EDUC 794 Culminating Experience

Syllabus

Instructor

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Meeting Hours

Online via Zoom session
Zoom Link

Office Hours

One hour before each
Zoom session and by
appointment

Course Overview

This course is designed to provide a systems view of education with an eye toward imagining what is possible and desirable for our future. We will be exploring change that is occurring in your schools right now within the broader context of education in Hawaii, nationally and globally. The course is intended to prepare you to be creators of new possibilities and designers of tangible and real plans to get to your vision of an ideal teaching environment for our kids and our future.

Required Text

Meadows, Donella H. (2008) "Thinking of systems: a primer" Edited by Diana Wright. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing. ISBN 978-1-60358-055-7

Mella, P. (2007 hardcover, 2012 soft cover) "Systems Thinking: Intelligence in Action" New York: Springer. ISBN 978-88-470-2565-3

Course Overview

This is an integration course, where you take all that you have learned in your program and view it as a system so that you can address the big challenges of education in Hawaii. Your research will serve as a foundation to dig deeper into the most pressing issues for education today. At the end of this course participants will be prepared to address current education challenges with an understanding of the context in which these challenges exist and focus toward the current and future implications of action.

Course Learning Outcome #1: Demonstrate an understanding of the central concepts of systems thinking and the ability to apply these ideas to the larger challenges of education today. (Correlates with PLO # 2, 7)

The butterfly-effect is a hypothetical scenario introduced by Edward Lorenz. It posits that the presence or absence of the flapping of a butterfly's wings in Japan impacts the weather in North America. This idea addresses two concepts we will be addressing in this course. First, that no actions are performed in a vacuum. What we do (or don't do) has effects on all the things that are connected to that action. Another way to think of this is that we live in systems that are interdependent and interconnected. The second concept related to the butterfly-effect is one that is extremely important in our situation. It is that systems are influenced by initial conditions. Small differences in those initial conditions today can have profound effects on the course of events in the future. In education we understand this effect profoundly but can find it difficult to address it while managing the challenges of today. This course will encourage you to explore these distant effects thus enhancing the positive effects of small actions made today.

Course Learning Outcome #2: Demonstrate the ability to collaborate efficiently and effectively with classmates, professional colleagues, and other stakeholders to create solutions to education challenges that have short-term buy-in and efficacy as well as lead to long-term system-wide change. (Correlates with PLO # 4)

Addressing "big" challenges requires not only a good idea, but also the ability to communicate and collaborate with stakeholders to influence their behaviors and eventually attitudes. This course will focus on these skills drawing on learning from all previous courses in the program.

This course is constructed as an online master's level seminar. We will be holding 10 online chats using Zoom, in which your instructor will facilitate discussions and provide mini-lectures on topics relevant to the course material. These will be very interactive. In addition, you will participate in discussions with your teams using eCollege. Participation in both is required, however, you can review the Zoom recordings and provide your instructor a summary of learning from the online chat if you are not able to attend. All members of the class are expected to contribute their knowledge and experience to the course.

Course Schedule

Week	Subject	Reading	Assignment
1 – July 5-10 Zoom July 6	Setting the Stage for the Course	Meadows – Introduction	
2 – July 11-17 Zoom July 13	Systems Thinking the Basics Part 1	Meadows Part One, Chapter One (pp. 11-25) Mella Chapter 1 (pp. 1-17)	Online Discussion (**due July 13th, responses are due July 17th**): Answer the following: How do you define a system? Describe one system that you can think of in your daily life. Topic: Provide a one paragraph description of your topic to your instructor via email. Include whether you are changing the focus. This is not graded and I will get back to you with any questions I have.
3 – July 18-24 Zoom July 20	Systems Thinking the Basics Part 2	Meadows Part One, Chapter One (pp. 25-34) Mella Chapter 1 (pp. 17-22)	
4 – July 25-31 Zoom July 27	A Deeper Awareness of Systems Thinking	Meadows Part One, Chapter Two Mella Chapter 1 (pp. 22-41)	Online Discussion (**due July 27th, responses due July 31st**): Provide a brief update of what you have learned about your topic in other school districts. Discuss how they are addressed, what conditions do you see as similar and different to what we have in Hawaii and what you have identified as noteworthy for modeling for Hawaii in your visioning exercise.

