



## Course syllabus

School of Business and Economics  
Department of Organisation and Entrepreneurship

4FE421 Leadership as Construction of Meaning, 7,5 högskolepoäng  
Leadership as Construction of Meaning, 7.5 credits

### **Main field of study**

Business Administration

### **Subject Group**

Business Administration

### **Level of classification**

Second Level

### **Progression**

A1N

### **Date of Ratification**

Approved by School of Business and Economics 2014-12-11

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2015

### **Prerequisites**

General entry requirements for second-cycle studies and specific entry requirements:  
Bachelor Degree in Business Administration with a minimum of 90 credits in Business Administration or the equivalent. English B/6 or the equivalent.

## Objectives

After completing the course the student is expected to be able to:

- describe and discuss different theoretical perspectives on leadership and leadership research
- briefly describe the structure of classical rhetoric and use this structure to analyze and construct speeches.
- describe and explain the sensemaking perspective and its application to leadership and reflect upon how this perspective helps us to understand and practice leadership
- reflect upon and motivate what implications the course content have upon the student's self-understanding as a potential future leader
- reflect upon how this course is connected other leadership perspectives and to the development of society at large

## Content

This course deals with leadership as a joint construction between the "leader" and the "lead" with the aim of construction shared meaning as a means for coordinated social action. The issues of sense making, sense giving and sense stabilization related to

leadership provides the theoretical foundation of the course. Special attention is here

given to the role of frames of references in strategic thinking. An introduction is given to the concept and philosophy of rhetoric, where both classical perspectives and modern ones are used. Rhetoric is then discussed as an organisational phenomenon and as a leadership activity. In the line of the perspective on leadership provided in this course, leadership is also discussed as a certain form of drama and performance on the organisational stage.

Key Themes:

Theme 1: introducing leadership, meaning and sense making

Theme 2: leadership as sense making

Theme 3: thinking outside of boundaries: frames of references as obstacles and possibilities

Theme 4: leadership and rhetoric

Theme 5: leadership as drama and performance

## Type of Instruction

The course consists of several different forms of learning opportunities, including lectures, seminars, presentations and group assignments. The international context of the learning environment is naturally used as an important asset in the discussion of the global and everpresent concept and practice of leadership.

Active participation is expected at seminars where assignments are discussed and presented. Participation in these seminars, as well as preparations for them, is obligatory and is described further in course instructions distributed at the beginning of the course. Obligatory parts are stated in the schedule.

## Examination

The course is assessed with the grades A, B, C, D, E, Fx or F.

Assessment of the student's performance is carried out by means of active class participation, individual written home examinations, individual written essay and by the presentation of group works and reports. Students who do not achieve a satisfactory result in the examinations are permitted, after the examiner's judgment, to either revise the examination to passed grade or to make a second attempt approximately 6 weeks after the normal examination date. The student will have at least five occasions for written exams.

The grading is based on a balanced assessment of individual and group work, orally as well as in written form in relation to the course targets. Assessment of performance will be given incrementally throughout the course.

The grade A constitutes the highest grade on the scale and the remaining grades follow in descending order where the grade E is the lowest grade on the scale that will result in a pass. The grade F means that the student's performance is assessed as fail.

After each regular examination there will be at least one new examination in close proximity to the date the results of the regular exam were posted. A minimum of five occasions for written exams will be offered in relation to the syllabus to which the student was accepted. Usually three occasions per academic year are offered. Students that fail reports can complement after instructions from the examiner to obtain a pass grade.

Grading criteria for the A–F scale are communicated in writing to the student by the start of the course/module at the latest, as well as how grades on separate elements of examination are weighed to a final course grade.

## Course Evaluation

A written course evaluation is carried out and compiled in a report, which is archived at the faculty. The results and possible measures taken are communicated by the course

coordinator and presented to the students the next time the course is given, or in another way deemed suitable by the course coordinator. Other types of course evaluations, for example regular evaluations throughout the course or discussions with students, will be included and encouraged with the aim of ensuring continuous quality development.

## Required Reading and Additional Study Material

### **Required reading**

Gardner, H. *Leading Minds, An Anatomy of Leadership*. New York: Basic Books. Latest edition. Approx. 400 pages.

Weick, K. E. *Sensemaking In Organizations*. SAGE Publications. Latest edition. Approx. 231 pages. (Chapters 1-3).

Weick, K. E. *Making Sense of the Organization*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. Latest edition. Approx. 300 pages. (Chapters 1 and 7).

### Additional teaching material

Compendium with scientific articles and book chapters covering leadership, sensemaking, strategic leadership and rhetoric, approximately 100 pages.

### **Reference literature**

Bennis, W. & Nanus, B. *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*. New York: Harper Business. Latest edition. Approx. 235 pages.