UVU UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY™

Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: https://catalog.uvu.edu/

Semester: Spring
Course Prefix: SLSS
Course Title: Strengths-based Leader/Coach

Year: 2025
Course and Section #: 2500 X01
Credits: 3

Course Description

Building on prior coursework and the foundational concepts of self-awareness, interdependence, and critical thinking, this course advances the study and practice of leadership by focusing on research-based character strengths. Using strengths-based inquiry and assessment, students will identify and examine their character strengths as they relate to optimal functioning, well-being, and the leadership of self and others. Drawing upon the theories of positive leadership, students will apply positive paradigms and practices to develop a strengths-based core that they can transfer to diverse situations and a wide array of roles.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:
☐ General Education Requirements
☐ Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
☐ Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
☒ Discipline Core Requirements in Program
☐ Elective Core Requirements in Program
☐ Open Elective
Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Darin R. Eckton

Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop foundational knowledge of character strengths: research, meaning and impact.
- Understand leadership through the lens of character strengths
- Build a personal leadership profile from character strengths assessment
- Develop the skill of spotting strengths in others
- Learn strategies to leverage strengths in others
- Develop the ability to share leadership and work effectively in teams

Course Materials and Texts

There is no textbook requirement for this course. You WILL have multiple readings/learning materials each week throughout the course. All will be available on Canvas.

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Grading: The focus is on learning, not on grades. Yes, I know this is what every professor says. Learning the material in this class is critical because you will work in teams on discussions and for your final project. In order to be a fully contributing member of your team, you will need to demonstrate your learning.

*Learning Quizzes***:** Learning quizzes are due no later than 11:59pm on Tuesdays and are only available through 11:59pm on Sunday of the same week. You already get to take the reading quiz twice (and the system takes your best grade) and the second time you can use the learning materials. If you submit the quiz any time after 11:59pm on Tuesday through 11:59pm on Sunday, it is considered late and you will only receive partial credit.

*Substandard Work on Assignments/Failure***:** If you put in minimal to no cognitive and/or physical effort on an assignment, you may resubmit the assignment for a better score. This offer is ONLY for the first Strengths Journal.

*Final Exam***:** No late exams will be accepted

Using Artificial Intelligence: See the statement under Orientation about AI use. If you use AI to produce an assignment and submit it as your own, you will receive zero credit. AI isn't always right or accurate. AI can be a great way to start your thinking, but then, do your own thinking, creating, and producing. Submit your own work and give proper attribution to the work that is not your own. If you do not, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

Late Work Policy--The Justice Part:
- 1 day late = 10% reduction
- 2 days late = 20% reduction
- 3 days late = 30% reduction
- 4 days late = 40% reduction
- 5-7 days late = 50% reduction
- More than one week late = no credit

We are all busy! For the most part, we choose our priorities. Taking responsibility for your choices is expected.

Procrastination is never an acceptable excuse. Think about the reputation you want to build in the workplace, in your family, and in life!

Late Work Policy--The Mercy Part:
- Students who experience life-altering circumstances (e.g. illness, death of a loved one, etc.) can be given full opportunities to submit their work for full credit consideration. This should be an exception, and not a regular occurrence.
  - **These types of events are rare.**
  - If one of these rare events should happen to you, contact me immediately (or as soon as you can).
    - Send me a proposal listing each of the past due assignments you have not submitted *including* due dates by which you will submit them.
    - You must continue to submit the current week's assignments on time.
    - You must take responsibility to clearly and regularly communicate your circumstances.
    - You can't expect to do little to no work most of the semester and then ask for exceptions at the end of the semester.
    - We will discuss the proposal and make plans according to what seems to be fair.
- I will always listen to you and seek an appropriate balance of equity and fairness.

