ODKM 700: Foundations of Organizational Development and Knowledge Management
Professor: Param Srikantia
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Schar School of Policy & Government
3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201
Office hours: 3:00-4:30 PM on Fridays when there is class and other times by appointment.
By Appointment. Please text me (216) 374-7413
Phone: (216)374-7413 (available on phone 24 X 7)
Email: psrikant@bw.edu

Class dates and times
Either on Friday nights or Saturdays as scheduled.
Friday Sept. 25 (5:00 pm to 8:30 pm); Friday, October 2 (5:00 pm to 10:00 pm); Saturday, October 3 (9:00 am to 12:30 pm); Saturday, October 17 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm); Friday, October 30 (5:00 pm to 10:00 pm); Friday, November 13 (5:00 pm to 10:00 pm), Saturday, December 5 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm).

Foundations of Organizational Development and Knowledge Management: This introduction to organizational development and to knowledge management will provide a historical review and a contemporary understanding of interventions in these fields of study with an intent to stimulate students to be creative and original in developing their own flagship approaches. Conventional approaches that have their roots in the industrial age will be explored alongside contemporary ones. The course will expose participants to scholarly and practitioner models inspired by a multicultural orientation that combines knowledge and wisdom.

We are at an exciting time when thought leaders around the world are talking about a “Post-Management Era” in which the traditional assumptions that inspired management practices are no longer seen to be in tune with what the world of organizations is calling for. Similarly, there are calls for a rejuvenation of the traditional educational system that currently resembles a factory, a paradigm eminently unsuited for knowledge work in which standardization is a nail on the coffin of human creativity and variances (not standardization) need to be celebrated. There is growing recognition that the paradigm of management, as we have known it, is hopelessly outdated and implies a level of centralized control that is unsuitable for the modern day in which initiative, autonomy and responsibility have to be dispersed to allow for personal growth, rapid response and a highly decentralized capability for workplace dynamism and relational vitality.

This course will seek to fill that need by creating a loosely structured space in which we can collectively explore creative organizational development and knowledge management interventions alongside unorthodox, professionally bohemian responses to the existential challenges of our personal and professional lives. It is a space in which we can reclaim our creative confidence to be able to play in the sandbox of emotional and intellectual creativity. Where we can be in conversation with like minded and like hearted sojourners, celebrating the spirit of life-long learning, of being our authentic selves, of listening, sharing, and of exploring the deeper existential dilemmas of professional life with no fear of judgment while acquiring conceptually sophisticated perspectives on OD and KM. We will share experiences, contribute to each other’s learning, view situations from multiple perspectives, learn about recent management
books and authors that are making waves and piece together the great puzzles of organizational life in joyous creativity. The style of delivery is intended to reinforce your passion for life and your courage to live life as the great adventure it was always meant to be, stepping outside your comfort zone and achieving a breakthrough in self acceptance and in self expression, embracing a world in which emotional authenticity is equally important as analytical rationality.

**Texts**

The following books are **required reading** for the course. The first two books will be available at the bookstore. As for Book 3, cheaper editions are available through various online sellers on the internet. Please don't hesitate to call me (216)374-7413 if you have any questions.


3. Cummings, Thomas & Worley, Christopher (preferably 9th or 10th edition but can also settle for 8th edition). Cengage Learning, 10th edition or Southwestern College Publishing, 9th edition.). This is a book that will be started in this course and later used again in ODKM 735 in your final semester. I noticed there are very inexpensive editions available through various sellers on the internet. If you find yourself spending more than $50 (absolute upper limit, but could be significantly less), please contact me at (216)374-7413 for suggestions to alleviate your hardship.

The following books are **very highly recommended** but not required. Immensely valuable perspective.


