



Course Syllabus

Course title:	Leadership and Organizational Governance
Course #/term:	SW 665 Winter 2023
Time and place:	Thursdays, 9am-12pm, TBD
Credit hours:	3
Instructor:	Bonnie Dockham
Pronouns:	She/her/hers
Contact info:	E-mail: bonnie@cancersupportannarbor.org <i>When you email me, please include SW 665 in the subject line.</i> Feel free to address me as “Bonnie” in class
Phone:	and in writing.
Office hours:	734.277.5911 by appointment

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Teaching philosophy

My courses are designed for students to leave with the following:

- Confidence in their ability to apply course material and concepts in settings outside of the classroom;
- A commitment to and facility with operationalizing social work Core Values in the NASW Code of Ethics;
- Enhanced capacity to confront and explore issues of social justice and how populations that traditionally have been marginalized are disproportionately negatively affected by policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions;
- Build on positive sources of power to envision and work towards social justice; work to reduce disempowerment;
- Build on indigenous knowledge/experiences of individuals, groups and communities in practice and evaluation;
- Demonstrable and recognizable skills and competencies;
- New knowledge of the subject matter, and an understanding of how to access further knowledge and resources commensurate with their professional roles and interests;
- Curiosity and a drive to continue to develop critical thinking, inquiry, and integrity.

Graduate students are adult learners, and as such I prioritize honoring your prior knowledge and experience; your contributions to the class are vital, and I make every effort to create an environment that encourages you to share your perspectives and ideas with each other, disagree with me, and shape the tenor of the course. Additionally, it is incumbent on me to understand the differential pressures and life circumstances that facilitate or constrain your learning and your engagement in the course.

Classroom Climate

True learning involves risk and, therefore, vulnerability. Leadership demands vulnerability. I hope that all students will work with me to create and foster a learning environment that promotes social justice, inclusion and equity. Further, this is an opportunity for all of us to engage in professional socialization, respectfulness, and broadening our mutual development of cultural humility.

Questioning and disagreeing are part of the learning process, and I encourage all of us to engage in these activities with thoughtfulness and respect. I expect the classroom to be safe, but learning and growth is often uncomfortable. There are a few times when I will engineer disagreements to foster learning, so please do not “freeze” your understanding of any of us after one or two interactions. Expect that *we all have the capacity to grow and develop*. Finally, if you are someone who likes to interact and engage verbally, consider “moving back” occasionally in order to open the airwaves for others to speak. Similarly, if you are someone who is reticent to speak up in class, consider “moving up” and taking a risk. Above all, this is a learning laboratory and we all will be testing out different ways of interacting and learning.

An emotionally brave class climate is important for everyone’s learning and growth. Below are a few expectations I have about our interactions in the course. This is not an exhaustive list, and I welcome suggestions for additional expectations:

- Practice “Both - And” thinking and solution seeking
- Be attuned to both **Process** and **Content**: “process” is *how* and *when* you express yourself, and “content” is *what* you say.

- Remember that this is a vulnerable space for you, and for others.
- We all have an amazing capacity to screw up. Do not “freeze” anyone in this space.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Be responsible to yourself and to others about what is communicated without blame or shame.
- Limit disruptions and distractions by coming to class on time, avoiding unnecessary use of electronics, and avoiding talking when others are presenting/talking.
- Notice both the **intent** and the **impact** of what you do or say. Take responsibility when your intent does not match the impact on someone else. Take notice of peoples’ intent, not just the impact of others’ communication.
- Speak from your own experience, without generalizing.
- Critique ideas, not people.
- Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- Step up if you usually don’t contribute, step back if you often contribute.
- Call each other in to conversations vs. calling someone out.

I am interested in any other expectations you may have, and we will discuss in one of our first classes.