Grading Scale:

Category	Percentage
Assignments (Strengths Journals, Quizzes, Other)	25%
Discussions	25%
Strengths-Based Teamwork (Project Deliverables/Team Attendance & Participation	35%
Midterm, Final (PERMA Project)	15%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale **: This scale represents your percentage of total points**

Grade	Percent of Points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
E	<59

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

Module 1: **READ**
- SLSS 2500 Syllabus (Course Orientation)
- Get to Know Your Instructor (Course Orientation)
- Intro to Leadership for Personal and Social Impact (Course Orientation)
- Module 1: Overview (Module 1)
- Leadership Theories (Module 1)

Module 2: **READ**
- Module 2: Overview
- Positive Psychology Explained
- P.E.R.M.A. - A New Theory of Well-Being

Module 3: **READ**
- Module 3: Overview
- Character Strengths and Virtues Model

Module 4: **READ**
- Module 5: Overview
- Read: VIA Top 5 Character Strengths Report

- The Meaning of Life - the M in PERMA

Module 5: READ
- Advanced Issues of Applying Character Strengths
- Strengths Use - Overuse/Underuse/Optimal Use

Module 6: READ
- What is Perfectionism?
- Dangers of Self-Criticism
- 3 Elements of Self-Compassion

Module 7: READ
- Curiosity and the Importance of Asking Questions
- Intro to Strengths-Based Questions

Module 8: READ
- Module 8: Overview

Module 9: READ
- Module 9: Overview
- Strengths Spotting

Module 10: READ
- Module 10: Overview

Module 11: READ
- Module 12: Overview
- PERMA Project
- Design Step 1: Empathize
- What is a User Persona?

Module 12: READ
- Module 12: Overview
- Creativity and Change
- Brainstorming 101

Module 13: READ
- Module 13: Overview
- Awe - The 8 Wonders of Life

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Module 1 Overview: For week 1 of this course, you are responsible for the content in the Course Orientation and the content in Module 1. Be sure to read through and complete the content in both of these modules (which are titled "Course Orientation" and "Module 1: What is leadership?") by the end of the first week! During this week, we will be exploring and discussing leadership--what it is and what it is not. Also, in the Course Orientation, we will examine the certificate program--Leadership for Personal and Social Impact (LPSI)--offered by the Department of Student Leadership and Success Studies at UVU.

Module 2 Overview: In order to become strengths-based leaders, we need to understand several foundational concepts, including positive psychology, well-being theory, PERMA, and character strengths. This week, we will the history and meaning of these important concepts, which will lay the foundation for the rest of the semester.

Module 3 Overview: In this module, we will begin to understand the origin and history of the VIA Character Strengths and Virtues. We will learn the difference between six virtue categories and the 24 character strengths, which will prepare you start exploring your own strengths profile next week. Finally, you will analyze character strengths through the lenses of dimensionality and context.

Module 4 Overview: In this module, you will receive your personalized strengths report called the VIA Top 5. You will learn what signature strengths are, why they matter, and how to express them more often. You will also learn Martin Seligman's theory of 3 happy lives, and why the pursuit of a meaningful life is the key to well-being. Finally, you will complete your second strengths journal. Strengths Journal 2 will give you the opportunity to reflect deeply on your specific top 5 signature strengths.

Module 5 Overview: Now that you have a better understanding of the strengths on your VIA report, we want to dive more deeply into how these character strengths are expressed. Recall when Dr. Chris Peterson was asked to share his most important finding in character strength science he stated, "Character is plural." Character strengths don't exist in a vacuum; when you are expressing one strength typically one or more other strengths are coming along for the ride. In this module, we will learn about the many ways in which strengths are combined including optimal use and how to recognize when they are overused or underused. We will also learn strategies for building less-used strengths. You will also be reading through the directions for the midterm this week. The midterm isn't due until mid October, yet there are steps you need to take that you can start now--specifically, soliciting feedback from people in your life about you at your best. Please read those directions carefully and thoroughly, and ask questions about anything that isn't clear!

Module 6 Overview: This week, we will explore a couple of mindsets that bog us down--perfectionism and fear of failure. We will learn ways to recognize when we are falling into these two deceptive traps and how to move ourselves to better mindsets through reframing. Finally, we will learn the three elements of self-compassion, which will aid in our quest to apply positive mindsets moving forward.

Module 7 Overview: In this module, we will explore the power of asking questions. Specifically, we will learn a new way to solve problems, using a strengths-based questioning process. This process, which will help you build your strengths of curiosity and creativity, can be used to solve our own problems, or to help someone else solve an issue. In any current leadership role you are in (formal or informal), this is a powerful process to use with those you lead.

