NEW SCHOOL UNIVERSITY
Milano Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy

ADVANCED SEMINAR IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT
Spring, 2006

Instructor:
Office hours by appointment
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Office hours by appointment

Tuesday evenings: 6:00-7:50 PM

Course Overview

In this capstone course for the Organizational Change Management program, we will utilize a modified seminar approach. Rather than a small group of students sitting in (rapt) attention to a professor's discourse, students will review their experiences, work completed in the curriculum, and write a rigorous paper of publishable quality (PPQ) on a topic of their choosing. We will strive towards a process of professional collegiality to create a supportive peer group experience within which we can integrate the entire OCM academic experience. The course is dependent upon student presentations & interventions, faculty and peer review of written work, faculty-student coaching during the semester, continual feedback, and peer support among students. Guest visits are anticipated from those who can help us focus on topics, discover our written "voice," achieve publication placement, and provide their perspective on the convergence of writing and OD.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Build upon critical analytic skills of the discipline through exploration and refinement of an appealing topic.
2. Research and write a substantial paper which adds value to the discipline and practice of organizational change management
3. Enhance professional credibility by developing and executing strategies for publishing one's work.
4. Look retrospectively on one's educational and professional experiences and prospectively to where one wants to be as a change management practitioner. Analyze the gaps and determine the need for specific, continued professional development.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: We strongly believe this course can and should be a highly collaborative enterprise in which seminar participants (faculty and students) engage in dialogue around issues each of us has encountered in the management of organizational change. This is a seminar[1]and members are expected to participate fully. Preparation in this course requires being ready to share your own writing project as it develops, lead seminar sessions, and take initiative in providing constructive feedback to colleagues on work in progress.

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[1] Seminar Defined – "A group of advanced students studying under a professor with each doing original research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions."

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Class participation – 25%
  - Co-design and lead one seminar session
  - Provide written and verbal feedback to seminar participants as required
  - Provide meaningful and informed contributions to weekly discussions regarding the PPQ process, OCM transformative issues and professional implications resulting from "OCM in the News"
- PPQ Proposal –25% (February 14th)
- PPQ Draft – required (Due April 4th)
- PPQ – 50% (Due May 9th)

COURSE READINGS:

Readings form the basis of your individualized research leading to the completed PPQ. Participants therefore need to create their own reading list for the seminar. Faculty advising will be available to assist you in refining and/or expanding your resources as the semester progresses. Be diligent, if not obsessive, at maintaining an accurate bibliography of sources that supports your work, since it is required as part of your initial proposal as well as the final PPQ.

You will find attached some helpful weblinks.

The instructor will hand out readings on an as-needed basis in advance for upcoming classroom discussion. In addition, he will email web links that may be helpful to writing, professional development and student-facilitated seminars.

Suggested Texts to facilitate the writing process:

Elbow, Peter. Writing with Power; Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process, Oxford University Press, New York: 1998

Zinsser, William. On Writing Well; The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction. Quill, NewYork: 2001.

Zerubavel, Eviatar. The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations and Books. Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1999.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G.Columb and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995.

COURSE OUTLINE:

January 24 **Introduction to the Seminar**

- How the seminar works: assumptions, expectations, format, roles, norms, values and beliefs.
- Completing your portfolio – The value of research and publication, what's in it for you?
- Proposal construction and criteria.
- Developing your potential topics (due next week).

January 31 **Finding and Kneading the Topic**
Faculty-led seminar

- Seminar Discussion – Participants present two or three ideas to the group for discussion. Ideas will be discussed in the context of how they add value to the profession and why the idea is of particular interest to the writer.

February 07

"Why do writers write? Because it isn't there." Thomas Berger.

Finding and Kneading the Topic – 2

Opportunities to receive feedback on new ideas or drilled-down specifics of a topic already presented; pose questions about defining your topic.
Faculty-led discussion on power and influence
Students should be in the midst of developing their proposal.
(**NOTE: We will have a change in venue for this evening only.**
Place tba)

February 14

Connecting with Your Reader (and your Client) – (Re)creating Yourself and Your Audience
Student-facilitated seminar (#1)

This is the first in a series of student-led seminar sessions. The focus for each is driven by two critical competencies: Managing Group Process and Developing Others.
Seminar leaders should consider their role in the context of intervention. "How can I design, lead, and facilitate the discussion topic while enhancing the capacity of others to give and receive feedback?" Each seminar participant is responsible for co-leading one seminar discussion during the semester. Leaders should review their goals and intervention approach with the instructor in advance.

