

**Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy
Summer 2010**

CRN# 1613 **Large Group Interventions (LGI) MGMT 6015A**
Mondays: 6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28; 7/12, 7/19, 7/26;
meets from 6:00 pm – 9:50 pm.
Location: 6 East 16th Street 902

Instructor: Scott Gassman
Telephone: (917) 951 – 0258
Email: scott.gassman@gmail.com
Office Availability: After class or by appointment.

Text*: **You Don't Have To Do It Alone. How to Involve Others To Get Things Done;** By Richard H. Axelrod, Emily Axelrod, Julie Beedon, and Robert W. Jacobs, Berrett-Koehler Pub. 2004;

A **reading packet** of core articles will be available for purchase at Village Copier, on 13th street between Fifth Ave. and University Place. Please bring the textbook/readings cited to class.

Optional

References: **Community: The Structure of Belonging** (Paperback) by Peter Block, Berrett-Koehler Pub. 2008;
The Change Handbook: The Definitive Resource on Today's Best Methods for Engaging Whole Systems, by Peggy Holman, Tom Devane, Steven Cady; Berrett-Koehler Pub. 2007;
The Handbook of Large Group Methods: Creating Systemic Change in Organizations and Communities, by Barbara Benedict Bunker & Billie T. Alban, Published by Jossey-Bass, 2006.

Course Description:

Ever wonder what it's like to bring 20 to 5000 people together (virtually or in person) increasing engagement and commitment for initiatives; then this course will educate you about how you choose a method, and provide you with the opportunity to design and deliver a productive, satisfying and sustainable results generating meeting.

Through dialogues with originators of large group practices, our readings and discussions, you will learn first hand about the impact people coming together can have on communities around the world.

Practitioners will discuss their methodologies and how they: identify client needs; contract and partner with sponsors and clients; involve others to get things done; model a culture that values dialogue; design meetings; encourage reflection; practice facilitation; sustain change initiatives and measure results.

We will look at the current Solar Decathlon initiative at The New School as a practice case study. As a class, we will design a meeting, invite guests and/or subject matter experts, and facilitate the meeting we design. Former students, who have experience

designing meetings, will be there to coach and support you. Organizations are continuously challenged by internal and external change factors.

This course focuses on how to enable whole organizations to go forward building organizational capacity and engaging constituents. Models, principles and values we study include: Future Search, Conference Model, Whole-Scale Change, Open Space, America Speaks, Appreciative Inquiry, the World Café, on-line Collaboration, and Graphic Facilitation. We will contrast these methods, with the current crop of major political town hall meetings and historic tribal communication rituals.

The course uses large and small group discussions, provides practice designing, facilitating, and evaluating interventions, has guest participation and explores from the client frame of reference why these models matter. Text readings will be supplemented with articles and video demonstrations of methodologies in action.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand the business case for accelerating change, engaging employees and building an organization's future.
2. Discover the history of LGIs, their foundational thinking, evolution and current application.
3. Appreciate how staff engagement in vision, mission and process energizes the workforce to support what they helped create.
4. Learn about LGI conceptual models, activities, designs and structure.
5. Experience designing and facilitating a Large Group Intervention.

Expectations:

Learning in a course like Large Group Interventions (LGI) means being involved and participating. Responsibility for learning resides with both students and instructor. Given that we will have guest speakers it is extremely important that you read required weekly assignments, identify your questions and are able to converse with the guests about their writing and practices. The guests will be giving us their time. I expect us to engage them in their content and experience.

Students will practice skills in design, leadership and logistics and this will enhance the exploration of LGI concepts. Participation involves careful preparation for class and regular attendance (please arrive on time). The syllabus will serve as a guide, but may be modified based on availability of guest speakers or relevant learning opportunities.

Ground Rules:

- As a courtesy, **please call or email, if you cannot attend class.**
- Written assignments are to be typed/word processed and double-spaced.
- Please proofread your work before turning it in. Written work will be evaluated for analysis, organization, and clarity. Grammatical and typographical errors send a poor message and will affect the evaluation.
- Late papers cannot be accepted.
- Readings are to be completed prior to class.

Requirements and Grading Weights: (descriptions attached)

1. Class Participation, Preparation, and Attendance (includes LGI Perspectives website write-up)	20%
2.1 *Optional Volunteer LGI experience replaces (#2)	25%
2.2 World Café Methodology Discussion	5%
2. LGI Design & Delivery	25%
3. Final Project: Integrative LGI Analysis	30%

Incomplete: The Student Handbook explains the incomplete policy.

