

# Gender, Equity, and Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Executive/Evening-Weekend MBA  
Global Network of Advanced Management  
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*“When women consider the dynamics of gender in their organizations and connect to purposes that are larger than themselves, they are far better prepared to take up—and take in—the leadership role” (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011).*

The career paths of men and women diverge in complex yet systematic ways. In this course, we will investigate the state of gender equality, identify the unique approaches that women and men can use to respond to and solve pressing global social issues, and equip women with the leadership tools needed to achieve their highest potential. With more women in the workforce than ever before — and even more joining top leadership ranks — the need for women’s voices to be heard has never been greater. What will *your* role be in advancing gender equality? This course is specifically designed to support your leadership development so that you can reach your highest potential sooner while doing work that is more meaningful, engaging, and fulfilling. While the course will focus heavily on issues facing professional women in particular, the leadership skills that you will develop are applicable to anyone who is invested in creating more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizations and societies. All students are welcome.

We seek to cultivate your authentic leadership to promote gender equality in the workplace. Authenticity is about acting on one’s core values to advance the work required to accomplish shared goals. Teaching women to act like men to get ahead is misguided and likely to misguide women leaders. Not only does this approach fail to provide women with strategies for countering the effects of gender bias, it encourages women to become overly focused on self-image to the detriment of the central leadership task: **to enable others to be maximally effective in service of shared**

**goals.** This course seeks to over-write outdated scripts about power that have historically produced deep ambivalence in high-potential, rising star women to motivate and enable women's highest leadership potential in the modern age and into the future. Pushing past the usual stereotypes that require women to "fit into" a masculine world, this course combines evidence-based findings with pragmatic insights to enable you to recognize and override stubborn barriers to women's advancement.

The course is based on cutting-edge behavioral and social science, and has been validated by leading practitioners around the world. Perhaps most importantly, this course offers a proven set of tools to combat obstacles that limit global efforts to make the world better, fairer, and safer for all, and thus is targeted at those seeking to develop leadership tools to increase diversity and inclusion in the modern workplace. We will use daily experiential exercises to foster greater self-insights and to benefit from real-time, peer feedback. Learning how to be an effective leader is like learning any complex skill: It rarely comes naturally and usually takes a good deal of practice. This course will create a safe space for this type of work to occur. Finally, this course is focused on results—you will walk away with increased self-awareness, tangible skills, and knowledge needed to be an impactful leader in the modern global workplace who creates an environment that promotes gender equality.

If there is anything in this syllabus that does not work for you due to current circumstances, let us know as soon as possible. We will try to work things out for you, whatever your situation. Focus on learning and contributing in whatever way you are able. The most important thing is that you take care of yourself and others. Let this course be a source of support, not stress.

## **Objectives**

If you embrace everything that this course has to offer, you will gain a new level of confidence and greater sense of ownership over your own leadership development. After taking this course, you will be able to: (1) diagnose multiple causes of gender inequality, (2) identify strategies for overcoming personal and organizational obstacles to career advancement, (3) develop techniques for influencing others, and (4) understand the critical role of growth mindsets in collaborating effectively with others to lead change in organizations and societies.

## **Use of Technology and In Class Writing Assignments**

Class will be conducted by Zoom. Please keep your camera on during class. Students overwhelmingly report that they are more engaged when they can see instructors and their classmates. At times when bandwidth or circumstances do not allow, audio only is fine. Please let us know if you cannot attend a scheduled synchronous session or have to leave early so we can adjust breakout rooms, group work, and paired exercises that are planned in advance. Students overwhelmingly report that it is easier to stay focused if their notifications are off and only class-related windows are open during our Zoom sessions. Because our time together is precious, we ask that you commit to turning off all other screens, closing chats, and silencing other devices to help you maintain your focus on the course material. We also ask that you have a dedicated notebook and pencil/pen by your side throughout the week. We will be assigning a number of short, writing exercises to help you internalize course concepts.

