## **University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

## **College of Business Administration Management 311 (MNGT 311)**

**Leadership, Communication and Teams**

T/R 12:30-1:45pm, CBA Room 25

**Fall 2015 Syllabus**

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| **Instructor:** Amber S. Messersmith, Ph.D. | **Office:** CBA 268 |
| **Office Hours:** By appointment | **Telephone:** 402-472-3915 (MNGT Dept.) |
| **E-mail:** amessersmith3@unl.edu  \*\**email is the best way to reach me!\*\** | **Course website:** <https://my.unl.edu> |

**Course Description, Objective, and Prerequisites**

Building on theory and historical and contemporary perspectives, this course will examine the process of leadership development, with a focus on relational models of leadership. The course will also focus on group dynamics and the promotion of optimum team performance. Students will learn the processes of group formation and how to take advantage of the talents of each group member to enhance the achievement of group objectives. The differences between groups and teams and how to structure work among group/team members to maximize learning and goal attainment will be emphasized. Learning and practicing new ways of communication will be a central component of this course. *(From the UNL Undergraduate Bulletin 2015-16)*

The main objective of this course is to prepare students to be effective and successful leaders and teammates. This course is designed to meet the UNL ACE 6 designated criteria: *Use knowledge, theories, or methods and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior.*

The prerequisite for this course is Sophomore standing. Successful completion of this course is a prerequisite for MNGT 411, MNGT 412, MNGT 413, MNGT 414, and MNGT 828.

**About this Document**

I view the syllabus as a contract between students and professor. By enrolling in and taking the course, you agree to follow the policies contained within and I agree to uphold these same policies. I reserve the right to modify/change the schedule at any time in the semester when those changes are in the best interest of the class as a whole. Adequate notice of changes will be given to all students. I will communicate these changes in class as well as via email and/or Blackboard.However, **it is the responsibility of the students to be aware of any and all announced changes. Please read this document carefully.** You are welcome to contact me with questions, but please check this document and/or the course schedule first, as answers to many of your questions are likely contained within these documents.

**Required Materials**

1. Northouse, P. G. (2015). *Introduction to leadership: Concepts and practice (3rd ed.)*. Los Angeles:

Sage.

2. Keyton, J. (2006). *Communicating in groups: Building relationships for group effectiveness (3rd ed.).*

New York: Oxford.

3. A package of 3 x 5” notecards (plain or ruled—simple is preferred)

**Class Policies**

*As is the case in any successful business or organization, specific policies and procedures for this course have been developed and are communicated below. Read this document carefully and consult it when you have questions, as it is packed with valuable information. The same goes for course assignments and paying attention to Blackboard announcements/class email messages.*

Professionalism/Attendance/Engagement

Think of the best leaders you know. Chances are, a strong quality you would associate with each of them is professionalism. Given our focus on leadership, my expectation for each member of this class is that you consistently carry yourself with professionalism.

Success in this course depends on how prepared you are and how willing you are to share ideas and take part in activities and assignments. Regular attendance is expected but attendance is not taken.

***What do professionalism and engagement look like?***

1. Preparing for class by reading—and bringing—the assigned readings and by preparing comments/notes/questions on those readings; participating thoughtfully in class discussion and activities.
2. Attending class, arriving on time, and not leaving early.
3. In the event of an unavoidable absence, getting yourself caught up by checking with classmates, not emailing Dr. Messersmith asking if anything important took place during class.
4. Attending and supporting your classmates during their presentations.
5. Using electronic devices during class for appropriate purposes only.
6. Submitting assignments on time without excuses.
7. Turning off or silence any electronic devices that beep, buzz or ring or in any way disturb the peace during class. Once class has started, **avoid text messaging in class**.
8. Expressing yourself with honesty and respect. Those around you are cheated if you do not express your ideas. We’re here to learn from each other, but do try to be diplomatic.
9. Adhering to professional use of email correspondence. This includes making wise choices about when email is appropriate and when a face-to-face meeting would be more productive.

