

ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS (DYNM)

DYNM 5010 Perspectives on Organizational Dynamics

"Perspectives" is both a fundamental and integrating course intended for MSOD students at any point in the program who wish to understand and deploy a multiplicity of dynamics operative in organizations and in the minds that create and inhabit them. It is particularly useful for those in their first year and for non-MSOD students. One key focus is on understanding the implicit mental and emotional frameworks or metaphors that "inform" organizing so that we can virtually see more robust and complex approaches to effectiveness and to leadership within them. Several faculty members highlight their specialties. One special theme examines new management models and thinking frameworks designed to prevail in a 21st century context. Lectures, discussion, and experiential learning are used to build an informed grounding in the history, philosophy, theory and practice of Organizational Dynamics. The course requirements are active class participation, potential application projects/weekly journal, a midterm paper and a final paper. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 5110 Organizational Culture and Communication

This foundational course in Organizational Dynamics explores the complex relationship between organizational culture and communication within modern workplaces. The course provides a comprehensive overview of that interplay, emphasizing their significance in today's diverse and dynamic work environments, a key focus of the program. In so doing, the course will cover various theories, models, and practical approaches that enhance communication in diverse organizational contexts. Effective organizational communication must consider and address its audience's culture, context, and cognition. Awareness and understanding of different theories, models, and perspectives as to how that can be accomplished allows the student to see the organization as a complex enterprise with related parts that comprise the whole. The course goes further by equipping students with critical systems thinking tools to assess and improve organizational culture, and advanced writing skills to effectively communicate their findings, as both tools and lenses enabling holistic understanding, strategic improvement, and the clear expression of ideas in seeing organizations as systems. This is important for several reasons. First, organizational culture reflects the organization's norms and values that in turn impact communication, how messages are received and understood. They also reflect the power dynamics of the organization, indicative of who makes decisions, how they are made, and who is included and why. Paying attention to these dynamics allows leaders and members to be more inclusive and respectful toward each other and promote organizational harmony, ethical behavior, and ultimately organizational success. They also enhance communication efficiency, cultural competence, trust building, decision-making, employee engagement, and conflict resolution. Real-world case studies and examples will highlight the impact and importance of these skills in diverse organizational contexts.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 5112 Equity and Belonging in Organizations

This fundamental course examines how inclusive organizations successfully adapt to diverse customers, markets, ideas, and talents to maximize productivity and achieve an organizational culture of equity and belonging. With the growth of diversity in the U.S. and global workforces, organizations are increasingly expecting leaders to effectively create and champion a culture of inclusivity as a way to meet organizational commitments to social justice, enhance organizational performance, and maximize employee satisfaction. In this interactive course, students will explore the structural foundations of social identity and inequity in organizations, examine the necessary leadership tools to meaningfully address these forces in contemporary organizations, and learn how leaders can best create and sustain organizational cultures that respect and value diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Non-Dynamics students: please include a job description in your permissions request.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 5113 Research Design and Methods in Organizational Dynamics

This course introduces students to the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods in the social sciences and humanities as applicable for conducting research related to organizations. The aim of the course is to give you a general understanding of a variety of research methodologies and to combine this with theoretical discussion and practical experience. We will explore debates and discussions related to the nature of qualitative data and the value of particular approaches; the conditions under which specific methods of data collection and analysis are most appropriate; ethical questions in qualitative research; and research design and implementation. A significant portion of class time will be devoted to covering practical aspects of qualitative research, including: gathering data through interviews, focus groups, and observational research; strategies for recording, coding and analyzing qualitative data; and evaluating and presenting qualitative research.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 5114 Introduction to Organizational Dynamics: The Practical Scholar

This course provides you with an overview of academic concepts central to the Organizational Dynamics Program. In addition, the course will prepare you to move through our program by developing academic writing and research skills that are interdisciplinary, practical, and critical. We will explore questions central to being a student in a professional degree program, including: Why is academic research important in our daily lives? How can we apply the strategies that scholars use to improve our workplaces? How do we develop research topics that will help us while clarifying the concept under study? The final deliverable will be a proposal for a research project that can be used for your Capstone Project. You will become skilled in how to: explain concepts central to Organizational Dynamics; narrow a topic and frame a research question; develop a methodology that suits your research goals and timeline; engage in innovative thinking techniques distinct to the arts and science; write a proposal for a substantial research project; develop and maintain an annotated bibliography; conduct and interpret interdisciplinary research independently and as a class; and read critically and write clearly for your specified audience.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 5510 Devil's Advocate: The Power of Divergent Thinking

Short-term or long-term? Us or them? Build or buy? Margin or volume? My way or the highway! Ad infinitum, apparent forced choices—or no choice—and limited perspectives can create costly tugs of war or constricted judgment without our minds (and hearts) and in organization dynamics, persuasive, and often hidden, divergence in thinking offers great opportunity for learning, creativity, and sound decision-making. This course offers several robust, practical techniques for bringing the value of diverse perspectives in politically productive ways to leadership thinking, communications, and organization dynamics. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6010 Gender, Power, and Leadership in Organizations

For the last several years, issues related to gender in organizations and organizational leadership have not been hot topics of discussion in the popular media, in organizations themselves, or in academia. That is no longer true. The advent of #metoo and the revelation of sexual harassment in corporations, government sector organizations, and nonprofits has highlighted the ways in which those with more power have been using their power to both harass and silence their victims, many of whom are women—although this dynamic is true for others belonging to groups with less power. Addressing these issues effectively will require more than lawsuits and more than sexual harassment and bystander training. This course will explore what will be required if we are to have organizations that effectively leverage the skills and talents of both men and women. Although in the last 30 years there has been some significant progress made in placing women in leadership roles in organizations, we will take a deep look at the data about where and how gender differences continue to exist in organizations including differences in both professional and outcomes. This class will examine the social, cultural, and structural dynamics within organizations that unintentionally, but differentially, affect women and men. In particular, we will consider how men and women are viewed, how their contributions are evaluated, and the opportunities that are available to them. Specific topics that will be addressed include exploration of theories explaining the development of gender identity and related behaviors that appear to be gender-based; the social construction of gender; the intersectionality of gender, race, and class in terms of power and organizational dynamics; the various explanations for gender differences in organizational life; the theories that connect gender and leadership; policies and practices that reinforce gendered dynamics; how sexual harassment, long illegal, has quietly persisted in organizations and why now new instances of harassment are being revealed nearly every day; methods for understanding the multiple sources of gender inequities in organizations; and methods for changing organizations to create equity in terms of the roles and treatment of women and men. The seminar will involve a substantial amount of reading from required books and articles. Assignments will focus on students' examination and assessment of gender-linked dynamics in their own workplaces. Classroom time will be structured in a seminar format, including presentation of material by the instructor, group discussions of readings, experiential learning activities, student presentations, and group discussions, and examination of students' own organizational experiences as they relate to the course material. A significant portion of the learning will result from discussions in class, so attendance is important. The course is structured to first address the development of a theoretical framework for understanding gender issues in the workplace from personal, interpersonal, group, and organizational perspectives. During the second section of the course, we will explore more specific ways in which policies and practices have differential effects on employees and managers by virtue of gender. In the last section, we will focus on alternative conceptualizations, structures, policies, and practices that could enable both men and women to be successful in the workplace and to avoid gender-based inequities. In this last section we will specifically discuss interventions and strategies for enhancing gender equity. Course permits for non-DYNM students: <https://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/graduate/dynamics/course-permit>.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6020 Leader-Manager as Coach

