Syllabus

Getting Good at Change: Systemic Thinking and Practice

ITPG-GT.2671
Fall 2014

This one-credit course meets on Saturday, November 8 from 12 noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday, November 9 from 12 noon to 2:45 p.m.

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Description
The promises of innovation, creativity, and design are the promises of change. But how can you know if the promises are real? What does it mean to “get good at change”? In this workshop, we will critically examine theories and practices for purposeful change. We will pay particular attention to relationships between personal and social change, models and methods for evaluating the success of social innovations, and the development of a shared workbook for systemic thinking and practice. No advance preparations are required for this weekend workshop of collaborative learning. Participants must be willing to share experiences and support each other in exploring socially controversial and personally challenging issues. Together, we will consider what it means to be effective.

Day one
Examine theories of change, drawn from across a range of academic and professional fields, through a series of individual, small-group, and full-group exercises to:

- Develop approaches to systems thinking;
- Develop rubrics and examine models for project evaluation; and
- Develop techniques for representing and diagramming systemic interactions.

In small groups, begin to apply these approaches, rubrics, models, and techniques to an area of concern or opportunity – that is, an area where you would like to participate in influencing or effecting change.

Overnight assignment
Continue to think about and work on these projects.

Day two
- Project presentations and critiques
- What happened? Workshop summary, discussion, and reflection

Shared workbook
Using Hackpad, or a similar collaborative note-taking platform, we will develop a shared workbook for systemic thinking and practice. Students must bring a device on which to participate in this digital supplement to our face-to-face activities. A laptop or tablet is preferable, though a phone may be functional.

Evaluation
Evaluation is based on individual participation throughout the two-day workshop.