

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

SYSTEMS THINKING AND EXPERIMENTAL LEARNING IN OR - 3568

Last update 17-08-2017

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: management of ngo's and social organizations

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Amos Lehmann

Coordinator Email: amosjeru@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays 10 -12
Only by advance notice

Teaching Staff:

Mr. Amos Lehmann

Course/Module description:

The course focuses on learning and understanding of two leadership challenges in open social organizations:

1. leading and implementing 'systems thinking' processes
2. Developing organizational culture and organizational skills that allow experiential learning in organizations.

Course/Module aims:

1. Leading the students to an understanding of the importance of the above challenges in leadership and developing of open social organizations
2. Laying a conceptual basis to enhancing the students' ability to further develop their skills in these fields in future training.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- To describe and share their personal experience in the creation of relevant knowledge and new insights in a defined organizational context.
- To present main theories, concepts and basic models of organizational knowledge-creation, using the models of 'systems thinking' and 'experiential learning.'

In addition: in the field of 'systems thinking':

- To (basically) point out special characteristics of open systems and conceptualize them
- To (basically) formulate and present possible hermeneutics regarding behaviors and dynamics in open systems or organizations.
- To design a primary and relevant 'operational rationale,' bearing a potential to create change in the system *)

In the field of experiential learning:

- To identify meaningful personal and organizational experiences, describe and present them in order to allow developing alternative hermeneutics.
- To identify barriers that block experiential learning in organizations, and point out their possible causes.
- To form primary (practical) ideas, with a potential to create change in the organization.
- To promote organizational processes and actions that will enhance a learning

culture in the organization.

**) this course provides only basic knowledge and experience and cannot be regarded as professional training.*

Attendance requirements(%):

Full and active participation in the learning process in class

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lectures, workshops, preparatory work.

Course/Module Content:

*Session 1: introduction – why do organizations find learning difficult?
General overview of course rationale, aims, plan and requirements.*

Session2: psycho-dynamics in organizations and open systems – theoretical background of experiential learning (G.R.T) and open systems (O.S.T), and the required integration between them in the context of organizational learning.

Session 3: experiential learning as a key to leadership and organizational development – from theory to practice.

Session 4: experiential learning in organizations – interim summation and exercise.

Sessions 5-6: general introduction to open systems theory.

Session 7: "systems thinking" as a key to organizational development and change in open systems – from theory to practice.

Session 8: criteria for assessing "systemic" culture and "organizational learning" in organizations. Preparation for a field-workshop.

Sessions 9-11: workshop in class or in organizations. (one long day or several observations in or out of class – the format to be decided in cooperation with the students at the beginning of the course).

Session 12: activating organizational learning and systems thinking culture and procedures; discussion of the relationship between theory and practice.

Session 13: leadership and management practices in open systems. Summary of the course.

Note: due to the dynamic character of the course, the curriculum order may change

as a result of the learning process in class.

Required Reading:

Kaplan, O. and Solan, M. (2002) "Ghosts in the corridors of business administration schools: the 'unconscious' at work" *Organizational & Social Dynamics* 1: pp. 53-74, Karnack Books

Senge, P.M. (1991) *The fifth discipline, the art and practice of the learning organization* New York: Currency & Doubleday

Bain, Alastair (1998) 'Social Defences against Organizational Learning' *Human Relations* Vol 51(3)

Gold, Lawrence J. (2004) 'Fraternal disciplines: group relations training and systems psychodynamic organizational consultation' . In: Gold, L.J. et al (ed) *Experiential Learning in Organizations*. London: Karnack Books

Stapley, Lionel F. (2004) 'Introduction' in: Gold, L.J. et al (ed) *Experiential Learning in Organizations*. London: Karnack Books

Stein, Mark (2004) 'Theories of experiential learning and the unconscious' in : Gold, L.J. et al (ed) *Experiential Learning in Organizations*. . London: Karnack Books

Long, Susan (2004) 'Building an institution for experiential learning' in : Gold, L.J. et al (ed) *Experiential Learning in Organizations*. . London: Karnack Books

Ezion, Razi and Yehezkeally, Pinhas (2006) *Real Life is Not Linear, introduction to Complex system Theory*, Haifa: National Defense College, IDF

Additional Reading Material:

Kolb, David A. , . Boyatzis, Richard E., Charalampos Mainemelis (2000) 'Experiential Learning Theory: Previous Research and New Directions' in R. J. Sternberg and L. F. Zhang (Eds.), *Perspectives on cognitive, learning, and thinking styles*. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Bates, Peter (2010) 'Living on Triangle Island' *British Journal of Wellbeing* Vol 1 No 9

Bates, Peter (2011) 'Acknowledging hidden emotions on Triangle Island' *British Journal of Wellbeing* Vol 2 No 1

Bates, Peter (2011) 'Uncovering emotions at Engagement Sands' *British Journal of Wellbeing* Vol 2 No 2

Gershenson C, Heylighen F. (2003)' How Can We Think The Complex?' <http://arxiv.org/ftp/nlin/papers/0402/0402023.pdf>.

Heylighen F., Joslyn C. (2005), 'What Is Systems Theory?' In: <http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/SYSTHEOR.html>

Schon, Donald A. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner* Basic Books, Inc.

Argyris, Chris and Schon, Donald A. (1981) Theory In Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness Jossey-Bass Publishers.
Checkland, Peter (1993) Systems Thinking, Systems Practice, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, England. 12th edition
Miller, E.J. and Rice, A. K. (1967) Systems Of Organization, The control of task and sentient boundaries London: Tavistock Publications, , England.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 50 %
Assignments 50 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %
workshop on student day

Additional information:

Please note:

- 1. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory! Any exceptions only by special prior approval of the teacher.*
 - 2. This course includes a full day workshop which will take place on 'Yom Hastudent' from 8:30 till 16:30 and will count for 4 regular classes. Therefore, 4 classes will be deducted from the regular schedule of classes. The corrected schedule of the course will be presented during the first meeting.*
- Absence from the workshop will lead to disqualification of the entire course.*
None