**Course Syllabus**

**Dr. Hammad Akbar**

**MGT 414 – Leadership and Group Dynamics   
Fall 2025**

**Lecture Time and Location:**

**MGMT 414:** Mondays and Wednesdays

**Time:** 0930 hours – 10:45 hours

**Location:** BUA-S CG 1016

**Contact Information:**

**Email**: [hammad.akbar@ku.edu.kw](mailto:hammad.akbar@ku.edu.kw)

**Office Hours**: Mondays 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM or by appointment

or by *email* appointment

**Office:** S01-0B-1016

**Course Website**: See Teams

**Course Description:**

Organizations are social entities, consisting of individuals working together within a context to achieve a common goal. To achieve this shared purpose, individuals in organizations need to be incentivized to harness their strengths and capabilities for collective effectiveness. Leadership in this context plays a crucial role in inspiring, guiding, directing, and aligning individuals in organizations to achieve the shared goal and purpose, both in the short-term and the long-term.

This course explores the principles and practices of leadership within the context of group and organizational dynamics. Students will examine theories of leadership, motivation, communication, and decision-making, while developing skills to effectively lead and participate in teams. Emphasis is placed on understanding group processes, conflict resolution, diversity, and the role of emotional intelligence in leadership. Through case studies, experiential exercises, and collaborative projects, students will learn how to foster positive group dynamics, enhance team performance, and apply leadership strategies to real-world situations.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

The learning outcomes for this course are listed below and relate to the learning goals of the College of Business Administration Undergraduate Program.

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

1. Understand major theories of leadership and group dynamics and their relevance to the context of organizations as social entities.
2. Analyze group processes, such as communication, decision-making, incentives/disincentives, risk-taking behavior, motivation and conflict resolution.
3. Develop the ability to think as leaders and demonstrate effective leadership skills in diverse teams through role-plays, case studies, and group projects.
4. Understand the impact of individual differences, cultural diversity, and emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness and group performance.
5. Apply strategies for building trust, fostering collaboration, and improving team effectiveness in real-world scenarios.
6. Reflect on personal leadership style, strengths, and areas for growth in relation to group dynamics.

**CLO Mapping to CBA Skill-Based Competency Goals**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course Learning Outcomes** | **Competency (Goals)** | | | | | |
| *Analytical (LG5)* | *Communication (LG4)* | *Information Technology (LG3)* | *Decision-Making Skills (LG2)* | *Business Ethics (LG1)* | *General Business Knowledge* |
| 1 | A |  |  |  |  | A |
| 2 | R | R |  | A |  | A |
| 3 | A |  |  | R |  |  |
| 4 | A |  |  |  |  | A |
| 5 |  |  |  | R |  |  |
| 6 | A |  |  | R |  | R |

**Type of Emphases:**

* **(I)ntroduce:** Students will be introduced to the skill and their grasp of it assessed in the course.
* **(A)pply:** The course will not cover the skill. Students should have a high-level grasp of the skill and are required to apply it in the course.
* **(R)einforce:** Students should have an introductory-level grasp of the skill and the course will improve their mastery to a higher level.

# CBA Competency Goals – Linked with Competency Goals

1. **Analytical Competency:** The CBA graduate will be able to use analytical skills to examine and understand business problems.

***Student Learning Objectives:***

* 1. Use appropriate analytical techniques to study and investigate a given organizational design problem.
  2. Use relevant analytical techniques and methods to dissect and absorb business problems, such as the apparent versus the core problem.

1. **Decision-making Competency:** The CBA graduate will be able to solve business problems and make a well-supported business decision.

***Student Learning Objectives:***

* 1. Critically evaluate multiple solutions to address a given organizational structure or design issue.
  2. Make well-informed and well-supported business decisions.

1. **General Business Knowledge:** The CBA graduate will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental business disciplines’ concepts and theories.

***Student Learning Objectives:***

3.1 Acquire a fundamental understanding of knowledge from the main business disciplines (e.g. management, economics and finance, among others) vis-à-vis organizations as social and economic entities (e.g. going-concern, scale/scope, knowledge-imperfections, and contextual implications, among others).

**My Expectations from You**

This course focuses on the application of concepts and ideas to real-world examples, primarily through case discussions. I intend to keep lecturing to a bare minimum. For the class to work well, and for you to benefit from it, preparation for each class meeting is essential. All students are expected to arrive at class having read the assigned chapter or the case and be prepared to offer and defend their recommendations. As our class discussion forms the crux of the course, it is important that I get to know who you are as soon as possible. **Please display your name card and try to sit in the same seat every session.**

An important feature of MGMT 414 is that it is an integrative class. I shall be expecting you to draw on the knowledge you have gained from your previous classes, and from your general knowledge of business affairs. But MGMT 414 is not just about reading and analysis, it is also about ideas. Successful leaders are innovators - they seek to identify and exploit new opportunities for profit. In making recommendations I shall expect you to generate novel, interesting, and commercially attractive ideas.

**Required Material:**

**Textbook:** Northhouse, Peter G. (2025). Leadership: Theory and Practice. Tenth Edition. London: Sage Publications.

**Additional Material**: Required reading materials will be provided through the course website or distributed in the class.

**Grading:**

The scores in this course will be the weighted average of the following items:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Weight** | **Description** |
| 10% | Attendance (two late attendances make one absence) |
| 20% | Midterm Exam |
| 20% | Class Participation (class discussion and group exercises/discussions) |
| 10% | Group Report and Presentations |
| 40% | Final Exam |
| 100% | TOTAL |

**Grade Distribution:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PERCENT** | **GRADE** |
| 95.00 – 100.00 % | A |
| 90.00 – 94.99 % | A- |
| 87.00 – 89.99 % | B+ |
| 83.00 – 86.99 % | B |
| 80.00 – 82.99 % | B- |
| 77.00 – 79.99 % | C+ |
| 73.00 – 76.99 % | C |
| 70.00 – 72.99 % | C- |
| 65.00 – 69.99 % | D+ |
| 60.00 – 64.99 % | D |
| ≤ 59.99 % | F |

**Course Requirements and Policies:**

“Eighty percent of success is showing up.” – Woody Allen

**Class attendance** will be determined based on roll calls conducted at the beginning of the class. In the case-method pedagogy, class attendance is critical to individual and collective learning, and so is having read the case before coming to the class. ***My expectation is that every student arrives on time and attends every class***. Absenteeism and lateness to classes throughout the semester count against the participation grade since it adversely impacts the learning experience of the section as a whole. Anyone who cannot attend class should email me in advance if at all possible. In case we have a collective learning activity (i.e., a case discussion or group exercise), your attendance and lateness will count heavily for your participation grade. Your participation during any case discussions will contribute to your participation grade.

Every student in this course must abide by the Kuwait University Policy on Attendance (published in the Student Guide, Chapter 3, Section 13). A copy of the student guide can be accessed online on:

http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku\_content/kuw055940.pdf

**Participation and Class discussion:** Class discussion will be assessed on the basis of your contribution to class discussion and listening. Of course, the underlying condition for class participation is attendance. I expect you to attend all sessions. Prior to class, you should thoroughly read and prepare the case for that day, including answering the study questions. Please ensure that you have used the frameworks, tools, and ideas from the readings in your analysis as appropriate. In grading class participation, I look at **both the quantity and quality of contribution**. With regards to quality, some of the criteria I shall apply include:

* Are the points made relevant to the discussion and fit within the class context?
* Do the points go beyond a mere recitation of case facts?
* Are the underlying assumptions clearly understood?
* Are the ensuing implications clearly drawn out?
* Is there evidence of analysis rather than expressions of opinions?
* Are the arguments convincing?
* Are the comments linked to those of others?
* Does the contribution further the understanding of the issues and raise interesting questions?
* Is the participant a good listener?
* Is the participant able to clearly articulate her/his thoughts?
* Does the analysis make use of learnt models and techniques?
* Are comments made in a respectful, professional, and constructive manner?

Simply being present does not warrant full credit, nor does frequent participation that does not advance the learning of the class. I will use “cold calling” occasionally so you need to be prepared for each class. Cell phones must be turned off or set to the “silent” mode during classes. Laptops may not be used during case discussion segments and activities.

