DPLS 778 Leadership & Film

Spring 2011 3 Credits
Dr. Shann Ferch
**Office hours:** by appointment
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**Meets Mondays from 6-10:** 1/10, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/28, 3/14, 3/21, 4/11
Tilford 117

**School Theme Statement**
The School of Professional Studies at Gonzaga University seeks to build "people for others," people able to define their own sense of identity, live within a moral framework, and articulate and advance social justice.

**Course Overview**
The quest for discernment regarding leadership on personal, organizational, and global levels is both elusive and complex. Yet, when individual people, families, organizations, or nations find the resonance that true leadership brings, they are restored to a sense of hope, healing, and legitimate power.

This course features a collaborative classroom combining four vital leadership learning communities: the Comprehensive Leadership Program for Gonzaga undergraduates, the Masters of Organizational Leadership Program, the Masters of Communication and Leadership Program, and the Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies. The course initiates a thoughtful consideration of the nature of leadership as depicted in film. Through seeking understanding in dialogue with fellow learners, students are encouraged toward greater discernment of the person, the collective, and the context with regard to the dynamic systems involved in leadership. Film provides unique insights to investigate character and motive, as well as culture, allowing us to access meaning and significance through theoretical, analytic and dialogic inquiry. The course helps form in students the ability not only to be leaders, but in the words of Robert Frost, "awakeners." Through the time spent viewing films and entering into discourse, we will become more sophisticated observers and practitioners of leadership as we seek to understand the essence of leaders through artistic representation. Reflection, introspection, and personal engagement aimed toward a richly layered encounter with the lives of leaders contributes to the formation of a more enduring and authentic leadership response to personal, organizational, and global complexities.

*You do not need to purchase the films. We will watch an entire film each class session, except in the final class.*

**Course Objectives and Goals**
This course promotes the understanding of:
1. leadership theory and personal application
2. film analysis and critique
3. general understandings of the role of leadership in film
4. dialogue and experiential-based learnings regarding leadership and film
5. the use of films to encounter leadership in the moment;
6. the development of a personal leadership stance in the context of film
7. the understanding of the self and the other in relation to leadership and film

**Texts for the Course**

**Film: A Critical Introduction**  
by Maria Pramaggiore & Tom Wallis, Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2006

**A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Leadership**  
by Brad Jackson & Ken Perry, Sage Publications, 2008

**Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation**  
by Parker Palmer, Jossey-Bass, 1999

**Pedagogy of the Oppressed**  
by Paulo Freire, Continuum, 2000

**Repair**  
by C. K. Williams, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000

**Learning Activities and Evaluation**

Grades will be based on:
- **60%** In class participation (including personal presentation in class 8)
- **40%** Required writing assignments

The writing work is graded with regard to three equally-weighted elements:
- **Creativity**—writing style, writing voice, arrangement of thoughts and arguments, etc.
- **Construction**—structure, grammar, clarity, simplicity, etc.
- **Critical Thought**—depth, skill of argument, density of critical judgment, etc.

Scholarly work at Gonzaga University is of highest quality both in content and presentation. Grades are assigned as follows:

A 95-100%  
A- 90-94%  
B+ 85-89%  
B 80-84%  
B- 75-79%  
C+ 70-74%  
C Not acceptable at Ph. D. level

**Writing Assignments**

1) Leadership Film Critiques (due classes 3, 4, and 5)
- CLP students (or other undergraduate students): complete 1 film critique
- Masters students: complete 2 leadership film critiques
- Doctoral students: complete 3 leadership film critiques

Definition of a leadership film critique: Write a 3 page paper of publishable quality in which you frame a leadership problem (personal, organizational, or global) through self-responsibility and collective responsibility by focusing on a film of your choice (from films shown in class, or films not shown in class). Include in the paper a life-giving stance that shows rich critical discernment and persuades your audience toward an answer to the leadership problem you propose (without
coercing or lecturing your audience). No citations required. Excellent depth of critical thought required.

Submit your work to a major media outlet (national or international newspaper, magazine, or online venue).

2) Leadership and Film Paper (due class 7)
   • CLP (or other undergraduates): 6-8 pages including references
   • Masters students: 10-12 pages including references and submit the paper to a refereed scholarly journal
   • Doctoral students: 13-15 pages including references and submit the paper to a refereed scholarly journal

Pick a classic, well-reviewed, or exceptional film (from in class or not), and use the leadership ethos in the films to speak to a major contemporary social justice problem (e.g. familial breakdown, racial inequality, economic disparity, addictions, environmental issues, the problem with privilege, the problem with inappropriate power, the lack of authentic love, etc.). Include at least one personal story in your paper. Give an introduction (at least one paragraph) that persuasively positions the connection between leadership and the arts (specifically film) as a good place for leadership development/insight/discernment. Also, choose one of the emergent theories of leadership as a backbone of the paper (appreciative inquiry, relational leadership, servant-leadership, transformational leadership, etc.). Generally, the paper should have 2 to 5 citations per paragraph (except in the personal story section(s)) in order to provide a scholarly and critically rich foundation for the vision you put forward in the paper.

Final Presentation (present in class 8)
In the final class please present a symbolic personal integration of your learnings from the class. The length of the presentation is 5 minutes sharp (except group presentations, which can be 10). Choose one major point of personal transformation to present on, and select your presentation format from the following list:
   • 1) Dramatic monologue
   • 2) Dramatic dialogue (done with one or two other students)
   • 3) Self-produced film, or documentary
   • 4) Co-produced film or documentary (with one or two others)
   • 5) Any art-based form of presentation (e.g. music, dance, painting)

Class schedule
Two of the course texts, Film: A Critical Introduction and A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Leadership will be utilized throughout the course, so students are encouraged to read these books as soon as possible. The remaining three texts should be completed by the dates below;

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<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Topic/Film</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Intro to Leadership &amp; Film Amazing Grace</td>
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<th>Two</th>
<th><em>Crash</em></th>
<th>Let Your Life Speak</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td><em>Doubt</em></td>
<td>Let Your Life Speak,</td>
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<td>Leadership Film Critiques</td>
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<td>Four</td>
<td><em>Smoke Signals</em></td>
<td>Let Your Life Speak,</td>
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<td>Leadership Film Critiques</td>
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<td>Five</td>
<td><em>The Crucible</em></td>
<td>Pedagogy of the Oppressed,</td>
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<td>Leadership Film Critiques</td>
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<td>Six</td>
<td><em>Babette's Feast</em></td>
<td>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</td>
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<td>Seven</td>
<td><em>Once</em></td>
<td>Repair, Final Paper</td>
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<td><em>Finishing Together</em></td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
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