Adaptive Leadership: Cultivating Personal and Organizational Capacities for Change and Conflict (AM-609)

Fall 2014: Tuesday, September 29, Tuesday, October 7, Tuesday, November 11, Tuesday, December 2, and Tuesday, December 9, 2014 (9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description:
Adaptive leadership, that is leading in a way that addresses the growing edges and challenges, of a congregation or organization inevitably also means orchestrating conflict and navigating change. In this course, we will gain perspectives and hone practices that allow you to cultivate your own adaptive leadership as well as build an adaptive culture.

Leadership for change requires inspiration and perspiration as we help organization navigate the gap between bold aspirations and challenging realities. Expect in this course an opportunity to assess your own leadership repertoire as you also build new perspectives and practices.

Dr. Lawrence Peers has been a senior consultant with the Alban Institute, and has worked with congregations and organizations of many faith traditions in the areas of whole systems strategic change and planning, transforming conflict and clergy leadership coaching. Dr. Peers has a doctorate of ministry from Hartford Seminary and a doctorate in organizational change from Pepperdine University. He now focuses much of his work on providing relevant, practice-based professional education for clergy.

Course Objectives:
Our overall collaborative inquiry for this course is grounded in the question, “How can we be purposeful and transformative leaders within a changing and emerging landscape that religious and other organizations?”

Students will be able to:

1. Clarify the distinctions between technical problems and adaptive challenges as they approach their leadership role in a particular context. Utilize perspectives and practices related to observing the context, interpreting the situation and constructing interventions within congregational and other religious systems.

11 Please note: The class will not meet on Tuesday, October 28, 2014. Instead, the “make up date”, Tuesday, December 9th will be utilized for this course’s schedule.
2. Reflect upon their own competencies for being a “conflict competent leader” and develop a personal learning and development plan for their role as a leader within a congregation, group or other organization.
3. Recognize the dynamics of leading change given the personal and organizational dynamics of the immunity to change.
4. Demonstrate being a scholar-practitioner that can skillfully engage both theory and reflective practice.
5. Integrate their learning through imagining how they might apply these perspectives and methods in their role as a leader in a particular context or relevant area of interest.

Methods of Course Assessment

Grades will be based on attendance, participation in class discussion, and completion of written assignments. Please note: attendance policy below.

Written Assignment

1. A 3 page reflective summary paper of each of each of the reading assignments. The first reflective summary paper is due no later than September 19, 2014. All other papers are due the day we are discussing the reading assignment in the class (i.e., October 7, November 11, December 2nd.)

   This reflective summary is not just a report of what you have read! In your reflective summary, you must demonstrate that you not only have read the material, but that you have engaged the text by responding to what specific:
   (a) INSIGHTS the reading has given you
   (b) IMPLICATIONS these insights have for how you will approach your role and
   (c) INQUIRIES or questions the reading has evoked or that linger in you.
   (This will count for 25% of your grade.)

2. A final paper demonstrates your capacities as a scholar-practitioner. The topic that you chose should integrate what perspectives you have gained from the readings, course discussions and your own reflective summaries and how you can utilize these perspectives in your current or future leadership role. It is recommend that you share your proposed topic with the professor by the November class session. The suggested length of the paper is 15 pages and it is due no later than December 15, 2014. (The paper will count for 50% of the grade)

3. Class participation: preparation and engagement within the class discussions and activities. (This will count for 25% of the grade.)

Attendance Policy

Attendance in class is required. Exceptions are only allowed if advance permission has been granted by the instructor, and only for unavoidable absences. In all cases, failure to
be in attendance at more than one class session automatically precludes successful completion of the course.

**Course Syllabus**

**Tuesday, September 9, 2014 from 9 am-12 pm; 1-5:30 pm**

**Theme: Adaptive Leadership: What, Why Now, How, and For What**

**Assignment to Prepare for the First Class Session:**

Please note that there is an expectation that this pre-reading will have been completed before the first class. Given the intensive nature of the course, this pre-work will allow us to engage fully from day one.

1. Read the Preface and Parts 1 and 2 (pages 1-108) of *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*.
2. Begin to prepare a reflection summary paper on this reading (as outline in the Writing Assignments). This first paper is due no later than September 19th.