The changing nature of work—where we work, increased competition, post-merger integrations and employees' desire for more involvement in their work—have changed the traditional role of the manager. Rather than directing, planning, and controlling the work, managers and leaders are facilitating processes, coaching, and developing their employees. Team based organizations are built on coaching as a core competency of the team leader's role. Managers are often called upon to coach colleagues' team members, peers, and often their leadership in the organization. Effective leaders supplement their technical and leadership expertise with a learning mindset and build that capability in their team members and organizations. The pandemic presented challenges for managers, employees and organizations in ways that are continuing to unfold, including WFH and hybrid work arrangements. Demographic changes in the workplace, AI, wellness, work and its impact on well-being, life-work balance, dispersed teams, new ways of working, upskilling for tomorrow, sustainable practices in the workplace are affecting relationships in the work environment, requiring innovative and collaborative problem solving and the ability to flex in the implementation of decisions. This course explores the theory and practices of coaching individuals and teams as a leadership behavior. The focus is on helping managers develop their skills and improve their coaching leadership. We will examine the need to provide others with successful performance strategies, timely feedback on strengths and on development needs and growth opportunities to challenge others to reach their potential. We will examine workplace environments that foster the growth and achievements of those we lead for sustained change and identify opportunities to create, support and sustain a learning mindset for the coaching leader as well as their team members and organizations. We will also focus on the leadership challenge organizational requirements can present to the coaching leader when deliverables and results are on the line. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your permission request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6030 Leading Emergence: Creating Adaptive Space in Response to Complex Challenges

This seminar is designed to be highly experiential so that participants can engage in the practices necessary to enable innovation and adaptation. Participants will examine emergent innovation theory by addressing the dynamics and conditions in which ideas emerge in an informal manner, garner organizational attention, and gain momentum towards becoming successful innovations or bold changes within complex organizations. This will include examining the need for adaptive space in generating value that drives growth by enabling an environment of idea generation, entrepreneurship and innovation while leveraging the benefits of existing, formal systems to scale these ideas. Participants will explore and engage in such topics as creative experimentation, idea emergence, organizational network analysis, social capital, design thinking, organizational analytics and complexity leadership. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your permission request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6060 Leading from the Center: Unleashing Your Leadership Potential

This seminar is designed to support existing and emerging leaders who recognize their need for more adaptive leadership skills to effectively respond to rapidly changing environments. We will weave leadership theory and practice in a highly experiential seminar so that participants can actively engage in a leadership lab including deep reflective thinking, rapid prototyping and experimenting with new behaviors and practices. The purpose of the seminar is to evoke personal leadership at more impactful levels and improve organizational performance and personal satisfaction. Participants will examine their own, and others', leadership theories by identifying assumptions about leading, creating a preferred model for individual leadership, and field testing actual shifts in behavior. Participants will engage in a three-part exploration over the course of the seminar: first, we will have an opportunity to examine our own models and those of the leading theorists in the field; second, participants will be asked to articulate and improve their own model; and finally, participants will be asked to activate and test their model and report back on the experience. This course is designed to create an 'action-learning' community in which you will integrate your professional experience, this class, and other graduate course work with a final exploration of leadership concepts, theory, and applied practice. This course is also designed to strengthen your ability to lead, including as a colleague who can support leadership behavior in peers and as one who can promote leadership behavior in supervisors and subordinates. Permission requests from Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description. Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6090 Critical Imagination: Diverse Strategies for Meaningful Change

In her novel *Parable of the Sower*, MacArthur "Genius Grant" awardee Octavia E. Butler reminds us that "the only lasting truth is change." While this mantra comes from the pages of science fiction, it speaks to an important fact about the shifting social realities that affect organizations in our technological age. If we want to develop lasting strategies for leading through change, we must think carefully about the resources we turn to for guidance—including which perspectives are represented in those resources. Critical imagination can help us do this work by encouraging creative thinking that fosters substantive change. We'll begin this project-based course by asking how work within organizations can better reflect the diversity of perspectives and research that have already transformed our world. This will involve looking closely at a range of case studies and scholarship across disciplines—as well as speculative texts that invite us to think about the future of work within agile teams. We'll discuss models for inclusive leadership, adaptive facilitation, and intercultural collaboration which highlight emergent strategies for change. This means turning to research on organizational dynamics in our digital era—where science fiction is closer to social and technological fact than ever before. Our culminating efforts will include projects that we will develop throughout the course via discussion posts, reflective activities, collaborative presentations, simulations, and reading groups. Much of this will entail using imaginative work to think critically about what's possible, as we advocate for meaningful change within diverse organizations. Permission requests from Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6140 Consulting and Coaching Tools and Techniques

The work, the workforce, and the workplace across the globe have experienced rapid changes in the last few decades. In addition, the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic has presented multilevel challenges for organizations, managers, and employees to navigate. All place organizational consulting and coaching at the forefront for many to consider leveraging and to make a difference. Sitting at the intersection of organizational behavior, cognitive psychology and many other disciplines, organizational consulting and coaching are complex and dynamic and there is a need to apply context appropriately and responsibly. This course will offer a theoretical and practical comprehension of the tools and techniques used in the art and science of effective internal and external organizational consulting, individual, group and team coaching engagements. By contrasting the theory and practice of alternative models, we will build tools and techniques for effective consulting and coaching. The focus is on learning the “how” and “why” of consulting frameworks and understanding how to establish an effective helping relationship with client. We will also explore how to develop and apply critical thinking, problem posing and solving strategies to complex client problems. Additionally, the symbiotic connection between consulting and coaching will be explored. What process tools are most useful to today’s leadership coach in a consultative and evolving environment? How do approaches to consulting and coaching differ? How are they similar? How can a confluence of consulting and coaching lead to more effective decision making and wide-scale organizational performance? What is the impact of the emerging technological tools, including AI, on consulting and coaching relationships? How can the internal and external consultant partner with the client and develop novel approaches that empower employees at all levels, and result in better business outcomes for the entire organization? Permission requests from Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6150 Global PENNovation

Environmentalist Paul Hawken challenged a class of college graduates that they would have to “figure out what it means to be a human being on earth at a time when every living system is declining, and the rate of decline is accelerating.” That theme is at the heart of this course. While we have seen the notion of sustainability gaining traction in recent years, our quality of life in the near future hinges on the development and implementation of sustainable solutions to enormously complex global environmental and social problems. This course is designed to foster the thinking that is needed to address those enormous problems. It involves focusing on a critical global problem with sustainability and social dimensions - in this case, the rapid shift of an increasing global population to cities - and providing the framework for students to take a deep dive into evaluating and recommending solutions to meet that challenge. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that in 1990, less than 40% of the global population lived in cities, and that figure is expected to grow to 60% by 2030 and 70% by 2050. Such growth brings tremendous sustainability and design challenges in both developed and developing countries in terms of resource consumption, food security, water security, energy security, air quality, transportation, infrastructure, waste processing, recycling, and public health. It also brings opportunity. In 2020, students will conduct research on the challenges and opportunities created by increasing urbanization, drawing on readings from thought leaders in conjunction with their own creative insights, with a focus on advancing development of sustainable cities to ensure the long-term health of people and planet. Prerequisite: Non-DYNM students must complete a course permit request: <https://www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/graduate/dynamics/course-permit>

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6160 Myths to Media: Stories on a Mission

What determines our behavior? How do we come to understand? Who determines our purpose? Is now the only time? When asked “What if there were nothing in the universe,” one professor replied, “How do we know there isn’t?” The more our world seems to dis-integrate into discrete and unpredictable units and actors, the more we crave guidance from robust human models and conceptual frameworks of intellect, emotion, psyche, and action. Fortunately, our 100,000-year-old brains retain mechanisms enabling us even now to enhance our choice using the “stories beneath the stories” that—in form and content—have driven our purposes and actions since sentient beings could communicate. Yoda you should ask. This course offers several means of deploying these powerful ancient sense-making tools—myths and stories—to purposefully communicate and foment action with individuals, groups, and organizations, particularly in our global social media milieu. We will learn many practical story-based ways to apply this power to several “missions”: engaging others in individual and collective action, increasing understanding of patterns in human behavior, and harnessing the driver of purpose for business and social enterprise. Seek help from Prometheus. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6170 Economics of Human Behavior and Organizational Life

As a society, we choose many different ways to organize different aspects of our lives. The institutions and organization we choose to provide us with the necessities and comforts of life range from the fundamental institutions of family and religious organizations, to firms in the capitalistic market and democratically elected governments. We respond to this environment in unique ways: we marry, we worship, we buy and sell goods and services, and we vote. The primary goal of this course is an examination of the various aspects of human behavior in the context of organizational and institutional life from an economic perspective. We recognize that the choices we make are sensitive to the costs and benefits of different actions and use this economic perspective to gain insights into social, economic and political behavior in our daily lives. We start the course with an examination of how micro economists view the world and examine their favorite toolkit. We discuss concepts such as: efficiency, opportunity cost, marginal analysis, externalities, incentives, free-riding, rent-seeking, and transaction costs. These concepts are fundamental if an economic perspective and they will be presented using everyday examples. Before concluding the course, we will look at several topics such as: Human capital and investment in education (Should you invest in an Ivy League school education?); Law and enforcement (When is it profitable to break the law?); Bribes and gifts (Quid pro quo?); Economics of information (Used cars and the market for "lemons"); Why we discriminate against minorities?; Property rights and externalities (The tragedy of the commons: Should we have smoke-free environments?); and Free-riding (Should I vote in the next election? Should I volunteer to clean up?) Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6190 Organizational Project Management

The course provides an overview of the concepts, procedures, and fundamental processes of project management for working professionals. Participants are introduced to the principles, tools, and techniques of project management within an integrative framework. The course emphasizes that, for most organizations, projects are the primary means for implementing strategic initiatives. Course Objectives: 1) Understand and critically evaluate expectations, procedures and processes of program management as currently practiced in large for-profit enterprises; 2) Understand the content and processes and standards of practice as defined by the Program Management Institute (PMI); 3) Understand how to build and manage effective project teams; 4) Become familiar with the critical components of effective project plans. In addition to the scheduled meeting dates, additional class activities will be planned between faculty and students. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6200 The Art and Science of Understanding Paradox in Organizations

This course introduces multiple approaches to understand and interpret the paradoxes that baffle us, such as: 1) Why is it that we go to hospitals to be healed and get well, but we leave sick and infected? 2) How is it that we come together to do purposeful work and end up doing mundane, boring tasks? 3) Why is it that banks were created to protect and ensure financial security, but banks have caused a global recession? 4) Why do we not learn from history? Why do we repeat the mistakes we have made before? 5) Why is it that the "Developed and Advanced" countries of the world are destroying the planet? This highly interactive, flexible, and remarkably diverse online course will offer frames to observe the paradox in ourselves, our families, our friendships, our workplace, and our relationships with individuals, teams, and systems—the three units of analysis that constitute every paradoxical situation. Paradox appears in our organizations, our relationships, and our experience as contributing members and leaders of our society. The value proposition of this course is for managers, leaders, and strategic thinkers who wish to understand the art and science behind the paradoxes in the systems within which we live and operate—the visible and the invisible and the rational and irrational. Understanding the unconscious forces that lead to inconsistencies and contradictions will help us be resilient in the face of paradox. This online course will have weekly synchronous and asynchronous sessions of 2-3 hours in length. Through guest speakers and multiple interdisciplinary discussions, we will explore many angles of our understanding of paradoxes. Course grading will be based on class participation, contribution to the collective wisdom, and academic excellence in written assignments. Non-Dynamics students: Please include a brief job description in your permission request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6210 Courageous Leadership: New Norms for Better Futures

It takes courage to do things differently—especially when those things disrupt established norms. But courage can be contagious. This course will provide participants with adaptive strategies for cultivating courageous leadership in diverse and distributed organizations. Together, we'll explore the complex dynamics of power, culture, and community within everyday systems. We'll also work proactively to transform our thinking, as a prerequisite for creating new norms in a collaborative environment that supports self-reflection and collective action—while growing together in this 21st-century moment. In the spirit of doing things differently, we will develop personalized toolkits for purpose-driven work while blending organizational coaching practices and strategic lessons from science fiction. This will involve embracing organizational dynamics' interdisciplinary nature through case studies, models, and examples that link the empirical with the speculative. Course materials will support our approach: from academic articles, whitepapers, and presentations to digital media, creative works, and interactive simulations. Participants may even incorporate their capstone projects as a component of the course. Join us as we work carefully and creatively toward courageous leadership that inspires us all to build better futures. Non-DYNM students: please include a job description in your permissions request.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6240 Leadership: Mindset to Action

This course bridges theory and practice to guide you in honing your unique leadership style within your personal and professional context. Rooted in an experiential and application-based approach, the course moves beyond simply understanding leadership theories, emphasizing the importance of acting on them and making them your own. Through discussions, assignments, and reflective exercises, you will deepen your understanding of leadership principles, refine your approach, and articulate your identity as a leader. Whether you are an experienced leader or embarking on your leadership journey, this course integrates a structured framework—Theory, Mindset, Action, Outcome—to support your growth. You will assess and reflect on your leadership mindsets to understand how they influence your actions, identify areas for development, experiment with new approaches, and align your intentions with outcomes. By the end of the course, you will develop a personal leadership narrative that synthesizes your past and present leadership experiences, analyzes your mindset, and outlines a forward-looking plan for growth and impact. This course encourages you to move beyond theoretical understanding to purposeful and context-driven action, empowering you to lead authentically and effectively. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6270 Behind the Screen: Decoding Team Effectiveness in Virtual and Hybrid Workplaces

Virtual and hybrid teams have become increasingly popular and necessary in organizations around the world across multiple industries and geographies. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic further transforming the way we work and accelerating this trend, the ability to effectively collaborate virtually is critical now more than ever. Yet, virtual and hybrid teams are difficult to get right. Why? What accounts for the persistent challenge of navigating virtual team dynamics in this digital age, especially given our increased knowledge and tools about how to do so? In this course, we will explore the nature of team dynamics and team effectiveness in virtual and hybrid teams and how the unique characteristics of these teams, such as geographical dispersion and high reliance on technology for communication and collaboration, impact team effectiveness. This course draws from multiple disciplines informing these topics, including industrial-organizational psychology, communication, information science, and sociology. Specifically, this course examines the current research and best practices from virtual team literature pertaining to topics such as learning and performing in such teams, building and maintaining trust, identifying and managing conflict, power dynamics, information sharing across boundaries, diversity dynamics, creativity and innovation, and intercultural collaboration. Through case studies, real-world examples, and project work, this course enables students to gain practical skills and actionable insights on the topic and explore ways to apply their learnings in real-world situations.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6280 Organizational Diagnosis: Diagnostic Strengths for Effectiveness

This seminar introduces participants to approaches to diagnosing organizations to understand the complex ways issues show up and how to work through them. When organizations find themselves in trouble, i.e., rumblings about lack of leadership, cultural challenges, diminished productivity, low morale, etc., they tend to frame the problem(s) simplistically or locate blame in specific individuals or groups. On closer examination, problematic issues are often symptomatic of systemic or cultural issues within the organization. Effective change begins with a thorough, evidence-based assessment. Through systems thinking, cultural analysis, and group dynamics, students will learn to identify and frame problem areas, collect and analyze data, and deliver actionable feedback to client systems. The course emphasizes hands-on learning through case simulations, real-world examples, enactments, and diagnostic project work. Participants will gain practical skills to connect diagnosis with meaningful organizational action. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6310 Everyday Intergenerational Conversations: Baby Boomers and Millennials

This hybrid course delves into three big questions around the burning theme of everyday intergenerational conversations. The class experience will be a living such conversation with Dr. Barstow, a Baby Boomer, and Amrita Subramanian, a millennial. The course format is 20% in person and 80% on a virtual platform. It's a learner-centric and a learner-driven course. It is created to mine the practical know-how and life experiences of all participants, so all generations within the class can have a revealing experience that they can immediately apply at work and their personal relationships in life. At this exact point in time there are 300+ million people in the workforce and four generations at play. We begin to see the tiers of own understanding falling apart. It's no longer about stereotyping or simply managing by default or banking on quick-recall labels—and here's why—workplace performance or productivity or engagement or intergenerational respect and trust cannot be left to chance or opinions. We have to pause and consider the following questions: 1) What: What are the generation names and labels we use? What purpose do they serve? How do they help and how do they hurt? What do they help us see? What do they hide, obstruct or make us miss? 2) So what? Intergenerational communication is poor and we can do better. Understand it and skills (strategies and tactics) to prosper and cope. How to use agency and brokerage? What of cognitive dissonance? Responding versus reacting to Fake News? 3) What's next? What have we learned from this whole century about the 4 generations at work? At home? At meetings or webinars or potluck parties? What of families at Thanksgiving? How can we expect to have valuable and meaningful conversations and relationships with all generations—current and future? The primary goal is not to make up our minds just yet or have cookie-cutter retorts. It's not just what to think but how to think about this very pertinent issue at hand for all practitioners, leaders, managers, and folks from all walks of life. There are bound to be far more questions than answers as we begin, and by the time we close, we would have configured our own responses to these questions that appreciate the context of our own unique lives. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6320 Coaching and Developing the Agile Leader and Their Organization: Implementing AI Initiatives

This course focuses on guiding organizations through the successful implementation of AI projects using an Agile Organizational Development (OD) Leadership framework, emphasizing strategies and leadership practices for adapting to change and improving operations. (No prior knowledge of AI is required) As work environments and expectations evolve, leaders and teams must navigate complex challenges.

Throughout the course, you will work with corporate clients to help them identify emerging patterns, foster a culture of continuous learning, use agile business thinking, and engage in meaningful conversations to drive sustainable transformation. The coursework highlights the importance of alignment, accountability, and inclusive team development. AI will be a key tool in this process, but the course emphasizes the need to apply OD leadership for its effective implementation. By combining contemporary research on agile, AI, and leadership practice with lessons learned from applications at Fortune organizations, this interactive course will provide you with a strong theoretical framework and practical experiences to create your own enterprise-level transformation project. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6350 Organizational Essentials for Leadership

Through presentations by expert speakers, case discussions, and participation in team projects, students will review and evaluate critical issues from across the frames of business, including general; human resource; marketing; information and stakeholder management; leadership; corporate culture; communications; organizational behavior; sales, marketing and public relations; finance and financial reporting; ethics and social responsibility; unions and government relations; and business law. Each of these elements will be studied in light of changing environmental conditions, including the economy; society; consumer behavior; market trends; regulation; politics, unpredictable events such as 9/11; organizational change; history; and internationalism. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6410 The Art and Science of Organizational Coaching

Coaching has become a primary tool for consultants, human resource professionals, leaders, and administrators interested in promoting and sustaining leadership and executive development, organizational change, and managerial performance. Through practice, observation, feedback, and discussion, this course explores the fundamental skills and theoretical knowledge underlying leadership and organizational coaching. We examine the coaching process and relationship, as well as the issues and boundaries that can sometimes derail or constrain coaching's effectiveness in organizations. This introductory course follows an online model of instruction, combining synchronous virtual class meetings with asynchronous assignments and resources. The course is highly interactive and provides many opportunities to explore and move beyond the edges of your comfort zone, experiment with new skills, and learn from your experience. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6420 A Cognitive Playbook: Frames for Smart Thinking

Strategy and organization are of a piece. Bain & Company's Chris Zook put the matter ironically: "I don't know whether organization is the new strategy, or strategy is the new organization, but it's something like that." Too often, however, these realms are treated as discrete. This course integrates strategy and organization through abstract thinking—what psychologists call metacognition. You will gain both big-picture scope and nitty-gritty tools for organizational analysis, planning, and change. You will learn how to speed-read the literature on strategy, organization, leadership, management, and the like—because so much of it is derivative and redundant. Old wine in new bottles. At the core of DYNM 6420 are five "cognitive plays," or geometries of thinking: point, linear, curvilinear, angular, and triangular. Each play has its time and place. The challenge is to mix and match appropriately. Playbook shows how. The course is grounded in my most recent book, *The Geometry of Strategy*, and incorporates material from a book about metacognition that I am writing. In *Rethinking the MBA* (Harvard Business Press, 2010) Srikant Datar, David Garvin, and Patrick Cullen quote a representative executive (recruiter): We want people who can take an unstructured problem...and look at it in a completely different way. We want people who can x-ray [emphasis added] through to a different problem while using the same material everyone else has seen....We need people who can look at a problem and see it differently from others. [That way] you break the log jam. This course will enable you to x-ray strategic issues and problems in order to reveal their underlying logic. Most people instinctively think in point or linear terms. Point thinking is either/or. Linear thinking is more of/less of. Point thinking is effective for certain purposes; likewise, linear thinking. 1 Often there is little difference between point- and linear-thinking. The real contrast is between these two patterns and three more powerful kinds—curvilinear, angular and triangular. Curvilinear thinking is like Goldilocks: finding a sweet spot that is "not too hot, not too cold." Angular thinking is what I call MBA-think: best-of-both-worlds—the dominant form of cognition in leading graduate business schools. Triangular thinking goes beyond angular; it is finding parallels with the three interdependent variables that underlie almost every strategic organizational issue: autonomy, control, and cooperation. A Cognitive Playbook is high-concept, low-tech. It is not for everyone. This course will frustrate those who are (1) looking for a highly-structured educational experience, and/or (2) uncomfortable with novelty and ambiguity. Put simply, DYNM 6420 upsets conventional modes of thinking—but the payoff can be profound. Non-DYNM students: Please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6440 Applied Organizational Change: A Methods Dojo

This seminar is designed to support existing and emerging leaders who recognize their need for more adaptive practices to effect organizational and individual change in complex and rapidly changing environments. Building on a strong base of theory, this seminar is largely experiential. Students are expected to identify a real need in a system (work, internship, or volunteer), which, if improved, would have a substantial improvement on overall organizational performance and satisfaction. Beginning with this problem or dilemma, the seminar is designed as a 'dojo,' or practice space, where students can clarify their own assumptions about how and why change occurs and practice new techniques and approaches for eliciting change. Theory provides the foundation for our work and students will be expected to recognize and be able to articulate how they are operationalizing theory in their setting. The purpose of the seminar is to evoke change at more impactful levels and improve organizational performance and personal satisfaction. Participants will examine their own and others' change theories by identifying assumptions about change, testing methods that evoke change, and field-testing actual shifts in behavior. Participants will engage in a four-phase exploration over the course of the seminar: first, participants will have an opportunity to articulate their mental models about how change occurs and examine those of a few cutting-edge theorists; second, participants will be asked to learn and practice a minimum of 16, and possibly up to 25, organizational change micro-methods in class; third, participants will be asked to activate and test their change model using some selection of these methods learned in class on the problem they identified at the beginning of class real-time; and finally, participants will be asked to report on their experiences and re-examine their own models for possible revisions. This course is designed to create an 'action-learning' community in which participants will gain new knowledge and applied skills and give and receive feedback while weaving their professional experience, this class, and other graduate course work into a new, more robust toolkit of change methodology. This course is also designed to strengthen students' ability to lead change from wherever they find themselves in a system. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6450 Project Based Laboratory

Project based lab course.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6460 Race, Ethnicity, and the American Workplace

The U.S. workplace has long been one of the foremost spheres in which racial and ethnic inequality is created and perpetuated. This course investigates how racial and ethnic inequality affect our experiences in the workplace as well as how we as employees, managers, and the like, can positively impact upon our work environments against bias to promote equality and inclusion. Although most Americans largely perceive the employment relationship as one's personal relationship with his/her "boss," one's occupation and/or "job" encompasses much more than that. How we come to work at the jobs that we do is about our access to larger institutional structures within society including education, family background, and, importantly our ascribed location within the social hierarchy. At the beginning of the course, we will spend time studying race and ethnicity as dynamic social and political constructs that evolve through time and space. We will examine how these constructs relate to social stratification, intergroup and intragroup relations, and economic and political hierarchies within U.S. society. The objective here is to provide you with a better understanding of how and why race continues to be such a powerful stratifying agent in contemporary America. We will spend time discussing the enduring power of structural racism in U.S. society—it's evolution since slavery, and its ability to restrict Black & Brown achievement and success within all spheres. How has the Covid-19 pandemic and the BLM movement further brought to light the rigidity of our peculiar system of racial stratification? How can we work to promote true equity and inclusion now? How can we come to work as our "authentic selves" where everyone has a seat at the table? What has history taught us about these issues? And, how can we learn both as individuals and members of organizations to make racial diversity, equity, and inclusion normative experiences for all? Work is a microcosm of our broader lived experiences and it is likely the most "diverse" place we experience in our lifetime. Simultaneously, we will focus on understanding history and evolution of diversity, equity and inclusion practices in the workplace as they relate to addressing racial and ethnic inequality. How have diversity and inclusion practices in the private and public sector evolved over time? How do these practices reflect broader historical and societal trends concerning social and racial inequality? What does it mean to go from compliance to commitment? Have we moved from "diversity for its own sake" to true and meaningful inclusion? What kinds of new initiatives and commitments have organizations made since the BLM protests this summer? How has BLM impacted the experiences of employees of color to-date and where are things headed now? For the rest of the semester, we will examine how workplace inequality gets produced and reproduced along racial and ethnic fault lines. Do D, E, & I programs tailored to distinct groups alleviate issues of marginalization for employees? Why are successful D, E, & I programs profitable for big business? In addition, we will examine the intersections of race, gender, and class in the workplace; how do these intersections impact how we address inequality in hiring, promotions, and recidivism? We will study in-depth how and why personal and organizational biases remain mechanisms of inequity as well as how social class and gender intersect with race/ethnicity to contribute to workplace discrimination. We will host several guest lecturers throughout the semester. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6470 Influence and Persuasion

Former Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca once noted, "You can have brilliant ideas; but if you can't get them across, your ideas won't get you anywhere." This course builds on Iacocca's insight, helping students develop the ability to win support for their perspectives, proposals, and projects from key people in the workplace. Everyone needs to know how to sell ideas. Sales people obviously need this skill and so do managers of all kinds. Even CEOs need it to gain buy-in for a vision. Influence and persuasion help you work with and through others—customers, teammates, colleagues, direct reports, and stakeholders—who have different professional backgrounds, roles, opinions, and agendas. In highly interactive discussions and exercises, students will learn about practical field-tested frameworks that draw on current insights from psychology, anthropology, and behavioral economics. When the course is completed, students will have mastered the latest thinking about:

1) Persuasion styles and how they can adapt them to achieve desired outcomes. 2) The five barriers to communication and collaboration and methods for overcoming the barriers. 3) The systematic steps in the process of selling ideas and negotiating when you need to. 4) The similarities and differences among influencing, persuading, and negotiating. 5) Ways to build momentum for ideas. 6) Techniques for motivating others to take action. 7) Winning support for culture change. These insights will enable students to work across the boundaries that create warring workplace tribes. Nearly every organization contends with this tribal warfare and leaders need to know how to counter-act the natural human tendency to square off against co-workers who have different professional backgrounds or roles. Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6480 Thriving in the Workplace

America's workforce is struggling. The results of Gallup's most recent employee engagement survey show the first annual decline in worker engagement in more than a decade. A recent Deloitte study of workplace wellbeing suggests that 70% of C-suite leaders are considering quitting and finding a job that better supports their wellbeing. These trends are closely connected to well-publicized crises such as The Great Resignation and Quiet Quitting, popular terms that describe the overall dissatisfaction and disengagement that is prevalent across workplaces. In this environment, what can leaders do to create a different experience for themselves and for their teams? What does it look like for workers—and entire organizations—to truly thrive and reach their fullest potential? The news isn't all bad—there are leaders across the world who are creating a distinctly different experience in the workplace by intentionally recognizing and maximizing the good in themselves, their colleagues, and their organizations. This course will explore promising frameworks, strategies, and practices for creating thriving workplaces that maximize individual potential and organizational impact. Course content will integrate key concepts organizational development, workplace wellbeing, positive psychology and performance management. Participants will first explore strategies for maximizing individual wellbeing and the science of character. We will then examine approaches for building thriving teams, including strategies for fostering trusting relationships, leveraging collaboration, and creating a culture of feedback. Finally, we will investigate organization-level practices, including applications for strategy, organizational culture, and change management. The course will use a diverse mix of methods to help participants learn and apply the content, including small group projects and discussions, guest presentations, case studies, and individual assessments and reflections. Course material will include a variety of mixed media that cover academic science, research, and practical application. Participants will apply new strategies and tools in real-time throughout the course as a way to put them into practice. Ultimately, participants will develop a new lens for seeing and maximizing the good in themselves and others in an effort to create thriving workplaces.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6490 Leading Cultural Transformation Amid Polarized Realities

This course explores strategies for leaders, regardless of identity and organizational position to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizations amidst today's polarized landscape. Participants will explore the fundamentals of culture change, while delving into the practical aspects of implementing and assessing diversity, equity and inclusion programs, honing inclusive leadership skills, and the impact of polarization on organizational cultural transformation. The course will provide an overview of relevant social science research, organizational development literature, case studies, and current best practices in the marketplace. At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify Key Concepts: Understand essential concepts in diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and organizational culture, and analyze how identity and social inequality impact these areas.
- Hone Inclusive Leadership Skills: Relate personal and professional experiences to broader DEI narratives, developing skills to navigate diverse perspectives, promote equity, foster psychological safety, and address biases within teams and organizations.
- Develop, and Assess Culture Change Programs: Design, execute, and evaluate effective DEI programs within organizations, utilizing evidence-based strategies and best practices to enhance outcomes even in polarizing environments.
- Apply Research and Best Practices: Leverage insights from social science research, organizational development literature, case studies, and current market best practices to inform DEI efforts and organizational change initiatives.

