



Management & Strategy

“Executive Leadership Styles and Personalities”

Summer Term 2026

Institute:	Institute for Leadership and Organization (ILO)
Lecturer:	Prof. Dr. Martin Högl
Assistant:	Selina Richter, Izabela Sosnowska, Helene Nicole Hellwig
Weekly hours:	Block Course with 7 in-person meetings
Credits	6 ECTS
Examination:	Presentation & Workbook
Prerequisites:	-
Course Material:	Course slides and literature on group topics researched by students

Course Description & Main Objectives

This course examines executive leadership from theoretical and empirical perspectives, with a focus on contemporary leadership theories. Students analyze how leadership theories are derived from literature, empirically operationalized, and enacted by top managers (e.g., CEOs). Using executive exemplars, the course explores the benefits and limitations of different leadership approaches and their implications for executive development. Leadership theories are further applied to current cross-cutting topics such as gender, artificial intelligence, and culture.

Learning

The course is conducted in a seminar-style format with a strong emphasis on critical literature analysis, qualitative methodology, and the integration of theory and empirical analysis. Students work in groups to analyze executive leadership examples based on academic literature and independent research. Active participation and critical engagement with paper readings, cases, and class discussions are essential components of the course.



Grading

Presentation (50%): Students give a theory-driven presentation (10 minutes per person) based on a qualitative analysis of an executive leadership example. The analysis must be derived from academic literature and include references as well as a transparent coding scheme (e.g., Gioia-method).

Workbook (50%): The workbook consists of two equally weighted components: 1) **Methods Appendix (25%)** documenting the qualitative research design and analytical procedure; 2) **Written in-class assignment (25%)**: an essay-style reflection on leadership theories based on the presentations and their application to a cross-cutting topic (e.g., gender, AI, culture).

N.B.: All assessment components must be completed to pass the course.

Lectures Overview / Course Outline

Before the Course: Registration via online survey (link published in LSF) and reading of mandatory introduction literature.

Kick-off Session: Course overview and expectations; introduction to leadership theories; formation of working groups; explanation of assessments; introduction to systematic literature research.

Preparation Session 1: Systematic literature review: structuring leadership theories and developing research questions.

Preparation Session 2: Qualitative methodology: linking theory to empirical analysis; introduction to coding schemes (e.g., Gioia); development of a methods appendix.

Pitch & Feedback Session: Idea pitch with instructor feedback and peer discussion.

Presentation Sessions: Student presentations of executive leadership analyses, followed by feedback and peer discussion.

Written in-class assignment with course reflection.

Literature

The literature list serves as a guideline for the types of papers covered in previous semesters. The list is not final, and further details will be provided during the kick-off session.

Antonakis, J., Fenley, M., & Liechti, S. (2011). Can charisma be taught? Tests of two interventions. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 10(3), 374-396.

Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C., & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1): 36-62.

Fischer, T., & Sitkin, S. B. (2023). Leadership styles: A comprehensive assessment and way forward. *Academy of Management Annals*, 17(1), 331-372.



Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15-31.

Hemshorn de Sanchez, C. S., Gerpott, F. H., & Lehmann-Willenbrock, N. (2022). A review and future agenda for behavioral research on leader–follower interactions at different temporal scopes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 43(2), 342-368.

Maak, T., & Pless, N.M. (2006). Responsible leadership in a stakeholder society: A relational perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66(1), 99–115.

Maran, T. (2025). Developing and validating the charismatic leadership tactics scale: evidence from multi-source questionnaire studies, cognitive and behavioral assessments and a leadership training evaluation. *Review of Managerial Science*, 19(4), 1001-1039.

Schmid, E. A., Pircher Verdorfer, A., & Peus, C. V. (2018). Different shades—different effects? Consequences of different types of destructive leadership. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1289.

Schyns, B., & Schilling, J. (2013). How bad are the effects of bad leaders? A meta-analysis of destructive leadership and its outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(1), 138-158.

Waldman, D. A., Siegel, D. S., & Stahl, G. K. (2020). Defining the socially responsible leader: Revisiting issues in responsible leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 27(1), 5-20.