Institute for Leadership Studies

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The Institute for Leadership Studies (ILS) supports the university’s mission of preparing students for a diverse and challenging world through innovative, interdisciplinary curricula at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Our programs inspire students to make a difference from where they are with what they have because we envision a world mobilized by Jayhawks with the courage and leadership skills to ignite positive change.

The ILS engages students across campus and from all disciplines in learning to do the work of leadership through a variety of programs designed to complement any degree or career path, in residence and online. The Leadership Studies Minor (LSM) serves as the centerpiece of our undergraduate curriculum, offering students opportunities to work in a small-group environment, developing universal professional skills that are highly valued in today’s workforce. Through innovative coursework, students practice diagnosis, problem-solving, and ethical decision making while developing a self-awareness which enhances tolerance for ambiguity, empathy, perspective-taking, and active reflection while increasing understanding of diversity. The combination of theoretical and experiential coursework allows students to frame existing leadership experiences, explore new leadership opportunities, and engage their disciplinary content with greater confidence and efficacy.

In addition to the LSM, undergraduate students may elect to complete the Leadership Engagement Certificate, the Online Leadership Strategies and Applications certificate, or participate in Leadership Studies centered study abroad experiences.

Courses

LDST 201. Introduction to Leadership. 2 Hours S.
This course introduces students to the study of the leadership process. The course covers theories and research on core themes of leadership, focusing on how course materials relate to students’ own leadership experiences. Concurrent enrollment in LDST 202 is recommended. Students considering the Leadership Studies Minor must complete LDST 202. Not open to seniors. LEC.

LDST 202. Introduction to Leadership Applications. 1 Hour AE51 / S.
This course focuses on the application of information learned in LDST 201. Activities and discussions emphasize application, analysis, and engagement with the process of leadership. Concurrent enrollment in LDST 201 is recommended. Students considering the Leadership Studies Minor must complete LDST 201 and LDST 202. Not open to seniors. Prerequisite: Corequisite: LDST 201. LEC.

LDST 203. Introduction to Leadership, Honors. 3 Hours AE51 / S.
This course combines an introduction to a theoretical, research-based approach to the study of leadership with hands-on application, analysis, and engagement with the process of leadership. Within a small group setting, students explore core leadership competencies and experiment with the process of leadership by engaging classmates and members of the university and local communities and addressing issues of concern within those communities. This course satisfies the LDST 201/LDST 202 prerequisite for the Leadership Studies Minor. Prerequisite: Admission to the University Honors Program, Instructor Permission. LEC.

LDST 260. Study Abroad Topics in Leadership Studies. 1-6 Hours S.
This course is designed to enhance international experience in topic areas related to Leadership Studies at the freshman/sophomore level. Coursework must be arranged through the Office of KU Study Abroad. May be repeated for credit if content varies. FLD.

LDST 271. Foundations of Adaptive Leadership. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces students to the study of the leadership process with an emphasis on applying the Adaptive Leadership paradigm to current systems in which the student is engaged. Activities and discussions focus on analysis and diagnosis of current leadership cases, offering students opportunities to apply concepts to their own professional disciplines and systems. LEC.

LDST 272. Ethics and Diversity in Leadership. 3 Hours AE51 / S.
This course examines in-depth the role of ethics and diversity in effectively engaging in the process of Adaptive Leadership. Activities and discussion will focus on the application of theories of ethics and diversity as well as the development of core leadership competencies within student’s own professional disciplines and systems. Prerequisite: LDST 271. LEC.

LDST 301. It’s On Us: Gender Based Violence Prevention. 0-1 Hours S.
This class is the first in a series of four addressing Gender Based Violence Prevention. This class examines the foundational concepts of Gender Based Violence Prevention at the individual level. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, Consent, Drug and Alcohol Facilitated Rape, Gender Based Violence as Oppression, and Bystander Intervention. Students will participate in small and large group discussions, online reflection journals, and evidence based trainings. At the end of the eight-week course students will be able to 1) Assess behaviors that put others at risk for violence, victimization, or perpetration (2) Identify the four main characteristics of consent and describe what is necessary for consent to be present (3) Identify and apply strategies for safely intervening as an active bystander on the individual level (4) Identify multiple ways that power and oppression is impacted by individual identity. LEC.

LDST 302. Breaking the Cycle: Gender Based Violence Prevention. 0-1 Hours S.
This class is the second in a series of four addressing Gender Based Violence Prevention. This class examines the intersection between Gender Based Violence and individual identities in relation to gender and sexual orientation on the relationship level. Topics cover include, but are not limited to, introduction or Sexual Orientations, Gender Roles and Gender Construct, Sexual Health and Sex Positivity, and Healthy Relationships. Students will participate in small and large group discussions, online reflection journals, and evidence based trainings. At the end of the eight-week course students will be able to 1) Assess behaviors that put others at risk for violence, victimization, or perpetration (2) Assess behaviors that contribute to sexual health and sex positivity (3) Identify multiple ways that power and oppression are utilized through the social construct of gender and toxic masculinity (4) Identify multiple characteristics of healthy relationships and describe what is necessary for consent to be present in intimate partner relationships (5) Identify and apply strategies for safely intervening as an active bystander on the relationship level. Prerequisite: LDST 301. LEC.

LDST 303. Prevention is Possible: Gender Based Violence Prevention. 0-1 Hours S.
This class is the third in a series of four addressing Gender Based Violence Prevention. This class examines the critical role social justice plays in the prevention of Gender Based Violence on the community level. Topics cover include, but are not limited to, Introduction to Social Justice,
Cultural Humility, Systems of Oppressions, and Primary Prevention as Activism. Students will participate in small and large group discussions, online reflection journals, and evidence based trainings. At the end of the eight-week course student will be able to 1) Assess behaviors that put other at risk for violence, victimization, or perpetration (2) Identify and apply strategies for safely intervening as an active bystander on the relationship and community level (3) Identify multiple ways that power and oppression is impacted by individual identity (4) Contribute to gender based violence prevention on the community level. Prerequisite: LDST 302. LEC.

LDST 304. ACTivist: Gender Based Violence Prevention. 0-1 Hours S.
This is the final class in a series of four addressing Gender Based Violence Prevention. This class examines Gender Based Violence prevention through a Social Justice Frame Work and the Socioecological Model on the community and societal level. Topics cover include; but are not limited to, Social Justice Frame Work, Socioecological Model, Evidence Based Primary Prevention, and Accountability. Students will participate in small and large group discussions, online reflection journals, and evidence based trainings. At the end of the eight-week course student will be able to 1) Assess behaviors that put other at risk for violence, victimization, or perpetration (2) Assess the intersection between the socioecological model and the social justice frames work (3) Identify apply strategies for safely intervening as an active bystander on the community and societal level (4) Identify multiple ways that power and oppression is impacted by individual identity (5) Contribute to gender based violence prevention on the community or societal level. Prerequisite: LDST 303. LEC.

LDST 320. How to Plan (Almost) Anything: Event Development and Management. 3 Hours S.
This course is designed to provide an introduction to the principles of special event planning and management. Students will gain foundational concepts and professional skills through researching, planning, coordinating, marketing, management and evaluation of special events. This course will develop student skills necessary to lead and manage in an ethically, environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable way. By utilizing the adaptive leadership model, students will analyze core objectives of event planning, while experimenting with smart risks and disciplined assessment. Essential topics will include event planning and coordination, sponsorship, negotiations, marketing, communications, customer service, vendor management, volunteer management, crisis risk management, and event evaluation. LEC.

LDST 371. Leadership and Interpersonal Effectiveness. 3 Hours S.
This course examines the role of communication in effectively engaging others in the work of leadership. It is expected that participants will finish this course with knowledge of basic interpersonal principles, theory, and applied research as it pertains to leadership and building strong relationships with others. This course is designed to develop participant’s interpersonal competencies within their own professional disciplines and systems. It is comprised of discussion, activities, assignments, and exams. Topics such as interpersonal skills, self-regulation, impression formation, emotion, and conflict management, as they apply to communication and leadership contexts will be discussed. Prerequisite: LDST 271, LDST 272. LEC.

LDST 381. Survey of Leadership Theory and Application. 3 Hours S.
A survey and application of leadership theories and communication skills will enhance students’ development of expertise in assessing organizations, identifying systems issues, and facilitating organization- and system-wide improvement in a variety of workplaces. Traditional approaches to leading, organizing, and communicating are contrasted with emerging approaches that promote sensitivity to diverse organizational cultures, populations, and challenges. Through examination of theoretical perspectives, the student will develop an ability to integrate the contributions of different points of view and ways of thinking crucial to accurately assess, design and lead high performing teams and organizations in a dynamic world. LEC.

LDST 420. Communication, Leadership, and Conflict Management. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces students to theories of conflict management from a variety of academic perspectives and the role leadership plays in managing conflict across multiple contexts. Students will learn how to successfully assess and command situations and effectively resolve interpersonal, organizational, and systemic conflict while doing the work of leadership. (Same as COMS 415.) Prerequisite: LDST 202. LEC.

LDST 431. Communication and Leadership. 3 Hours S.
This course provides an overview of the role of communication in leadership in a variety of contexts, including: interpersonal, small group, intercultural, organizational, and public sphere. It will include theoretical and experiential approaches to effective leadership communication. Prerequisite: Admission to Leadership Minor or consent of instructor. LEC.

LDST 460. Study Abroad Topics in Leadership Studies. 1-6 Hours S.
This course is designed to enhance international experience in topic areas related to Leadership studies at the junior/senior level. Coursework must be arranged through the Office of KU Study Abroad. May be repeated for credit if course content differs. FLD.

LDST 470. Independent Study in Leadership Studies. 1-6 Hours S.
This course engages students in an investigation of a special topic or project selected by the student with advice, approval, and supervision of a Leadership Studies instructor. Such study may take the form of special research, individual reports and/or conferences. Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor, LDST 201, LDST 202. IND.

LDST 471. Case Study in Leadership Applications. 3 Hours S.
This course offers students an opportunity to practice effectively engaging in the process of Adaptive Leadership. Activities, readings, and discussion will focus on the application of core leadership competencies and theories of adaptive leadership within students own professional disciplines and systems as well as continuous active reflection. Prerequisite: LDST 271, LDST 272, LDST 371. LEC.

LDST 480. Internship in Leadership Studies. 1-6 Hours S.
Students complete leadership-centered fieldwork in an organization related to their career goals. Criteria for the organizations and work assignments suitable for internship credit are available through the Institute for Leadership Studies. An internship plan is developed with the field supervisor and internship faculty adviser. Reports and meetings are required. Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor. INT.

LDST 481. Survey of Ethics and Diversity in Leadership. 3 Hours S.
This course examines the implications and applications of various theories of ethics and diversity in effectively engaging in the process of leadership. Activities and discussion will focus on the application of theories of ethics and diversity within the student’s professional disciplines and systems. This course is taught online in an 8-week format. Prerequisite: LDST 381. LEC.

LDST 490. Special Topics in Leadership Studies: . 3 Hours S.
This course is designed for the study of special topics in leadership studies. Course content addresses major topics and specialized issues in the field and topics change as needs and resources develop. May be repeated for credit if the content differs. Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor. LEC.
LDST 500. Directed Readings in Leadership Studies. 1-6 Hours S.  
This course is designed for directed readings in selected areas of  
Leadership Studies. Individual and supervised readings address major  
topics and specialized issues in the field. May be repeated for credit if the  
content differs. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. IND.

LDST 520. Leadership Ethics. 3 Hours AE51 / S.  
Through collaboration, discussion, case study, and course readings,  
Leadership Ethics familiarizes students with various theoretical  
perspectives of ethical decision making and the ethics-guided behavior  
essential for competent leadership. Upon completion, students will  
understand a variety of ethical perspectives for the prescription of action  
in a leadership context, apply a variety of ethical perspectives to the  
choice and evaluation of action in leadership work, and recognize the  
significance of considering multiple ethical perspectives in both leadership  
and broader contexts. Prerequisite: LDST 202. LEC.

LDST 532. Leadership Studies Practicum. 1-3 Hours AE61 / S.  
Students engage in a variety of training programs and field experiences  
in which they learn about leadership, observe leaders in action, and  
involve themselves in leadership activities. Written assignments and  
group discussions are used to analyze their learning. Should be taken for  
a total of three credit hours, across more than one semester. Prerequisite:  
LDST 201 and admission to the Leadership Studies minor. FLD.

LDST 535. Seminar in Leadership Strategies and Applications. 3  
Hours S.  
This seminar serves as the capstone course for the Leadership Studies  
minor. It includes advanced readings on leadership theory and practice,  
as well as major written and applied projects in which students integrate  
demonstrate what they have learned in the program. Prerequisite:  
LDST 201, or LDST 431, and admission to the Leadership Studies minor.  
LEC.