## **Course requirements**

You will be evaluated on three types of work:

- Participation (30%)
- Leadership development plan (35%)
- Leading for change team project (35%)

### **Professional Code of Conduct**

My hope is that you are here to learn. I think highly of you and your integrity, and hope you see yourself the same way. To ensure the best experience for all throughout the course, please note the following:

- I reserve the right to submit written work to plagiarism detection software.
- Do not view anyone else's work prior to doing your own, or discuss cases and exercises with students who have already taken the class.
- If you are familiar with a case or exercise introduced in class, please do not be a "spoiler" in any way.
- No recordings of any kind can be made of class without my permission.
- All exercises and their "solutions" are confidential and are not to be circulated or shared in any form.

### **Participation**

For us to learn together, it is essential that we create a safe space for experimentation and build a community of peer support. Exposure to a diverse range of ideas and insights from people with distinct backgrounds and experiences is critical to this course. It is imperative that you attend every class, bringing your unique perspective and ready

to engage in healthy debate about the causes and consequences of gender equality and what we can do collectively to enable women's leadership to address the most pressing challenges of contemporary society. We look forward to hearing your perspective and learning from your past experiences. To further deepen lessons, you will also be asked to submit your thoughts, reactions, and brief self-reflections at various points throughout course sessions.

If you are in a time zone which, at times, makes synchronous participation challenging or you miss class, we will make recordings available. You are expected to watch what you missed as we proceed through the week. To make up for missed sessions, you will be asked to submit a virtual three minute response video after watching the recording. We will do our best to pair you with other students for asynchronous group activities to maximize time zone compatibility.

### **Leadership Development Plan**

This assignment is designed to strengthen your leadership identity. A leadership identity involves both coming to see oneself as a leader and being seen by others as a leader. I invite you to take stock of the accumulation of experiences that have informed your sense of self as a leader, as well as critically examining prior feedback you have received about your fit for taking up the leader role. Considering times when you have taken actions aimed at asserting leadership, when have you received validation? Grounding your leadership identity in actual achievement will enable you to see leadership as a central and enduring aspect of your self-definition. Connecting with the part of you that already feels capable will bolster your self-confidence, increase your motivation to lead, and encourage you to seek new opportunities to practice leadership. By comparing times when you have been successful at leading others to times when have you struggled to be recognized for your authority, the hope is that you can identify which personal qualities support your leadership and which, if any, are currently holding you back.

Another critical aspect of leadership development is connecting with your sense of purpose. You will be most effective as a leader when you pursue purposes that align with your personal values and orient you towards advancing the collective good. Not only is connecting with your larger purpose inherently rewarding to pursue, it will also enable you to feel and to be experienced by others as more authentic, to inspire trust and a sense of urgency in others and help your teams to find more meaning in their work. Finally, being purpose-driven may provide a way out of the trap of being overly preoccupied by how others view you by turning your focus outward (i.e. focusing on what your direct reports need from you to accomplish their work may enable you to adopt both a hard-driving and supportive style). What are your most deeply held values and how can these values be leveraged to support finding solutions to the most

pressing contemporary societal challenges? What is the job that you are best suited to perform based on your values and how do your values provide a rationale for various career-advancing behaviors (i.e. networking, negotiating) that might otherwise not seem worthwhile?

- **Part A: Personal Reflection (due Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>)**

A central goal of this course is to enable you to construct a leader identity despite subtle barriers erected to your leadership advancement. To do so will require working through any ambivalence you may feel about embarking on a journey to increase your leadership capacity. To begin, please complete the required readings listed on p. 11 (available in Study.net via bCourses), which includes several recent studies of gender equity across the globe. In addition, please incorporate insights from your readings of the **two required textbooks** (*The Person You Mean to Be* and *Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader*).