Part of professionalism is showing up---and looking like you want to be there. Your presence or absence is noticed---just like in the workplace. Should your grade be borderline at the end of the semester, your attendance record (based on completed participation activities/points) is one aspect I will consider when deciding whether to bump you up to the higher grade. Therefore*, there are no excused or unexcused absences in this class.*

Your enrollment in the class indicates your decision to attend scheduled class periods. I understand that life events arise and from time to time and you must make difficult decisions about where and how to spend your time. As college students and future working professionals, it is always your prerogative to make these decisions. **However, with your decisions comes a responsibility to deal with the outcomes of your absence.** Presentations, in-class activities, and in-class assignments **cannot** be made up due to absence. If you miss class for whatever reason, you simply forfeit those points.

If a religious holiday precludes your class attendance, please make arrangements with me in advance to complete/submit assignments. If you are representing UNL in an official capacity (e.g., athletic competition, musical performance), please provide me with official documentation in advance of the absence. You and I will work together to address what you will miss/handle assignment submission, etc.

**Meeting deadlines**

The following assignment-related policies will be enforced:

* Papers will be submitted via SafeAssign to Blackboard. They will not be accepted in hard copy in class.
* Any assignments due at the beginning of class are considered late after the first 10 minutes of the class period. In-class assignments will be due within that same class period.
* A deduction of one letter grade will be taken for any assignment that is submitted 10 minutes to 24 hours late. Assignments submitted 24-48 hours late will incur a deduction of two letter grades. Assignments submitted more than 48 hours late will not be accepted.
* If you are required to miss class on the day an assignment is due, you must turn it in **early or send it with someone else**. Deadlines apply even when you cannot be there.
* LOD presentations must be given on the day assigned. If you miss your presentation, you forfeit those points.
* Makeup exams are not available. You may take the comprehensive optional final exam to replace your lowest or a missing exam score.
* Loss of an immediate family member or a life-threatening emergency on your part or on the part of an immediate family member are the only exceptions to these rules. You will be required to submit an acceptable, written, verifiable form of documentation in these situations.

**Service for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodations to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements.  To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY. If you already have an accommodation plan, please see me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements necessary for your learning. No accommodations can be provided without documentation. Please remember, plans are not retroactive.

**Academic Integrity**

Per the UNL Student Code of Conduct: "The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test or examination of another student; using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for an academic test, examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a student; or communicating information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic test, examination or exercise."

1. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating on tests and assignments, plagiarism, misrepresentation, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, aiding other students in academic dishonesty, and other behaviors in the student judicial code of conduct, section 4.2 (http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code)
2. The penalties for academic dishonesty will be severe, from a zero on the test or assignment, an F in the class, up to and including expulsion from the university. Faculty will report ALL cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students at UNL, who will place a report in the student’s permanent file.
3. If you copy, or substantially copy, work from anyone else on a paper, the work must put it in quotes and the source cited. Otherwise, it is plagiarism. If plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty are found on a group work assignment, it is possible that every member of the group will be punished. It is to your advantage to check out anything that doesn't seem like the work of your group members or colleagues. Written assignments are subject to be checked on Safe Assignment for plagiarism.

D. Types of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

* Interacting with other students during an exam or quiz
* Using unauthorized resources during or before an exam or quiz
* Unauthorized reproduction/possession/distribution/use of an exam or quiz, in whole or in part
* Altering graded exams or intentionally creating ambiguity with exam answers
* Presenting as your own, work done, in whole or in part, by another individual or individuals
* Resubmitting your own work, in whole or part, for a different class without the instructor’s permission
* Doing an assignment, exam or quiz for someone else, in whole or in part
* Having someone else do an assignment, exam or quiz for you, in whole or in part
* Providing answers on an assignment, exam or quiz for someone else, in whole or in part
* Claiming the Professor lost the exam or assignment
* Plagiarism
* Providing false information in a bibliography or reference list
* Exaggerating class or group participation and contribution
* Making up an excuse to get additional time to do an assignment or postpone a test
* Making up an excuse to get an excused absence from attendance
* Signing an attendance sheet for someone else or have someone sign for you
* Tampering with academic records and examinations
* In any context, presenting yourself as another person or having someone present themselves as yourself
* Aiding others or participating in any of the above

APA style is the required style for this course. If you do not own the latest APA style manual, consult the following APA resources or ask for assistance at the UNL Library.