Non-DYNM students: Please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6510 Group and Team Dynamics: Understand Overt and Covert Dynamics

This course focuses on groups in an organizational context: how they develop, behave, and function, and the dynamics that evolve within the group. It also addresses the ways in which groups influence and are influenced by organizational behavior and life. The course pays particular attention to the seemingly inexplicable group and team events and behaviors that occur in organizations, including what groups "carry" on behalf of the department or organization they are part of; covert behaviors; cascading problems; scapegoating; and counterproductive group behaviors. The course will emphasize understanding group dynamics through paradoxical and psychodynamic frameworks. Although we spend much of our lives in groups and teams, we rarely take the time to understand their underlying dynamics. Group and Team members often struggle to make meaning of the myriad spoken, as well as unexpressed, factors influencing the process and outcomes of the groups of which they are a part. By emphasizing both theory and practice, this course provides students with a thorough grounding in the ways groups and teams develop, learn and behave. In addition to drawing on the extensive literature and research in group dynamics and team building, the class will rely on experiential methods to help students develop keener understanding and insight into the ways in which their own leadership and followership dynamics, as well as the dynamics of the group-as-a-whole, influence their team's ability to accomplish its tasks. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6520 Exploring Organizational Culture: An Ethnographic Approach

This course introduces concepts, methods, and applications for understanding and conducting ethnographic research in organizational settings. Organizational ethnography is an approach to qualitative research that helps practitioners understand the complex social, cultural, and behavioral dynamics of this approach when applied across a variety of settings and for both practical and scholarly aims. Organizational ethnography is grounded in immersion in specific settings (cultural, organizational, community) and draws on observation, interviews, and other modes of interaction with members of the organization being studied to get close to the lived experience of people in organizations. Ethnographers collect their data through field notes, recordings, photographs, surveys, and other means and also produce reports in written and now, increasingly, other media forms (image and sound-based). While traditional ethnography emerged out of anthropology and the social sciences, there has been considerable innovation in revising these methods to make them relevant, practical, and inclusive for the contemporary environment and for use in other disciplines. There have also been criticisms of the power relations inherent in traditional ethnographic methods, and the field has developed collaborative and participatory ways of engaging with these organizations and communities. This course will allow students to learn about and experiment with ethnographic work in organizations through reading, doing, writing, and discussing ethnographic approaches.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6540 Crisis Communications and Reputation Risk

All organizations confront crises, either of their own making or from external events. To be ready, equipped, and able to extricate itself from a potential calamity, major or minor, can mean the difference between continued operation and obsolescence. This course focuses on strategies for managing communications during times of organizational crisis by exploring topics such as crisis planning and preparedness, crisis communication strategies, and reputation management techniques as well as the use of social media and other digital platforms in these communications. The course uses case studies of organizations that have faced crises and examines the communication strategies that were employed, both effectively and ineffectively. Outside speakers will include serving and former senior officials in government whose positions required crisis communication skills and expertise. These include Penn's VP of Public Safety, the Philadelphia Fire Commissioner, and the former Director of the U.S. Secret Service. Students will develop skills in crisis-communication planning, message development, and crisis response coordination. They will learn to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of crisis communication strategies in real-world scenarios. As part of these learned competencies, students will be media-trained in bridging techniques, smart brevity presentation and writing principles, and message development. As a wrap-up of these acquired skills and techniques, students will be presented with an actual crisis case and serve as the company spokesperson. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6570 Strategic Engagement with Government

Strategic Engagement with Government will be offered as an intensive one-week course during spring break 2024. The course will meet for three days on campus and will then shift to Washington, DC, for the final three days. Government actions play a major role in business and most other organizations, shaping the environment in which organizations operate and making direct purchasing and investment decisions. Effective organizations consider, respond to and shape government decisions that impact them. This course will explore ways in which the private and public sectors interact and will equip organization leaders to engage strategically with governments around the world. Students will study how government actions influence results and will learn proven methods for optimizing growth and reducing risk from interaction with governments. Students will engage with business, non-profit and government leaders, who will discuss challenges they currently face and successful approaches to addressing those challenges. The course uses case studies and small group exercises to illustrate and emphasize key points. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6580 Fundamentals of Sustainability

This course is designed to provide an introduction to sustainability concepts and challenges through the lens of the world's most significant framework to address them: the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs). The UN-SDGs serve as a blueprint for addressing the world's most critical social and environmental challenges, calling for urgent collaboration and change to reset the world on a path that operates within planetary boundaries and promotes global prosperity and security. This course will explore extraordinarily significant threats to the way of life of future generations—such as climate change, ecosystem degradation, health and nutrition, pollution, and resource depletion—with specific attention to sustainability challenges and solutions involving food, water, energy, oceans, waste, plastics, biodiversity loss, and urbanization. Further, the course will include focus on the importance of transitioning from linear to circular systems and maximizing life cycle resource utilization. Case studies of scalable sustainability practices and organizational leadership for sustainability will be reviewed with additional input from global thought leaders. Course permits for students outside of the DYNM, MES, or MSAG programs: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6590 Becoming an Agile and Creative Leader

This course offers an environment and experiences to learn, practice and develop a creative leadership profile. Classes will be highly experiential leveraging experiential learning through the arts. Art and creativity offer a rich experiential learning opportunity to develop skills that are needed for the mental and emotional agility necessary to cultivate creativity. Creativity is an innate capacity of every human being, meaning that it can be “unleashed” or learned to a certain degree. Creativity can be shadowed by intrinsic (intolerance of uncertainty, an ideal of perfection or excellence, etc.) and extrinsic conditions (lack of time or other resources, unsupportive environment, etc.). This course focuses mainly on developing the intrinsic skills that facilitate creativity in individuals. It also helps identify the extrinsic conditions that support creativity. This course builds on existing research and literature as well as in the experience of the instructor implementing art and creativity in Penn Organizational Dynamics and Visual Studies courses as well as in other business settings. This course is ideal for working professionals seeking a space to delve into the complexity of creative leadership. Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6650 AI in Organizations: A Multidisciplinary Approach

This course examines the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on organizations through a multidisciplinary lens, combining perspectives from anthropology, sociology, business, and data science. Students will explore how AI is reshaping organizational structures, decision-making processes, workplace cultures, and human-machine interactions. The course emphasizes both theoretical understanding and practical applications, with hands-on experience in digital methods such as network analysis, text mining, and other computational techniques. Through a combination of lectures, case studies, and applied projects, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges presented by AI in global organizational contexts. This course will prepare students to critically evaluate and effectively manage AI integration in various organizational settings while considering ethical implications and future trends.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6670 Suits and Combat Boots: Organizational Lessons from the Military