Inclusive Language

The words we use can make the difference between forging positive connections or creating distance in our personal and professional lives. Particularly in writing, impact is more important than intent. This course provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive concepts that span a variety of disciplines, experiences, cultural communities, and learning styles in education. Increasing the inclusiveness of our language means striving to understand the ways that language often unconsciously makes assumptions about people and unintentionally reinforces dominant norms. I invite you to reflect on issues of privilege and injustice, and to acknowledge issues of ethical engagement when speaking on cultural communities that you do not identify with. As such, I ask that students consider:

- Recognizing individual gender pronoun use;
- Respecting and using contemporary and relevant language around social identities;
- Using language that recognizes varying abilities and is not ableist;
- Using language inclusive of diverse global contexts;
- Providing developmental and educational support of attendees who may be unfamiliar with inclusive language practices.

Land, Labor and Life Acknowledgment

We are coming from many places and I want to acknowledge the ancestral homeland and traditional territories of indigenous peoples who have been here since time immemorial and to recognize that we must continue to build our solidarity and kinship with Native peoples across the Americas and across the globe.

The University of Michigan, named for Michigami, the world’s largest freshwater system and located in the Huron River watershed, was formed and has grown through connections with the land stewarded by Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbors the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations.

I also acknowledge that this country would not exist if not for the free, enslaved labor of Black people. I honor the legacy of the African diaspora and Black life, knowledge and skills stolen due to violence and white supremacy.

While the movement for justice and liberation is building, and we are witnessing the power of the people, many are still being met with violence and are being killed. Collectively, I join with all communities to say that this must end now. Black lives matter.

About SW 665: Leadership and Organizational Governance

Course Description

This course will examine the attributes, skills, behaviors, problems, and issues associated with higher level administrative roles in human service organizations, both public and private. Several executive functions will be given particular attention, including defining the mission and goals of the organization, mobilizing resources, selecting service technologies and staff, developing the appropriate internal-external structures (i.e., internal structures that link to external contexts), and adapting the organization to changing environments. Various styles of leadership will also be analyzed with special reference to the stages of organizational development. Concomitant with the above executive roles and skills, this course will address strategies for organizational development that are directed toward enhancing adaptability, effectiveness and efficiency in serving clientele, and organizational problem-solving.

Course Content

This course will examine the attributes, skills, behaviors, problems, and issues associated with leadership in social impact organizations, both in the public and private sectors. Students will explore multiple styles of leadership, as well as the application of those styles in various settings. Some emphasis will be placed on the basic rudiments of executive positions and roles in relation to decision-making and facilitation, organizational governance, and relationships with boards of directors and external stakeholders. Issues pertaining to intersectional dimensions of identity (ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender identity and gender expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, spirituality, sex, sexual orientation) will be given special attention, particularly as students develop their own identity as leaders and manage relationships and conflict in the workplace. Leadership will also be analyzed in relation to the stages of organizational development. Concomitant with the above executive roles and skills, this course will address strategies for organizational development that are directed toward advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as enhancing adaptability, effectiveness, and efficiency to serving populations that have traditionally experienced marginalization.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Recognize the role of intersectional identity and multiple ways of knowing and constructing knowledge in leadership development and organizational governance. (EPAS 4, 6, 7; PODS)
2. Differentiate the relevant contexts, conditions, competencies, and characteristics of leaders which affect the organization's impact on stakeholders and the community. (EPAS 4, 6, 7; PODS)

3. Develop and evaluate an evidence-based action plan related to systemic barriers and growth of leadership skills. (EPAS 4, 7, 9)
4. Evaluate ethical concerns in social impact organizations and the role of leadership in mitigating ethical concerns. (EPAS 4, 7; PODS)
5. Demonstrate how leaders apply critical thinking skills to assess, engage, intervene and evaluate. (EPAS 6, 8, 9)
6. Examine conflict, its components, and methods for transformation toward social justice goals, including analyzing assumptions that underlie presumably universal practice methods. (EPAS 6, 8; PODS)
7. Engage with diverse stakeholders to incorporate their perspectives on organizational governance and strategy. (EPAS 6, 7, 8; PODS)

Course Design

This course will follow a lecture-discussion format with student projects, invited speakers, and opportunities to exchange knowledge with executives of human service organizations.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity

will be addressed through attention to the executive's role in insisting on and designing and implementing agency diversity and cultural competence. Emphasis will be placed on the barriers to executiveship on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, minority status, etc. (e.g., the "glass ceiling").

