POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: SPA 460
American University, Spring 2015
Tuesdays 8:10-10:40 pm in Ward 104

Professor Margaret Marr
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, as announced in the American University Catalog “[e]xamines major theories and research in public leadership, with emphasis on American political and administrative institutions. Case studies of leaders and leadership in complex public organizations. Relative impact of personality and organizational factors in leadership development. Emphasis on students' awareness of their own leadership style and development potential.”

This year, the class has decided to create a deliverable for first- and second-year students exploring the important leadership theories and practices through the seniors’ own personal experiences. On this subject, each senior will choose a topic, work with a group to make an in-class presentation, write a well-researched paper, and offer a valuable contribution to the deliverable that the senior class will make working together.

EXPECTATIONS:

Each student can expect to achieve the following:

1. Work in a group to make a presentation to the class on a leadership theory or practice also contributing to the presentation the student’s own personal experience that enlivens that theory or practice.
2. Three weeks in advance of that presentation (unless otherwise specified) submit a lesson plan and proposed materials for the class to read or view in preparation for the presentation. For a full-day’s presentation these materials should take an average Leadership student 2-3 hours to read or review, half that time for a half-day’s presentation. The lesson plan should state the learning objectives for the presentation and how the students intend to use the class time in the pursuit of those objectives.
3. The week before the presentation (unless otherwise arranged or noted), join the presentation group in meeting with the professor to walk through a complete version of the presentation, including a thorough draft of any PowerPoint or Prezi or activity the students intend to offer.
4. Twenty-four hours in advance of class (Mon 8pm) those not presenting submit via Blackboard three unique, thought-provoking, insightful discussion questions about the materials that the presenters have selected for their presentation. These questions should also demonstrate the student’s comprehension of the readings. If there are two presentations that week, the student should submit at least two questions on each set of
readings.

5. Write a well-researched paper of about 8 pages on the topic of student’s contribution to the presentation, including both theory and personal narrative. Due two weeks after the presentation.

6. Collaborate with the class to create a deliverable for first- and second-year Leadership Program students exploring important leadership theories and practices through the seniors’ own personal experiences. Serve on a committee such as content, creative, fundraising, and marketing to help create, produce and distribute this deliverable. Offer to the professor a peer evaluation of the other committee members’ participation on the committee.

7. Under the direction of the Content and Creative committees, make an individual contribution to the deliverable related to the student’s presentation topic, including a personal narrative that brings to life relevant leadership theories. This may take a wide variety of forms, e.g. text, graphics, or digital.

8. Engage with younger students in the program. Each senior is expected have a coffee date with at least three of the four or five students on a list given to each senior. Each senior should also should attend at least one program-wide event (e.g. a Linner, laser tag or the Alumni Reception) and widely introduce him/herself there. Alternatively, as class time allows, the senior might attend a first- or second-year class meeting and there introduce him/herself.

9. Write a reflection on the student’s 4-year (or 3-year) experience in the SPA Leadership Program, including how the student’s leadership skills and capacity have developed in the program (or not). Please feel invited to include any suggestions about what to keep and what to change in the program as we continue to strive for excellence. The reflection should be about 8 pages, unless the student creates and references in the paper an electronic portfolio that explains the student’s work in the program, in which case the paper should be about 4 pages.

10. Attend and participate in retreat Jan 30-Feb 1, to be organized and produced by the class.

11. Actively participate in the class including: attend class; come fully prepared for class, including having completed all assigned readings, completing any homework, and taking any in-class quizzes; fully engage in class dialogue; carefully, honestly and accurately evaluate other students’ presentations; and help to organize and execute the retreat.

Note: Unless otherwise indicated all materials should be turned in both electronically to marrcourses@american.edu before class and on paper in class.

SCHEDULE OF STUDIES

Students are expected to complete the readings assigned, as posted and adjusted on Blackboard, and submit discussion questions, in advance of each class meeting, and come prepared to discuss those readings.

Jan 13, 20, 27, Feb 3: Reuniting with the class, planning for coming semester, deliverable, and retreat.