5. Osho. *Meditation for Busy People: Stress beating strategies for people with no time to Meditate*

6. For those of you who are interested in mastering additional tools and techniques of engaging whole systems in processes of change and transformation, I would recommend that you peruse and perhaps buy the following book that you can read over the course of the two year program:


Students are also **required to read** additional articles during the course. Some are already posted online and additional ones will be added to torment you further.
NOTE: You should **start** by reading MacKenzie. Treat this as background reading for the course and *please start reading the book before the first class.*

**A summary of the written contributions, presentations, and class participation**

*These are the various items on which your grade will be based.*

1) **A case study** Global Inc. It provides an opportunity to delve into a number of challenges in organizational development that are central to the course. *Students will form groups of 4 or 5 in class during the first meeting on Sept. 25 and will prepare the case study for discussion during class on Friday Oct 2.* A list of questions will be provided. (10% of grade)

2) **A picture/drawing of your organization.** How would you describe your organization to other people, to reveal what it is ‘really like’? Draw your organization, or some aspect(s) of it that you want to depict. Be creative (see McKenzie, *Orbiting the Giant Hairball*). Think of images that would help others to see your organization through your eyes. You can use any images that come to mind. It may be helpful to think of your organization in metaphorical terms, such as a circus, an emergency room, a zoo, a machine, a laboratory, or any other metaphor that comes to mind, and then use this metaphor as the basis of your drawing. (10% of grade)

3) **Mini Case Study**
   I will invite each member of the class to do a short 10 minute presentation (a ‘mini case study’ from their own life) highlighting a challenging situation that they have encountered in their personal or professional life sharing the impact that the situation had on them and how they coped with the challenges arising in that situation. (10% of grade)

4) **Individual Application Project & Recommendations Report** – Undertake research, interviews, assessments and observation to gather data for an analysis of your workplace. This paper has a theoretical, an experiential and an action component to it.

For the **theoretical component**, begin with a theoretical overview in which you incorporate key ideas about organizational effectiveness and OD that you assimilated from any 3 of the prescribed readings or from any other internet resources that constitute “stretch ideas” about organizational development. For the **experiential component**, please interview 3 colleagues or managers in your organization and tap into their insights/perceptions pertaining to the key issues, challenges and barriers to organizational effectiveness. Formulate a list of the top five organizational practices positively contributing to organizational effectiveness in your workplace. For the **action-transformation component**, explore options and opportunities for improving organizational effectiveness. Diagnosing the key issues in this organization, you will present a detailed blue print for organizational improvement in which you will be called upon to utilize 8-10 of the classic organizational development interventions outlined in textbooks of organizational development. Which of the organizational development interventions presented in Cummings and Worley, for example, appear relevant to your workplace and why? You will indicate possible process steps that you would recommend in implementing the organizational development interventions. In addition to the standard
interventions from the textbooks that can be invoked in this situation (this will require some creative choreography adapting the interventions to your organization beyond their generic form), you will also need to exercise your own scholarly practitioner imagination and playfully challenge yourself to develop your own original intervention, something that cannot be found in any textbook. More detailed guidelines for this assignment will be developed in class, through a process of dialogue between the instructor and the class participants. (25% of grade) Suggested Length: 6-10 single spaced Pages. (50% of grade)

5) **Mindset Rotation Activity**: You will be watching a video that may challenge your assumptions about human nature, people, organizations and society. You will place yourself in the role of an OD professional who is tasked with developing a session on what Peter Senge, in the Fifth Discipline has called ‘surfacing and testing mental models’. You will write a paper contrasting different mental models about human nature and leadership that you see in contemporary US society with the ones depicted in the movie and reflect on how your style of facilitation as an OD professional may be different if you were to inhabit a different set of mental models/mindset along the lines represented in the film. (10% of grade)

6) **Class participation.** Because of the emphasis on collaboration and discussion, participation by way of attendance and discussion (including ‘on-line discussion’) is crucial in this course. (10% of grade)

7) **Grades**

Letter grades for the course are awarded as follows:

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<th>Grade Letter</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
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*Late submissions — should be negotiated before due dates.*
Note that students choosing to take an incomplete may be penalized by at least a grade letter.

**Attendance Policy**
There is a program wide policy that students are not allowed to miss more than one class and still get credit for the course. If you miss more than one class, you will not receive credit for the course. If you are late, you will lose points toward class participation. If you leave and do not
return during the class session, you will lose points toward class participation. If a consistent issue is observed, the ODKM program director will be notified.
Outline of topics for each class session

COURSE OUTLINE

Meetings Dates: Friday, Sept 25; Friday, October 2; Saturday, October 3; Saturday, October 17; Friday, October 30; Friday, November 13, Saturday, December 5

Session 1: Friday, Sept. 25. 5:00 P.M. -8:30 P.M.

