ELPS 429: The Psychology of Power and Authority in Cross-Cultural Leadership: Lessons from Rome
Loyola University Chicago

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http://luc.edu/education/rome-graduate.shtml

OVERVIEW
This course is designed to examine the psychology of how power and authority are manifest in social systems as people come together in the process of leadership. The vibrant city of Rome is used as a historical and contextual reference point and learning laboratory. The course will briefly address evolving theoretical conceptualizations of leadership, but attend more closely to advanced leadership topics related to power, authority, and social justice. This will be complemented by the examination of how these leadership concepts are manifest within a variety of social institutions including education, religion, and government. The course will rely on Rome’s rich historical context and complex social systems as a venue for the exploration of leadership issues, as a reference point for understanding cultural influences on leadership, and as a model for interpreting cultural considerations in a global context. The course provides a platform to explore compelling questions such as:

- What lessons can be learned from historical examples of how power and authority were wielded?
  What applications does this have for work in contemporary educational contexts?
- How do good people get coerced into doing bad things? How do leaders and social systems propagate this? How can it be disrupted?
- How does our own embeddedness in cultural norms frame how we engage across cultures?
- How are our own relationships with authority structured and what might that mean for how we navigate personal/ professional relationships as well as educational contexts.

This course is open to a wide range of graduate students with interests in leadership and social justice issues and applications within educational contexts. Students need not have prior introductory coursework on leadership theory. Loyola students may use this course as an elective to their academic program. Non-Loyola students or professionals in the field may enroll and will be admitted as a ‘non-degree’ seeking student in the School of Education. The course carries 3 semester hours of graduate credit for which all students must register.

ROME AS A LEARNING LABORATORY
Rome is known as the “Eternal City” given its near two millennia of uninterrupted existence and continuously evolving cultural contributions to the world. This course is constructed specifically around the use of Rome as a laboratory for enhancing student learning. That means 90% of classes are taught at sites across the city. There is a distinct pedagogical advantage gained from the immersive nature of exploring course content in Rome. No where else can rich historical contexts illustrate and bring to life compelling leadership issues associated with power, authority, and social justice in ways that illuminate its evolving nature, applications in diverse social institutions, and centrality as a compelling issue in contemporary society. Listed below are just some of the ways in which Rome will serve as a powerful context for learning:

- The Roman Forum- Imagine visiting ancient ruins of Roman society to bring to life the consequences of leadership grounded in unequal power and authority relationships. Students will read Plutarch’s Lives of the Roman Emperors to examine philosophical issues associated with how positional leaders manifest their power and authority and its consequences in society.
Envision unpacking the complexities of these dynamics at Julius Caesar’s funeral pyre, the Arch of Titus, and the House of the Vestal Virgins.

- **The Coliseum** - A class session will be held on site at the Coliseum, home to some of history’s most elaborate and deadly staged battles. Students will examine the psychological underpinnings of authority using the Stanford Prison Experiments as a lens to understand how good people can be coerced into doing bad things. Envision sitting on fallen Roman pillars in the heart of the Coliseum and debating with peers about contemporary examples of authority issues in education.

- **The Spanish Steps** – The diverse neighborhoods surrounding the famous Spanish Steps will serve as a context for field observations of cultural dynamics. Students will then integrate theoretical assertions about cultural influences of leadership with real world observations to construct their own understandings.

- **St. Peter’s Cathedral and The Vatican Museum** - Students’ will have a private tour of the Vatican museum providing a platform to examine social authority over time. Imagine being one of only 50 people in the entire museum and discussing justice issues in the Sistine Chapel or sitting underneath the famous School of Athens painting.

- **Site-Based Ethnographic Interviews** - Students will conduct ethnographic interviews with key leaders in different social systems to elicit examples of how power and authority surface in Rome. Past interviews include visits to the US Embassy in Rome to interview the Minister Counselor of Public Affairs, visits with faculty and administrators at US and Roman educational institutions, and a visit to the Jesuit Curia at the Vatican to interview the head cannon lawyer.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**READINGS:** Readings selected for this class reflect the goals of 1) providing a brief overview of leadership theory, 2) introduction of advanced topics in leadership, 3) synthesizing cultural considerations in leadership, and 4) examining the social justice implications of leadership. Readings will be provided in the form of PDF documents.

**PHOTO ELICITATION PROJECT:** Photo elicitation involves the use of photographs as a means to evoke information, feelings, and/ or memories that explain a specific phenomenon. Prior to arrival in Rome, students will take photographs representing leadership, power, and social justice and document why these pictures are reflective of the concepts. The photos will be revisited at the end of the course and additional ones added from the time spent in Rome to document students’ journeys as they relate to understanding and representing advanced issues associated with culture and leadership.

**FIELD OBSERVATION:** This assignment builds on the central tenets of Hofstede’s cultural value orientations along with empirical research associated with the GLOBE study. Students will be asked to conduct a field observation in teams to observe cultural dynamics in social settings and connect them to the literature along with their application in the context of educational leadership.

**TEACH US SESSION:** In small groups students will prepare a class “teach us” session. This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of the central themes of the course. Each session will use Rome as a “laboratory” to advance our understanding of the application of leadership in diverse cultural contexts. This is an opportunity to not just express understanding of course themes, but also demonstrate the ability to teach them as well. For example, a team may wish to have the class visit a prominent location associated with Mussolini’s régime as an opportunity to unpack historical considerations associated with leadership and governance.