To prepare you for our time in class together, after doing a deep dive into these readings, please address the following themes around your leadership identity and the connection between your sense of purpose as a leader and contemporary societal challenges in a 2-3 page (double-spaced, 12 point font) essay:

- a) **YOUR EXPERIENCE:** What forms of biases described in the report have you personally experienced or witnessed? What impact, if any, has it had on your leadership aspirations? How did you handle the situation and would you do anything differently today? If you have not experienced any of these biases, why not?
- b) **YOUR INSPIRATION:** Who are your role models of diverse leaders that have best taught you how to claim a leader identity credibly? What diverse leaders do you admire, and why? What are the competencies these leaders have that enable them to be effective? Which aspects of their biography and career trajectory particularly resonate with you? How are you similar? How are you different? What do you have to learn from these leaders?
- c) **YOUR PURPOSE:** What is the societal or organizational problem that you are most driven to solve? What issue motivates you to be your most courageous self? What is your most pressing goal at this juncture in your career? What higher purpose might accomplishing it enable

you to pursue down the road? At the end of your career, what do you want to be known for? What does a meaningful and successful career look like to you? How can you firmly ground your personal values in your leadership role? What risks, if any, does pursuing this passion pose that you will need to accept and/or work to mitigate?

- **Part B: Leadership Development Plan (due Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>)**

After our class ends, you are tasked with creating a leadership development plan for the next chapter of your career. Drawing from the readings, lectures, peer feedback, personalized feedback, experiential exercises and any other modality of classroom learning, construct a plan that enables you to be a leader working on the issue that generates the most passion from you and that will enable you to have the greatest impact. Start abstractly and then work towards a more concrete action plan that details the incremental steps needed to make this dream a reality.

- a) Incorporating the written, oral, and peer feedback received throughout the course, identify which facets of your leadership style you would most like to improve. Which aspect of the feedback indicates this should be a priority? What benefits do you expect to reap for these improvements? What specific behaviors would you like to change? What is your plan for change? Are there aspects of the feedback you received that seem off? If so, can you explain why this might be so?
- b) Think back to a time in your career in which a setback prevented you from getting the result or outcome you wanted. Using course concepts, describe how the current state of knowledge about leadership generally and diversity, equity, and inclusion specifically informs your understanding of the best pathway for achieving your career objectives. In hindsight, how might you have handled the situation differently? How well positioned are you for success if a similar challenge were to arise in the future?
- c) The higher you go in an organization, the less likely it is that bureaucratic policies will apply and therefore the more critical your informal network will become. Moreover, instead of it being the case that diverse leaders “sink or swim on their own merit,” leaders who have support networks are more likely to swim, while those who do not tend to sink. With this in mind, who are the most important individuals

for you to build relationships with? What kinds of relationships help you cultivate the perspectives and experiences that you value? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your network? What challenges make building the right network difficult? Be specific about tactics you can employ to overcome those challenges.

- d) What practices will you institute to reflect your growth mindset about leadership? How will you maintain the will to learn and grow into future leadership challenges? What will success look like? What obstacles might you encounter along the way and how will you remain resolute in pursuit of your higher purpose?

Final papers should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, and no longer than 8 pages. The value of this assignment will be determined by the breadth and depth of your strategic planning. Please incorporate readings throughout.

### **Leading for Change Team Project**

Working in teams of 2-3 students, this assignment is designed to increase our shared learning by identifying a pressing issue of our day that is relevant to equity and promoting the leadership advancement of diverse groups. Teams should consider the wide range of issues, challenges, and opportunities of women and underrepresented minorities throughout the globe in gaining power, influence, and resources and conduct an in-depth analysis around your chosen topic grounded in research on real organizations to identify best practices for improving diversity, equity, and inclusion for your particular issue-area.

Your team should provide a roadmap for accelerating the pace of progress and innovation to create organizations unconstrained by bias. You should articulate how we can best create a sense of urgency for change and to craft and communicate a vision of the future despite persistent barriers. Specifically, you might address how women, underrepresented minorities, and their allies can best negotiate “buy-in” from various stakeholders and change social norms and laws to promote equality. What situational constraints need to be considered in making (and possibly adjusting) your recommendations?

Some potential topics are listed here. Feel free to propose a different topic as well.

