

DMM 525: Digital Media Leadership

# Course Description

This course examines personal leadership principles and practices as applicable to digital media. It specifically focuses on how to lead within an organization to build a diverse and high-performing team to deliver digital media initiatives that advance organizational goals. Students will have an opportunity to assess, develop, and practice key leadership skills including: setting a compelling vision; evaluating and onboarding an optimal mix of talent; communicating with clarity; tackling ethical issues with a focus on advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion matters; and seeking regular feedback and input to expand influence over time and create a work environment where people thrive.

# Course Learning Objectives

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

* Evaluate personal strengths and areas for improvement as current or aspiring leaders.
* Create a personal leadership philosophy based on leadership theories, principles, and styles relevant to digital media organizations.
* Examine the role of the leader in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in organizations.
* Solve digital media challenges using a change-oriented mindset and collaboration.
* Practice effective communication strategies with different stakeholders in digital media organizations.
* Develop effective and ethical leadership responses to complex challenges and opportunities in digital media environments.

# Course Preparation

Prerequisite(s): None

Recommended Preparation: None

# Books and Materials

Check the “Start Here” module of the Canvas course for a full listing of materials and how they can be accessed.

# Course Duration and Due Dates

The duration of this course is eight weeks, which directly correlates with the eight modules of course content in the Canvas learning management system (LMS). The due dates are:

* **Discussions:** Initial responses to focus questions are due by 11:55pm Pacific Time (PT) on Wednesday of the week they are assigned. Replies to at least two classmates per discussion board are due by 11:55pm PT on Sunday of that week.
* **Participation:** Participation responses are due by 11:55pm Pacific Time (PT) on Sunday of the week they are assigned.
* **Assignments:** With the exception of the Week 8 final assessment, all assignments are due by 11:55pm PT on Sunday of the week they are assigned.
* **Final Assessment:** Instructions for the final assessment are available at the beginning of the course, and it is due by 11:55pm PT on Monday of Week 8.

# Course Schedule

| Week | Topics | Readings and Multimedia | Assignments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | * Definitions, characteristics, and actions of leadership * Definitions, characteristics, and actions of management * Leadership theories, styles, and principles within digital media organizations | *Leading in the Digital World: How to Foster Creativity, Collaboration, and Inclusivity* (Chapter 4)  Allas & Schanginer, 2020  Anderson et al., 2017  Ashkenas & Manville, 2019  Cortellazzo et al., 2019  Harvard Business School Online, n.d.  *Workforce 2030* (video)  *Defining Your Natural Leadership Style* (video)  *Critical Competencies for Leaders* (video) | Discussion  Participation  A Leadership Role Model Assignment |
| 2 | * Ethics within the context of a digital media environment * Ethical issues that may arise on digital media teams * Characteristics of ethical leaders and ethical leadership responses to complex challenges in digital media environments, including those related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access | *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (Introduction and Chapter 1)  *Reimagining Communication: Action* (Chapter 4)  Bazerman, 2020  Williams, 2018  *Ethical Leadership Responsibilities* (video)  *Simon Sinek: Building Trusting Teams* (video) | Discussion  Participation  Leadership Assessment Activity  Implicit Association Test (Optional Activity) |
| 3 | * Definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in a digital media organization * The role of leaders in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, including evaluating and onboarding an optimal mix of diverse talent * Overcoming implicit bias to create a fair and inclusive work environment | *An Introduction to Implicit Bias: Knowledge, Justice, and the Social Mind* (Chapters 1 & 12)  Bourke & Titus, 2019  Livingston, 2020  Agovino, 2020  Burns et al., 2021  *What is Inclusion?* (video)  *Exploring Unconscious Bias* (video)  *How to Counter Unconscious Bias* (video) | Discussion  Participation  A Conversation about Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Assignment |
| 4 | * Personal leadership strengths * Personal leadership areas for opportunity and improvement * A personal leadership philosophy that builds a high-performing work environment where people thrive | *Strategic Doing: Ten Skills for Agile Leadership* (Chapter 1)  *The Leader You Want to Be: Five Essential Principles for Bringing Out Your Best Self—Every Day* (Chapter 2)  Ancona, 2019  Larson & DeChurch, 2020  Frei & Morriss, 2020  Peterson et al., 2020  *Jane Hyun in Becoming a Fluent Leader* (video)  *What is Your Philosophy on Leadership?* (video)  *The Likability Dilemma for Women Leaders* (video) | Discussion  Participation  Leadership Action Plan Activity |
| 5 | * Characteristics of organizational complexity * Strategies for assessing and navigating complexity effectively in digital media organizations * Collaboration techniques in a matrixed environment * Personal leadership assessment insights on complexity and collaboration | *Conscious is the New Smart: How to Adapt and Thrive in a Disruptive World* (Chapters 1 & 2)  *Leading in the Digital World: How to Foster Creativity, Collaboration, and Inclusivity* (Chapter 7)  *Who Wins in a Digital World? Strategies to Make Your Organization Fit for the Future* (Chapter 7)  Gardner & Matviak, 2020  Casciaro et al., 2019  De Smet et al., 2020  Kwan, 2019  *Five Challenges of Collaboration* (video)  *Five Benefits of Collaboration* (video)  *Integrating Siloed Departments* (video) | Discussion  Participation  Collaboration Video Assignment |
| 6 | * Change leadership strategies and frameworks * Applications of leading change with courage, clarity, and collaboration * Personal leadership assessment insights on a change-oriented mindset | *Cognitive Readiness in Project Teams: Reducing Project Complexity and Increasing Success in Project Management* (Chapter 7)  *The Technology Takers: Leading Change in the Digital Era* (Chapter 5)  *Leadership, Communication, and Social Influence: A Theory of Resonance, Activation, and Cultivation* (Chapter 5)  Chima & Gutman, 2020  Higgins & Bianzino, 2020  *Leading Change through Agility and Resilience* (video)  *Daniel Goleman Explores Emotional Intelligence* (video)  *A Leader’s Role in Change* (video)  *Developing a Change Mindset* (video) | Discussion  Participation |
| 7 | * Stakeholder analysis approaches * Effective communication strategies for different stakeholders * The role of stakeholder feedback in improving performance * Personal leadership assessment insights on effective communication strategies | *Dynamic Competitive Strategy: Turning Strategy Upside Down* (Chapter 10)  *Leadership, Communication, and Social Influence: A Theory of Resonance, Activation, and Cultivation* (Chapter 4)  Mendy et al., 2020  Sull, 2018  *Communicating with Impact and Influence* (video)  *Jane Hyun: Get Out of Your Comfort Zone* (video)  *The Case for Transparency* (video)  *Transparency Starts with Facts* (video) | Discussion  Participation |
| 8 | Final Assessment | Final Assessment | Final Assessment |