Theme Relation to Social Justice

will be addressed through the presentation of management tools which can secure a better representation of women and minorities in executive ranks and the organizational changes, especially in boards, needed for this to occur.

Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation

will be addressed through special attention to the risks attendant to the executive person, including mental health and physical problems occurring from stress. In particular, wellness programs and mental health regimes developed to aid executive success will be discussed. Leadership issues relevant to human service agencies that reflect these particular modes of intervention will also be addressed.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research

will be addressed through the use of executive leadership theory, theories of social roles, and research on organizational effectiveness and organizational performance.

Relationship to SW Ethics and Values

This course will present the role of the executive in taking leadership with respect to social work values and ethics and implementing the NASW Code of Ethics. In particular, this course will focus on the executive's special responsibility to demonstrate propriety, competence, professional development, and integrity as well as the executive's responsibility to treat colleagues with respect, fairness, and courtesy. Students will learn that the executive role consists of presentation of self in the agency and community and the use of the public persona to articulate and reinforce social work values and ethics.

Course Requirements

Textbook & other readings

Required Textbook:

Frei, F. and Morriss, A. (2020). *Unleashed: The Unapologetic Leader's Guide to Empowering Everyone Around You*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

It is ~\$30 in print and a little less in e-book format. Since it is so new, I have been unable to find a free copy at the library, but they are working on it. The upside is it is a useful text and something that you may want to have access to in the future 😊

There are multiple ways to order the book or the e-book: <https://www.theleadersguide.com/> (external link)

Secondary Textbook (NOT REQUIRED)

Brown, B. (2018). *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*. New York: Random House.

We will not read this whole thing, and there is one copy (now) at our library so you don't need to purchase it. However, many of you may find you want to purchase a copy. It costs between \$10-\$20 new, in print and there is eBook or audiobook (read by the author!)

As of this writing, there is one copy available at the library, and you need to be signed in to the library to access it: <https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/017032558> (external link)

I will place all other required readings on our course Canvas site in folders that correspond to the weeks they are due. **I reserve the right to add/substitute the readings, but if I do, I will give you sufficient notice.

I recommend the following books also, though you **do not need** to purchase or rent either of them. If you are interested in leadership, this is a very useful compendium to have:

Northouse, P. (2016) *Leadership: Theory and Practice, Seventh Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Cameron, K. (2012). *Positive Leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Performance, Second Edition*. San Francisco: Barret Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Class schedule

Date	Topic/ Agenda	Asynchronous Work before class	Assignments to turn in/complete before class
1/5	Session 1: Introduction	Canvas Modules have all of this material in them. There are more detailed instructions on Canvas than on this syllabus.	
1/12	Session 2: Management and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Is (Still) Not Leadership • Real Impact of Your Leadership • Emotional intelligence in leadership • OPTIONAL: Entering the Fundamental State of Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Listen to 1 of 4 Brene Brown podcasts (see Discussions on Canvas) and post comments on 2 others student's posts. • 16 Personalities Results due
1/19	Session 3: Personal Leadership Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit leadership at a crossroads • Turning Potential Into Success • 34 StrengthsQuest Themes • Ethics Chapter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CliftonStrengths Inventory results due <i>**I will email you a code after the 2nd class</i>
1/26	Session 4: Leadership in Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unleashed, Chapters 1-2 • SKIM What Makes a Great Leadership Team • SKIM How to Create Better Nonprofit Executive Teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daring Leadership Assessment • Reflection Questions for Unleashed (Chapters 1-2) • OPTIONAL: https://www.ted.com/talks/frances_frei_how_to_build_and_rebuild_trust?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
2/2	Session 5: Inclusive Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unleashed, chapters 3-4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Question for Unleashed (Chapters 3-4) • Post: a quote/meme/short video in the Leadership & Vulnerability Garden
2/9	Session 6: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are We Still Struggling with Diversity Equity and Inclusion in Nonprofit Governance • What does it look like to support women of color to lead? • 8 Ways People of Color Are Tokenized in Nonprofits 	Perusal: From diversity to inclusion: a multimethod study of diverse governing groups
2/16	Session 7: Governance Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study • Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling Structural Racism • Nonprofit Board Responsibilities The Basics 	