- Equity in the era of Covid-19
- Mentoring and sponsorship
- Intersectionality
- Cracking the glass ceiling
- Dual-career couples
- Work-life balance
- Sexual harassment
- Male allies

- **Part A: Motivating Collective Action – Individual Pre-Course Assignment (due Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>)**
  - Identify a leader of an organization from your home country (i.e. where you currently attend business school) that is leading change in an area of diversity, equity, and inclusion that you are interested in. Why are they so highly respected in this regard and what is the key to their success within your local context? Highlight their relevant accomplishments and cutting-edge practices to explain why they inspire your leadership. Summarize your key insights on one Powerpoint slide that will be shared with the class.
  - All submitted slides will be posted on the course website (under “Discussions” page). On the first day of class, you will be asked to discuss your chosen leader and why you admire them with your classmates. You will be asked to comment on at least three of your classmates’ chosen leaders during the week of class.
  - Group assignments will be finalized on the first day of class, Monday, June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **Part B: Diversity Audit and Strategic Plan for Change – Group Assignment (due Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>)**
  - Perform an informal diversity audit of at least two organizations your group is familiar with, comparing the similarities and differences in their strategies and processes and making recommendations for improving their management of diversity. You might find it helpful to talk to people in the organization (if not in time for your presentation in class, then for the final report). This could include organizations you have previously worked for or are currently employed by. However, in some cases, it may be possible to complete the project with your own insights and publicly available information about the organization. Some information (e.g. policy statements) may be readily available from the company’s website. More in depth information may come from personal discussions with managers and/or other employees, requesting quantitative data from the organizations’ HR departments (e.g. the demographic composition of the organizations over time, the presence and number of affinity groups) and analyzing written materials related to



diversity (e.g. mission statements, PR materials, application materials). You might explore external data as well, including GlassDoor and other employee-driven reviews of the organizations.

- Focus your research on your group's chosen topic, diagnosing and posing resolutions for specific tensions currently evident within the organizations (e.g. integrating cultural diversity in a global environment), or evaluating the organizations' diversity policies and practices (e.g. hiring and promotion, participation in decision-making, implicit bias training).
- Formulate recommendations to the organizations based on your learnings. Offer both practical and creative insights for managers interested in addressing your chosen topic. Lay out the incremental, systematic (i.e. replicable) steps that can help managers identify biases built into these organization's normal routines and practices and offer solutions to unleash their previously untapped potential.
- What system of advocacy might the organizations institute to support diverse leadership? How can advocates create a strategy for building alliances with key stakeholders within and across organizations?

Final deliverables include a 5-minute presentation of your initial ideas and findings (with 5 additional minutes for Q&A) on **Friday, June 18<sup>th</sup>** and a 2-3 page executive summary of key learnings and best practices (to be shared with the rest of the class), which is due on **Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>**.

## Summary of Course Deliverables

(all deadlines are at 11:59pm PST)

### Pre-course work:

- 1) **Readings and Videos.** Whether you are just taking your first step towards exploring leadership through the lens of diversity or you are a seasoned veteran of advocating for justice and equality, questioning the status quo, and using power to lead change, our short time together will be enhanced to the degree that we enter the classroom on Day 1 with a shared foundation of knowledge about the scientific literature and contemporary discourse on this vast topic. To this end, please complete the required readings and explore the recommended videos before the course begins.
- 2) **Leadership Survey.** During the course we plan to provide you with customized feedback on various aspects of your leadership style based on a survey that you must complete by **Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>** in order for us to compile the reports before the course begins. Please allot 30 uninterrupted minutes to complete this task. The survey can be found here:  
[https://berkeley.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3lbO7eLpMF8iJk9](https://berkeley.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3lbO7eLpMF8iJk9)
- 3) **Social Capital Questionnaire.** You will receive an email from [applications.sg@insead.edu](mailto:applications.sg@insead.edu) with your login details for this questionnaire. Once you have received your login details, use these credentials to complete the questionnaire. You will need to save these credentials to access your individual reports later. Please complete the questionnaire by **Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**. The course GSI, Sonya, will send you a message when your individual reports are available for download.
- 4) **Personal Leadership Development Plan—Part A—due by Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**
- 5) **Leading for Change Team Project—Part A—due by Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**
- 6) **Record a greeting and your name.** Please upload a photo of yourself and a short written greeting to your classmates (or upload a video) in the “Classmate greeting” discussion forum in bCourses. Please record your name in the “Name Coach Roster” so that we can all learn how to say each other’s names!