# Grading

Students are graded based on their performance on course assignments. Instructors use rubrics to determine assignment grades. Students can access and view the rubrics for each discussion and assignment in Canvas.

## Grading Breakdown

Course assignments are weighted as follows.

| **Assignments** | **% of Grade** |
| --- | --- |
| Discussion | 15% |
| Participation | 10% |
| Assignments | 50% |
| Final Assessment | 25% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

## Grading Scale

Final grades are determined using the following scale.

| **Grade** | **Range** |
| --- | --- |
| A | 93.0% or higher |
| A- | 90.0%-92.9% |
| B+ | 87.0%-89.9% |
| B | 83.0%-86.9% |
| B- | 80.0%-82.9% |
| C+ | 77.0%-79.9% |
| C | 73.0%-76.9% |
| C- | 70.0%-72.9% |
| D | 60.0%-69.9% |
| F | 59.9% or lower |

# Assignment Descriptions

## Discussion Boards

The purpose of the discussions is to frame and promote collaborative learning. Active and regular participation is not only important for instructors to see but is also important for students to engage with each other and develop their thoughts and positions related to the module topics.

## Participation

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## Assignments

Assignments provide a way for students to demonstrate the course and module learning outcomes. Assignments may take the form of mini-papers, case studies, video summaries, presentations, spreadsheets, or other types of work. All assignment expectations are described in detail within the Canvas LMS. Assignment submissions should also follow the prescribed file naming structure provided within the Canvas LMS.

## Final Assessment

The final assessment provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the concepts learned throughout the entire course.

# Course Notes

This course incorporates a range of instructional strategies, and students are expected to participate in a variety of activities and assignments that will contribute to their success in the course.

## Class Requirements

Students are expected to spend approximately 10-15 hours per week engaging in course activities.

This includes, but is not limited to, reading, viewing multimedia, posting discussions, participating in live sessions, and completing assignments.

## Live Classroom Sessions

This course has live (synchronous) classroom sessions, meaning students meet online at the same designated time regardless of time zone or location. Students are expected and required to participate in the live classroom sessions. Live sessions allow students to apply and synthesize the content they have learned in the course with their peers and to ask questions of faculty face-to-face. Benefits of participation include interacting with experts, understanding peer perspectives, building community, and networking opportunities. The day and time for each session is specified in the Canvas calendar. Live session recordings are available in Canvas the following business day.

## APA Formatting

A link to the [Adapted APA Style Guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1p37s5_N0JlFUPbIGLbKB9cmuDowumOz9qEtVzUkMXE8/edit)is provided to students within each course.

# Technical Requirements

Detailed technical support requirements, as well as support points of contact, are provided in the [USC Online Technology and Support](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-RHCkZZqJl0AmOo4gWPxtOWWDazQ-OAeyF3ERkItpQw/edit?usp=sharing) document.

## Hardware

A computer or device with reliable internet access is necessary to participate in this course. The device must have video and audio capabilities. Students also need access to a device that can record sound as well as take photos and videos, as one or more course assignments may call for the creation and posting of media. The built-in camera on most computers, tablets, or mobile devices should be an appropriate tool for this purpose.

## Software

Your program requires the use of Microsoft Office. Microsoft Office is provided to USC students through [IT Services - Microsoft Office](http://itservices.usc.edu/officestudents). You must also have Google Drive, with an account under your USC email address. Google Drive is also provided to USC students through [IT Services - Google Drive](https://itservices.usc.edu/googledrive/).

