OVERVIEW
This course introduces participants to theories and practices for creating well-being at all levels of scale, from the intra-personal to the inter-personal, group/team, organization, community, ecology, society and world. The course encourages students to connect with their own core and to define their own learning priorities to create an individualized education plan (IEP). Participants will put theory into practice by engaging in experiential learning focused on implementing well-being in their lived environments, synergistically for themselves and others.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

I. Knowledge and Understanding
   • Theories of and approaches to well-being
   • Systems thinking
   • Theories of and approaches to change in complex adaptive systems
   • Self-awareness

II. Professional Development
   • Emotional intelligence
   • Transformation in complex systems
   • Use of Self

III. Skills
   • Presentation, listening and conversational skills
   • Systems seeing and sensing
   • Self-transformation
   • Supporting and creating systemic change

READINGS

Books: (NOTE: Feel free to get any edition, or a digital format, of the books below to save money)

Scharmer, Otto (2018), *The Essentials of Theory U*

Read a book from the list of options (or, with advance permission, you may choose something not on the list)
CLASS CHOICE, to be decided collectively on first day of class: Arbinger Institute, *The Anatomy of Peace* OR, a second book or materials from the list of options

**Additional articles, book chapters, and other materials:**
Articles, book chapters and other materials to be assigned. Please see below for a draft list by class date and topic.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

The course requirements include the following (fuller descriptions of assignments will be handed out in class at appropriate times):

1) Engagement in class, preparation, and mutual support of classmates
2) Choose TWO of the following (20% each):
   a. Ethnographic Self-Reflection Paper (1.5 - 2 single spaced pages)
   b. “Triggers” paper (1.5 - 2 single spaced pages)
   c. From Drama to Compassion (1.5-2 single spaced pages)
3) Final Synthesis Paper: Creating well-being, 2-3 single spaced pages (20%)
4) Choose Option A or B (20%):
   a. Reading response (annotated bibliography) and personal reflection journal
   b. Concepts check: Articulating and applying key concepts from the course and each reading, making explicit use of these readings.
5) Class presentations – connecting class readings, materials, concepts etc to your own life and/or contexts/issues you are passionate about: 20%

Please note that full attendance and participation in class meetings is essential. **Missing more than two class periods lowers your final overall course grade** by 1/3 for EACH missed class after the first two (e.g., for three missed classes an A- becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B, etc; for four missed classes, an A- becomes a B, etc.). Two instances of coming substantively late or leaving early count as a missed class. In special cases as appropriate, mutually agreed, additional assignments may be able to function as make-up work for some of the point deductions.

**Cell phones, text messaging devices, email, web-browsing, computers and so on are NOT permitted to be used in class,** unless being used publicly to support the collective class work or for officially approved special needs. If you must use your text messaging device, etc. for an emergency, please take it outside of the classroom. Violations of this policy will result in point deductions.

**CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN OUR CLASSROOM**

As part of creating a valuable learning experience for everyone in the classroom and also living the essence and spirit of the course through our everyday interactions in and through it together, let’s attend to the quality of how we talk with each other, support our own and each other’s learning, and help each other (including helping me!) when we forget. This includes: An emphasis on inquiry rather than advocacy in class conversations, support for multiple different forms of interaction and participation guided by a foundation of mutual valuing and respect, and practicing ways of being in class that are less well developed for you. For example, let’s go beyond the content of what we want to contribute, by attending actively to how we are listening to and conversing with each other in class. Let’s focus on the quality of listening, efforts to build on the contributions of others and on the substance of the readings, asking questions, reflection, thoughtfulness of comments, and other contributions made to the creation of a mutual learning space. Let’s all try to work on whatever is hardest for us: For those who speak up often, try focusing on receptive listening; for those who rarely speak, try to add your voice even when it’s not comfortable. Most of all, let’s each of us take responsibility for creating a caring and respectful space where everyone is truly heard and valued. From this foundation, class discussions will promote your ability to understand, contextualize and interpret class materials and the world around you.
WEEKLY READINGS AND CLASS SESSIONS:

Class 1: Monday, August 26, 2019
Topics: Introduction to the course. Discuss course syllabus; Creating community together
Readings: Please begin reading Nonviolent Communication (Complete the book for Sept 9)

NOTE: No class Monday Sept 2 – have a terrific break!