Jan 30- Feb 1 (Fri-Sun): RETREAT!
3- Feb (Tues) 6:30-8pm: Leadership Dinner (“Linner”) - McDowell Formal

Feb 3 – 10: Meet with consulting member of Creative Committee to discuss layout and artwork for contribution to deliverable.

**Leading with Love**

Feb 10: Jasmine, Ta Lynn, Madison, Cj, Elyse  
(Readings and Lesson Plan Due Feb 2, papers due Feb 24)

**Feb 10:** Turn in: Any requests for artwork due to the Creative Committee with copy to Prof. Marr

**Servant Leadership**

Feb 17: Joelle, Amanda, Angelo, James  
(Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 3, papers due Mar 3)

**20- Feb (Fri): Leadership goes Laser Tagging**

Feb 21 (Sat) Midnight (11:59pm): Contribution to Deliverable due to Content Committee and Professor Marr

**Strengths based Leadership**

Feb 24: Laura, Caroline, Michelle, London  
(1/2 class) (Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 3, papers due Mar 17)

**Introverted Leadership**

Feb 24: Ben and Marc  
(1/2 class) (Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 3, papers due Mar 17)

**Leading with Humor and Improv**

Mar 3: Nicole, David, Tyrees  
(1/2 class) (Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 10, papers due Mar 17)

**Leading with Optimism**

Mar 3: Emily A, Kendall, Sam  
(1/2 class) (Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 10, papers due Mar 17)
Mar 7 (Sat): Midnight (11:59 pm): Final Draft of Deliverable
Due to Content and Design Committees with copy to Prof. Marr

10-Mar  SPING BREAK -- No Class – Enjoy

Leading through Crisis

Mar 17: Nolan, Gabe, Conor, Harry
(Readings and Lesson Plan due Feb 24, papers due Mar 31)
(Meet with Professor Marr Mar 3 for dry run)

20-Mar (Fri) 6p: Alumni Reunion
All current students and alumni invited to attend – a great networking opportunity

21- Mar (Sat): Great Falls Hike

Leadership, Pragmatism and Resilience

Mar 24: Tripp, Leilani, Emily H, Lori, Emily K, Trevor, Lydia
(Readings and Lesson Plan due Mar 3, papers due Apr 7)

31-Mar (Tues) 6:30-8pm: Leadership Dinner (“Linner”) - McDowell Formal

Mar 31, Apr 7, 14: Complete and produce and distribute deliverable

9-Apr: (Thurs) 5:15-8PM Join the first-year students for the annual Cherry Blossoms
Monuments Tour

Apr 14: Turn in short reflection on meeting with younger students for coffee and attending
Program-wide event(s)

Apr 21: Senior Showcase Presenting the Deliverable

24-Apr (Fri): Formal Dinner-Dance and Senior Toasts!

May 5: Final Class Meeting (perhaps at Professor Marr’s house)

Turn in:
• Final reflection on all three or four years on the program.

May 8 (Fri): 11:30-1:30 Presentation of Certificates in Advanced Leadership Studies
Luncheon Reception for Leadership Seniors and their families (location TBA)

May 9, 10 (Sat, Sun): SPA Commencement!
Sat May 9 about 11AM: Gather on the steps of Ward Building for picture
directly after SPA Commencement at 9AM.
EVALUATIONS

A student’s final evaluation will be based on the following weighted criteria:

15%  Presentation (includes timeliness, selection of readings, and presentation; peer evaluations will be taken into consideration in assessment) (graded)
20%  Paper on presentation topic, about 8 pages, double-spaced (graded)
10%  Committee work on class’ deliverable (peer evaluations) (graded)
15%  Student’s contribution to the deliverable, whether revision of paper or other creative assignment, or both (graded)
10%  3 discussion questions on the readings submitted 24 hours before presentation (C/NC)
10%  Reflection on time in the program, about 8 pages, or if student’s work in the program is fully described on a website or LinkedIn, then about 4 pages (C/NC),
5%   Retreat participation (C/NC)
15%  Class participation, including in-class reflections on the presentations, deliverable committee work and engaging with younger students (graded)

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Class attendance is mandatory. Unless excused, all students are expected to come prepared for each and every class, having completed the designated readings in advance of the class meeting. Each student may have one unexcused absence without adverse impact upon his/her grade. Additional unexcused absences will have an exponentially adverse impact upon the class participation grade. Class participation includes attendance, class preparedness (including reading comprehension and homework assignments), any quizzes that might be given, work on the student’s deliverable committee, and outreach to younger students. Students with excused absences are still required to complete the class preparation work (including submitting questions on the reading via Blackboard, contributing to your deliverable committee, and homework assignments).

