



LE 701 Collaborative Leadership & Management in a Digital Age

Professor: Rev. Dr. Graham English

Email: iamgrahamenglish@gmail.com

Phone: 780-554-6377

Course Dates: **February 18-20, 2027, with 3-hour-long online Learning Labs on March 1, March 8 and March 22, 2027.**

Course Delivery Method: Hybrid (In person or online)

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will be introduced to many of the key concepts related to redemptive, effective leadership and management including project management, financial oversight, working with people, AI in the workplace, and the principles and practices of personal and organizational thriving. Insights from experts in these diverse fields will be woven with models of collaboration.

COURSE INTEGRATION

This course creates space for students to integrate their faith and leadership work through thoughtful consideration of themes such as managing diverse teams, the ethical use of AI, stewarding resources, and the issue of power. Blending theological reflection, theoretical concepts, and application the course moves from theory to practice in thoughtfully designed learning labs.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Reading:

Books:

Edmondson, Amy. *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy*. Jossey-Bass. 2012. (352 pages)

Heifetz, Ronald. *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Belknap Press. 1998. (368 pages)

Hougaard, Rasmus and Carter, Jaqueline. *More Human: How the Power of AI Can Transform the Way You Lead*. Harvard Business Review Press, 2025 (158 pages)

Schein, Edgar and Schein, Peter. *Humble Inquiry: The Gentle Art of Asking Instead of Telling*. 3rd Edition. Barrett-Koehler Publishers. 2025. (176 pages)

Articles:

Wheatley, Margret with Frieze Debbie. *Leadership in the Age of Complexity: from Hero to Host*. 2010. <https://www.margaretwheatley.com/articles/Leadership-in-Age-of-Complexity.pdf> (5 pages)

PDF available on Canvas

DeSmet, Aaron et al. *New Leadership for a New Era of Thriving Organizations*. McKinsey Quarterly. May 2023. (10 pages)

PDF available on Canvas.

Western, Simon. *Leadership: A Critical Text*, 3rd ed. Sage pub. 2019 (22 slides – counting this as 5 pages)

PowerPoint summary available on Canvas

Seth, Jayshree and Edmonson, Amy. *What Leaders Need to Know About AI and Psychological Safety*. HBR. September 17, 2026. <https://hbr.org/2026/09/what-leaders-need-to-know-about-ai-and-psychological-safety?ab=HP-latest-1> (3 -4 pages)

Podcast:

Jason Swan Clark with Simon Walker. *The Undefended Leader: Giving Up Control to Release Power in Others*. <https://www.affectiveleadership.net/p/the-undefended-leader-giving-up-control>

Total Required Reading = 1078 pages plus the podcast.

Recommended Reading:

Seamands, Stephen. *Ministry in the Image of God*. IVP, 2005.

Fitch, David. *Reckoning with Power: Why the Church Fails When It's on the Wrong Side of Power*, Brazos Press. 2024.

Walker, Simon. *Leading With Nothing to Lose: Training in The Exercise of Power*. Piquant Editions, 2013.

Lencioni, Patrick. *5 Dysfunctions of a Team*, Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Bolsinger, Tod. *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. InterVarsity Press, 2018.

Mollick, Ethan. *Co-intelligence: Living and Working With AI*. WH Allen, 2024.

Johnson, Darrell. *Experiencing the Trinity: Living in the Relationship at the Centre of the Universe*. Canadian Church Leader's Network, 2021.

Additional Tools or Apps Needed:

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/seminary-life/documents>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <https://textbooks.briercrest.ca/>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

SEMINARY-WIDE OUTCOMES

Students will graduate:

1. Describing and demonstrating evangelical faith and values.
2. Preparing to serve God's kingdom in its diversity. Describe God, God's kingdom, and your calling (vocational sensitivity) within it, including the types of contexts and people you feel best prepared to serve.
3. Participating in the action of our Triune God through formation of the soul (i.e., virtue and spiritual integrity), mind (academic rigour), and strength (vocation).