### Post-course work:

- 1) **Personal Leadership Development Plan—Part B—due by Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>**
- 2) **Leading for Change Team Project—Part B—due by Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>**

## Course Reading / Listening List

### Required Pre-Readings:

Chugh, D. (2018). *The person you mean to be: How good people fight bias*. NY, NY: Harper Collins Press.

Ibarra, H. (2015). *Act like a leader, think like a leader*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

Women in the Workplace (2018 & 2019 reports). McKinsey& Company and Lean In.

Global Gender Gap Report (2020). World Economic Forum.

The impact of Covid-19 on gender equality. (2020). National Bureau of Economic Research (working paper #26947).

### **Required Case (to be discussed on Thursday):**

Ibarra, H., Rattan, A., & Johnston, A. (2018). "Satya Nadella at Microsoft: Instilling a Growth Mindset." *Harvard Business School Case*.

### Recommended Podcast and Videos:

Women at Work podcast, *Harvard Business Review*.

<https://hbr.org/2018/01/podcast-women-at-work>

[Makers.com](https://makers.com), the largest video collection of women's stories.

[Ted.com](https://ted.com): A vast archive of talks can be found on issues related to gender, equity, and leadership. Sign in and complete the "TED recommends" tool to locate relevant talks on social change, identity, society, personal growth, activism, business, collaboration, etc.

### Recommended Readings:

#### Monday modules:

- Tinsley, C. H., Ely, R. J. (2018). What most people get wrong about men and women. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Eagly, Alice H., and Linda L. Carli. 2007. "Women and the labyrinth of leadership." *Harvard Business Review* 1-11.

- Barsh, Joanna, Susie Cranston, and Rebecca A. Craske. 2008. "[Centered Leadership: How Talented Women Thrive.](#)" *The McKinsey Quarterly* 4.
- Phillips, Katherine, Dumas, Tracy, & Rothbard, Nancy (2018). Diversity and authenticity. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Popova, Maria. 2014. Fixed vs growth: The two basic mindsets that shape our lives. *Brainpickings*.

### **Tuesday modules:**

- Neffinger, John, and Matthew Kohut. 2013. "The Big Idea." Pp. 1-24 (Chapter 1) in [Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential.](#) New York: Hudson Street Press.
- Keltner, Dacher. 2016. "[Don't Let Power Corrupt You.](#)" *Harvard Business Review*.
- Phillips, K. (October 2014). How diversity works. *Scientific American*, 33-37.
- Dobbin, F., and Kalev, A. (2016). Why diversity programs fail. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Johnson, Stefanie, and Hekman, David (2016). Women and minorities are penalized for promoting diversity. *Harvard Business Review*.

### **Wednesday modules:**

- Kolb, Deborah M., and Judith Williams. 2001. "[Breakthrough Bargaining.](#)" *Harvard Business Review*.
- Kray, L. J., & Kennedy, J. A. (2017). Changing the narrative: Women as negotiators—and leaders. *California Management Review*.
- Cialdini, Robert B. 2001. "[Harnessing the Science of Persuasion.](#)" *Harvard Business Review*.
- Kolb, Deborah M., and Debra A. Noumair. 2016. "[How to Negotiate for Yourself When People Don't Expect You To.](#)" *Harvard Business Review*.
- Malhotra, Deepak. 2014. Fifteen rules for negotiating a job offer. *Harvard Business Review*.

### **Thursday modules:**

- Bohnet, Iris. 2018. "This is how companies can close the gender pay gap." *Financial Times*.
- Kray, Laura (2015). The best way to eliminate the gender pay gap? Ban salary negotiations. *Washington Post*.
- Alphabet Inc/Google Shareholder letter to Chairman Eric Schmidt on gender pay gap (2017).

- Berdahl, Jennifer, Glick, Peter, & Cooper, Marianne (2018). How masculinity contests undermine organizations, and what to do about it. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Correll, Shelley (2017). Reducing gender biases in modern workplaces: A small wins approach to organizational change. *Gender & Society*, 31, 725-750.
- Edmondson, Amy (2011). Strategies for learning from failure. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Idea watch: How companies can profit from a “growth mindset.” *Harvard Business Review*.

**Friday modules:**

- Ibarra, Herminia (2016). Five misconceptions about networking. *Harvard Business Review*.

## Gender, Equity, Leadership in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

June 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Date	Monday, June 14th	Tuesday, June 15th	Wednesday, June 16th	Thursday, June 17th	Friday, June 18th
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Building Our Virtual Community</i>	<i>Barriers to Diversity</i>	<i>Advocating for Yourself and Others</i>	<i>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leadership</i>	<i>Embracing an Interconnected World</i>
<b>Module 1 (9-11 AM)</b>	Course Launch, Introductions, & Norms	Capitalizing on Diversity (group simulation)	Win-Win Negotiations (group simulation)	Leadership Challenge (group simulation)	Navigating Your Social Network
<b>Module 2</b>	Mapping Your Identity and Mindset	Understanding Implicit Biases	Gender, Negotiation, & Career Advancement	Designing a Learning Organization	Group Presentations
<b>Module 3 (2-3:30 PM)</b>	Celebrating the Leader Within (Carolyn Buck-Luce)	TBD	Advocating for Yourself (video case analysis)	The Future of Work (Sally Thornton)	Send Off!

**Note:** Class will be held from 9-5 PDT each day, with 6 hours of activities each day. We will have 10 minute bio-breaks during synchronous sessions and a lunch break. Modules 1 involves synchronous activity (90-120 minutes each) with individual, paired, and group activities that require attendance. Module 2 will consist of asynchronous, individual or group activities. Module 3 involves live speakers, which are best experienced synchronously so you can participate directly and ask questions. Recorded videos will be provided for missed sessions. To make up for missed sessions, you will be asked to submit a virtual three-minute response video after watching the recording on bCourses.

## Detailed Agenda

Day	Module	Time (PST)	Title	Format	Exercise(s)	Guest Speaker
M	1	9-11 AM	Intro/Class Norms	synchronous	Building Virtual Community (group)/ Admired Leaders (pairs)	
M	2		Mapping Identity	asynchronous	Who am I?	
M	3	2-3:30 PM	Celebrate Leader Within	synchronous		Carolyn Buck-Luce
T	1	9-11 AM	Capitalizing on Diversity	synchronous	PB Technologies (group)	
T	2		Understanding Implicit Biases	asynchronous	What Would You Do? (pairs)/Implicit bias tests	
T	3	2-3:30 PM	TBD	synchronous		
W	1	9-11 AM	Win-Win Negotiation	synchronous	Three Rivers Hospital (pairs)	
W	2		Gender, Negotiation, Career Advance	asynchronous	Career Advancement Simulation (pairs)	
W	3	2-3:30 PM	Advocating for Yourself	synchronous	Caitlin's Challenge	
TH	1	9-11 AM	Leadership Challenge	synchronous	Gender Pay Gap Reporting (group)	
TH	2		Designing a Learning Organization	asynchronous	Satya Nadella at Microsoft/Design Learning Org (group)	
TH	3	2-3:30 PM	The Future of Work	synchronous		Sally Thornton
F	1	9-11 AM	Navigating Social Network	synchronous		
F	2		Group Presentations	asynchronous		
F	3	2-3:30 PM	Send Off	synchronous		