

DM6023: Leading Adaptive Action in Communities of Faith SFTS / Summer 2014

What does adaptive action look like in communities of faith? Identifying the differences between technical and adaptive challenges only goes so far. This course will support the framing of effective community adaptive action, nourish students' personal resources for navigating systemic change, and draw on the deep theological resources of specific congregations. Students will work with case studies, explore various "art of hosting" techniques for open source change, and engage in a variety of contemplative practices to sustain their faith in the midst of dynamic change.

Mary E. Hess
Professor of Educational Leadership

mhess@luthersem.edu

Appointments can be set up via email or at class breaks.

The class will meet in Room #103

Required reading

The following texts are required and should be read prior to our in person gathering:

Adaptive Action (Eoyang and Holladay)

Boundary Leaders (Gary Gunderson)

How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work (Robert Kegan)

The Surprising Power of Liberating Structures (Lipmanowicz and McCandless)

Please also choose **one** of the following books, and bring it with you to read contemplatively during the week in which we gather:

Perseverance (Margaret Wheatley)

Falling Upward (Richard Rohr)

Leading from Within (Sam Intrator and Megan Scribner)

Course objectives.

At the conclusion of this course the successful student will be able to:

- (1) articulate their specific understanding of adaptive action, and their role in leading it
- (2) write a congregational case study, draw out its pertinent elements (particularly in terms of identifying adaptive vs. technical challenges), and formulate an adaptive action plan for engaging it
- (3) be familiar with and able to implement at least two forms of "liberating structures" or practices drawn from "the art of hosting"
- (4) practice a form of contemplative and/or introspective prayer
- (5) identify at least one specific personal learning challenge, and formulate a plan for their own growth in meeting that challenge, which they will pursue in the following year

Course schedule

A note about our rhythm for the week: Monday will be a day of orientation and planning for the rest of our time together. On Tuesday we will begin a rhythm which I anticipate following for the rest of our time together. We will gather first thing in the morning to work in small groups and plenary on specific congregational case studies. After the community fellowship coffee break we will return to explore specific theories of adaptive action. Following our lunch break students will be paired up to support each other in developing a personal growth plan for their own learning of boundary leadership. There will also be time for prayer and meditation. The final session of our time together each day will focus on exploring a practice of the art of hosting, or a liberative structure.

Monday, June 9th

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Introductions

afternoon break

3:30pm to 5:00pm: What is adaptive action?

Tuesday, June 10th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case study 1

morning break

11:30am to 12:30pm: Adaptive action theory

lunch break

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Storying your own leadership

afternoon break

3:30pm to 5:00pm: AoH/Liberating structure

Wednesday, June 11th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case study 2

morning break

11:30am to 12:30pm: Adaptive action theory

lunch break

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Prayer/meditation

afternoon break

3:30pm to 5:00pm: AoH/Liberating structure

Thursday, June 12th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case study 3

morning break

11:30am to 12:30pm: Adaptive action theory

lunch break

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Prayer/meditation

afternoon break

3:30pm to 5:00pm: AoH/Liberating structure

Friday, June 13th

9:00am to 11:00am: Drawing it all together

morning break

11:30am to 12:30pm: *Visio Divina*

lunch break

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Prayer/meditation

afternoon break

3:30pm to 5:00pm: Concluding rituals

Assignments

- (1) Write a personal learning plan, based on Kegan's framework (which will be discussed in class) for identifying and meeting adaptive challenges in at least one context in which you are active in pastoral leadership.
- (2) Participate fully in the various exercises we'll engage in class.
- (3) Pick one of the recommended books to be read contemplatively during the week, and engage in that contemplative practice.
- (4) Write a final project (details to be discussed in class) which integrates all of the readings and practices of the class. 5-9 pages.

Accommodations

Students who have a documented disability should approach the professor in the early days of the course and reach an agreement with the professor about appropriate accommodations.

Course Grading

Grading options in the APS program are pass/fail/incomplete.

In addition to issuing a grade, I will write a narrative summary of each student's performance in class, indicating strengths, weaknesses, and areas for future growth and improvement. (See the summary template at the end of this syllabus.)

Additional assignment details:

Write a personal learning plan which uses the Kegan 4-column format to diagnose a challenge you are facing, and then lays out a concrete plan for "testing" your big assumption, and making some change in what you're doing. This plan should be no more than three pages long and it should offer at least one example of the 4-column work and one concrete activity you can undertake in the next months. You might find the "immunity worksheet" a helpful tool in this process (you will find that tool in our moodle class site).

Write a final project which integrates the readings and discussions of the class. In most cases this will be a "case" from your context, in which instance you will use the "case info" handout to sketch out the basic details of the case, and then propose ways to engage the adaptive challenges in that setting by using adaptive action processes (think "container, difference, exchanges" and "pattern spotting" etc. etc.). This project should be between 5 and 9 pages long, double-spaced, using a 12 point font, written in a format (.doc .docx .pdf)

which I can easily read. It should draw on specific ideas from the readings and discussions in our class. This project should also make clear your particular definition of “adaptive action.”

Both of these pieces – the personal learning plan and the final project – can be discussed with me in advance, or shared in draft form if you find that helpful. Final deadline for each of them is July 14th.

San Francisco Theological Seminary

ADVANCED PASTORAL STUDIES POLICIES

Student Evaluation Form

Student _____ Faculty _____

Seminar _____ Term & Year _____

Instructions: Circle one number for each of the items below, only if that item applies to your seminar. Otherwise mark the "Don't Know" column if the category does not apply or if you have insufficient information.

Fulfillment of Learning Objectives

Instructions: Please rate student in each category. 6 is highest fulfillment, 1 is lowest. If you cannot assign a rating, please check "Don't know".

	6	5	4	3	2	1	Don't know
Participation in class	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Responsible for own learning	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Openness to different viewpoints	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Theological reflection	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Acceptance of feedback	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Independent and critical Reasoning	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Interdisciplinary Thinking	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Examining current understanding of self	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Examining current understanding of ministry	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____
Social and cultural analysis	6	5	4	3	2	1	_____

	6	5	4	3	2	1	Don't know
Written communication							_____
Engagement with assigned Readings							_____
Use of research materials							_____
Development of innovative project(s)							_____

Comments about the student's work in class:

Grade:

____ PASS _____ INCOMPLETE _____ FAIL

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student _____ has received OR _____ has not received a copy of this evaluation.