Excused Absences: Students may receive an excused absence from class for reasons that include, but are not limited to, major religious holidays, a medical reason, athletic participation on an AU team, off-campus activities that are required and related to another class, or a family emergency. The documentation required for excused absences is as follows and shall be sent to the professor, as follows:

- Religious holiday – email from student at least 36 hours before the class to be missed;
- Off-campus activity related to another class – email from the instructor of other class to professor at least 36 hours before the class to be missed;
- Athletic participation on an AU team – email or letter from coach or athletic department staff at least 36 hours before the class to be missed;
- Medical, family emergency, or other – documentation from the Dean of Students’ Office to be sent to the professor only. (Note: If a required co-payment for a Health Services visit is necessary to secure needed documentation and poses a financial hardship for any student, the Program Director will gladly provide it without question.)
GRADING GUIDELINES
I take very seriously the responsibility of grading your work, striving always to be fair and accurate in our evaluations. These are the guidelines we work with in assigning letter grades to your work:

A: Excellent work with clear, challenging, original ideas supported with convincing, logical arguments, including relevant counter-arguments and refutations, relying on sufficient appropriate evidence. An excellent paper reflects thorough research, is clear, well organized, logical, and demonstrates college-level command of writing mechanics. Work of 'A' quality should not just be good but outstanding in ideas and presentation.

B: Good to quite good work. The 'B' paper demonstrates a strong familiarity with relevant material and offers a thorough answer, with minor exceptions. The work may have some outstanding qualities but be marked by significant flaws which keep it from being an excellent, and therefore an 'A' paper; or it may be all-round good work, free of major problems but lacking the deeper insight necessary for excellence.

C: Satisfactory work, but not yet good. The product meets the basic requirements of the assignment, but it needs work in familiarity with course materials, research, thinking, or presentation. The work may lack clarity, or the evidence may not always be sufficient and appropriate, or the argument may have marked logical flaws. The work may have significant organizational, mechanical, or clarity problems that keep it from being good. Work of ‘C’ quality may be good in some respects but poor in others, or it may simply be adequate but not noteworthy overall.

Not Passing: Work that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assigned task and is therefore unsatisfactory. This is not necessarily a measure of effort. Examples include work that shows little thought or lack of familiarity with course materials, work that fails to approach the word count or page-length expected of the document, or assignments the student fails to turn in.

CREDIT/NO CREDIT Assignments: If the work is of B quality or better, the student receives credit for the timely completed work. Partial completion of an assignment or superficial analysis may result in partial credit or the student being asked to re-do the assignment for full or partial credit.

THE NOT SO FINE PRINT

A NOTE ON TIMELINESS:

Completing work in a prompt and timely fashion is essential to success. Accordingly, extensions of time on assignments will be granted only if requested before the due date and ONLY upon a showing of good cause. An example of good cause is hospitalization of the student or a dependent. Technology failure is not good cause, nor is forgetting about the due date or oversleeping. The sanction for graded assignments that are late without “good cause” is that the grade on the late assignment will be reduced one whole letter grade for each 24 hour period the paper is late, including weekends and holidays, starting with the end of the class period at which
it is due. Late credit/no credit assignments will not receive credit. Any in-class quizzes given cannot be made up. The professor reserves the sole right to determine good cause.

