

Navigating Diverse Perspectives in Public Sector Leadership  
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Your effectiveness as a public service leader will depend on how well you can understand and respond to the perspectives of a diverse array of people. Accordingly, this immersion experience seeks to (1) facilitate your understanding of your own identity; (2) give you practice at articulating a perspective different from your own; and (3) introduce you to the concepts of empathy and cultural competence.

An individual's perspective entails their worldview, values, beliefs, motivations and behaviors. An individual or group's worldview is their philosophy or outlook on the world. Values refer to what an individual or group holds as good and right and dear. Beliefs are our understandings about what is true. Motivations drive us to act in order to achieve desirable and undesirable states of being. An individual's behaviors comprise their actions.

**Identity Paper (10%).** Understanding other life perspectives starts with wrestling with your own identity. This one- to two-page paper involves (1) documenting your identity and (2) discussing how that identity affects your worldview, values, beliefs, motivations and behaviors. Your identity can include any number of factors (race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, political leaning, nationality, age, mental and physical health, etc.) This assignment is for your learning and will not be available to other students (although you can choose to share it as you see fit.)

**Reflections on a Different Life Perspective (40%).** This exercise involves diving deep into the perspective of a different type of person or group of people. Four tasks are involved:

1. Book Selection Assignment (1/10 of 40%)
  - A. Indicate your preference for reading a book from a list of approved readings that represents a perspective different from your own, the farther away the better. Explain why you have chosen that book and what you hope to gain.
  - B. Read the information on the back of the book and, without peeking inside, write what you *think* the book is going to be about. Cover who or what is the book's subject, what you predict their worldview, values, beliefs, motivations and behaviors are going to be, and articulate any notions you have about this particular perspective. This will not be available to other students, although you can choose to share it as you see fit.
  - C. 1-2 pages
2. Chapter Reflections (4/10 of 40%)
  - A. Read chapters from your book **each week** and reflect on **each of them**. Decide how to schedule your reading, but plan on reading and reflecting on *at least one chapter per week*.
  - B. When reflecting on each chapter, discuss the worldview, values, beliefs, motivations and behaviors of your assigned perspectives, and discuss how they

are similar/different from your own, along with parts of the text that strike you for whatever reason (1-2 pages)

3. Peer Commentary (1/10 of 40%)

A. Each week, comment on at least two other reflections of your colleagues.

4. Post-Reading Reflection (4/10 of 40%)

A. After you have read the book, you will compare your original thoughts with your post-reading reflections to see if/how your perspective changed. (1-3 pages)

**Annotation of Empathy/Cultural Competence Readings (10%)** Along with your reflections, take good notes on the assigned readings on empathy and cultural competence. Invest time and thought on these notes, as they are raw material for the Final Exercise.

**Implicit Association Test and Reflection (5%)** Implicit bias is the topic of our Friday morning session. To prepare, you should take the implicit association test for race, gender and age, which can be found [here](#). Then ponder your results online. Your implicit bias test reflection will not be available to other students, although you can choose to share your reflection as you see fit. (1 page.)

**Final Exercise (35%)** The final exercise will ask you to document your observations and responses to questions about the weekend panels and exercises, your Reflections on a Different Perspective and the empathy/cultural competence readings. The final exercise instrument will be distributed the week before class starts.

### **Empathy/Cultural Competency Readings**

From Empathy: HBR Emotional Intelligence Series (visit

1. What Is Empathy? *And why it's important*. By Daniel Goleman

9. The Limits of Empathy: *It's exhausting*. By Adam Waytz

From Gooden, Susan. *Cultural Competency for Public Administrators*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2012.

2. Rice and Matthews, "A New Kind of Public Service Professional Possessing Cultural Competency Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills"

Due Date	Assignments			
	1	2	3	
8-Sep	Watch Overview Video			
11-Sep	<a href="#">Book Selection Assignment</a>	<a href="#">Identity Paper</a>		
18-Sep	<a href="#">Chapter Reflections</a>	<a href="#">2 Peer Commentaries</a>	"What Is Empathy" <a href="#">Annotation</a>	
25-Sep	Chapter Reflections	2 Peer Commentaries	"A New Kind of Public Service Professional" Annotation	
2-Oct	Chapter Reflections	2 Peer Commentaries	"The Limits of Empathy" Annotation	
9-Oct	Chapter Reflections	2 Peer Commentaries		
16-Oct	Chapter Reflections	2 Peer Commentaries		
23-Oct	Chapter Reflections	2 Peer Commentaries	<a href="#">Implicit Association Test and Reflection</a>	
30-Oct	<a href="#">Post-Reading Reflection</a>			
3-Nov	<a href="#">Final Exercise</a>			

### **Books from Which to Choose (Pick One)**

Caudle, Dave (2016) *A Policeman's Perspective: Sometimes There's No Other Option*. Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2015. *Between the World and Me*. First ed. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

Dyson, Michael Eric. 2017. *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America*. First ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Faludi, Susan. 1999. *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man*. 1st ed. New York: W. Morrow and Co.

Grillo, Evelio. 2000. *Black Cuban, Black American: A Memoir*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público Press.

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. 1995. *Farewell to Manzanar: A True Story of Japanese American Experience During and After the World War II Internment*. New York, N.Y.: Bantam Books.

Isenberg, Nancy. 2016. *White Trash: The 400-year Untold History of Class in America*. New York, New York: Viking.

Kimmel, Michael S. 2008. *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*. 1st ed. New York: Harper.

Noah, Trevor. 2016. *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*. First ed. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

Nutt, Amy Ellis. 2015. *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family*. New York: Random House.

Sandberg, Sheryl. 2013. *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. First ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Santiago, Esmeralda. 1994. *When I Was Puerto Rican*. 1st Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books.

Solnit, Rebecca. 2014. *Men Explain Things to Me*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books.

Vance, J. 2016. *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*. First ed. New York, NY: Harper, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2016.