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Embrace and articulate an ethical and Christ-centered approach to leadership that is culturally and contextually informed.
2. Demonstrate adaptive and facilitative management principles and practices.
3. Exhibit and articulate biblically informed self-awareness and humble confidence.
4. Exemplify theologically informed collaborative leadership principles and practices.
5. Understand and apply systems thinking and the principles of systems complexity, systems health, systems change, and social innovation.

COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Develop a contextualized approach to building and managing diverse staff and volunteer teams, partnerships, and networks.
2. Discuss the ethics and rightful use of technology, including AI and other emerging trends.
3. Be introduced to project management, fundraising, and financial oversight.
4. Develop strategies for personal and organizational thriving.
5. Articulate and embrace a Christ-centered, theologically informed understanding of power.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

The course is designed around three movements in the development of collaborative leadership: foundations for collaboration, the collaborative leader, and creating the conditions for collaboration. The three in-person days provide the primary learning experience, while three subsequent online Learning Labs extend learning through reflection, practice, peer coaching, and application.

Students complete assigned readings and preparatory work before the intensive sessions. Class time is devoted primarily to theological reflection, dialogue, collaborative exercises, skill development, and application to real leadership contexts.

PRE-CLASS PREPARATION

Required Reading:

Students will complete the assigned books, articles, and podcast before the intensive. Students should come prepared to engage the readings critically and comparatively rather than simply summarize them. As a guiding question, the student should be asking, "What does the literature suggest is necessary for genuinely collaborative leadership?" Students will prepare a synthesis of the assigned literature for submission before the intensive.

Day 1: Becoming A Collaborative Leader

This day establishes the theological and formational foundation for collaborative leadership. Students will examine the relationship between identity, leadership, power, achievement, control, and the temptation toward heroic leadership models.

Attention will be given to a Christian understanding of leadership that flows from a received identity in relationship with a Triune God rather than from the need to achieve significance through leadership.

9-12 Theology and Leadership Identity

This opening section will establish the theological and relational foundation for the course. Before asking how leaders collaborate, students explore who they are and who they are becoming as leaders in relationship with a Triune God. (SWO 1,3, PO 3, 4)

1-4 The System and Adaptive Leadership

This section explores why and when collaboration is necessary. Students examine the difference between technical problems and adaptive challenges, using Adaptive Leadership to understand complexity, competing values, and systemic dynamics. They develop a working definition of collaborative leadership and apply these concepts to real-world leadership challenges through group work. (PO 2)

Day 2: The Collaborative Leader

This day considers how a leader's posture toward power is expressed through everyday relationships and conversations. Humble Inquiry provides a practical framework for developing curiosity, mutuality, listening, and learning-oriented relationships.

9-12: The Posture of a Collaborative Leader

This section explores the posture leaders bring to leadership relationships. Drawing on Margaret Wheatley and Simon Western, students examine assumptions about power, expertise, control, and responsibility, and consider the shift from heroic leadership to a more participatory, empowering posture. (PO 1, 3, 5. CO 5)

1-4: Relating as a Collaborative Leader

This section explores how leaders create the conditions for people to be seen, heard, and valued. Drawing on Edgar Schein's *Humble Inquiry*, students examine the practices of curiosity, listening, asking rather than telling, and building relationships of mutual trust. (PO 1, 3. CO 5)

Day 3: Conditions for Collaborations

The day explores teaming amid complexity, distributed expertise, and shared responsibility. Students will also consider digital collaboration and artificial intelligence, critically examining how emerging technologies can enhance or diminish human agency, trust, creativity, wisdom, accountability, and relational connection.

