

School for New Learning
DePaul University
***Course Syllabus:**
HC 160 Facilitation Skills for Organizational Learning
Spring, 2009

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Location: OHare Campus
Dates: Saturdays, 4/4, 4/18, 5/9, 5/23, 6/6
Credit: 4 quarter hours

Course Description

What makes a meeting or workshop engaging? .meaningful? effective?
How can leaders address the learning needs of a diverse group of participants while recognizing the limits of time and resources? Facilitating meetings, training, retreats and other events is a challenging and rewarding practice that contributes much to the health and effectiveness of organizations. This course will explore the nature of adult learning in organizational settings and the role of facilitators in making it happen. We will address:

- the impact of focusing on learning in organizational settings
- the key role of learner characteristics in choosing facilitation strategies
- the importance of creating environments conducive to learning.
- strategies for implementing facilitation skills and adapting quickly to changing conditions during meetings or training
- the power of group learning and ways to facilitate it.
- facilitating virtual meetings and training events

Class sessions will be devoted to discussion, observation, and demonstration of facilitation techniques and training practices that employ principles of adult learning.

Instructor: Donna Younger holds an Ed.D. and a Master of Arts in Teaching from the University of Memphis and has taught, trained, and facilitated in a variety of academic, not-for profit, and corporate settings. She is a Senior Consultant for the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning where she designs and delivers training on adult learning theory and practice and prior learning assessment.

* A revised syllabus with bibliography and expanded course schedule will be distributed at the first class session.

Competencies

- FX Can employ facilitation skills to elicit learning in organizational settings.
- H2X Can design and implement learning experiences to address organizational goals.
- H3X Understands and uses adult and organizational learning theory to select or create facilitation strategies.
- L7 Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge, and values that contribute to such learning.

Learning Experience

Students will engage with each other and the instructor both in the classroom and on Blackboard to discuss course readings, explore the nature of adult learning in a variety of settings, critique videotaped facilitation excerpts, evaluate the effectiveness of particular facilitation strategies in the context of particular training designs, and practice facilitating learning. The Blackboard site will be used for discussion conferences, to access web-based materials, and to submit assignments.

Required Text:

Klatt, Bruce. *The Ultimate Training Workshop Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Leading Successful Workshops and Training Programs*. McGraw-Hill, 1999.
ISBN: 0-07-038201-8

Readings will be distributed in class to address particular competences that will provide the basis of the reaction papers.

Supplemental Materials:

A complete bibliography will be distributed in class. Students will be expected to draw from these and/or other sources to complete projects related to their individual competences.

In order for learners in the course to be successful, it is important to review the following and participate accordingly:

Attendance: The nature of the course depends on participation of group members, so attendance is central to learning of individuals as well as the group. Several in-class exercises will provide evidence of competence and must be completed and are difficult to make up because they require the involvement of others. If you know you will need to miss class due to *unavoidable* travel or commitments, make arrangements in advance for alternate assignments, if possible, to replace those you will miss. If you miss class due to an emergency, contact me as soon as possible. While missing any class time might make it difficult for you to earn the grade you wish, missing more than two classes sessions may lead to a significant grade reduction or a negotiated grade of “Incomplete.”

Academic Seriousness: It is expected that students will incorporate sound critical thinking and writing skills into their work in the course and will demonstrate their academic maturity by honoring the Academic Integrity policy, participating actively in class activities, interacting respectfully but honestly with group members, preparing for each class session, seeking connections between course content and other experiences, and assuming responsibility for their own learning.

Incompletes: Students may request a grade of “Incomplete” if a significant change in circumstance prevents their timely completion of class sessions and/or assignments. The Incomplete Contract must include terms for resolving the Incomplete and must be submitted by the student and signed by the instructor. Failure to submit outstanding work by the specified deadline will result in a grade change from IN to F. Students who do not submit work by the end of the quarter and who have not requested an IN, will be awarded an appropriate letter grade and not an Incomplete.

Competence Development and Demonstration

Course activities, assignments and assessment are aligned with each of the competences, enabling students to see the relationship between the competences for which they are registered and their efforts in the course. In addition to the following, students will participate in in-class exercises.

FX: Can employ facilitation skills to elicit learning in organizational settings.

