DPLS 775 Leading Change

Spring 2010 3 Credits
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This syllabus is a working document for the course. Since we'll be working at a distance for much of the course, I'll be writing more of the things that I might normally say in the classroom - giving context, explaining background, raising questions

Course Organization, Schedule and Flow
The class will meet face-to-face three times.
- Saturday January 16th: 1-5pm - at Gonzaga University
- February 26th, 6pm - February 28th, 6pm - at a nearby Retreat Center
- April 10th: 1-5pm at Gonzaga University

We will do much of our collaborative learning work in an online collaboration space - Catalyst - which I have used at Gonzaga for by classes for the last five years.

Part of our work will be done in pairs (trios) and in study teams which bring together 2-3 pairs.

There is a $135 charge for food and lodging for the retreat.

Introduction
This course grows out of my work to lead change, in Spokane and around the world. I'd like to context the course with a little personal background. Since 2000 much of my work has been based in The Berkana Institute (http://www.berkana.org), co-founded in 1992 by Margaret Wheatley just after she wrote Leadership and the New Science. From 2005-2009 I was Berkana's Co-President. My own personal base on the internet is www.resilientcommunities.org.

I came to Spokane in 1973, when I was 24, to be the Program Director for the EXPO '74 Environmental Symposium Series. I thought I was moving here for one year...

When the World's Fair ended in the fall of '74 some of us who had been staff and advisors created Northwest Regional Facilitators (NRF) as a new nonprofit corporation to help people in Spokane and other Northwest communities think about what sort of future they wanted, and how they were going to co-create that future. For the next 25 years I served as NRF's Executive Director. We evolved into a community development corporation that has had a significant impact in Spokane and around the Northwest.

In the mid-nineties I read David Whyte's The Heart Aroused: Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America. I was pretty shocked to learn that my heart wasn't aroused anymore! I was caught in a cycle of endless "good work," with no time for deeper reflection or learning. My shock led me, within a couple of years, into a doctoral program in Learning and Change in Human Systems at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS).
As many of you have noticed, doctoral programs of this sort quickly lead into fundamental questions about how we're living our lives. That happened to me, and at the end of 1999 I stepped down as NRF's Executive Director.

Looking back, I believe I left because I no longer believed the work I was doing was making enough of a difference to make a difference. To be sure, the many individuals were able to live their lives better because of our work. However, I believed that we, as people living on this small planet and in the country that consumes the greatest amount of the world's resources, were racing to a precipice. What would change our course? I needed to go out into the world to see what else was possible. I needed to go and learn about how people in different cultures - especially those we consider impoverished - were living life on this planet.

I've been on a pilgrimage for the last ten years. You'll read about it in one of our texts for the course - Stilger, R. (2005). Enspirited Leadership: Creating a Future of Possibilities. Spokane, WA: Berkana Institute. This text is actually my 2004 PhD dissertation at CIIS. It forms part of the foundation for our work at Berkana for the last five years.

**Course Background**

This course is about the work and the change that comes from a new form of leadership I see emerging around the world in my work with Berkana. I call it enspirited leadership. Much of my work focuses on spaces and places around the world whose primary, underlying purpose is to invite others to discover and use their own enspirited leadership.

Around the world these activists are stepping into their local work, and into relationship with each other. They come from many places. In Santos, Brazil the Institute Elos works in favelas which are materially impoverished, but where the human spirit is still strong. They always begin their work by asking the elders to talk about their lives and look for the patterns of possibilities in their stories. At Kufunda Learning Village in Zimbabwe, people live the lives they want tomorrow, today and help others in Zimbabwe create a more desirable future. In Johannesburg, South Africa, Joubert Park has been reclaimed as a place of life by a cluster of nonprofits working with people from the surrounding community.

This new activism is arising in many places, and is linked by common questions:

1. How do I practice from abundance, self-reliance, interdependence, multi-culture, when I am confronted by dominant cultural thought and action patterns which emphasize scarcity, dependence and monoculture?
2. How do I share what I know beyond my community and how do I bring what others know into my community?
3. How do I sustain my reflective practices when so much work feels urgent?
4. How do I continued to ground myself as a leader who sees and acts on possibilities through an approach which is enspirited, appreciative and emergent?