9-12 Co-creative Environments

In this section, students explore how teams learn and experiment together, navigate disagreement, distribute authority, and make decisions in complex environments. Students will consider how Christian communities can make decisions that are both participatory and decisive, creating space for diverse voices while maintaining clarity, responsibility, and movement toward mission. (CO 1)

1-4: Remaining Human

In this section, students will explore the implications of digital technologies and artificial intelligence for Christian leadership and human community. Rather than viewing technology simply as a collection of tools for greater efficiency, students will examine how technological change is reshaping leadership, work, relationships, decision-making, and organizational life. Students will critically consider both the opportunities and limitations of AI and emerging technologies, developing principles for using technology in ways that foster flourishing and remain grounded in Christian understandings of human dignity and community. (PO 1, CO 2)

Learning Lab 1: Watch Navigating AI in a Ministry Context (Completed by March 1, 2027)

Students will watch the videos and complete the activities associated with this mini course. The goal of this lab is to deepen understanding of how leadership can be augmented with AI to enhance teams' collaborative work. Link to course <https://www.briercrest.online/courses/AI-Co-Vocational-Ministry-Course>. The access code will be posted on Canvas following the in-class session. (CO 2)

Learning Lab 2: Appreciative Inquiry: Experiencing A Collaborative Change Process (March 8, 2027, from 6-9 pm CST). Students will explore Appreciative Inquiry as a collaborative approach to organizational change and discernment. Students will consider how appreciative practices can foster participation, shared ownership, innovation, and a more collaborative approach to leading change. (PO 2, 4)

Learning Lab 3: Group Presentations (March 22, 2027, from 6-9 pm CST)

Groups will present their mid-course projects and receive feedback from their peers. Through peer consultation, coaching, and reflection, students will examine their emerging work, identify new insights and possibilities, and consider how they might adapt or strengthen their approach. The lab emphasizes learning with and from one another rather than simply evaluating completed work. (PO2, CO 4)

Note: Groups must come prepared with an online presentation.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Please submit all written assignments to Canvas.

Where AI has been used in the preparation of an assignment, students must disclose how and where it was used.

Pre-Course Assignments:

1. Write a 7-page academic paper that outlines the key themes covered in the required readings. Engage meaningfully with the readings by comparing the authors' foci and approaches. In what contexts might the approaches and perspectives be helpful? In what ways are the concepts limited or limiting? Students cannot use AI. (PO 1, 4, 5)

Due Date: February 1, 2027

Basis of Grade: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the material and integration of concepts.

Value: 25 %

2. Use the AI prompt provided to coach you through a leadership challenge, real or imagined. Afterward, write a two-page reflection, answering how AI helped your thinking, where it may have limited your thinking, and what you should discuss or verify with actual people. Students will use AI for the exercise but may not use AI in their own reflection. (CO 2)

AI Prompt:

You are an AI collaborator helping me think through a complex leadership challenge. Your goal is not simply to give me an answer, but to help me think more deeply and collaboratively about the situation.

Here is my leadership challenge:
(The student will describe the challenge here)

Begin by asking me 5–7 questions to better understand the situation, the people involved, different perspectives, and what I hope to accomplish. Do not give me solutions.

After I answer, help me:

1. Understand the situation from different perspectives.
2. Identify assumptions and blind spots in my thinking.
3. Generate several possible approaches rather than one answer.
4. Explore the potential benefits and risks of each approach.
5. Consider the impact on collaboration, including trust, participation, power, and shared ownership.
6. Identify what should remain distinctly human rather than being delegated to AI.

Ask challenging questions, point out alternative perspectives, and acknowledge uncertainty.

Due Date: February 8, 2027

Basis of Grade: Demonstrating the value and limitations of leveraging AI in leadership, prioritizing human agency and wisdom. As well, the student will demonstrate how their own leadership thinking and practice were affected.

Value: 10%

Mid-Course Assignment:

Students will work in small groups to analyze a complex leadership challenge and develop a collaborative response. Beginning with a real or realistic organizational challenge, groups will apply the course's theological, adaptive, relational, and teaming frameworks to understand the situation, identify the conditions necessary for collaboration, and develop a practical approach to moving forward. Groups may use AI as a coach to help them respond to their leadership challenge. (PO2, CO 3)

Due Date: March 22, 2017

Basis of Grade: Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the challenge, apply course frameworks, demonstrate collaborative leadership amongst group members, and demonstrate collaborative process.

