



Women in Leadership: Influence and Impact

Take the next step in your professional development by completing the SMU CAPE Women in Leadership Certificate program and learn what it takes to confidently lead with influence and impact. The six-week program leans on the expertise of five women leaders who are passionate about sharing their knowledge and helping women reach their leadership potential.

The first five weeks of the program feature topics that are crucial for leaders – and those aspiring to leadership roles – to effectively lead a team, convey their authority as a leader and find their voice. The sixth week of class features a live panel discussion with additional insights from senior female leaders that will help you grow your influence and impact as a leader.



Program Overview

Starting with the first week of class, you will look within yourself to understand and maximize your leadership style so you can confidently show up and express your point of view. Then you will learn how to align your actions and your team's actions toward your organization's strategic goals. To conclude, you'll learn how to extend your influence even further by cultivating relationships that help people feel connected, empowered, and encouraged to develop professionally.

Who Will Benefit?


The SMU Women in Leadership certificate program is designed for anyone who aspires to create change and make an impact in their organizations and communities. Throughout the six-week program, you'll learn the leadership skills to influence and inspire your team and gain the knowledge to develop yourself and others in service of career objectives.

The program's curriculum is designed to help participants develop a holistic view of their skills, strengths, and personality traits, and establish themselves as effective and influential leaders in their organizations. The program can be beneficial for new leaders, emerging leaders, mid-level leaders, and individual contributors who wish to be leaders of influence and impact or to be allies to women in leadership roles.


Participants who successfully complete the Women in Leadership: Influence and Impact program will receive a certificate, shareable digital badge verified through Credly, and will earn a lifetime credential through SMU Continuing and Professional Education.





Unlock your leadership potential and make a lasting impact in your organization and community by enrolling in SMU's Women in Leadership program. A Credly badge through SMU is a digital symbol of your commitment to growth and ability to inspire change, paving your way to become a leader of influence and vision.

 **\$1,995**

 **Classes offered quarterly** (February, May, August, November)

 **CEUs: 5.0** (Continuing Education Units)

 **Live, virtual sessions with instructors**

 **PDUs: 50** (Professional Development Units)

 **Live panel discussion with industry experts**

Instructor Spotlight

The first five weeks of the program are led by female subject matter experts with leadership experience in global learning design, human capital strategies, HR management, strategic planning, consulting, marketing, coaching and diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Kara Schillaci (Leadership Starts from Within)

Kara is a global talent development and transformation executive who is passionate about creating future-ready leaders and organizations.

She is currently the Vice President of Talent Development and Transformation at Rexel, USA. Kara has had many roles inside large organizations leading learning, talent management, leadership development, and functional capability building. She has also supported large and small organizations as a consultant.

She regularly coaches and mentors, facilitates workshops, speaks at conferences and is a resource for her teams. Her special talents are in employee engagement, culture change and community building.

She is a proud SMU alum, and resides in Dallas and volunteers in her local community for Jubilee Park and Community Center and the Melville Family Foundation.



Mina Shams (Developing Strategic Insights – from Staff to the C-Suite)

Mina is an HR leader with more than 30 years of diverse experience in the healthcare, biotechnology, and defense industries, which include more than 20 years of progressively greater management responsibilities developing and leading initiatives that align leadership, culture, talent, and total rewards.

In 2018, she set out on her own to start OH Consulting with the aim of providing comprehensive expert advice in the areas of human capital strategies and functional operations in support of business strategies for VP and C-Level clients. Shams earned her bachelor's in business management and a master's certificate in HR management from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.



Laura Wooten (Communicating for Influence)

Laura has spent her career working to empower women both professionally and personally as a strategic problem solver, consultant, marketer, and coach. For more than 15 years, she has built her own consultancy helping small and mid-sized businesses, nonprofits, and corporate clients turn their expertise into revenue streams.

Wooten has taught professional education at Southern Methodist University, facilitated team building sessions, and presented online webinars on writing and marketing for a variety of organizations. She is an active community member, serving on the Allen Library Board, the local PTA, and other nonprofit organizations. She has a master's degree from Northwestern State University of Louisiana.



Wendy Hultmark, CPC, ACC (Cultivating Psychological Safety, Trust, and Team Engagement)

Wendy is a certified executive coach who is passionate about helping women succeed and find fulfillment in leadership and in life.

