



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

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PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERSHIP (GSOG6002)

"The leader but points the way" - Eleanor Roosevelt.

Leadership is made by followers and leaders together. It is a story that resolves these questions. What is a leader? What is the difference between leaders and managers? Are leaders made or born? What are the different kinds of leaders? Who follows leaders and why? Is democratic leadership different from other kinds? How is public-sector leadership different from leadership in business or community organisations? Is it different across different cultures? Do men and women lead in the same way? In this unit, we will review and evaluate theories of leadership. Emphasis will be on the application of theories to evidence, including participants' experiences and perceptions of leadership in different contexts. The theme of leaders as facilitators and agents of change will be explored, including real-world examples of what, how and when to make decisions. Similarly, the themes of ethical practice in managing and leading people and shaping organisational culture will be explored.

The focus of this unit will be on how people provide leadership in different circumstances rather than specific policies or programs of particular leaders.

Learning Style

The unit is structured around different aspects of leadership relevant to the needs of senior public servants. Key concepts and theories will be presented initially through selected readings. Participants will be required to complete the relevant readings for a particular class before they attend that class. In class, we will use a variety of methods to examine the strengths, weaknesses and applicability of these theories and concepts. Working in small groups, participants will develop and present material about the issues raised in the readings and related case studies (see below). We will draw on participants' varied cultures, careers, backgrounds and experiences of leading and following. In each teaching session, specific case studies of leadership will be presented for discussion by visiting speakers, video presentations and/or additional reading material. The lecturer will sometimes elaborate on theories and concepts of leadership in short lectures. The focus of all classes will be on how people lead in different circumstances, rather than on the specific policies or programs of particular leaders. Suggestions and feedback are welcome at any stage. Specific opportunities for feedback will be built into the teaching program.

Learning Outcomes

- Understanding of concepts and theories of leadership.
- Application of the concepts and theories to leadership case studies in public administration, public policy and governance.
- Appreciation of the impact of different cultural contexts within which leaders and followers interact.
- Understanding of the impact of different institutional frameworks and processes through which leadership occurs.
- Critical awareness of common leadership measurement instruments.
- Skills and experience in interpreting and applying different leadership styles (or elements of styles) to varying real-world situations.
- Enhanced decision-making skills.
- Understanding of ethical practice and shaping work cultures.
- Strengthened analytical capacity.
- Effective verbal and written communication.
- Ability to manage and lead change.

Assessment

In keeping with the emphasis on blending theory and practice and drawing upon adult learning styles, assessment will involve a mix of tasks and assignments such as:

- a leadership profile (750 words or less) due in class 1
- a biographical analysis of a leader (2500 words or less) due in class 6
- a reflective journal (2800 words or less) due in classes 4 and 7, and
- preparation for and participation in the class sessions.

Participants will have the opportunity to choose, within limits, the weighting they want for each of these four elements of assessment.

Contact Hours and Private Study

The unit will be offered in 'intensive semester' mode. This will involve seven full days (42 hours) of class contact spread over 10 weeks (incorporating a three-week break for reading, reflection and writing). In keeping with the University of Sydney's expectations, face-to-face contact will be complemented by private study including the completion of assessment tasks.

Indicative Topics

- Leading and managing: what's the difference? Myths of leadership. Leaders: born or made?
- Is all leadership the same (I)? Different leaders and leadership in different cultures.
- Is all leadership the same (II)? Political, business and community leadership.
- What is distinctive about public sector leadership?
- Leaders and followers. The tools of leadership: words and deeds, decision making and ethical behaviour.
- Leading through crisis.
- What can leaders really change? Possibilities and constraints in leadership.
- Where have all the leaders gone? The end of leadership, or leadership reborn?
- Case studies with and of particular leaders (for example, NSW Premier Bob Carr and /or his ministers) or groups of leaders (for example, women as leaders, Indigenous and other community leaders).

Indicative Readings

- Bennis, W (1999) 'The End of Leadership', *Organisational Dynamics*, 28(1)
- Blondel, J (1987) *Political Leadership: Towards a General Analysis*, Sage, New York
- Bunce V (1981) *Do New Leaders Make a Difference?*, Princeton University Press, Princeton
- Burns J (1978) *Leadership*, New York, Harper and Row.
- Cooper T and Dale Wright N (eds) (1992) *Exemplary Public Administrators*, San Francisco, Jossey Bass
- Gardner H (1995) *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership*, Harper Collins, New York
- Neustadt R *Presidential Power*, New York
- Rost J (1991) *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, Praeger, New York
- Sarros JC and Santora C (2001) 'Leaders and Values: A Cross-Cultural Study', *Leadership and Organisational Development Journal*, 22(5)
- Sinclair A (1998) *Doing Leadership Differently*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press

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