Class 2: Monday, September 9, 2019
Topics: Understanding and taking responsibility for our feelings; bringing self-compassion to our anger; distinguishing languages of domination from languages that support life; hearing and listening to ourselves and others with wisdom and compassion
Readings:
- Rosenberg, M. Nonviolent Communication (Complete the book)
- Assignment: Find your STRENGTHS – www.strengths.gmu.edu and print out the report of your top 5 strengths and bring to class

Class 3: Monday, September 16, 2019
Topics: Accessing and spreading well-being in the face of violence and suffering
Readings:
- Frankl, V. Man’s Search for Meaning, pp. 54 to end including all appendices
- Dr. King, “Eulogy for the Martyred Children” and “The Power of Nonviolence” (blackboard)

Class 4: Monday, September 23, 2019
Topics: Shifting Our Paradigms
Readings:
- Lakoff, Concepts we Live By (selections, on Blackboard)
- Kofman & Senge, “Communities of Commitment: The Heart of the Learning Organization”
- Ross, Returning to the Teachings, excerpt on BBd

Class 5: Monday, September 30, 2019
Topics: From Drama Triangles to Compassion Cycles

Class 6: Monday, October 7, 2019
Topics: Creating Peace within, and from the inside out
Readings: Arbinger Institute, The Anatomy of Peace – OR – class decision whether to focus collectively on this book or let this be a second ‘book of your choice’ on the topic…..

NOTE: No class Monday, Oct 14; Instead, class meets TUESDAY, OCT 15 (no Tuesday classes this week)

Class 7: Tuesday, October 15, 2019
Topics: Creating well-being through listening, conversing, and opening mind, heart and will; generativity

Dr. Jessica Srikantia, GOVT 444, Transforming Violence, Fall 2018, p. 3
Readings: Scharmer, The Essentials of Theory U, Part I

Class 8: Monday, October 21, 2019
Topics: Putting it all together – systems thinking for transformation
Readings: Scharmer, Parts II&III

Class 9: Monday, October 28, 2019
Topics: Creating well-being for the planet; measurements and paradigms to support well-being
Readings:
- Arquette, “Restoring our Relations to our Future”
- Korten, We Can Have a Living Earth Economy, But It Won’t Be Easy.
  o Online at: http://www.yesmagazine.org/new-economy/time-to-grow-up-into-a-living-earth-economy-20160419
- Halstead & Cobb, “The Need for New Measurements of Progress”
- Manitonquat, The Original Instructions, excerpt on BBd.

Class 10: Monday, November 4, 2019
Topics: Self-directed readings and exploration
Readings: Select a book of your choice to read and present in class

Class 11: Monday, November 11, 2019
Topics: Polarities, teams, languages of transformation (Kegan & Lahey), and other resources for creating change in complex adaptive systems
Readings:
- Kegan & Lahey – chapters uploaded to BBd
- Assignment: Complete your own immunity to change 4 column exercise

Class 12: Monday, November 18, 2019
Topics: Experiential learning
Assignment: Apply concepts in an area of your life, work and/or interests. Prepare something to share in class

Class 13: Monday, November 25, 2019
Topics: Class choice - TBD

Class 14: Monday, December 2, 2019
Final presentations
Course Wrap-up
Course Evaluations
INFORMATION ON ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENTS: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The quality of your work will be evaluated on the following:

- Engagement with the materials and the course, including scope and depth of use of materials and sources
- Depth of reflection, especially self-reflection
- Depth of insight, analysis and understanding
- Clarity and richness of expression
- Demonstration of your personal learning and your effort to stretch yourself beyond previous experiences and underlying assumptions

Please single space all papers, submit by email at least 3 hrs before class begins if due on class days, and please bring hard copies to class (please don’t make special trips to drop off hard copies on days we do not have class – emailing by the deadline and bringing hardcopies to the next class period will be fine)

Hygiene factors that are assumed and that will detract from your grade if not fulfilled:

- Writing quality: Your writing should be at a quality appropriate to higher education, so please leave enough time for multiple rounds of editing and crafting, as well as final proof-reading. I recommend the Writing Center for help in taking your writing to the next level. Please proof-read all of your submissions and make liberal use of the Writing Center. I reserve the right to return papers unread if they do not meet appropriate standards of writing and editing quality.
- Citing sources: Be sure to cite all of your sources appropriately. Include a bibliography in your papers. Please read the sections on plagiarism (below and on the GMU website), and if you are at all unclear or uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism please talk with me.
- If you anticipate needing more time for assignments please discuss with me in advance.
- Thoughtfulness and engagement: Accurate and thoughtful use of course readings and concepts; conceptual coherence, grounding and clarity of posited relationships; accuracy and relevance of evidence.