## Skill Requirements

Students should have the ability to use a web camera, copy and paste, and attach or upload documents within the Canvas LMS.

# Course Policies

## Late Work

Late work is only accepted and graded at the discretion of the faculty. Students should contact their instructors prior to submitting any late assignments. Typically, late assignments are marked down 10% for each day late. Assignments submitted after midnight of the third day following the due date will not be accepted for grading. Faculty follow the policies below unless there are extenuating circumstances that students document and work through directly with faculty on an individual basis.

* **Discussions:** Original responses to the focus question(s) will be marked down 10% for each day late, and no original posts will be graded after midnight of the third day.
  + Original posts are due by 11:55pm PT on Wednesday each week; therefore, no original posts will be graded if they are posted after 11:55pm PT on Saturday of the week they are due.
  + No responses to peers will be accepted for grading after 11:55pm PT on Sunday of the week they are due.
* **Participation:** Participation responses are due by 11:55pm Pacific Time (PT) on Sunday; therefore, no original posts or responses will be accepted for grading after 11:55pm PT on Sunday of the week they are due.
* **Assignments**: Late assignments will be marked down 10% for each day late. Assignments are due by 11:55pm PT on Sunday of each week; therefore, no assignment will be accepted or graded after 11:55pm PT on the Wednesday of the week following the due date.
* **Final Assessment**: You will not be allowed to submit the final assessment prior to Monday of Week 8. Late work will be accepted for a reduced grade only with advance notice to your instructor. No final assessments will be accepted after Thursday (11:55pm PT).

## Plagiarism and Turnitin

All assignments for this course must be the student’s original work, and sources must be cited appropriately. All assignments are submitted through the university’s plagiarism detection tool, **Turnitin**. Assignments submitted through Turnitin will be added to the tool’s database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in the future. If plagiarism is suspected, the instructor may attempt to gain clarification from the student. Violations will be addressed under the university’s [student code of conduct policy](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus/).

## Concurrent Double-Dipping (Self-Plagiarism)

Related to plagiarism is the concept of self-plagiarism, which is using material from one assignment for another. Self-plagiarism is also referred to as “double-dipping” or recycling assignments, and it is a form of academic dishonesty. Therefore, coursework must be original work completed for each course session; work completed for other courses cannot be turned in for credit without the prior, written permission of the instructor.

Students who have previously attempted a course and did not receive academic credit for the course (with a passing grade), are retaking it, and wish to re-submit a previously submitted assignment must first request and receive permission to do so from their instructor. The student is responsible for submitting the request to the instructor:

* In writing,
* As soon as possible prior to the due date, and
* With a reason for the request.

The instructor will determine if the request is approved or denied and will communicate their decision to the student via email.

## Netiquette

Netiquette refers to etiquette on computer networks and is important for the course community to be a safe, engaging, and friendly place. Here are some guidelines for participation:

* Use the readings
* Be clear
* Be professional
* Read before responding
* Stay on point
* Avoid shorthand (e.g., IDK)
* Avoid sarcasm
* Avoid yelling (e.g., ALL CAPS!!!)
* Avoid overly long posts
* Avoid responding immediately if you are upset

On a more practical level, it’s often useful to type out discussion board posts in word processing or text editing software to refine them before posting, particularly in case there’s a problem with the browser or the software.

# Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

## Academic Conduct

Plagiarism—presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words—is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in [Part B, Section 11](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus/), “Behavior Violating University Standards and Appropriate Sanctions.” Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](https://policy.usc.edu/research-and-scholarship-misconduct/).

## Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)](https://osas.usc.edu/) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at the OSAS website. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

## Support Systems

[*Counseling and Mental Health*](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling) *- (213) 740-9355 (WELL) – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org) *- 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP)*](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault) *- (213) 740-9355 (WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

[*Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)*](http://eeotix.usc.edu) *- (213) 740-5086, M–F 8:30am–5:00pm | (213) 740-2500, for 24-hour reports (with the option to be anonymous)*

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[*Public CARE Report, USC Advocate System*](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid898515?) *- (213) 740-0411*

Avenue to report concern for a member of the Trojan family (Trojans Care 4 Trojans) or to report protected class harassment or discrimination (Harassment or Discrimination Incident Report). These reports are reviewed by the Office of Campus Wellbeing and Crisis Intervention.

[*USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)*](http://osas.usc.edu) *- (213) 740-0776*

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[*USC Campus Support and Intervention*](http://campussupport.usc.edu) *- (213) 740-0411*

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[*Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*](http://diversity.usc.edu) *- (213) 740-2101*

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[*USC Emergency*](http://emergency.usc.edu) *- UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[*USC Department of Public Safety*](http://dps.usc.edu) *- UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call*

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[*USC Office of the Ombuds*](http://ombuds.usc.edu) *- UPC: (213) 821-9556, HSC: (323) 442-0382*

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[*Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice*](http://chan.usc.edu/otfp) *- (323) 442-3340 or* [*otfp@med.usc.edu*](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health-promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.