Value: 25 %

Post-Course Assignment:

Part 1: Students will first reflect on how their thinking about leadership was challenged through this course. Students will articulate a personal philosophy of collaborative leadership grounded in theological reflection and leadership literature. Students may not use AI. (SWO 1,3. PO 1, 3, 5. CO 4, 5)

Part 2: Students will develop an implementation plan for collaboration with a current team or leadership context, including SMART goals and appropriate uses of AI. Students may use AI as a mentor to examine their thinking, ask questions that might improve their implementation plan, and assist in the formation of SMART goals. (SWO 1, PO 1, 2, 4, CO 2, 3, 4)

Total: 10-12 pages

Due Date: May 17, 2027

Basis of Grade: Students demonstrate the ability to integrate personal reflection, theological understanding, leadership literature, and course concepts into a coherent philosophy of collaborative leadership and a practical implementation plan. Attention will be given to depth of reflection, integration of theory and practice, quality of SMART goals, and consideration of digital technology and AI toward the flourishing of the team.

Value: 40 %

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current [Seminary Calendar](#):

Attendance Policy

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

Modular Courses

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Online Courses

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Semester-Based Courses

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

Modular Course Schedules

Modular classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

As members of the Briercrest learning community, students have a responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity and honour. Students who cheat on exams, plagiarize, inappropriately collaborate, or use generative AI without instructor authorization violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary. Any such actions constitute a breach of academic honesty and will result in serious consequences, such as failure of an assignment, failure of a course, or expulsion from the seminary.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or involuntary, is the submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper documentation. All information, ideas and/or direct quotations taken from other primary or secondary sources must be documented appropriately.

Generative AI is an umbrella term for a type of machine learning and a group of algorithms that can create new content, such as text, code, images, videos, music, or a combination of all these formats. Generative AI produces output in response to a query or prompt using generative models such as Large Language Models (LLMs) that rely on large datasets. Generative AI features are also often embedded within tools such as Grammarly, allowing these tools to generate new content, such as the rewriting, paraphrasing, or summarizing of existing text. The generated responses of these tools are probabilistic, which can result in errors and biases in responses.

The use of generative AI to create audio or visual media, to produce outlines, to generate partial or complete drafts of assignments, to answer questions on quizzes or exams, or to edit the grammar of assignment drafts is considered unauthorized unless it is explicitly permitted by the course instructor in writing. All use of generative AI tools must be properly documented.

Students are responsible for ensuring they are using their sources and completing their assignments with transparency and honesty. For more details, consult the [Seminary Calendar](#) and the Briercrest Format Guide. In addition to being familiar with these pages, instructors assume that you have completed the Briercrest Academic Integrity course on [Canvas](#) and understand the information contained in it.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition (mental or physical) who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should contact the ARC Coordinator in person (Room 217 across from Academic Services), by phone (1-306-801-6159), or by email (arc@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.). It is recommended that students meet with their professors to discuss the requirements of their accommodations (i.e., how the student will receive lecture notes, or how the professor wants to receive extension requests).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Heifetz, Ronald. Leadership Without Easy Answers. 1st Edition. Belknap Press, 1998

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Joiner, Bill, and Stephen Josephs. Leadership Agility: Five Levels of Mastery for Anticipating and Initiating Change. 1st ed. Jossey-Bass, 2007.

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McNeal, Reggie. A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders. 2nd ed. Jossey-Bass Leadership Network Series. Wiley, 2011.

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Wheatley, Margret. Leadership in an Age of Complexity. Accessed December 28, 2024. <https://www.margaretwheatley.com/articles/Leadership-in-Age-of-Complexity.pdf>

Wiseman, Liz. Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter. Revised and+ updated edition. Harper Business, 2017.