This hybrid course is designed to provide students with a fresh take on how to marry business strategy to successful tactics, create successful organizational change campaigns, and run engagements that create high impact and value. As we continue to respond to the pandemic and enter a new era of work, it is worth noting that productivity (at least in the US) largely remained steady when the workplace moved into a virtual setting. In some cases, productivity even went up, although there are indications that innovation has dropped, sometimes alarmingly. Students will learn how to string these tactics into engagements and campaigns critical for innovation and organizational success. Organizational leaders, managers, and change agents will benefit from being clearer in recognizing and leveraging powerful strategies and effective tactics. For example, military theorists differ in their thinking on the meaning of tactics and strategy, with views ranging between a classical, hierarchical view to a postmodern perspective informed by complexity theory. Being able to distinguish between strategy and tactics is a useful lens and will help create more effective organizational change interventions. Making this distinction and planning deliberately to link tactical action and strategic effect is the key to both military adaptability on the complex battlefield, and to achieving organizational performance objectives in a postmodern economy.

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6730 Stories in Organizations: Tools for Executive Development

As we all know, living in—and out—of organizations is getting exponentially harder. Things seem to be multiplying, splintering, and coalescing kaleidoscopically, and each of us is increasingly taxed to make sense of it all, let alone create meaning for ourselves and those we manage and care about. Remarkably, a powerful tool for helping us is one we have already mastered: stories. As humans we think, feel, speak, listen, explain, and believe in narrative form. Yet this capability is dramatically under-exploited at work. This course examines a variety of ways to bring the power of stories to organizational life. We will look at how stories enhance communication, support change, and intensify learning and development in individuals and organizations, thus informing your leadership style and effectiveness. We will have many opportunities in class to apply "story-based technologies" to issues you face in personal or professional life. Readings come from the literatures of human development, narrative psychology, organizational change, executive learning, and, of course, from literature itself. Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6760 Org Communication Essentials: Effective Strategies & Practices for Successful Prof Comm Outcomes

This course will explore the direct and indirect relationship between thoughtful communication practices and the ability to successfully achieve organizational and interpersonal goals. Participants will expand their own communication practices while gaining greater insights into their own organization's communication as well. Through this course, students will become increasingly thoughtful, agile, and empathetic communicators, with a greater ability to successfully communicate with a wide-ranging audience on a variety of topics, circumstances, and contexts. Students should prepare to be co-collaborators throughout the semester, adding personal insights and expertise to the conversation. Non-Dynamics students: please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6770 Post-Disruptive Growth: Scaling and Growing for Individuals and Systems

Reality has moved from a physical location to a cognitive location—in our minds. An exceptionally hands-on course that brings in the intellectual discipline with real-time application to look at the shattering of assumptions in face of crisis (as the current one) and what happens to individuals, groups, communities, and systems - when the world takes the blue pill overnight (goes virtual and hyperreal). The interaction with the altered reality is often hindered by cognitive traps of ghost structures (i.e. only stay in memory but have disappeared from concrete reality) that lead to counter-productive decisions by individuals (personal and professional) and systems. The course is highly recommended for leaders and managers of complex organizational structures who must continue to create a "holding environment" for psychological safety for their teams, managers, leaders, customers, vendors, and themselves in redefining post-disruptive growth in micro-and-macro decisions for Value Creation in everyday interactions. There will be conceptual and experiential assignments that will enable rich scrutiny with immediate application in their work and life. This course will have both synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Non-DYNM students: please include a brief job description in your permissions request.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 6780 Applied Systems Theory and Analysis

The Systems Theory and Analysis course will delve into the fundamental principles of systems thinking and equip students with the tools to analyze and address complex organizational challenges. The course will cover the following key areas: (1) Introduction to Systems Thinking, (2) Systems Analysis Techniques, (3) Organizational Dynamics through a Systems Lens; (4) Integration with Organizational Strategy; (5) Connecting systems thinking to strategic planning and decision-making; and (6) Application of Systems Theory in Practice. Course Objectives: • Understand the foundational principles of systems thinking. • Develop proficiency in using various systems analysis tools. • Apply systems thinking to analyze and solve complex organizational issues. • Evaluate the impact of systemic factors on organizational dynamics. • Integrate systems thinking into strategic decision-making processes. Non-Dynamics students: Please include a brief job description in your Permissions Request.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7050 Capstone Course

This course will help you prepare your Capstone Project by synthesizing previous Dynamics course materials and guiding you through the development phase of your final research project. The class sessions are structured as a practical path and collaborative support group designed to improve your skills in researching, writing, and thinking along your Capstone process. Skills covered will help you meet specific writing goals—whether you're drafting an initial proposal or completing your capstone project. Core lessons will include Reviewing the literature; Working with interdisciplinary sources; and Framing or Revising your research for your intended audience.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7200 Foundations of Leadership Coaching

This five and a half-day intensive is the first in a cohort program in Leadership and Executive Coaching. During this course, students will experience the formation of a learning cohort, explore the foundational elements of helping relationships and the adult developmental journey, observe and respond to the dynamics that commonly affect groups, and begin applying coaching concepts and skills through interactive live coaching sessions. DYNM 7200 is wholly experiential, meaning learning will occur through students' direct interaction with course exercises, and with peers in the class. The core requirement is a willingness and courage to "be yourself" and to be open to the impact your being has on others. This course is open to LCC members only.

Fall

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7220 The Four Provinces of Coaching

The territory of professional coaching spans four distinct provinces: The Coaching Context, The Coaching Relationship, The Coaching Process, and the Coaching Self. Each of these provinces represents a special area of interest and responsibility for practitioners, as well as an area of intellectual inquiry. This course continues to build on the foundational skills established in DYNM 7200 and DYNM 7230 through a practical exploration of the core theoretical perspectives that underlie and inform coaching practice. Knowledge of coaching theory serves to illuminate complex social phenomena, provides a sense of direction for your actions and choices in coaching, and helps you evaluate the results of your efforts in terms of client outcomes and progress. DYNM 7220 culminates with cohort members working together in small groups to research and execute a high-level presentation of the theoretical perspectives underlying each of the Four Provinces, as well as their applications in practice. This course is open to LCC students only.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7230 Becoming a Coach

This course is designed to immediately follow the five-day DYNM 7200 intensive in order to build on foundational coaching knowledge through guided practice and experience. You will have an opportunity to experience and reflect on a complete peer coaching engagement as both coach and client. You will also explore and gain familiarity with common tools used in assessment (360 feedback, psychometric assessments, etc.), various coaching career paths and business models, and professional credentialing bodies for coach certification. By the end of the course, you will possess a complete coaching toolkit—as well as insight into the appropriateness and impact of specific tools for a variety of client contexts. The course provides an in-depth introduction to the entire coaching process to accelerate your journey toward coaching proficiency. This course is open to LCC Students only.