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx

**Equitable Climate**

It is particularly important that a good climate for learning be provided by the instructor and students. Please join with me to help avoid any form of harassment in this class. Please note the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s definition: "Harassment is a form of discrimination in which unwelcome, severe, or pervasive speech or actions are directed to individuals or groups of people on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, veteran or marital status, sexual orientation, or political views, either directly or indirectly." If anyone feels that the instructor has said or done anything that offends someone, you should let the instructor know as soon as possible either during or after class (or anonymously with a note under the instructor's office door). You are also encouraged to report such behavior to the instructor's department chair (Dr. Dennis Duchon), and the Dean of the College of Business Administration (Dean Donde Plowman). Discrimination problems can also be reported to the Student Ombudsperson 124 Adm. Bldg., Counseling and Psychological Services, 15th and U Streets, Student Judicial Affairs, 124 Adm. Bldg. and the Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity Programs 127 Adm. Bldg. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

**Assignments**

Leaders of the Day 50 points

Exams (top 3 of 4) 300 points

Papers 150 points

Professionalism/Participation 150 points

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TOTAL POSSIBLE 650 points

# **Grading scale and Evaluation of student work**

In this course, grades will **NOT** be given as rewards for coming to class, completing your readings and assignments in a timely fashion, or having a great attitude. I expect these behaviors from all UNL students. Rather, grades serve as both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the quality of work you produced. To determine your grade, I assess the actual work you have submitted including the extent to which it reflects the assignment and incorporates course material. Grades are not necessarily an assessment of how much you know or hard you’ve worked (or how much you tell me you know or how hard you tell me you have worked after the grade has been issued). The following scale represents how I will be grading your work and the level of my expectations for the class.

A = Exceeds course requirements. Exceptionally well-prepared and executed completion of assigned work, indicating significant effort, individualized creative style, and demonstrating a thorough grasp and mastery of the related material. For written assignments: writing is insightful and error-free; message is communicated clearly, concisely, and directly. *Only work submitted by the assignment deadline can earn an “A.”*

B = Meets, and at times, exceeds course requirements. Student demonstrates fundamental mastery of the material. Work is creative, well-prepared, and demonstrates considerable effort. Is distinctly superior to an average or “C” effort. For written assignments: writing is generally effective with respect to clarity, directness, and conciseness; some uneven or awkward passages are apparent, as are a few errors in grammar or punctuation.

C = Meets course requirements. Satisfactory completion of assigned work at a level of effort and competency normally expected of the majority of students (i.e., basic completion, average performance, reasonable effort and preparedness). Student demonstrates minimum mastery of the material. This is average work that fails to stand out in any way. For written assignments: writing is reasonably clear, concise, and direct; uneven or awkward passages are apparent, as are multiple errors in grammar or punctuation.

D = Basic course requirements are only partially met. Student does not demonstrate minimum mastery of the material. Receiving this grade indicates the unsatisfactory completion of assigned work, either through misperceived objectives or the failure to grasp key concepts. This work is below average. For written assignments: The message is not communicated clearly, directly, or concisely. There is considerable unevenness or awkwardness in passages, and work is characterized by errors in grammar or punctuation.

F = Basic course requirements are not met. Student demonstrates little or no mastery of the material. Receiving this grade indicates either a failure to complete the assigned work, or failure to grasp key concepts due to lack of reasonable effort. Work is below the minimum level of acceptance. For written assignments: Writing lacks style, content, and format associated with a college-educated individual.

Grades will be assigned on a percentage of the total points possible, with the plus/minus system in effect. As a rule, there is no curving of grades on exams, papers, or presentations in this class.

98-100 A+ 78-79% C+

92-97% A 72-77% C

90-91 A- 70-71% C-

88-89% B+ 68-69% D+

82-87% B 62-67% D

80-81% B- 60-61% D-

<59% F

**Reviewing grades**

Should you wish to raise issues about the evaluation of your work, I use a **24/7 policy**. You must wait **24** **hours** after the assignment grades were issued to contact me to discuss it. This way you have time to fully review my comments as well as review the assignment guidelines. Further, you have **7 days (1 week)** from the date the assignment was returned in class or grade was posted on Blackboard to contact me. After 7 days, the posted grade stands. Ideally we will also meet within this timeframe, but if this is not possible for our schedules, your email within one week is sufficient to abide by the policy. If you are absent when assignments are returned in class, it is your responsibility to claim your assignment from me. The 24/7 policy begins when assignments are returned to/posted for the class/group, not when you claim your work or check the posted grade. When bringing assignments in for possible re-evaluation, I expect that you have thoughtful arguments to make and can point to specifics in the assignment as well as in your work. *Remember that your communication strategy has an effect on those you are wishing to persuade!*

