learned during the mapping social network worksheet activity. Please reflect on the results of your network mapping worksheet in light of your short- and long-term goals. For example, you could consider some of the following questions: what are potential shortcomings in your current network? Are you already connected

to the people you need to know in order to achieve your short term and/or long-term goals? What are the potential costs for assembling these networks?

7. “Action Plan for Enhancing My Leadership Capacity” – 2-3 pages

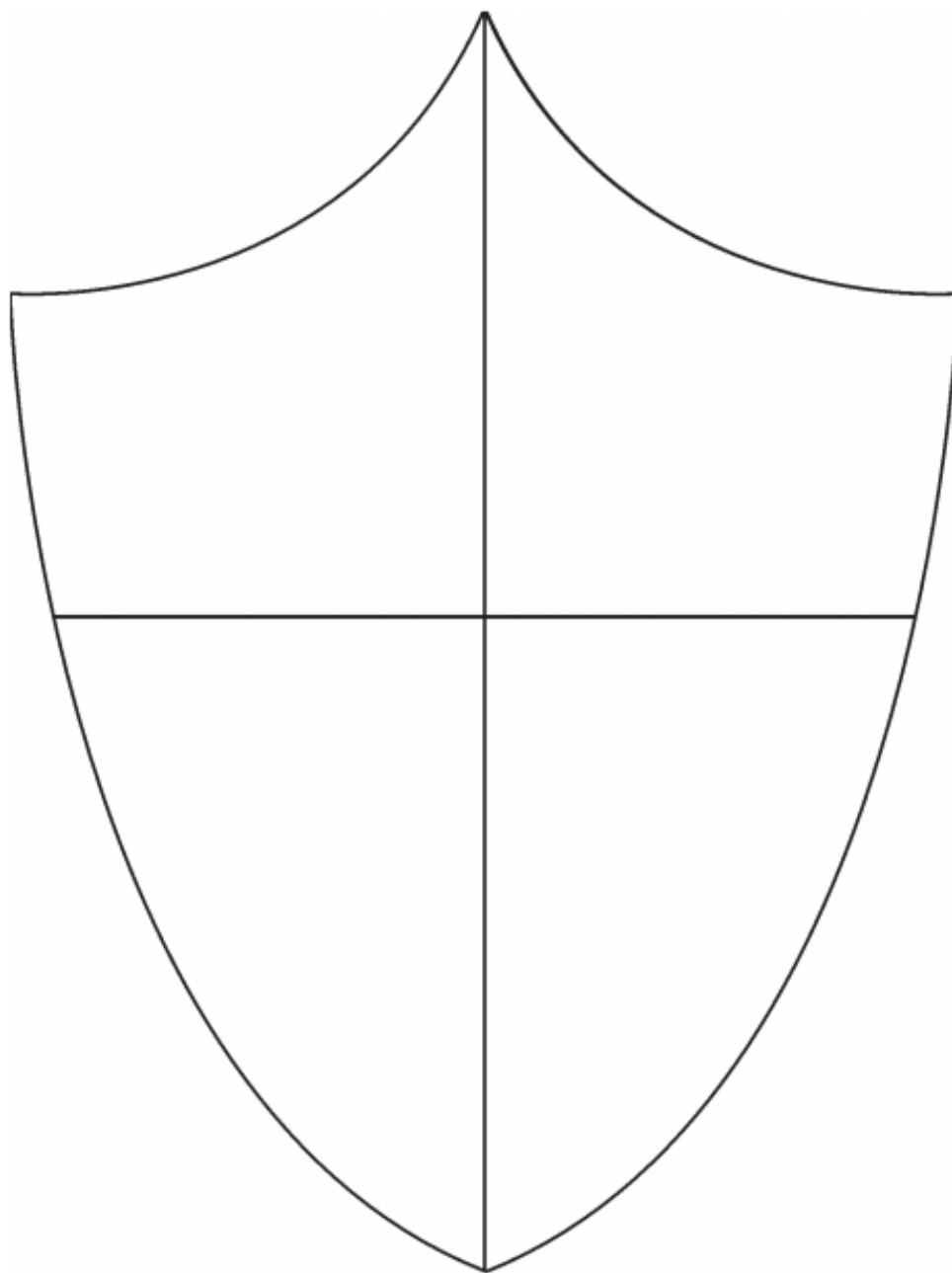
Identify at least **6 action items (total)** that you will take to improve your leadership capacity after completing this course. In addition to action items related to enhancing your leadership capacity in general (e.g., working on building trusting relationships with teammates), your action items should include **at least 2 actions** you will take related to building, enhancing, and/or leveraging your social networks (e.g., strategies you could use to connect to key people who could help you achieve your goals as a leader). Each action item should be listed numerically and described in a separate paragraph. Explain each action item, why you chose it, how and in what situations you will implement it, and the effect you think it will have on the teams you will lead in the future. Please reference the course material as appropriate.

8. In-Class Presentation

The final component of your project is in-class presentation. The purpose of this presentation will be to explain the results of your coat of arms/360-degree feedback self-reflection, your social network self-reflection, and your action plan. Each presentation should have no less than 5 slides (aim for your presentation to be 5-10 minutes, and then have a minute or two for questions). Please avoid typos, spelling errors, weird formatting of text, etc. in your presentations. Feel free to use cool pictures, figures, diagrams etc. to help explain your points instead of massive amounts of text.

Points to cover in your presentation:

- What do the components of your coat of arms represent?
- Who were the participants in your 360-degree feedback survey?
- What were 1 or 2 of the questions you asked participants?
- What were 2-3 key findings based on the 360-degree feedback responses? (Was anything interesting/surprising? Did you learn something about yourself? Did others’ responses match up with the way you see yourself?)
- What are your short term/long-term goals?
- Who do you need to know in order to achieve those goals? (Which “types of people”?)
- What were 2-3 things you realized based on the social network self-assessment activity?
- What are your “next steps” for enhancing your leadership capacity? (What does your action plan look like?)



The Teamwork Knowledge Test

Instructions: The following is a list of statements about teamwork. Read each statement and indicate whether it is “True” or “False.” Do not spend too much time on this activity as we will use it as a starting point for our discussion. *Note.* All of these statements have been the subject of rigorous research over the past 75 years. Though things are rarely always true or always false, research has uncovered some regularities that make it possible to increase the odds that a team will succeed.

Statement – Evaluate “True” or “False”	Your Answer	Correct Answer
1. Extroverts are generally better team members than introverts.	_____	_____
2. Diverse teams tend to perform better than homogenous team.	_____	_____
3. The phrase “too many cooks spoil the broth” is true of leading teams; teams work best when they designate one member to lead all aspects of the team.	_____	_____
4. Individuals usually exert more effort when working as a team than when working alone.	_____	_____
5. Team conflict is very harmful to team morale and performance.	_____	_____
6. It is better to reward member contributions individually than to reward teams as a whole.	_____	_____
7. In most team discussions, the floor time is roughly evenly divided among team members	_____	_____
8. The majority of the time spent on team discussions tends to focus on the discovery of new information.	_____	_____
9. Free form team discussions and debriefs are more effective than structured discussions and debriefs.	_____	_____
10. Teams usually outperform their best member	_____	_____
11. Teams are less susceptible to decision biases than are individuals.	_____	_____
12. Teams are often superior to individuals when it comes to brainstorming.	_____	_____
13. Teams are generally more creative than individuals.	_____	_____
14. Teams who excel at problem solving typically struggle with creative tasks, and vice versa.	_____	_____