

Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
Management 799

Leadership in Challenging Times

How effective leaders guide their people and organizations through challenging times

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Note: Draft Syllabus

THE COURSE

Management 799 seeks to leverage the recent and life-long career experiences of organizational leaders to expose students to the knowledge and skills that leaders employ when shepherding organizations through challenging times. Academic research and management experience demonstrate that as uncertainty and setbacks mount, leadership matters more than ever. As the coronavirus, economic challenges, racial inequity, natural disasters, and technology disruptions cause extended periods of volatility or even calamities for firms and organizations of all kinds, resilience, redirection, and recovery depend more on leadership, informed by both practical experience and academic insight. Drawing on leaders from business, philanthropy, and beyond, the course emphasizes vital leadership capabilities including strategic direction, timely action, and persuasive communication, providing a roadmap for navigating through crises and challenges – and for emerging more determined, more effective, and more resilient.

The course is a half-credit, pass/fail offering for Wharton MBA and Executive MBA students, and for participants in Wharton's Advanced Management Program. The course is synchronous (live) via Zoom, with Wharton faculty, executive speakers, and moderated questions from students in each session. Though the course is pass/fail, it counts toward the Organizational Effectiveness and General Management majors.

The course is organized and supported by the McNulty Leadership Program with assistance from Classroom Technology, Department of Management, Wharton Executive Education, and the Wharton Leadership Advisory Board. It is offered during the fourth quarter, 2021 on Wednesdays, 3 to 5:50 pm: March 17, March 24, March 31, April 7, April 14, April 21, and April 28. The course draws on faculty experts, including Dean Erika James, and leading practitioners. Please keep your video on during the class meetings, though do not access other websites,

applications, mobile phones, or other electronic devices during the class. Course readings are available on Canvas in Study.net.

Nick Lobuglio (lobuglio@wharton.upenn.edu), who holds a doctoral degree from the Department of Management, serves as Senior Teaching Fellow, and he oversees course assignments and the grading system. He will be supported by a team of student Teaching Fellows who will aid with course content and moderate the Q&As with the speakers.

In addition to the faculty and teaching fellows, the course design team includes Dara Chamides and April Rice of Estée Lauder Companies; Anne Greenhalgh of the McNulty Leadership Program; and Annie Badman of West Wing Writers.

The course delivery team comprises Jeff Klein, Nick Lobuglio, and the Teaching Fellows; Kelly Busch, Kate FitzGerald, and Anne Greenhalgh of McNulty; Liza Law, IT Project Leader, Management Department; and Linda Lee, Wharton Director of Instruction Design.

COURSE EVALUATION

Online class attendance and participation, 10 percent. Attend all class meetings and participate as often as possible. In order to promote a more open exchange of ideas and lessons with the guests, the sessions will not be recorded and will not be available for asynchronous viewing. If you are unable to participate in one or multiple sessions, please file a formal student absence report through the PennInTouch portal, specifying the range of time and reason (religious holiday, family emergency, health problem, or other). Due to the number of students in the class, please do not report absences through email or Canvas message. Excused absences will not incur a grade penalty, but if a student does not attend three or more of the seven sessions without an excused absence, it may result in failure of the course.

Weekly reflections on key crisis leadership points from each class meeting, 30 percent. Due on Canvas each week by 6 pm EDT on Friday, not to exceed one page or 300 words in length. Identify which mission-critical points should be added to your own checklist for leading in challenging times. Papers can take many different forms, and may vary week to week, as long as they reflect on what you considered to be the most relevant lessons for your development as a leader. Some weeks you may choose to focus on one key lesson that resonated with you, and other weeks you may create more of a list or integrate new lessons with lessons taken from previous weeks. For sessions with two guest leaders, you may choose to discuss both guests or focus on a single leader's key points.