Her career spans over two decades, first as an HR leader and then as a coach, guiding and supporting all levels of leaders—from first-time managers to executives running \$500 million businesses, and everything in between. She attained her certified professional coach (CPC) certificate from the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (iPEC), an ICF-accredited program. Additionally, she holds a master's degree in organizational development and communication from Suffolk University.



Mignon Early (Influence Through Coaching, Mentorship, and Sponsorship)

Mignon is the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Fresenius Medical Care. She has more than 25 years of experience in the nephrology industry and has held numerous leadership roles, including regional vice president, group vice president, general manager, and vice president of clinical quality.

She has served as a mentor and leader to others, providing coaching and guidance to help individuals become the best they can be while pursuing their goals. In her spare time, she also volunteers for organizations that serve at-risk and minority communities. She holds a master's degree in nursing from Drexel University and has been a registered nurse for more than 30 years.

Program Content Summary

Module 1

Leadership Starts from Within - In this module, you'll gain an understanding of yourself, your personality, identities, and your leadership style. Developing this awareness will allow you to confidently share your point of view, develop strategies that help you be more effective, and recognize triggers that take you off course. To be a strong leader, you don't need all the answers and you will make mistakes. You'll explore how to increase your growth mindset to help you continually learn and grow as an individual and leader.

Module 2

Developing Strategic Insights – From Staff to the C-Suite - In this module, you will learn how to leverage strategic thinking and position yourself as a key contributor in your organization. You will learn to effectively communicate your strategic goals for different relevant audiences, and learn how to best use metrics such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to better support your strategic planning. Having a greater understanding of the big picture, you will be able to help your team understand how they are contributing to the organization, anticipate issues, make better decisions, and offer better input toward achieving your organization's strategic goals.

Module 3

Communicating for Influence - In this module, you'll learn how to develop the right message for the right person at the right time to inspire action. You'll discuss the importance of listening, how to prepare for conversations, and how to choose the best next steps based on all the input.

Module 4

Cultivating Psychological Safety, Trust, and Team Engagement - Cultures built on psychological safety and trust lead to better business results in the form of innovation, error reduction, and employee engagement. In this module, you will learn how to identify the level of psychological safety and trust in your organization and team(s), and what practical steps you can take to build a healthy and happy team.

Module 5

Influence through Coaching, Mentorship and Sponsorship - Understanding that all relationships begin with trust, you'll explore what you should consider as a leader as you extend your influence on others. This module will highlight the differences between coaching, mentoring, and sponsoring and will specifically help you develop a plan for mentoring that will support your development as a leader of influence.

Module 6

Industry Expert Panel - Senior leaders from some of the country's top Fortune 500 companies will share their leadership stories, insights, and tips in a live panel discussion during the final week of the program.



What to Expect

At the beginning of class, you'll be paired with 1-2 other participants (Impact Partners) and meet with them once a week to discuss the curriculum, and what each of you are learning from the week's module.

These scheduled Impact Partner discussions allow you to have weekly informal conversations with another participant to ask questions about each module's material, discuss what you are learning, and brainstorm ideas for applying lessons in the workplace. The collaborative learning environment of the Women in Leadership program allows participants to grow their professional network, share ideas and build a sense of community with others.

Upon your successful completion of the program, you should expect to be able to:

- Develop a holistic view of yourself leveraging the DiSC behavioral assessment
- Reframe unhelpful thoughts through emotional agility and growth-mindset strategies to enhance your leadership performance and share your point of view
- Decode your organization's strategic goals and successfully align your goals and your teams' actions with organizational goals
- Utilize planning tools to help strategically prepare for efficient and effective communications with leaders, peers, and team members
- Identify the level of psychological safety and trust within your organization
- Develop an action plan to implement new strategies to strengthen psychological safety, trust, and engagement within your organization
- Discuss personal differences and apply best practices toward coaching, mentoring, and sponsorship relationships with all groups of people, including ethnically diverse groups
- Utilize mentoring meeting tools to plan and engage in impactful mentor relationships



About SMU Continuing and Professional Education

SMU Continuing and Professional Education (CAPE) is a division of Southern Methodist University, ranked among the top 75 national universities according to U.S. News & World Report's 2024 'Best Colleges' report. SMU is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. For nearly 70 years, CAPE has assisted with thousands of noncredit student enrollments each year from the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and beyond.

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