Date	Topic/ Agenda	Asynchronous Work before class	Assignments to turn in/complete before class
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying attention to white culture and privilege: a missing link • The Nonprofit Sector as White Space • Vital Voices Lessons Learned from Board Members of Color • Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Nonprofit Governance Definitions and Background • See <i>assignment</i> for how these readings are distributed among team members 	
2/23	Session 8: Adaptive Leadership		Guest Speaker – Barb Hiltz
3/2	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	
3/9	Governance Case Studies		Group Presentations
3/16	Session 9: Strategy and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unleashed, chapters 5-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Questions Question for Unleashed (Chapters 5-6) • OPTIONAL: Managing Human Behavior in Public and Nonprofit Organizations - Fifth Edition - Ch. 7 Leadership in Public Organizations • OPTIONAL: Resourceful Manager's Guide to Leadership
3/23	Session 10: Crisis Simulation	Reading Materials for each role on Canvas	Organizational Background Materials (folder on Canvas)
3/30	NO CLASS	I will be out of town.	
4/6	Session 11: Crisis Simulation Week 2	Reading Materials for each role on Canvas	
4/13	Session 12: Crisis Response Presentation		Presentations

Assignments

Assignment	Due date	% of Grade
16 Personalities Results	1/12/23	This is <i>part</i> of engagement, which is 40%
Clifton Strengths Inventory Results <i>**I will email you a login code</i>	1/16/23	
Reflections/Discussions	Various	
Group Assignment: Case Study Presentation	3/9/23	20%
Group Assignment: Crisis Simulation Presentation	4/13/23	25%
Individual Assignment: Leadership Development Plan	4/14/23	15%
Course Engagement & Final Reflection	4/14/23	40%

Grading

This course is “ungraded¹.” 🗳️🗳️ **This does not mean the course is pass/fail.** You will still receive a letter grade on your transcript at the end of the semester. However, unlike in traditionally graded courses, your grade will be determined *based on your own self-assessment* of your learning and effort in the class, with the possibility of adjustments up or down from me. There is a significant amount of research that supports this process.

In assignments that you turn in, I will ask you to assign a letter grade, with the possibility of adjustments up or down from me. At the end of the semester, I will ask you to propose a grade for course engagement with a brief reflection.

When assigning final grades, I will strive to honor your assessment of your own performance and progress in this course. However, I reserve the right to alter your proposed grade as appropriate, based on my own evaluation of your performance and progress in the course as a whole. In the event of an adjustment, I will provide you with my rationale and will meet with you to discuss.

I typically use this framework for grades, which are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following schedule:

100	A+	88-90	B+	78-80	C+	68-70	D+
94-99	A	84-87	B	74-77	C	64-67	D
91-93	A-	81-83	B-	71-73	C-	<64	E

Graded Elements	%
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¹ Much of what I understand about ungrading, I have learned from Jesse Stommel: <https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-faq/>

<p>Course Engagement & Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Inventories: Competing Values tool, CliftonStrengths, 16 Personalities, Daring Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous class discussions, activities, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous Discussions: shared podcast reflections, individual reflection questions, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership/Vulnerability Garden posts <input type="checkbox"/> Perusall Annotations 	40%
Group Project: Governance Case Study	20%
Group Project: Crisis Response + After Action Review	25%
Leadership Development Plan	15%
Total	100%

Course Engagement and Attendance

I place so much emphasis on course and team engagement because leadership development is dependent on your active engagement. I expect you to be engaged in all in-class activities, including contributing comments and questions in class discussions and case studies. Early in the course you will be assigned to a team, and you will work in that team throughout the semester. A big component of the course will center on responding as a team to a crisis in a human services organization.