Module 8 Overview: This week, Midterm Part A is due on Thursday night. For a reminder of how to complete Midterm Part A, go to the page titled "Looking Ahead: Preparing for the Midterm" from Module 5. In Midterm Part A, you will solicit and compile feedback from people in your life about you at your best. Once received, you will analyze that feedback in the "Best-Self Table."

You will also participate on a discussion board with your classmates to brainstorm ideas for Midterm Part B (due next week)--the "Artistic Profile." I have found over the years of teaching this class that many students are stumped as to how to create a Artistic Profile. By discussing this with your classmates, you can generate ideas together!

Module 9 Overview: This week's main focus is completing the midterm. Midterm Parts A & B were completed last week. Midterm Part C is due early this week because of fall break. You are also learning about strengths spotting this week and will get a chance to practice this skill as you review your classmates' Best-Self creative works. I have kept your workload very light this week so you can focus on getting your creative work done AND so that you will view ALL of your classmates' submissions, and respond to several.

Module 10 Overview: This week, we begin the shift from "leadership of self" to "leadership and others." Note that the phrase says "leadership AND others" instead of "leadership OF others": this is because you will be engaging in positive TEAMWORK in the coming weeks, where all members of the team will share in the leadership role. And speaking of teamwork, we will be analyzing it this week-- what we like and (more often than not) dislike about it.

Module 11 Overview: THIS WEEK, your team will meet for the first time! You will be getting to know each other, discussing the specifics of the PERMA project, and learning about, then implementing, design steps 1 and 2: empathize and define. Remember: what you are learning right now is an entirely

new way to a) problem-solve and b) experience teamwork. Be prepared to work outside your comfort zone!

Module 12 Overview: This week, your team will be moving on to Design Steps 2 & 3, Define & Ideate. Using your team's User Persona as a reference point, you will work together to define a specific problem within well-being that you want to brainstorm a solution for. You will then conduct a brainstorming session during your team meeting, focusing on solutions for the problem you've identified. Finally, you will choose one idea from your brainstorm, which will be the product or service idea your team will prototype and test in the next couple of weeks. You will also be revisiting creativity and exploring how it is connected to making a social impact.

Module 13 Overview: In the spirit of Thanksgiving, which is next week, your reading assignment and class discussion is focused on an emotion closely related to gratitude--awe. The scientific study of awe has taken off in recent years and is an exciting new field of robust research and dialogue. You'll be introduced to this cool concept and discover ways to implement it daily in your life. In team meetings this week, your team will be working on bringing your PERMA Project idea to life. Because each team has chosen a different type of product or service, I will be meeting with each team to walk you through how to do this for your specific idea. Your storyboard/prototype will not be able to be completed during the team meeting, so plan on discussing ways you can delegate tasks and collaborate successfully outside of that meeting. As always, I am here to help you!

Module 14 Overview: Pulls everything together, addresses final, etc.

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this course

AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and researching are crafts that you must develop over time to develop your own individual voice. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can be helpful to you.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Bard, MS Copilot etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Asking questions and finding *initial* answers;
- Finding information on a given topic;
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool (however, whatever you submit for an assignment must be your own work, not AI-produced).
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete assignments.
- Submitting AI-generated content as your own for the assignment (this is plagiarism)

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic

honesty. **If you choose to submit an assignment that is predominantly AI-produced and not your own work, you will receive a zero grade for that assignment!**
<u>**I will be using AI/Plagiarism detection for each assignment you submit in this course! Canvas will generate an immediate report for you to see how much AI/Plagiarism was detected in your submission.**</u>
As with any work that is not your own, whether academic sources or AI-generated, you need to cite and give proper attribution to others' work that you are using within the body of your work. Specifically, any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. **When assignments are submitted, your voice, your writing, and ultimately your submission should predominantly be your work! You use other sources to support your voice and not the other way around.** If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Using Remote Testing Software
☒ This course does not use remote testing software.

☐ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities
Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity
At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in UVU Policy 541: *Student Code of Conduct*.

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.
To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a specially dedicated space for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.