At the end of the course, you will be able to

- Choose or create a meeting or training design for a particular organizational purpose
- Facilitate meetings and training events in ways appropriate to organizational setting and purpose.

Course Activities:

- Explore the implications of adult and organizational learning theories for organizational effectiveness and for the development of employees or members of the organization
- Review sample meeting and training designs and consider alternative means of implementing them
- Discuss the constraints and possibilities represented by organizational contexts for learning and identify facilitation strategies to complement each

Evidence Students Will Submit

Using either an organizational setting of their choice or the classroom setting and audience, students will facilitate a meeting or training event at least 45 minutes in length. If using an organizational setting, the meeting or event will need to be approved in advance to serve as the basis for the assignment and the event will be videotaped. If using the classroom setting, students can choose a topic to teach/facilitate and facilitate in a class session, date to be arranged. Accompanying the demonstration of facilitation skills, students will submit a paper that includes the following: organizational description

and assessment; explanation of the purpose for the event and description of the participants; rationale for the choice of facilitation strategies, using the course text and one other reference; assessment of facilitation performance and goals for improvement. The accompanying document should be a minimum of 5 pages in length and use appropriate documentation of all sources used.

L7: Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge, and values that contribute to such learning.

Course Activities

- examine the nature of collaborative learning and the facilitation skills that support it
- review several online learning and facilitation platforms in terms of their effectiveness for collaborative learning

Evidence Students Will Submit

Students registered for L7 will work together to design an online learning experience for the rest of the class and will use either BlackBoard or another online learning tool provided by DePaul. Evidence of learning will include a paper assessing the effectiveness of collaborative learning by the facilitators; an assessment of collaborative learning by class members in the online environment; an analysis of facilitation strategies that support online learning. The paper should be a minimum of 8 pages and rely on at least 3 sources to support assessment and analysis.

H2X: Can design and implement learning experiences to address organizational goals.

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Clarify organizational learning goals using key facilitation skills
- Link facilitation strategies to types of learning goals.

Course Activities

- Review types of organizations and the role of organizational learning in each.
- Explore several types of organizational goals and the kinds of learning needs associated with each.

Evidence Students Will Submit

Students will submit a paper that analyses organizational learning in a specific organizational context. This may be a setting drawn from personal experience or from the literature. The paper should describe the nature of the organization, examine the

structure in terms of its support for organizational learning, and evaluate the state of organizational learning based on the type, mission, and culture of the organization. The paper should be at least 8 pages in length and rely on at least 3 sources beyond the text as the basis for the assessment.

H3X: Understands and uses adult and organizational learning theory to select or create facilitation strategies.

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Link facilitation strategies to principles of adult learning

Course Activities

- Compare adult learning theory to conventional training practice
- Identify facilitation strategies that best support adult learning
- Evaluate the congruence of organizational learning theory and adult learning theory.

Evidence Students Will Submit

Students will submit a paper that focuses on one category of facilitation tools (virtual learning, group learning, informal learning, etc.) and develops a plan for implementing in ways that support adult learning. The paper should be at least 8 pages in length and rely on at least 3 sources.

Criteria for Assessment

All Assignments:

- A - Demonstrates careful attention to detail and clear evidence of a thorough understanding of principles of organizational learning, facilitating, and adult learning addressed in class
- B - Provides adequate detail and a sound understanding of principles of Organizational learning, facilitating, and adult learning addressed in class.
- C - Provides basic detail and a cursory understanding of principles of training, facilitating, and adult learning addressed in class.

Class Schedule

An expanded schedule will be distributed after the first class.

- 4/4** Introductions to the course and to each other
Basics of Adult Learning

Key considerations for facilitators
Purposes and settings for organizational learning
Balancing Challenge and Supporting to support learning

Reading for 4/18: Chapters 9, 15, and 16 in Klatt

4/18 Behaviors that support leading and facilitating
Preparing the learning environment
Learner readiness

Reading for 5/2: Chapters 11-14 in Klatt

5/9 Tools for Facilitators – review and practice

- contracting
- questioning
- group learning
- start-up
- CATs
- Parking Lot and other management tools

Reading for 5/16: TBA

5/23 Troubleshooting
Facilitation Practice

6/6 Evaluating Learning and Satisfaction
Facilitation Practice

Addenda

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.