There will be a few self-inventory tools (Competing Values tool, CliftonStrengths, brief Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) that are required for the course. It will be *really* difficult for you to do the work in this class without completing those tools. (The good news: most people find them fun and interesting. After all, they're all about you 😊 and they don't take too long to complete.)

Some people naturally speak up in class more than others. I recommend that if you are someone who is comfortable talking a lot, you consider "moving back," and if you are less comfortable talking a lot, you consider "moving up." However, your engagement score is not predicated on the number of times you speak in class; rather I will focus on your participation in activities and whether it is obvious that you are engaged in the classes and coursework.

Class attendance is imperative for both your own learning and the learning of your peers, and certainly for my learning. I expect students to attend class or make arrangements to engage in all the content from each session.

If personal or professional circumstances require your absence from more than one class, please contact me as soon as possible. Note that even if you are absent from a class, you are still responsible for submitting any assignments due that day.

Group Project: DEI Governance Case Study

Each group will be assigned a case study about governance, with an emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which we will define together in class. There are readings associated with the case study. Each member of the group will be responsible for a subset of the readings. The

assignment will culminate in a presentation to the full class about the case study and the group's recommendations.

Group Project: Crisis Response and After Action Review

This project will unfold over a few class meetings; information will be revealed to you over time. You will select executive leadership roles in your team (Executive Director, Board Member, Development Director, Program Director, Human Resources Director) and develop individual and coordinated responses to the crisis situation(s) in the organization.

In terms of deliverables, your team will prepare a *brief* presentation for the class. I will facilitate an "After Action Review" with each group individually.

Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas and unlocked as the process unfolds.

Leadership Development Plan

You will submit a leadership development plan that connects your leadership style with actionable steps that will lead to specific, desired outcomes. You can write a cohesive narrative that responds to the prompts in the assignment, you can answer each prompt separately in the form of a workplan, you can create a slideshow or portfolio, a series of infographics, or a TED-style talk. In other words, you can feel free to be creative as long as you respond to the prompts given in the assignment (found on Canvas).

(Many people choose to use this assignment as an opportunity to build a portfolio for use in post-graduation endeavors such as employment searching or continuing education.) The overall goal of the assignment is for you to have a relevant, practical tool for your own professional development. Full assignment will be posted on Canvas.

Late Assignments

Assignments due dates are on schedule above and on Canvas.

Please submit all work on time so that I can give you timely feedback. If you find that personal or professional challenges prevent you from submitting assignments on the due date, please communicate with me so we can make a plan.

During the Organizational Crisis Simulation, there are no options to turn in deliverables late.

Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern.

Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including [properly wearing a face covering in class](#) and compliance with the [University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#). Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the [Campus Maize & Blueprint](#). Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#) and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through [WolverineAccess](#). I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required.

Expectations for Written Work

Development of professional writing is a goal of the course, and I will consider writing quality in grading. **Proofread written work carefully**; I strongly recommend that you have a colleague read your documents for clarity, typos, omitted words, etc. Purdue University's OWL website <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> is a great resource for general writing and formatting advice.

In addition, social work students can receive individual writing assistance from Betsy Williams, Writing Skills and Study Skills Coordinator, through the UM SSW Career Services office. **Betsy has created a website with lots of information:** ssw.umich.edu/writing-help

Students may schedule an appointment and bring a draft of their work (at any stage) along with the text of the assignment and any questions or concerns they may have. Email ssw-cso@umich.edu.

Finally, another resource is the English Language Institute: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli>

Additional Course Information and Resources

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism