



SELF PROGRAM 2019/2020

Design of sustainable organizations in an increasingly complex environment

Ruud Hartmanns

Course information

Number of credits: 6 credits

Contact hours: 30 hours

Hours taught per week: 3 hours

Teaching period: fall 2019

Course presentation:

This course proposes a eco-systemic analysis of our human organizations and their evolution over time, as well as an introduction to design as a dynamic and interactive tool to leverage our organizations to become more sustainable and satisfying communities.

Prerequisites:

No prerequisites required, but having a business background is an advantage.

Course objectives:

The main objectives of this course aim to help students to:

- ✓ apply an eco-systemic analysis to working organizations and their environment
- ✓ develop a critical view and analysis of the organization at all levels: individual, group (team), organizational, cultural and managerial.

- ✓ use design thinking, as a tool to conceive sustainable organizations
- ✓ discover permaculture as a biomimicral design method applicable to all human systems
- ✓ familiarize with innovative socioeconomic concepts like: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSP), Social Entrepreneurship and Social Marketing

Course description:

The environment of our organizations is becoming more and more complex. The classical and dominant management systems are being seriously challenged. This course will propose an indepth look at the paradigms from which the main existing management models have been generated, in order to understand their contexts and evolution.

More recently introduced organizational- and management models integrate a certain awareness of our organizations being living systems. This course will analyze parallels between other living systems and human organizations in their way of emerging and functioning.

Design thinking will be presented as a tool to build on this knowledge to design ecosystemic interactions for more sustainable organizations, achieving positive results in terms of a triple bottomline (3BL): social, environmental, economical.

The course will evaluate practical applications for sustainable organizations which are found in innovative socioeconomic concepts and principles like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Social Entrepreneurship and Social Marketing.

The courses will combine lectures, workshops, classroom debates, videos and speakers. Outside class, students are expected to study the readings from the course bibliography, work on group and individual projects and examine case studies.

Course schedule:

Week 1: Inclusion & presentation of basic concept of organization

- Get to know each other. Discuss guidelines and goals for the course.
- What is an organization? What are its components and dynamics? What is organizational behaviour?

Week 2: Organizational paradigms and evolution

- The evolution of organizations over time. The influence of dominant paradigms.
- Complexification of the environment.
- Recent trends. Successful organizations of past and future.

Week 3: Case study - The Sears story

- An example of organizing genius and entrepreneurial failure.
- Seminal (pioneering & influential) example of modern professional management

Week 4: Organizations as living systems.

- Diagnosing and changing organizational culture.
- Measuring through competing values
- Organizational culture assessment instrument (OCAI)

Week 5: Introduction to organizational culture

- Team based working

- Team processes
- Team design

Week 6: Dynamics of individuals in organizations

- Motivation and why it matters.
- Big themes and theories in what motivates people and how.
- Personal development.

Week 7: Group dynamics and teamwork

- An ecosystemic view at organizations.
- What can human organizations learn from other living systems?

Week 8: Organizational design 1

- Introduction to design
- Organizational design as a process

Week 9: Organizational design 2

- Sustainable or even better organizations.
- Designing with CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

Week 10: written exam

Assessment:

40% team presentation of a case study and/or the design of an organization

10% active participation and attendance

50% final written exam (case study or essay)

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) unexcused absences will be allowed; otherwise no mark will be given. An unexcused absence at a test (final test or continuous assessment) means no credits for the course.

Bibliography:

✓ Huczynski, Andrzej A. and Buchanan, David A., Organizational Behaviour, Pearson Education

Limited, 9th edition 2017

✓ Laloux, Frédéric, Reinventing Organizations, Les Editions Diateino, 2015

✓ Scharmer, C. Otto, Theory U, 2nd edition, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2016

✓ Wahl, Daniel-Christian, Designing Regenerative Cultures, Triarchy Press, England 2016

✓ Wolfe, Norman, The Living Organization, Quantum Leaders Publishing, USA 2011