A NOTE ON TECHNOLOGY ETIQUETTE:

Class meetings are a time to focus exclusively on the course material. Using technology during class when that technology is not required for the class meeting – including cell phones, checking messages, text-messaging, using the internet, playing games on laptops – distracts not only the technology user but also those around him or her. So, in devotion to your own education, as well as out of kindness for others, do not use unrelated technology during class (including surfing the internet, checking your Blackberry/iPhone, and text messaging). And please turn off your cell phone. The consequence for misuse of information devices during class is a recorded absence for that class period.

Similarly, laptops and tablets are very valuable tools for taking notes, but they have an incredible capacity to distract those students most in need of delivering their full attention to the course. If you need to use a laptop or tablet, perhaps as an accommodation for a disability, talk to me to secure permission. Be aware that a single instance of misuse of a laptop (e.g. surfing the net) may result in a class participation grade of zero for the entire semester.

AN ETHICAL ADMONITION:

We in the Leadership Program take personal and professional ethics extremely seriously. As one student commented in advice to future students, “Do not try to cheat. [Prof. Marr] is very strict about that subject.” Leadership students can expect that any violation of the University's Academic Integrity Code will be reported to the University for further action. Any academic misconduct in the context of Leadership Program work will result in being excused from the Program. Plagiarism, fabricating observations, copying other students’ work, and unauthorized collaboration, are all examples of violations of the Academic Integrity Code, which is published on the University’s web page, among other places. Academic integrity violations are heart-breaking for all concerned. Please be good to yourself and always hold your conduct to the highest ethical standards. Remember leaders exemplify ethical conduct for others to follow.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency,
students should refer to the AU Web site (american.edu/emergency) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean’s office for course and school/college-specific information.

ASSISTANCE

Everyone at this university wants you to succeed, truly. If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please consult Professor Marr. As another student commented in advice to future students, “Don’t be afraid to ask questions; Prof. Marr is extremely helpful in assisting you.” In addition to your professor, the university offers a wide range of services to support you in your efforts to perform well, including:

- **Academic Support and Access Center** (x3360, MGC 243) In addition to using the resources available in this department, all students may take advantage of individual academic counseling, skills workshops, tutor referrals, Supplemental Instruction, and writing appointments in the Academic Support and Access Center. Writing support is also available in the **ASAC Writing Lab**.

Students with Disabilities: If you wish to receive accommodations for a disability, please notify me with a letter from the Academic Support and Access Center. As accommodations are not retroactive, timely notification at the beginning of the semester, if possible, is requested.

- **Writing Center** in the first floor of Bender Library offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday; 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Friday, and 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Sunday. Call 202-885-2991 to arrange a session.

- **Counseling Center** (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

- **Wellness Center** (x3276, McCabe Hall 123) provides health education resources and programs for AU students. The center’s mission is to provide students with wellness resources, to promote healthy lifestyles, reduce risky behaviors, and offer a safe, non-discriminatory environment. Both the Sexual Assault Prevention Coordinator and the Coordinator of Victim Advocacy Services work in the Wellness Center to counsel students who are survivors of sexual assault. The coordinators can also provide information about reporting options and resources at the University and in the D.C. area.

- **Center for Diversity & Inclusion** is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, multicultural, first generation, and women's experiences on campus and to advance AU’s commitment to respecting and valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. It is located on the 2nd floor of Mary Graydon Center: 202-885-3651, email is cdi@american.edu.
• **Dean of Students Office** (x3300, 408 Butler Pavilion) offers one-on-one meetings to discuss academic, adjustment, and personal issues that may be interfering with a student's ability to succeed academically. The DOS office also verifies documentation for students who have medical or mental health issues that cause them to be absent from class.

**QUESTIONS:**

I am very open to questions. Really. Always feel free to contact me. Email is probably the most reliable. If you don't receive a prompt reply (within 24 hours) to a note sent to marr@american.edu please email me again and then try my cell phone 202.905.5161. Less reliable is my office phone, 202/885-2308, as I am likely only to receive your call during my office hours. I am very interested in meeting with you whenever you are interested in doing so. Please email me for an appointment. Tuesday afternoons are often a wonderful time for me to see students.

I look forward to a warm and memorable semester working and learning with you, a wonderful final hoorah!