LDST 536. Special Topics in Leadership Studies: _____. 3 Hours S.  
This course is designed for the study of special topics in Leadership  
Studies. Course content addresses major topics and specialized issues  
in the field and topics change as needs and resources develop. May  
be repeated for credit of the content differs. Prerequisite: Permission  
of instructor. LEC.

LDST 560. Special Topics in Leadership Studies: _____. 3 Hours S.  
This course is designed to take advantage of special competence by  
an individual faculty member in Leadership Studies. Course content  
addresses timely topics and relevant issues in the field and topics change  
as needs and resources develop. May be repeated for credit of the  
content varies. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

LDST 570. Introduction to Graduate Studies. 3 Hours.  
This course is designed to prepare students accepted into the Master of  
Arts in Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion program for further graduate  
studies through a series of workshops, experiential learning opportunities,  
lecture, discussion, research assignments, and peer collaboration. Upon  
completion, students will have a better understanding of the expectations  
of graduate education as well as campus resources, and networking  
opportunities designed to support degree work. Students will develop their  
academic skill set by focusing on scholarly writing, oral communication/  
presentation, research and information literacy, critical thinking, and  
argumentation. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. LEC.

LDST 705. Professionalization Seminar in Leadership Studies. 3  
Hours.  
This course is designed to cultivate professional habits, perspectives,  
and identities for graduate students primarily in the humanities and social  
science fields, but is open to students from all fields. The course focuses  
on preparation for career paths outside of higher education and based in  
work around Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion in the United States.  
Prerequisite: Graduate standing. LEC.

LDST 710. History and Theory of Leadership Studies. 3 Hours.  
Theoretical foundations in leadership, organizational decision making,  
and communication will enhance students’ development of expertise  
in assessing organizational and systems issues, and facilitating unit-,  
organization-, and system-wide improvements. Traditional approaches  
to leadership, organizing and communicating are contrasted with  
emerging approaches that promote sensitivity to diverse organizational  
cultures, systems, and populations. Through examination of theoretical  
perspectives, the student will develop an ability to integrate the  
contributions of different points of view and ways of thinking crucial to  
effectively assess, design and lead high performing organizations in a  
dynamic world. Contexts discussed will include for-profit, not-for-profit,  
healthcare, community, and military organizations. Prerequisite: Graduate  
standing. LEC.

LDST 720. Leadership Ethics. 3 Hours.  
This course establishes a theoretical groundwork with readings and  
discussions that will familiarize students with five perspectives on ethical  
decision making and behavior as well as the essential competencies  
of leadership. For each of those perspectives, students will engage in  
reflections, collaborative case studies, and debates based on a case  
in point approach as well as a single-authored analysis of a selected  
leadership case. Prerequisite: Graduate Standing. LEC.

LDST 730. Managing the Work of Leadership. 3 Hours.  
Through webinars and case in point pedagogy, this course prepares  
students to manage the day to day communicative and executive  
functions necessary for doing the work of leadership. Topics will include  
crisis management, stakeholder engagement, speech writing, fundraising,  
image management, and professionalization. Prerequisite: Graduate  
standing. LEC.

LDST 740. Leadership and Power. 3 Hours.  
Leadership and power often are confused and this misunderstanding can  
lead to members of oppressed groups dismissing their own leadership  
potential. Through reading, reflective writing, and engaged discussion,  
this course will help students understand power and leadership as  
distinct concepts that occasionally intersect. Within their various systems,  
people continuously perceive, encounter, and work within different power  
dynamics. Thus students will learn about historical and culturally diverse  
understandings of power, the ethical responsibilities of power, the dangers  
of misuse of power, and doing the work of leadership with (and without)  
power. Prerequisite: Graduate standing. LEC.

LDST 750. Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion Capstone. 1-3  
Hours.  
This course provides students an opportunity to integrate and synthesize  
the interdisciplinary knowledge they have gained in their graduate  
learning, combining self assessment and reflection with a guided project  
to create a final portfolio. Students will work closely with their faculty  
committee to design an experience that makes relevant connections  
across disciplines represented within the degree program and applies this  
knowledge to a new setting or complex problem. Prerequisite: Graduate  
standing. Instructor Consent. LAB.