Description of Assignments

1. LGI Perspectives Write-up: Between session #1 and #2, answer the following questions and share your response on the class website. The questions are: What do you know about Large Group Interventions (LGI)? Have you ever participated in an LGI? What questions do you have about the subject? Describe your ideal or dream LGI application/situation? Please dream of what you would like to do for a client or with associates you want to work with? What would be the intended outcomes? After completing this class, what awareness, knowledge or skills do you want that you didn't have upon entry? As the semester proceeds, you will have opportunities to build on your reflections.

2. Midterm (Due 6/28/10): Write a reflective paper that processes your learning from researching a large group intervention methodology of your choosing. The paper will be evaluated in terms of the quality of presentation and adequacy of coverage of your selected methodology. The paper should be a **minimum of 3 pages and not exceed a maximum of 7 pages.**

2.1 *Optional Volunteer LGI experience replaces (#2) – A voluntary opportunity at a National Large Group Intervention may present itself and if you choose to volunteer for it, you will be excused from the Mid-term because of the time you spend on the intervention.

2.2 World Café Methodology Discussion (6/28/10): “Students will use their midterm research paper to share their learning on the intervention approach in a **World Café.**

3. LGI Design & Delivery (7/19/10): Leading up to our delivery class, we will form a design team and have the task of designing an LGI, planning logistics, and engaging others in a minified version of a facilitated meeting. This is a work in progress that each of you will have input in deciding on and designing. We may have an option to engage a real client situation. The Solar Decathlon presents us with many exciting engagement opportunities that can cultivate practical process interventions. Time will be provided during each of the prior sessions to connect and plan the intervention.

4. Final Paper: Integrative LGI Analysis (Due 7/26/10):

Write a reflective paper that processes your learning from working on the design and delivery of your group's LGI. The paper will be evaluated in terms of the quality of presentation and adequacy of coverage of your team ability to identify goals or desired outcomes, determine roles and responsibilities, build an agenda, design and deliver activities, share information and plan for logistics. You will write a paper integrating

your LGI learning while pondering application in the work place or community. The paper should be a **minimum of 8 pages and not exceed a maximum of 15 pages**. The paper should include at least **7 quotes or references from the course material**. **Five additional quotes or reflections** must reference lessons learned or observations made from group interactions or dynamics in the class experience.

Large Group Interventions (LGI) Course Outline

CLASS	DATE	TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT
#1	6/7	LARGE GROUP INTERVENTIONS ENGAGEMENT AND BUILDING CAPACITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Syllabus and Course Objectives • Clarify Expectations and Explain Core Principles • Review Agenda Guidelines • Building an Intervention Team • Open Space • To Do for 6.14 class: Watch Video: The Four Hour House Building Contest
#2	6/14	TRUST BUILDING: THE METHODS & FACILITATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: <u>You Don't Have To Do It Alone</u>, p 1-46; • Read: <u>The Wisdom of Crowds</u>, by James Surowiecki; Working with Design Teams; • Reference: The Change Exchange; Large Group Methods for Change; Group Behavior Observation Form; Questions; • Discuss the Video: The Four Hour House Building Contest • Explore Methods and Meeting Designs • Guest Discussion: Solar Decathlon Team Members • Form LGI Design Team and conduct a Design Team Meeting
#3	6/21	BUSINESS CASE AND DESIGN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: Civic.pdf by Peter Block; A Conversation with Kathleen Dannemiller; Interactive Large Group Conferencing; The Secrets of Great Groups by Warren Bennis; • Reference: Interactive Large Group Conferencing; Three C's Model; Event Logistics; • Discuss Meeting Designs, Experience and Question Power • <i>AmericaSpeaks: Our Budget, Our Economy National Town Meeting, June 26th, 2010</i> • Video: America Speaks • Guest Discussion: To be determined
#4	6/28	DESIGNING THE INTERVENTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: <u>You Don't Have To Do It Alone</u>, p 47-89; • Read: <u>Trafficking in Trust</u> by Karen Stephenson; Café to Go

		<p>by The World Café; Strategic Questioning: Engaging People’s Best Thinking;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience World Café & share mid-term paper learning • Due: Mid-term Paper
#5	7/12	<p>DESIGNING THE INTERVENTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: <u>Kurt Lewin: groups, experiential learning and action research</u>; <p>Reference: Dotmocracy Handbook, Remarks of Senator Barack Obama: ‘A More Perfect Union’; “Corporate Funerals and the Joy of Change,” by Kenny Moore; Tales Out of School; Roskin on Decision Making; NCCD’s Engagement Streams Framework; Power Questions; Critical Incidents: How do Values and Principles Guide Us?;</p> <p>Guest Discussion: To be determined</p>
#6	7/19	<p>THE PRACTICE FIELD: INTERVENTION & IMPLEMENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Team Delivers a Mini LGI
#7	7/26	<p>EVALUATION: Interventions, Inclusion and Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons Learned • What went well? • What would you do differently? • Discuss and Process Team Experience • Due: Final Paper