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignment
5 – Aug 1-7 Zoom Aug 3	Constructing Causal Loop Diagrams and Using Systems to Influence Change	Mella Chapter 2 (pp. 43-81) Mella Chapter 3 (for those of you who find this reading difficult you may want to just focus on our discussion of control systems. Those of you who "love this stuff" enjoy Chapter 3!)	Systems Thinking Problem Set - The problem set will be posted on **August 7th and will be due August 14th** at midnight Hawaii time. Remember that this is an individual project and should be done without the help of your classmates or others.
6 – Aug 8-14 Zoom Aug 10	Defining an Ideal Future – Future Search	Rieley, James (1997) Scenario Planning in Higher Education You can access this article on SlideShare at Link to SlideShare	Online Discussion (**due August 16th, responses due August 19th**): Describe the perfect environment for the education of our children. What does it include? What is excluded? Try to use rich detail to create this vision. Don't hold back!!!
7 – Aug 15-21 Zoom Aug 17	Defining an Ideal Future – Scenario Planning	Meadows Part Two, Chapters Three, Four and Five	Online Discussion (**due August 23rd, responses due August 26th**): Construct one of the Causal Diagrams that you will be using for your term project and discuss it in terms of the concepts discussed in Chapter Three of Meadows book (resilience, self-organization, hierarchy). Be sure to explain the system and the loops first and then discuss how it represents self-organization, resiliency or hierarchy.
8 – Aug 22-28 Zoom Aug 24	How to get there from here	Thinking in Systems – Part Three, Chapters Six and Seven	
9 – Aug 29-Sept 4 Zoom Aug 31	Project Presentations		Each of you will present the findings of your study to the rest of the class. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes, should be visual in some way (e.g. PowerPoint, but you can use some other ideas if you like), and should provide time for discussion. We will all take notes and think about systems implications to prepare for the Integration Assignment.
10 – Sept 5-11 No Zoom	Integrating our projects		Online Discussion (**due September 7th responses due September 10th**): Reflect on the various presentations. Discuss the system that you have created as a class in your project presentations. What things do your

ideas have in common? What
challenges will you face? What one
thing do you need to do today to make
this future a reality?

Course Assignments

Topic Discussions (Must be posted in eCollege)

On selected weeks you will have a discussion topic provided by your instructor. These topics will relate to the readings, current events or to your term project. Everyone must provide an original post with their own response to the question or discussion topic and at least two responses in response to other original posts. Original posts should address the question directly, should reference and cite readings that influence your ideas, and should give examples from your own experiences whenever appropriate. This is intended to be a discussion, so you should be building off the ideas of your teammates in your responses. Commenting or clarifying responses made to your original post are highly encouraged. Dates and times for both your original post and for your responses are posted in this syllabus under "course schedule" above and in eCollege on the course page. Your grade will be based on the depth and originality of thinking that went into the response and the degree to which you are furthering the conversation in your responses.

Systems Thinking Problem Set

The material in this course is part art and part science. The science component requires some basic skills that you will learn throughout the first part of the course. To reinforce this learning you will have a midterm assignment that is a problem set. A series of questions that apply concepts such as stock-and-flow diagrams, causal loop diagrams, feedback loops, control systems. I will post this assignment and you will be given seven days to complete it. This is an Individual assignment and you will be asked to sign a statement to the fact that you completed this assignment by yourself.

Term Project

The project that we are doing this term will build off the topics that we explored in EDUC 740 (if you did not complete this course, please contact me and we will arrange a telephone conversation to prepare you for the term content material). Thus the Term Project will both broaden and deepen our exploration of the change issues that you are facing in your schools.

This project is asking you to build on the real-time small changes that you considered in EDUC 740, to explore the larger system-wide opportunities around this topic. If you would like to change your topic make sure you select a new topic that you are intimately familiar with, as you will need that knowledge as a starting point. I will be confirming your topics within the first 2 weeks of class. You can work in pairs or alone according to your preference. We will be looking at the topics as part of the larger system of education in Hawaii.

To accomplish our study of the topics you have selected you need to:

- Understand how the issue is being addressed in other parts of the country and the world. You should identify three benchmark school districts (at least one should be out of the US). Discuss how each district is addressing the topic including answering the following questions: What challenges exist? How is it imbedded within the greater education systems? How does the context of each differ from Hawaii?
- Map three casual diagrams that relate to this issue in Hawaii. Each should represent simple causal loops, but should indicate where external variables are influencing the loop. It is best if you can indicate links between each of the

casual loop diagrams. (I will discuss this in much more detail in the Zoom Live Discussions, also look to textbooks for further information)

- Perform a visioning exercise designed to use the information you collected (both primary and secondary) from EDUC 740 (or what you know about the topic if you chose to change it) and from the research on other districts and to develop a vision for how this topic *could* be operating in the future ideally. This should represent "out of the box" thinking. Take into account the constraints that exist today, but do not let them limit your ideas. Note them, but allow your creativity to emerge. Design a future that is "ideal".

Deliverable

You will prepare a 10 to 20-page paper (not including appendices) that goes through the 4 backcasting steps (backcasting is a concept we will be using in class and will be discussed in the first Zoom Live Discussion session, you probably know that concept by another name).

1. Awareness – What is the topic really all about and how is it being addressed outside of Hawaii?
2. Baseline – How does the system function right now? What are the inflows? What do the feedback loops look like? How resilient is the system to change?
3. Visioning – In your ideal world, what would this lever look like? How would it operate? Think outside the box here. What can you imagine?
4. Backcasting – Describe 3 to 5 first steps to move your school, district, nation toward your vision.

Your paper should tell a story. There should be a thread between what we know about this topic and where you think it should look like, using the concepts you have learned about systems thinking.

Term Project Presentations and Integration

During the final Zoom Live Discussion session we will present the results of our projects. You will be thinking through the various "ideals" from the visioning process and identify how they might impact the topic you focused on, and the system as a whole.

Pairs or individuals will present the findings of their study to the rest of the class. The presentation should be no more than a total of 10 minutes, should be visual in some way (e.g. PowerPoint, but you can use some other ideas if you like), and should provide time for discussion. We will all take notes and think about systems implications to prepare for the Integration Assignment.

Your course grade will be based on the following weighting of assignments and activities:

Zoom Live Discussion Participation	5%
Online Discussions (5 – 5 % each)	25%
Systems Thinking Problem Set	20%
Term Project	40%
Term Project Presentation and Integration	10%

Students who receive "A" grades have evidenced thorough understanding of course theory and practice.   They have sought opportunities to contribute to online discussions and their contributions have reflected preparation, insight, and the willingness to take risks. They communicate effectively, both in speech and in writing. Systems thinking, change and

leadership knowledge and skill development are evident in class assignments. The participation of these students has added substantively to the learning available in the course.

Students who receive "B" grades have evidenced an adequate understanding of course theory and practice. Typically one or both of these could be developed further in the scope of the course. They contribute to some online discussions and their participation shows preparation for the class. Their communication skills are satisfactory, both in speech and in writing, though there are opportunities for improvement in one or both to be professionally functional. Change and management knowledge and skill development is evident in class assignments.

Students who receive "C" grades in the course have evidenced inadequate performance and understanding of course material. This grade is typically earned through lack of preparation and/or thorough attention to assignments, and limited participation in class discussion and activities. Communication skills are often in significant need of improvement to be professionally adequate.

Students who receive "F" grades have not completed required assignments and/or have missed three or more class sessions.

Relevant Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

PLO #2: Demonstrate knowledge of organizational life in schools, organizational change processes and their connections to the development of positive school cultures that promote learning an social development of students.

PLO #3: Conduct systematic inquiries into programs and policies that are relevant, integral, and essential to the success of children, schools, and school leaders.

PLO #4: Develop skills in facilitating collaboration and communication among schools, school communities, families, other educational and service agencies, and professional organizations.

PLO #7: Use informed scholarship to analyze and offer solutions for school policies and problems.

Time Requirements

Participants should expect to spend approximately nine hours each week on course-related work. This includes participation in online chat sessions, completing the readings, change term project, and team discussions.

Education Division Attendance Policy

(Revised 3/8/10)

As stated in the Chaminade University Catalog, students are expected to attend all classes for courses in which they are registered.

Students must follow the attendance policy as stipulated in the syllabus of Education Division courses. Penalties for not meeting the attendance requirements may result in lowering of the grade, withdrawal from the course, or failing the course.

1. **Excused Absences**.
   1.1 Since it is expected that students will participate in all class sessions, excused absences are only granted in exceptional situations where evidence is provided by the student to the instructor. Examples would include illness (with verification by a doctor) or the death of a close family member. Students should notify their instructors when a situation prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. While

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notification of the instructor by a student that he/she will be absent is courteous, it does not necessarily mean the absence will be excused.

1.2 In cases where excused absences constitute a significant portion of a course's meetings (e.g., more than 20% of on-ground course meetings, or a significant portion of online or hybrid courses), the instructor should refer the case to the Dean with a recommendation on how the case should be handled (e.g., withdrawal or incomplete).

2. **Unexcused Absences**. Chaminade University policy states that in cases where unexcused absences are equivalent to more than a week of classes the instructor has the option of lowering the grade. In the Education Division we have added detailed guidelines to cover different types of courses and class schedules:

1.2 **Hybrid courses** (online combined with 3 or more on-ground meetings): **One absence from on-ground classes lowers grade one letter.** Two or more absences from on-ground meetings results in failure or withdrawal.
For the online portion of the course the instructor will specify and enforce expectations for online participation and receipt of assignments appropriate to the design of the course.