In essence, enspirited leadership is about leading change.
Broadly speaking, we will be exploring three areas:

1. **Enspirited Leadership**: What is it? How is it different than other forms of leadership? What are the characteristic of the work it engenders? What are the forms of this work present in our own communities.
2. **Leading Change**: What is the change you want? What is the change you are ready to step into? How will you begin?
3. **A World of Difference**: What is the relationship between this change growing in you and the rest of the world? How does what you do matter?

### Course Specifics

**First Phase: Enspirited Leadership**

We will study the ideas of Enspirited Leadership and "life-affirming leadership" which guide the work of The Berkana Institute.

### Texts

**Stilger, R. (2005).** Enspirited Leadership: Creating a Future of Possibilities. Spokane, WA: Berkana Institute. I began my exploration of what I've come to call Enspirited Leadership in 2000 as part of co-creating a global leadership initiative called From the Four Directions. I became fascinated with what I saw as a social movement, and a form of leadership that was quite different than the social movements of the last century. We will be using the lens of enspirited leadership as a foundation for the course. My research was a cooperative inquiry conducted with many people around the world and I invite you, in this course, to join me in this continuing inquiry about new forms and patterns of leadership that are emerging.

**Wheatley, M. (2005).** Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler. My work, and my life, has been greatly influenced by my close work partner Meg Wheatley. When I first read Leadership and the New Science in the early nineties, it was the first work on leadership since my encounter with Robert Greenleaf and his work in 1969 (the year before he left AT&T) that really made sense to me. This book started off as a collection of essays, and then went deeper as Meg explored how her ideas about leadership have evolved over the last decade. It is a window on what else is possible in terms of leadership. Meg will join us for a conference call during the course if we can work out her schedule, mine and yours.

### Prior to First Class on January 16th

1. **Reading**: Enspirited Leadership. Read the entire dissertation before our first class.
2. **Mini-Paper**: Post 3-4 page paper on ways in which themes of Enspirited Leadership show up (or don't) in your own life and post on our class space on Catalyst by January 9th
3. **On-line**: Read the mini-papers of at least three other members of the class. Make at least four contributions to the on-line discussion of Enspirited Leadership by January 14th.

### January 16th Class 1-5pm

We concentrate on understanding the concept of enspirited leadership and explore the leadership which each of us has to offer in the world.
Prior to Retreat on February 26-28th

1. Teamwork: During the first class we will organize into teams of 3-4 people. I want you to use the lens of Enspirited Leadership to identify and interview a leader in Spokane who is practicing enspirited leadership. Each of you needs to participate in the interview - this cannot be delegated to part of the team.
   - Get clear with each other about what enspirited leadership means to you
   - Develop a strategy to identify a person who you believe practices this form of leadership.
   - Interview this leader and to gather her/his story.
   - Write up the story and post it online on later than February 14th.
   - Discuss online, with your team and with people from other teams, the questions and issues for enspirited leadership this story raises.

2. Interview Paper: Write up the story that emerges from your interviews and post it online no later than February 14th.

3. Reading: Read at least half of the essays in Finding Our Way. You choose which essays appeal most to you - but read at least half of the book to get a full flavor of Wheatley's approach.

4. Personal Mini-Paper: Post 3-4 page paper on responses and reactions to one or more of the chapters in FOW by February 21st. What new insights and questions come from reading this work?

Second Phase: Leading Change!
We will look at how the U Theory is a basis for gaining clarity and direction for the changes each of us wants to see in the world.

Texts
Scharmer, C. O. (2007). Theory U: leading from the emerging future. Cambridge, MA, Society for Organizational Learning. There is a wonderful poem from Rilke that could well be an introduction to Theory U:

You must give birth to your images.
They are the future waiting to be born.
Fear not the strangeness you feel.
The future must enter you long before it happens.
Just wait for the birth, for the hour of new clarity.

