

Case Study Development Assignment, Prepared by Eric K. Kaufman

Abstract/Overview

The purpose of the case study development assignment is to produce verification of students' ability to analyze and synthesize multiple concepts of leadership in real world contexts. In addition, the assignment offers students experience in applying shared leadership in a small group setting. This assignment is a culminating course experience that has the potential to align with a variety of the learning objectives. Beyond satisfaction, research on student case writing reveals relationships with improved final exam and course grades (Escartín et al., 2015).

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- a) Define and describe leadership in the contexts of interest to them.
- b) Apply shared leadership in a small group setting.
- c) Identify, discuss, and apply prominent leadership theories.

Activity Logistics

- Group size: While the activity can be done with any group size, the most engaged student groups typically have 5-7 people each.
- Time needed: Multiple weeks or months, depending on desired complexity and quality.
- Methods used: Case Study
- Materials needed: Internet access and software that allows students to collaboratively develop products (e.g., wikis, like Google Docs).

Directions/Instructions

- 1) Begin by facilitating exploration and discussion of a short case study, such as one available through Stanford's "Leadership in Focus" website: <http://leadershipinfocus.net/>

- 2) Assign students to groups that will be conducive for collaborative development of a teaching case during the timeframe available, and encourage them to brainstorm topics and options for a case that would easily feature concepts that are the focus for the course (e.g., specific leadership theories).
- 3) Direct students to prepare a case narrative and teaching notes following guidance from *Writing Case Studies: A Manual*, available at <https://www.slideshare.net/hudda2020/writing-case-studies-a-manual>
- 4) Arrange time for student groups to facilitate a case study discussion using the teaching case study they have developed.
- 5) Facilitate reflection on the experience, including appropriate peer evaluation (e.g., students provide both qualitative and quantitative feedback to those with whom they collaborated to develop and deliver the teaching case).

Debriefing Notes

When facilitating student reflection on the experience, challenge students to consider:

- How did the case study reveal perspective and insight on the leadership concepts?
- In what ways did teaching about leadership help you learn about leadership?

Facilitator Notes

There are a variety of resources available to help guide case writing, including faculty reflections on implementing student-written, instructor-facilitated (SWIF) case projects (Boulocher-Passet, 2016; Careaga, Rubaii, & Leyva, 2017; Corrigan, & Craciun, 2012; McDonald, 2013; Tarter & Beal, 2013). When guiding and evaluating student cases, pay particular attention to what Herreid (1997) has identified as the characteristics of a good case: (1) tells a story, (2) focuses on an interest-arousing issue, (3) is set in the past five years, (4) creates empathy with central

characters, (5) includes quotations, (6) is relevant to the reader, (7) serves pedagogic utility, (8) is conflict provoking, (9) is decision forcing, (10) has generality, and (11) is short.

References

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