**Exams:** There will be one mid-term exam and one final examination, which will cover the course material to that point in the course, including lectures, discussions, cases and readings. Details about exam contents, time, and location will be discussed in the class. **Missed examinations may not be made up without prior permission, no exceptions.**

***Note:*** *The instructor reserves the right to change assignments and cases as necessary to facilitate an improved learning experience.*

**Course Website**

MGMT 414 uses Teams (website) to facilitate the administration of the course. You will be responsible for checking the Teams website regularly for class work and announcements. Please become familiar with the website. I recommend creating a shortcut (link or favorite) in your browser that will take you to the course login page. At the course website, you can

* Check for announcements,
* Download slides and files related to MGMT 414, and
* Review the grades and monitor your progress.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Every student in this course must abide by the Kuwait University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism (published in the Student Guide, Chapter 3, Section 2). A copy of the student guide can be accessed online on: http://www.kuniv.edu/cs/groups/ku/documents/ku\_content/kuw055940.pdf

Please carefully note all sources and assistance when you turn in your work. Under no circumstances should you take credit for work that is not yours. You should neither receive nor give any unauthorized assistance on any deliverable. If you have any questions about what constitutes ‘unauthorized assistance’ please email me before the deliverable is submitted.

**Writing Style:** Students must refer to MLA writing style for their assignments and report writing. Please refer to the English Language Center for help.

**Office Hours**

My office hours are given at the beginning of this document. If you have a time conflict, please contact me to schedule an appointment for another time. You may contact me any time via email. It is best not to contact me via telephone, as I often work in areas other than my office. In general, this syllabus is your first source of information on questions pertaining to the class. I will not answer a question the answer for which is in the syllabus. When sending me an email, always include **the course title** **and your first and last name in the email title** (the same applies if you send me a message via teams). **I reserve the right to not recognize or respond to emails/messages without the course title and your first and last names.**

**Case Analysis Workshop**

Analyzing business case studies can be challenging, especially if you have no prior experience working with cases. Sometime early on the semester, I will hold a case analysis workshop to help you prepare your case and prepare for the in-class case discussions. The date, time, and venue for the workshop will be announced in class during the first week of the semester.

**Course Outline (subject to modifications):**

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| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Topics** |
| Introduction | - Rules of the game/syllabus  - Introduction to the course, its objectives and learning outcomes  - Leadership: Definitions, roles, importance, and distinction from management  *- Case Analysis Workshop* |
| Understanding Leadership | - Leadership and the mainstream thought  - Different perspectives on leadership  *- Class Discussion: Missing perspectives on leadership* |
| Leadership Theories 1 | *-* Classical and Modern leadership theories  - Critical analysis of established theories  *- Case Discussion: Adapting Leadership Skills to People Problems* |
| Leadership Theories 2 | - Emotional Intelligence and Leadership  - Power, Influence, and Authority in Leadership  *- Case Discussion: tbc* |
| Understanding Group Dynamics | *-* Underlying theories of groups and their dynamics (formation, roles, norms cohesion, communication, and conflict and negotiation)  *- Case Discussion: tbc* |
| Leading Group Performance | - Group incentives, risks, decision-making, drivers,  - Leadership styles in team contexts  - Building trust, collaboration and psychological safety  - Ethical Challenges in Leadership and Group Settings  *- Case Discussion: tbc* |
| Leadership in diverse context | - Diversity and inclusion  - Leading virtual and global teams  *- Case Discussion: Women’s Leadership Gamut* |
| Leading for Creativity and Innovation | *-* Creativity, Innovation, and Problem-Solving in Groups  *- Case Discussion:* Developing a Policy for Innovation |
| Developing Self Leadership | *-* Self-Assessment: Discovering Your Leadership Style  *-* Thinking like a leader  *- Case Discussion: tbc* |
| Leadership in the Team Context | - Leadership Skills for Facilitating Effective Meetings  - Team-Building Strategies and Exercises  *- Case Discussion: tbc* |

**Important Dates**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event** |
| tbc | Last day to drop classes |
| tbc | Last day of classes |
| 05/01/2026 12:00--14:00 | Final Exam (Comprehensive) |