

Syllabus
FA 353 Systems Change and Chaos Theory

This course focuses on the phenomenon of organizational change. It examines the natural environment as an example of the ways chaos can be healthy, and often necessary, aspect of an organization's identity. As organizations continually reinvent themselves, chaos models are useful tools for assessing this change strategically. We address the following specific issues: (1) the complexities of inside, and outside, collaboration; (2) reinventing of the organizational relationship; (3) building a shared vision; (4) systems thinking; (5) strategies for team-based learning and related leadership skills.

Competencies

S2D

Can describe, categorize, and analyze the interactions and exchanges between living organisms and their physical environments.

- Articulates the distinction between an organism and its environment
- Describes the ways in which an organism relates to its environment
- Categorizes and assesses two or more interactions of an organism and its environment in terms of their effects on each other.

Students demonstrate this competence by examining ecological relationships and articulating the ways any living organism, including humans, exist within specific environments. Students may work on either their micro (small-scale) or macro (large-scale) level, and on either the individual or group level. This competence differs from the required S competence in that it is limited to the interaction of organisms and their environments.

Assignment:

1. How can systems use chaos to create order?
2. How is order different from control?

H2C

Can identify an organizational problem and design a plan for change based on an understanding of change theories or models

- Identifies one or more problems of strategy, structure, or process that affect an organization.
- Describes one or more change theories or models that explain these problems
- Uses these theories or models to address the problem(s)

Students demonstrate this competence by presenting a plan, which addresses a relatively complex problem in an organization. Students must connect the solution to theories or models of change and show it has significance beyond the specific example. The plan

may focus on growth and transformation through acquisition of new skills and may identify specific actions, resources, and time frames required for implementation

Assignment:

1. How can an organization develop a mission statement collaboratively?
 2. Describe the steps that are necessary to create a vision for an organization.
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L7

Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge, and values that contribute to such learning

1. Participates in a learning project with others
2. Applies collaborative learning skills, such as communication skills, skills of group dynamics, ect.
3. Reflects on one's ability to contribute to the collaborative learning process as characterized in at least one model or theory

Students demonstrate this competence by working with others to develop common understandings around a shared agenda that leads to an assessable outcome. Collaborative learning is characterized by a willingness to explore the ideas and insights of others in an atmosphere of mutual respect, encouragement, and challenge. Essential to this competence is understanding the distinctions among collaboration, cooperation, and strategies of group dynamics.

Assignment:

1. Articulate the differences and similarities between collaboration and cooperation.
 2. Discuss the collaborative activities you engaged in during this class. Include in your discussion:
 - a. How have you changed?
 - b. What were the challenges you experienced working in a collaborative environment?
 - i. How did your group overcome the challenges?
 - c. What worked within your collaborative setting?
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Week 1

1. Instructors introduction
2. Introduction to syllabus
3. Introduction of students and competencies
4. Get to know you game

Week 2

1. What is the difference between collaboration and cooperation? (Think, pair, and share)
2. Collaboration:
 - a. What are the necessary steps to create a collaborative environment?
 - b. What are the areas that can cause collaboration to break down?
 - i. Ladder of inference (pg 242-246)
 - ii. Left handed column (pg 246-252)
3. Time to prepare for presentations

Week 3

1. What is the difference between climate and culture? (Free form mapping carousel)
2. How can we create more participative, inclusive and open organizations?
3. Dealing with problem behaviors:
 - a. The latecomers
 - b. The early leavers
 - c. The broken records
 - d. The doubting Thomases
 - e. The headshakers
 - f. The dropouts
 - g. The whisperers
 - h. The loudmouths
 - i. The attackers
 - j. The interpreters
 - k. The gossipers
 - l. The know-it-alls
 - m. The backseat drivers
 - n. The busybodies
 - o. The interrupters

Students will work in pairs. Each pair will be responsible for presenting their topic. The presentation must include:

1. Definition of category
 2. How to deal with the category
 3. Practical application
4. Time to prepare for presentations

Week 4

1. Group conflict resolution models:
 - a. Avoidance
 - b. Accommodation
 - c. Compromise
 - d. Competition
 - e. Collaboration
2. Groups will discuss each model and detail appropriate situations as well as inappropriate situations to use each strategy. The groups will present the discussed information to the rest of the class as well as role-playing a scenario for appropriate and inappropriate usage.
3. How can we reconcile individual freedom and organizational standards?
4. Time to prepare for presentations

Week 5

1. Describe the difference between a manager and a leader.
 - a. What qualities do each hold?
 - b. What type of situations would benefit from each style?
 - c. What type of situations does not fit each style?
2. Keys to presenting information
3. Time to prepare for presentations

Week 6

1. Change vs. progress
2. Is change necessary?
4. Do we change for the change of change?
5. Wheatley quotes and reactions

Week 7

1. Process building activities

Week 8

1. Presentations

Week 9

1. Presentation

Week 10

1. Presentations of papers

Assignments

1. Group presentation topics

- 1) The Chaos Theory
- 2) Reinventing of the organizational relationship
(pg 69-74, 351- 357, 407-421 and 424-435)
- 3) Building a shared vision (pg 297-304 & pg 312-328)
- 4) Systems thinking (pg 87-149)
- 5) Strategies for team-based learning and related leadership skills
(pg 351-357, 407-421 and 242-435)

*Groups will present topics as well as engage students in an interactive activity.
Presentations should be approximately 45 minutes in length.*

28 points

2. Content of papers

25 points

3. Presentation of papers

Presentation of papers should include content of papers turned in for assessment. Also part of the presentation should be a reflective component where the student discusses how the student found meaning in the information.

25 points

4. Class participation

Students need to be actively engaged in class discussions as well as class activities

25 points

ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

	4	3	2	1	Points
Eye Contact	Holds attention of the entire audience with the use of direct eye contact	Consistent use of direct eye contact with audience	Displayed minimal eye contact with audience. Reliance on note cards	No eye contact with audience. Complete reliance on note cards	
Clarity	Speech is well understood throughout the entire presentation	Speech is understood, but not throughout the entire presentation	Only half of the presentation is able to be understood	The ability to understand speech is minimal	
Loudness/ speed	Speech is at a comfortable volume, and is set at a natural speaking speed	The volume level is not natural, and the speed of the speech is not consistent	The volume is too quiet or too loud, or the speech is too fast or too slow	Volume control and/or a consistent speed have not been achieved	
Position/ movement	Speaker is positioned for the audience to see and hear them, and movement is natural	Speaker's position is starting to distract from the speech, and is becoming unnatural	Speaker's position is taking away from the speech, and the movement has become repetitive	Speaker's position and movement took away from the presentation	
Logical sequence	Speaker presents information in a way that makes sense to the audience	Speaker's sequence deviates from topic	Speaker's sequence inhibits the audience from grasping main concepts	Speaker's sequence denies the audience knowledge of the topic	
Knowledge of content	Speaker exhibits command of the material	Speaker exhibits a working knowledge of material	Speaker exhibits a general idea of material	Speaker lacks knowledge of material	
Fluidity of presentation	Presentation flows naturally	Presentation flows but not completely	There is minimal flow	Flow has not been achieved	