Spring, odd numbered years only

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7240 Beyond the Dyad: Group Coaching Theory and Practice

This course explores the application of coaching principles, models, and techniques in the context of groups and teams. While most coaching is dyadic in nature, coaching in group or team settings requires an understanding of the complex social dynamics that shape learning and change in groups, as well as the levers and mechanisms that enable collective action toward common goals. The course is designed to build on and complement your growing base of scholarship and practice from 7200, 7220, and 7230. This hybrid course blends synchronous virtual class sessions and team meetings with asynchronous learning opportunities, in-depth readings, and other self-study activities. It is a highly experiential course combining conceptual knowledge, integrated practice, and interactive sessions that serve the development of group and team coaching competency, capability, and capacity. Learners will participate in group coaching sessions as both group member and coach to gain an understanding of the unique benefits of group work—as well as the innate challenges coaches must navigate when working in the group domain. Individual one-on-one meetings with the instructor will complement these group experiences in further support of the course learning objectives. Participants in the course will demonstrate their learning through scholarly and reflective writing, live coaching, in-class discussion, and other assignments.

Spring

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7580 Sweden: Strategies for Thriving in the 21st Century

Neutral during WWII, and claiming a "Middle Way" between east and west in the post-war twentieth century, Sweden - its people, institutions, and culture - has left its mark on our global society. In today's world, the influence of Swedish ideas and innovations can be seen in government structures, health and social policies, business organizations, working life, education, science, art, literature, and, of course, the design and style of many products and services which enjoy high demand. These are impressive impacts from a nation-state of only eight million people. What lessons are there for Americans and our institutions as we enter the twenty-first century where our leadership position, ability to determine the rules and control the agenda of world economic and political affairs are diminished? In this course, we focus on "the people philosophy" of Sweden, its government, businesses and organizations. We cover healthcare issues and policy, sustainable development, the European Community and the human relations issues in organizations. This course will include meetings with academics and leaders from industry, government, health care, science, media, arts and culture. Students will meet with and learn from these representatives in order to explore Swedish organizational dynamics, both in terms of its economic prosperity and the problems Swedish society faces today.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7660 Global Collaboration for Sustainability - The Food-Water-Energy Nexus in Italy

Environmentalist Paul Hawken challenged a class of 2009 college graduates that they would have to "figure out what it means to be a human being on earth at a time when every living system is declining, and the rate of decline is accelerating." That theme is at the heart of this course. While we have seen an uptick in corporate initiatives, government policies, and NGO activity related to multiple sustainability challenges in the last 10-15 years, the world remains well off track on all of the Sustainable Development Goals – which come due in 2030 – and emerging global headwinds are concerning. Our quality of life, and that of future generations, increasingly hinges on the development and implementation of sustainable solutions to the enormously complex environmental and social problems embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals – particularly those related to the food-water-energy nexus. This course is designed to foster the thinking, and the collaborative spirit, that is needed to address these enormous problems. It involves focusing on a critical global sustainability problem with vast social, cultural, and environmental dimensions – in this case, the need to balance global food, water, and energy needs in a manner that allows the world to feed nearly 10 billion citizens by 2050 while preserving the environment for future generations (i.e. achieving the healthy people, healthy planet balance). It also involves collaboration and the exchange of ideas between multi-disciplinary leaders from multiple countries, and perspectives on how to manage diverse views and sustainability initiatives that are extremely relevant to the success of today's organizations (i.e. how to lead "big change" with urgency for competitive advantage).

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7810 Panama: Innovations in Entrepreneurship & Sustainability at the Hub of the Americas

Creating meaningful solutions to the biggest challenges facing humanity today requires diverse interventions at all scales: macro, micro, and everything in between. The projects reshaping business as usual and driving more sustainable outcomes involve both multinational cooperation at the highest levels and place-specific interventions at the scale of individuals, families, and communities. This course will explore innovative, cross-scale initiatives through which Central America's largest and fastest growing economy is tackling sustainability challenges while balancing cultural values and conservation of biodiversity with economic growth and exploitation of natural resources. On the international stage, the Republic of Panama leads the way on environmental conservation, even surpassing ambitious global targets by protecting more than 50 percent of its oceans and becoming one of the first certified carbon-negative countries. The globalization-defining Panama Canal epitomizes human efforts to make something happen that was colossal in scale and macro in scope. Today's Panama also offers opportunities to study bright spots, positive deviance, and the emergence of new economic initiatives based on diverse worldviews—despite the micro scale of some of these projects, they too have the potential to change world order. Geographically, politically, culturally, and economically, Panama is an excellent place to prototype. Underdeveloped relative to its potential, the nation provides a fruitful environment for Panamanian and expatriate entrepreneurs alike to develop new ventures, organize from the ground up, and intentionally design for sustainable scalability. At the core of this experiential travel course is the opportunity to visit a range of Panama's land, sea, and cityscapes and interact with pioneering companies, entrepreneurs, policymakers, NGOs, and scientists. Organizational Dynamics students will be challenged to create and contribute while learning in this dynamic environment. Travel abroad will take place in Panama over Penn's Spring Break (March 1-10, 2024), with pre-departure and post-trip sessions TBD. Students are expected to complete readings in advance of the trip, keep a field journal, participate in scheduled meetings and activities, complete a paper or applied project synthesizing their learning, and give a presentation on their work during the final session. Interested students will sign a travel agreement. There will be an additional course fee to cover logistics.

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7860 European Approaches to Multi-Stakeholder Project Management

In the interconnected world of global corporations, studying Project Management from the standpoint of U.S. firms is not enough. Broadening perspectives is the goal of the seminar in Paris, France. Dr. Jean-Marc Choukroun will lead Organizational Dynamics students in a study of European approaches to the challenges of large project management, particularly those involved in public-private and other multi-group projects. Dr. Choukroun notes that "In today's global economy, managing multi-national, multi-cultural teams, devising innovative financing arrangements and securing public-private cooperation are increasingly becoming standard requirements for complex projects. European integration has made dealing with these issues a priority with many European organizations. Students will be exposed to new ideas, and new ways of applying time-tested methods and techniques that European organizations in general, and more specifically French organizations, have developed to address these issues. Properly adapted, some of these ideas should prove to be readily applicable in the US context. In addition, students will discover how French managers in the public and private sectors frame issues, approach problems and implement solutions."

Summer Term

1 Course Unit

DYNM 7870 The Intersection Between Business Agility and Sustainability and Its Impact on Organizational Design

This course requires a signed Travel Agreement prior to registration.

This course will have an additional course fee to cover logistical arrangements. In a rapidly changing world where sustainability efforts to combat climate change are paramount, organizations must adopt innovative leadership practices to effectively navigate complexities and drive meaningful change. Since Amsterdam in the Netherlands is at the epicenter of these conversations, what better place to explore the intersection of sustainability with organizational dynamics, using emerging agile leadership principles to catalyze sustainable transformation. This is a practical experiential course. You will call upon your background in organizational dynamics to explore how the goals of creating a more sustainable organization can be achieved by redesigning organizational culture, behaviors, structures, networks, processes, and practices. By attending this course, you will also:

- Better understand the fundamental principles of sustainability and their relevance to organizational dynamics.
- Explore the concept of agile leadership and its role in driving change.
- Learn practical tools and techniques for co-creating sustainable strategies and initiatives.
- Develop leadership capabilities to lead change initiatives, build adaptive capabilities, and foster a culture of innovation and collaboration.

The course will be delivered through a blend of lectures, interactive workshops, collective projects, case studies, group discussions, and experiential learning activities. Moving from the classroom to the ports, canals, art, sciences, media, factories, and other Dutch cultural activities to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the impact of culture and how agile leadership can be applied to foster change in organizations. Please join us in this exploration.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

DYNM 8990 MPhil Capstone Thesis

Required MPhil Master's Thesis.

0 Course Units