ASSIGNMENTS (Details to be provided in class)
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

**GMU Writing Center.** I would encourage you to make use of the GMU Writing Center while you're here (regardless of how well you write), since getting feedback on writing is often a great learning opportunity and one that's harder to come by once you leave school. The writing center info can be found online at [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/). For updated information please check for their hours on their website.

**New Voices in Public Policy** is a journal designed to disseminate student work in SPGIA to a broader audience. It is reviewed by a combined panel of students and faculty. You may self-submit online at: [http://journals.gmu.edu/index.php/newvoices](http://journals.gmu.edu/index.php/newvoices). If you would like me to consider nominating your course paper for publication in *New Voices in Public Policy* you may let me know.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** If you are a student with special needs that require academic accommodations, please see me and contact Disability Services at 993-2474 or [www.ds.gmu.edu](http://www.ds.gmu.edu) as early as possible. All academic accommodations must be arranged through Disability Services and must be prospective rather than retrospective.

**Class Meetings and Missed Classes.** If you find you have to miss class, please communicate with me immediately. Please see the missed class policy above. Missing more than two classes during the semester will lower your grade by 1/3 for each missed class after the first two, except under exceptional circumstances, in which case you will need to complete additional assignments designed to help you assimilate the information and classroom experiences you have missed. Missing substantial portions of two classes counts as one missed class (arriving very late or leaving substantively early). I am willing to work with you through difficult situations, especially when you can alert me in advance or as soon as possible, to make it possible to complete the course successfully.

**Honor Code:** GMU has an honor code and all students are required to know and abide by it. The information is located at: [http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/)

**PLAGIARISM:** All submitted work must be your own, and it is imperative that you accurately cite all sources in your work.

- GMU has an official university policy on plagiarism that can be found at: [http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/)
- Please note that violations of plagiarism policies can result in expulsion from the university.
- Note that ignorance of the policies is not a defense, so please familiarize yourself with what plagiarism is and how to ensure that you don’t commit it. If you have any questions about what constitutes the appropriate use and citation of sources, please talk with me.
- *To quote from GMU’s policy as emailed to me on 3/20/08 by the SPP office:*

> “The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

> “Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Dr. Jessica Srikanthia, GOVT 444, Transforming Violence, Fall 2018, p. 6
“Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

“The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

“To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.”

Note that most cases of plagiarism are unintentional, but are plagiarism nonetheless and carry all the consequences. Here are a few tips to help you avoid making such a serious mistake:

- As a rough guide, if you use three or more consecutive words from a source, use direct quotation marks around the text and cite it (see a style manual for citation guidelines). Direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks, with references to the corresponding source and page number(s). Images, data and charts must also be cited and referenced.
- If you use ideas, data, or other material from a source but put it in your own words (paraphrasing), then you must reference the source materials with in-text citations.
- All direct quotations and all paraphrased ideas and data need to be cited in the text where they appear (can be with footnotes, endnotes, or in-text parentheses depending on your manual of style), with a bibliographic entry at the end.
- These requirements apply to all forms of submission or presentations (including oral presentations), and all kinds of sources, including material drawn from the internet.
- IN YOUR NOTES AND ALL WRITING/PRESENTATIONS, to protect yourself from unintentional plagiarism, ALWAYS 1) take the time when copying notes to put quotation marks around direct quotations (and then copy the quoted material accurately – you can use ellipses (…) to skip parts of the quotation and brackets ([ ]) to change specific words such as replacing “He” with “[The informant]” to clarify references, etc.); 2) clearly distinguish direct quotations from paraphrases in your notes so that it’s clear what is your language and what isn’t; 3) clearly distinguish paraphrases of others’ ideas and data from your own original ideas and data so it’s clear in your notes what are your original ideas and what is drawn from others – this is easy to forget over time.
- In sum, always make clear which language and ideas come from which sources, vs. which are your own original ideas, & cite all direct quotations & all paraphrases clearly, fully & appropriately.