Again, in your reflective summary, you must demonstrate that you not only have read the material, but that you have engaged the text by responding to, what specific:

(a) INSIGHTS the reading has given you for your role as a leader
(b) IMPLICATIONS this has for how you will approach your role and
(c) INQUIRIES or questions the reading has evoked in you.

**Purpose?**

Topics in class session one include:

1. Introductions:
   a. Of the course objectives, requirements and a collaborative inquiry process
   b. Of ourselves and our “context”
2. What?
   Some useful distinctions: technical and adaptive challenges, leadership from and without authority, etc.
3. Why now?
   a. A broader social and religious context for adaptive leadership, conflict transformation and navigating change.
   b. Leading toward an emerging future
4. How?
   a. Observing, Interpreting, Intervening
   b. Diagnose the system, the adaptive challenge, the political landscape
5. For What Purpose?
6. “Balcony Time”: Insights, Implications and Inquiries

**Tuesday, October 7, 2014 9 am-12 pm; 1-5:30 pm**

**Theme: Leading Adaptively: Interpreting, Designing Interventions and**

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<th>Assignment in Preparation for the Second Class Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Read the Part 3 (pages 113-165) and Part 4 (pages 181-232) of <em>The Practice of Adaptive Leadership</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Write a reflection summary paper on the reading (as outlined in the Writing Assignments). Due at class on October 7th.</td>
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**Staying on Purpose**

Topics in this class session two include:

1. Collaborative Inquiry: Resilience
2. Leading Adaptively: Making Interpretations
3. Leading Adaptively: Designing Effective Interventions
4. Contextualizing Our Learning: Sketching your own leading practices
5. Staying on Purpose
6. Balcony time: Insights, Implications and Inquiries

*(Please note this class will not meet on October 28th. We’ll make up this class session on December 9th.)*

**Tuesday, November 11, 2014 9 am-12 pm; 1-5:30 pm**

**Theme: Leading Adaptively: Being a Conflict Competent Leader**

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<td>1. Read <em>Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader</em>, Chapters 1-6, pages 1-185.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Write a reflection summary paper on the reading (as outlined in the Writing Assignments). <strong>Due at class on November 11, 2014</strong></td>
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<td>3. Take the Conflict Dynamics Profile (cost $30). Instructions will be sent by the instructor.</td>
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<td>4. Bring a one page draft description of proposed final paper topic.</td>
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Topics in session three include:

1. Collaborative Inquiry: A theology of change and conflict
2. Change and Conflict in Congregations some research and our experiences
3. Being a Conflict Competent Leader
4. Understanding our Conflict Dynamics Profile
5. Creating a Personal Development and Learning Plan for our own conflict competence
6. Workshop: Final paper topics
7. Balcony Time: Insights, Implications and Inquiries

Tuesday, December 2, 2014 9 am-12 pm; 1-5:30 pm

**Theme: Leading Through the Immunity to Change**

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<td>1. Read Introduction and Part 1 (pages 1-84) and Part II (pages 87-205) in <em>Immunity to Change</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Write a reflection summary paper on the reading (as outlined in the Writing Assignments). <strong>Due on December 2, 2014.</strong></td>
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Topics in class session four include:

1. Collaborative Inquiry: Hidden dynamics in the challenge of change
2. Overcoming the Immunity to Change: Individual
3. Overcoming the Immunity to Change: Group and/or Congregation
4. Balcony Time: Insights, Implications and Inquiries

Tuesday, December 9, 2014 9 am-12 pm; 1-5:30 pm

**Theme: Spiritual Practices and Leadership Disciplines Observing, Interpreting, and Intervening**

Topics in class session five include:

1. Collaborative Inquiry: Spiritual Sources and Grounding Leading through change
2. Theory U and leadership disciplines
3. Spiritual Disciplines: Observing, Interpreting, and Intervening
4. Balcony Time: Insights, Implications and Inquiries

**Required Reading for the Course:**


Conflict Dynamics Profile, available from the professor (details on the first class). Cost is $30.


**Resources for Further Reading and Research**

*Here is a list of some further resources related to the topics of the course and specific topics related to possible inquiries of the students.*


Theory U website: Presencing.com