The "U Process" or "Presencing" as articulated by Otto Scharmer is a reflection-action model that I and many of my colleagues around the world use as a guide for our work. It will serve as the base-rhythm for this course as well. Most of us spend most of our lives quickly downloading information and then reacting. The U Process invites us into a process of deep observation, of open heart and open will, and into action in an instant. Scharmer's never encountered an idea that couldn't be said at least four ways, so some portions of this book are a bit repetitive, but it will serve as a baseline for the course.
Prior to Retreat on February 26-28
1. Reading: Begin reading Theory U, completing the Forward, Introduction and Part One and Part Two prior our Retreat

February 26-28 Retreat
I am still finalizing the retreat location. It will be within a one hour drive from Gonzaga. This weekend will be a time to explore what leadership each of us want to offer in the world and we will do so by working with the Art of Change lens The Berkana Institute is developing from its work around the world.

We will consider things like Theory "U", Art of Hosting Conversations that Matter, Alternative Frameworks to Command and Control, Berkana's "Two Loops", and other topics.

The weekend will, of course, be very participatory. You'll be invited to explore your learning edges and to take a really deep look at the changes you want to lead. I hope that at times you'll be uncomfortable, surprised, delighted. invigorated - sometimes all at the same time. I hope you'll come away from the weekend with at least as many questions as insights. We'll walk the land, create models with clay, sit in circle and at world café tables.

We will talk and listed. We'll also learn by cooking and cleaning up together!

Prior to April 10th Class
1. Mini-Paper: Describe, in writing, the change you want in your life/work - that future which is inviting you - which we will begin to explore in class on the 10th. Post this 3-4 page paper on WiserEarth by March 28th.

April 10th Class
We will:
- Review key concepts from the retreat
- Work with your Mini-Papers about the changes you want in your life
- Set up the last readings and work.

Third Phase: A World of Difference
We will situate our work on change in a global context, looking at the impact the changes we make - and don't make - here in the global north and the impact they have on the rest of the world.

Texts
Esteva, G. and M. S. Prakash (1998). Grassroots Post-Modernism: Remaking the soil of cultures. London, Zed Books. Gustavo Esteva is a gentle man with strong challenges to the dominant culture. We met for the first time this past summer and it was like finding a long-lost elder brother. Grassroots Post-Modernism had as great an impact on my thinking about development issues as anything I have read in my life. It is challenging and powerful. I learned from Gustavo this summer that he and Prakash wrote the book over a period of time when they were working with the Zapatistas. While writing the section on human rights, they were working with 60 human rights activists from Chiapas and 40 human rights activists from the offices. Gustavo
divided the group with his remarks - the people from the offices felt he was pulling the rug out from under their feet. The people from the villages felt he was telling the truth. Gustavo will join us for a conference call during the course.

Kahane, A. (2004). Solving Tough Problems: An Open Way of Talking, Listening, and Creating New Realities. San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler. Kahane and Scharmer have worked closely together over the last several years and their work ties together nicely. Kahane is about action; about getting the right people to the table who can act to make a difference.

**After April 10th Class**
1. Reading: Read Solving Tough Problem.
2. Reading: AFTER you have read Solving Tough Problems, begin reading Grassroots Postmodernism. Pay careful attention to what trigger you in the book. Keep a running reference about the things the authors say that you think are unfounded or unfair. Notice the different response you had to Kahane and that you have to Esteva and Prakash.
3. Online: The weeks of April 19th and 26th, participate at least twice a week in an online discussion about Grassroots Postmodernism.
4. Conference Call. At a mutually convenient time, we will hold a conference call during the week of the 26th to discuss Grassroots Postmodernism and to discuss why I think these controversial views are important for this class.

**Grading**
This is a class which requires your full and timely participation in all activities. If you fall behind, you jeopardize your own learning as well as that of your classmates. Work products - mini-papers, team assignments, participation in scheduled online dialogues - must be completed on time or they cannot be used as a basis for online interaction.

In other words, this is not a course where you can pile up all your writing assignments and finish them at the end.

Your grade is based entirely on how you "show up" both in class and online. I expect full, enthusiastic, informed participation.

I realize that life intervenes. Things happen. Not everything can be anticipated. If something is happening in your life which makes it difficult to meet your obligations to me and your classmates, let me know right away and we will talk about alternatives. It is your responsibility to be responsible for your own participation.

At the conclusion to the class I'll ask you for your own evaluation of how you've done in the class and what you think your grade should be. And based on what you say, we'll have a discussion.

**Books and Resources**

Plus other articles and websites from my collections as they come to mind in class discussions.