Topic Proposal Due - Bring copies (or email by today) copies for all participants

February 21

Presentation of Topic Proposal Summaries (Part I)

Participants should be prepared to summarize their proposals as cogently as possible. What specific feedback do you want? In what specific areas do you want to ask for help/guidance/resources/conceptual frameworks? This will be a relatively fast-paced class, since every participant needs to give and get feedback.

"Even experienced writers feel that deadlines come too soon; they long for another month, a week, just a day. Some spend their whole careers on one problem, and even feel that they have to deliver before their ideas have matured. Writing before you feel your work is complete will always seem frustrating, but less so if you think of your paper not as a polished gem but as a stepping-stone to better understanding. No researcher, not even the best, ever has the last word, fortunately for us all. If the tradition of research has taught us anything, it is that Truth has a way of changing. The best we can hope for is to make our interim report as clear, as complete, and as close to being right as we can: *After my best efforts, here is what I believe to be true – not the whole truth, but a truth important to me and to my readers, a truth that I have tried to support strongly enough that they will find in my argument good reason to agree or at least to reconsider what they believe."*
"Two principles used by many writers:

- Respect the complexity of the task.
- Know that much of the early writing will end up in your files or wastebasket…really productive work begins after you see not what you think you know, but what you are finally able to say.

Adapted from Booth, et al, pg.150

February 28 **Presentation of Topic Proposal Summaries (Part II)**

March 07 **The First Draft**
Student-facilitated seminar (#2)

While there is no trick for knowing when you should start drafting, you can prepare for that difficult moment if you start writing notes and summaries and critiques from the moment you begin the topic proposal phase. You are ready to start a serious first draft when you have a plan in your head or on paper.
That plan should reflect the following elements:

- A picture of your readers
- A sense of the character you want to project
- A question that defines some gap in knowledge, some flawed understanding that you want to resolve
- Your main claim or point, and some of the sub-points that will support it
- The sequence of the parts of your paper

March 14 **Guest writer/practitioner - Perspectives on the convergence of writing and OD**
Tentative: Cynthia Froggatt, author, *"Work Naked: Eight Essential Principles for Peak Performance in the Virtual Workplace"* (Jossey-Bass)

"I sit at a desk. I face the wall. If you sit facing the wall, the only way out is through the sentences." - E. L. Doctorow

March 21 **University Vacation: Class does not meet**

While there are no classes you may find it necessary to keep plugging away. At this point you probably find yourself deep in the midst of writing and revising your draft. The draft is due on April 04. If you plan on being away or taking a break, managing your productivity and time will be particularly important.

Late submissions will make your life more complicated and the semester will be over sooner than you realize. Mark will be available if you confront research and writing "traps" and you would like to discuss them with him.

March 28 **The Future of OCM/OD**
Guest appearance

April 04 **The State and Future of Organizations and Change**
Student-facilitated seminar #3
Where is the profession going? Where do I want to go? What more will I need to get there?

Submission of PPQ Draft – (Please bring a copy for each seminar participant. Participants are to read each draft and be prepared to engage in constructive discussion of colleagues' work on April 11th.)

"…regardless of how you revise, you face a problem that all writers share; you cannot experience your own prose as your readers will, because you know too much about it. When you come to a passage that your readers might stumble over, you sail right through, because you aren't actually reading it; you are only reminding yourself of what you were thinking when you wrote it.

"To help you overcome the problem of your intractable subjectivity, we are going to suggest some formal, even mechanical ways for you to analyze, diagnose, and revise your draft, ways that will help you sidestep your too-easy understanding (and too-ready admiration) for your own words.

"Revisions take time, so start early. Moreover, in the course of revising, you will almost certainly discover something new about your project, some fact or idea that you want to add, some part of your argument that you want to rework. You may think the end is in sight, but revision is as important as any other stage in your project, so don't rush it. In fact, this final stage is when you will come to understand your project most completely."

Things to consider:

- Analyze and revise your organization
- Diagnose the continuity of your themes
- Revise your argument

Excerpted from text, pg. 202

April 11 **Peer Discussion of PPQ Drafts**

April 18 **Peer Discussion of PPQ Drafts**

April 25 **Continual Development as a Change Management Professional**
Faculty-led seminar with guests tentatively scheduled

"Technique alone is never enough. You have to have passion. Technique alone is just an embroidered pot holder." - Raymond Chandler

May 02 – **The Home Stretch**
Presenting Your PPQ: Steps to Publication
Faculty/Guest/student-led seminar

While much of this may already have been addressed, the focus of this session is on how to gain access to publishers, what is required, and the identification of next steps necessary to have your work published.

May 09 – **Course Closure and Program Evaluation**

Final Submission of PPQ

fini

Grades of "Incomplete": Please see the Policy on "Incompletes" in the Milano Graduate School Student Handbook.