Agenda
Overview of the course
What is Organizational Development and what is Knowledge Management?
Course objectives
Burrel and Morgan’s Sociological Paradigms of Organizational Analysis
Global Inc. Case Study
The 5 approaches to Management
An Overview of the main frameworks for analyzing corporate strategy
Overview of Orbiting the Giant Hairball.
Stop Holding Yourself Back
Reclaim Your Creative Confidence

Read before class from BlackBoard

Session 2: Fri, Oct 2 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm.

Agenda
The ODKM Professional as Enlightened Presence.
Global Inc. case Study Presentations
Discussion of the Two Assigned Videos by Param and their Implications for OD.

Read before class
Intimacy by Osho

View Before Class:
1. Param’s 16 minuted TEDX talk: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE_82qwpSKI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE_82qwpSKI)
2. Param’s Four Hour Talk
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Voi1S37dIyg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Voi1S37dIyg)

Session 3: Sat, Oct 3, 9:00 am to 12:30 pm.

Socio-technical Perspectives on Knowledge Management.
The Process of Organizational Development

*Read before class from BlackBoard*

*Read before class from Cummings and Worley.*
Cummings and Worley Text Chapters 1-3, namely:
General Introduction to Organizational Development
The Nature of Planned Change
The Organizational Development Practitioner
Cummings & Worley Text Chapters 4, 5 and 6, namely:
Entering and Contracting
Diagnosing
Collecting, Analyzing and Feeding Back Diagnostic Information

**Session 4: Sat, Oct 17, October 25, 9:00 am- 5:00 PM.**
Managing Mission Critical Knowledge
Designing Interventions: Human Process Interventions
Competency based Organizational Development
Redesigning Knowledge Work. (on BlackBoard)
Designing Interventions (Contd.) Technostructural Interventions, & Human Resource Interventions
Strategic Change Interventions

*Read Before Class from BlackBoard:*
Dewhurst, Hancock and Ellsworth (2011). Redesigning Knowledge Work. (on BlackBoard)
Sherf, Elad et al. (2019) Why Managers Ignore Employee Ideas

*Read Before Class from Cummings and Worley*
Cummings & Worley Text Chapters 7, 10 & 11, namely:
Designing Interventions
Interpersonal and Group Process Approaches

Organization Process Approaches Cummings & Worley Chapters 12-17, namely,
Restructuring Organizations
Employee Involvement
Work Design
Performance Management
Talent Management
Workforce Diversity and Wellness

Cummings & Worley Text Chapters 18-20, namely:
Transformational Change
Continuous Change
Transorganizational Change

**Agenda:**

**Session 4: Friday, October 30, 5:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

Dialogic OD and the Post Modern Turn in OD
Overview and book discussion *Orbiting the Giant Hairball.*

*Finish Reading before Class*
Orbiting the Giant Hairball

*Read Before Class from BlackBoard*
Bushe, G. and Marshak, R. Introduction to Dialogic OD. Please read the 3 chapters (30 pages) posted on Blackboard: Foreward, Introduction to Dialogic OD Mindset and Introduction to Practices of Dialogical OD.

**Session 6: Saturday, December 5, 9:00 AM. – 5:00 P.M.**

**Agenda**

*Read Before Class from BlackBoard*
Emerging Knowledge Management Approaches
Unstructured Reflection and Discussion Time
Future work
Course wrap-up
Course evaluation

**Baseline course objectives**

- Explore the relationship between theory and practice in the disciplines of organizational development and knowledge management
- Gain insight into the history of management and the history of OD and KM
- Develop skills in Systems Thinking and grasping the interaction between the organization and its parts
- Understand the missing component in traditional management perspectives (‘view from the top’) and the interdependent nature of knowledge work.
- See how having distinctions (organizations/organizing, top/practice, factory/knowledge work,tame/wicked problems, technical/adaptive work, diagnostic/dialogic OD) allows new possibilities for action (Addleson)
- Understand why knowledge-workers need to be agile (networks, collaboration, wicked problems, adaptive work, ‘muddling through’) (Addleson)
The School’s Policy on Plagiarism: The following statement is included in all syllabi

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.

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.

Mark Rozell, Dean Schar School of Policy and Government, GMU

The Instructor reserves the right to use ‘SafeAssign’ in ‘Blackboard,’ a plagiarism detection and education tool used at Mason, as a way of assessing whether portions of submitted written materials not having been properly referenced and/or attributed to the original authors/sources, are claimed to be the work of the person submitting the paper or assignment.