

DM6023: Leading Adaptive Action in Communities of Faith
SFTS / Summer 2019 / D R A F T (details to be finalized in June)

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.

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

Required reading

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

Adaptive Action (Eoyang and Holladay)

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

Learning While Leading (Anita Farber-Robertson)

Perseverance (Margaret Wheatley)

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 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 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.

Monday, July 8th

1:30pm to 3:00pm: Introductions

afternoon break

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

Tuesday, July 9th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case studies

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, July 10th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case studies

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, July 11th

9:00am to 11:00am: Case studies

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, July 12th

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.

Case Study

For this course I'm defining a case study as a conscious retelling of an experience of ministry in practice which you present to us for reflection. For most students in this class, your final project will be a specific case study drawn from your primary leadership context.

To begin, carefully select an event, critical incident or conversation which has been puzzling to you, has caused you concern, and/or has continued to impact your leadership. Please use pseudonyms for people and/or organizations involved in this case. It is important to be as detailed and honest as possible, in order to facilitate the most effective learning, but also to protect the confidentiality of people and institutions involved.

Elements to include:

Background (what)

Set the event in context: Where did it occur – describe both the immediate context (church, nonprofit, home) and the larger context (geographic area, faith context, race, ethnicity, class, gender, etc.)? Who was involved? How and why were you involved?

Description (what)

What happened? What did you do? Try to include only the most essential facts, as much detail as possible, balancing that with an attempt to stay as brief as is reasonable. Try to make clear where you are reporting on the situation (who, when, where, why, how) and when you are adding your own feelings and perspectives (“I felt,” “It appeared that she felt,” “I wonder if perhaps...”).

Analysis (so what)

Identify the issues and relationships that were apparent as you viewed the situation. What was happening? Are these issues apparent in your written version of the situation? Who and how was someone(s) leading in this situation? How was God (or however you name transcendence) evident or absent?

Evaluation (now what)

Estimate your own effectiveness in the event. Did you function effectively? Why? Why not? Did you do what you set out to do? What factors or forces emerged which you did not anticipate? What questions would you like this group to discuss that might be helpful to you?

Once you've described the event or situation in writing, and the issues involved, take a break and do something else – work on your mindfulness practice, eat a meal, visit with friends, sleep on it overnight – and then return to the situation by working through the following three worksheets which have been developed by the authors of the *Adaptive Action* textbook. Each of these worksheets is somewhat similar, but uses a slightly different lens. Revise your case in light of what you learn from these worksheets, as well as other ideas we engage in class.

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.