1.3 **Online courses and online portion of hybrid courses**: The instructor will specify and enforce expectations for online participation and receipt of assignments appropriate to the design of the course. **For online/hybrid courses failure to log in for one week is equivalent to an absence in a traditional on-ground course. Two weeks of not logging in constitutes grounds for removal of the student from the course.**

3.. **Tardy.** 10% of class time (on-ground) missed is equivalent to ½ class absence (i.e. missing 18 minutes of a 3 hour class is equivalent to a ½ class absence; missing 24 minutes of a 4 hour class also equates to a ½ class absence).

4. **Additional Notes.**

4.1 If a student does not logon to an online or hybrid course for the first two weeks, the instructor should notify the Dean and the student will be withdrawn from the course.

4.2 Any student who stops attending an on-ground course or stops participating in an online course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

As stated in the Chaminade University Catalog, students are expected to attend all classes for courses in which they are registered. *Students must follow the attendance policy of the* Division as appropriate for the course format (on-ground, hybrid, or online). Penalties for not meeting the attendance requirements may result in lowering of the grade, withdrawal from the course, or failing the course.

A summary of the Education Division's attendance policy is attached at the end of this syllabus.

All work submitted by Chaminade University students must meet the following writing standards. Written assignments should:
1) Use correctly the grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure of Standard Written English.
2) Develop ideas, themes, and main points coherently and concisely.
3) Adopt modes and styles appropriate to their purpose and audience.
4) Be clear, complete, and effective.
5) Carefully analyze and synthesize material and ideas borrowed from sources. In addition, the sources of the borrowed material should be correctly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

"Plagiarism is the offering of work of another as one's own. Plagiarism is a serious offense and may include, but is not limited to, the following:
1) Complete or partial copying directly from a published or unpublished source without proper acknowledgement to the author. Minor changes in wording or syntax are not sufficient to avoid charges of plagiarism. Proper acknowledgement of the source of a text is always mandatory.
2) Paraphrasing the work of another without proper author acknowledgement.
3) Submitting as one's own original work (however freely given or purchased) the original exam, research paper, manuscript, report, computer file, or other assignment that has been prepared by another individual.

Please refer to your **Student Handbook** and the **Graduate Catalog** for other important institutional and academic policies including more detailed information regarding Grading, Plagiarism, Classroom Deportment, Freedom of Expression, Add/Drop, Disabilities, and others.

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and recognizes the obligation to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities to students with disabilities. If a student is in need of accommodation due to a documented disability, he/she should contact the Counseling Center at 735-4845 or 739-4603. A determination will be made if the student meets the requirements for documented disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is important to contact them as soon as possible so that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Beyond the legal requirements Chaminade's Education Division is committed to an integral, quality education that begins with respect for the complexity and diversity of each person. Subsequently, faculty members attempt to engage the whole person with quality courses and activities that challenge the intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, physical, and ethical dimensions that make up each student's life experience.

Instructor Background Information

Jennifer Roney, Ph.D.

Jennifer Roney is an experienced educator, consultant and leader across multiple sectors. She combines her experience with her passion for developing solutions to today's challenges that are at once performance-based and values-based.   She believes that each person who opens his/her mind to learn has the opportunity to play a significant role in shaping the trajectory of our future in a positive way.

Jennifer was born in Kansas City, Missouri but was raised in Northridge, California. After receiving her BA in Economics from UCLA, she worked for the Hughes Aircraft and Eastman Kodak Companies in Southern California. She then received her MBA degree from San Diego State University where she focused on management science and modeling for process improvements. Jennifer applied her graduate education at General Dynamics in San Diego as a Financial Manager. While at General Dynamics participated on the corporate Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation team and led the efforts for the Space Systems Division. The lessons learned from this project prompted her interest in the dynamics that impact change processes in organizations.

While pursuing her PhD from the University of Utah, she studied the processes of change within the context of the dramatic changes occurring in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s. Jennifer received a Fulbright Scholarship and a National Security Education Program Grant to explore the amazing transformation occurring in Poland. This experience greatly influenced the way she views organizing and how we can facilitate organizational transformation through the understanding of the context and values of participants.

After returning to the United States she taught and consulted in leadership, cross- cultural management, technology management, organizational theory and design, and marketing research. She has taught at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, Pepperdine University in Malibu, California and Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. After serving as Associate Dean for Willamette University's Atkinson School of Management, she searched for ways to manage efficiently while simultaneously preserving what we truly valued in life. The timing was finally right and she quickly found many of the solutions she was looking for in Sustainability. Since then, she has taught at Chaminade University, Colorado Technical University, Bainbridge Graduate Institute, a fully integrated sustainability MBA program and developed and led a similar program for Alliant International University in San Diego, CA. In addition, she consults with

organizations that are integrating sustainability into their strategic objectives. Recent clients include several Catholic Diocese Schools in the San Diego area.

Jennifer lives in San Diego, California with her husband Kevin, daughter Delaney and two dogs, Nieko and Trojka.