Commentary on peers' reflection papers, 20 percent. Each week, you will be assigned to read and provide a brief comment on a peer's reflection paper. Comments will not need to exceed a few sentences each week, but are not strictly limited. Due by the start of the following week's session.

Individual leadership paper, 40 percent. A paper of no more than 1,000 words on the leadership of an individual during the coronavirus crisis, or some other major crisis for an organization, that draws on course concepts, source materials, and a personal interview with the individual. Evaluated by teaching fellows.

Identify an exemplary leader of special interest to you. She or he might be a boss, the head of your organization, or a moving spirit in a local or national, secular or religious organization. The individual should be a person whose work is guided by a vision for the organization and who has been especially effective in mobilizing people and other resources during the crisis. You are also welcome to focus on a team rather than an individual, or you might want instead to concentrate on a person who served as a kind of anti-leader, an individual who exemplified exceptionally poor leadership during the crisis.

Arrange for a short interview with the selected person and possibly one or two others familiar with the individual. The purpose is to better appreciate the distinct principles required for leadership in challenging times. What accounts for the person's effectiveness and impact on the organization? Please draw out the capabilities that you will want to develop further in yourself or a team for leading through your own challenging times in the future. The paper should draw on course concepts and outside sources, and include (1) a vivid description of the leader; (2) the leadership challenges faced during the crisis, (3) a critical incident that illustrates the person's leadership, and (4) identification of the mission-critical leadership capacities that accounted for the individual or team's success (or failure) during the crisis.

The paper should not exceed 1,000 words, with the number of words placed below the paper's title. Due on Canvas by 6 pm EDT on Friday, April 30.

CLASS SESSIONS

Pre- and Post-Session Readings to be shared and available on Canvas at the beginning of Q4

CLASS 1. LEADERSHIP IN CHALLENGING TIMES, MARCH 17

Course Introduction: Jeff Klein, William Lauder, and Mike Useem, 3 to 3:40 pm

Regina Cunningham, Chief Executive Officer, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, 3:45 to 4:45 pm.

Darren Walker, President, Ford Foundation, 4:50 to 5:50 pm.

CLASS 2. LEADING CONSUMER COMPANIES, MARCH 24

Nisaba Godrej, Chair and Managing Director, Godrej, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd., 3 to 4:20 pm

Robert A Katz, Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Vail Resorts, 4:30 to 5:50 pm

CLASS 3. LEADING ESTABLISHED ENTERPRISES, MARCH 31

Alex Gorsky, Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Johnson & Johnson, 3 to 4:20 pm

Ruth Porat, Chief Financial Officer, Alphabet Inc., and **Erika James**, Dean of the Wharton School, 4:30 to 5:50 pm.

CLASS 4. LEADING GLOBAL ENTERPRISES AND CONSUMER BRANDS, APRIL 7

Katrina "Kat" Cole, former President and Chief Operating Office, Focus Brands North America, 3 to 4:20 pm

Carlos Brito, Chief Executive Officer, AB InBev, 4:30 to 5:50 pm

CLASS 5. PARTNERING TO LEAD – AND LEADING A TECHNOLOGY COMPANY, APRIL 14

William P. Lauder, Executive Chair, and **Fabrizio Freda**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Estée Lauder Companies, 3 to 4:20 pm

Jennifer Tejada, Chair and Chief Executive Officer, PagerDuty, 4:30 to 5:50 pm

CLASS 6. MANAGING RISK IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD, APRIL 21

[Tentative pending invitation to second guest], 3 to 4:20 pm

Tricia Griffith, Chief Executive Officer, Progressive Group of Insurance Companies, 4:30 to 5:50 pm

CLASS 7. BUILDING A PERSONAL ROADMAP FOR LEADING IN CHALLENGING TIMES, APRIL 28

Judith Rodin, former President, Rockefeller Foundation and University of Pennsylvania, 3 to 4:20 pm

Course Conclusion: Jeff Klein, William Lauder, and Mike Useem, 4:30 to 5:50 pm.