**Additional Course Information**

**Email Correspondence & Blackboard**

All e-mail correspondence should be handled professionally as you would in the world of work or graduate school. Since this course includes a focus on communication, part of my role is to help you improve your communication skills. I welcome email correspondence from my students and will appreciate your adhering to the following basic email format, which includes:

* A descriptive subject line
* A greeting (Dear, Hi, or the like) and my name
* The material or information you want to convey in a succinct manner
* A closing (Sincerely, Thanks, or the like)
* Your first and last name

This simple format is not intended to make more work for you, but rather to get you in the habit of communicating in a complete, professional manner. To be considered professional, you should proofread and spell-check all emails (not just those you send to me!) *before* sending. Do not use IM or text message abbreviations in formal email messages sent to me for class. Since I ask this format of you, I will strive to use it in the messages I send you as well***.*** These requirements will be expected of you in the professional world; establish good habits now!

Since I am asking you to check Blackboard and email regularly during the week, I will do the same this semester. I strive to be prompt at responding to emails, most within 24-48 hours Monday-Friday. I view this as a professional responsibility and conduct which demonstrates my respect for my students. I check email multiple times between **8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday-Friday**. Certainly there are exceptions to this, such as when I am out of town. If you have not received a response from me within 2 weekdays (48 hours), send your message again; your original message likely did not reach me. ***I ask that you return the favor of a prompt reply when I email you.***

Whenever possible, I will give you ample lead time (at least 1-2 days) when I email you regarding class requirements, reminders, etc. ***Again, I request the same of you when you are making a request of me.***

Your email address as listed in MyRed, Blackboard, and in the UNL email system is where I will send messages. Be sure to check this account regularly.

**Presentation Attire**

When giving your LOD group presentation, flip flops or casual (athletic) shoes are not considered professional. In addition, revealing clothing is also not considered professional. Dress for presentations as you should for a job interview--neat, ironed, clothed, and professional.

**Description of Assignments (*additional assignment guidelines will be provided in class and/or on Blackboard*)**

**Leaders of the Day (LOD) (50 points possible)**

We will begin most class periods with a short segment called Leaders of the Day. This assignment gives you and your group members the opportunity to practice your communication and leadership skills as you take our class through a short activity, reflection, or exercise that deals with our topic for the day and gets us into the right frame of mind for that day’s class. Early in the semester you will be assigned to groups and given your LOD date. You will then be responsible for designing a quality 10-minute (maximum) session that provides insight into a topic we will be covering or is closely related to a topic we will be covering that day. LOD presentations will be graded on the basis of creativity, class involvement, topic significance, punctuality and preparedness, and quality.

**Exams (3 @ 100 points each; 300 points possible)**

There will be four exams this semester, including a comprehensive final. Your top three scores will count toward your final course grade. You are welcome to take all four; your lowest score will be dropped. If you miss an exam, that will be your dropped score. If you are content with your grade at the end of the regular semester, you do not need to take the final. I simply ask that you email me *if you DO plan to take it.*

**Papers (150 points possible)**

1. *Personal Reflection*: This short paper will allow you to reflect over the various leadership and team experiences you have had across various contexts. (50 points)
2. *Leadership Article Analysis*: This paper will require you to locate a quality, current popular press article and analyze it using course material. (100 points)

**Professionalism/Participation (150 points possible)**

Please refer back to the section of the syllabus which outlines how you can demonstrate professionalism. Opportunities for 150 participation points will be distributed throughout class sessions; some participation points may appear on the course Blackboard site. Please note: participation points are not automatically awarded simply for being present and completing an assignment or activity. Most participation point opportunities are evaluated and graded based on the evident level of effort and thought put into the assignment. Participation points from in-class participation opportunities can ONLY be earned if you attend and participate; points from Blackboard activities must be completed on time as assigned; no exceptions and no make-ups.

You must complete all assignments to pass this course.

# **Final Thoughts**

I look forward to working with you in this class and learning from each other this semester. I encourage you to make some time to come see me if you have questions, concerns, difficulties with the course, or you just want to chat! ☺ I will be glad to try to support you, but I can't assist you if I don't hear from you. To find a mutually convenient meeting time, simply email me. Dealing with issues early on is always the most helpful approach.