



Pitt Education

EFOP 3137: Culture, Innovation and Organizational Performance SPRING 2025

Instructor

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To schedule a virtual meeting: <https://calendly.com/jillalexaperry/30min>

Syllabus

This syllabus is a living document and *a required text. Please read it carefully!*

Note: I reserve the right to change the syllabus to meet class needs.

Course Description

Successful leadership requires an understanding of the concepts, skills, and practices that build a strong organization. In this course, students will explore organizational improvement from both scholarly and practitioner lenses. Specifically, three areas that support building strong leadership in higher education will be explored. First, students will learn about the theoretical and practical aspects of organizational culture by reading higher education theorists and investigating their own organizational culture. Second, students will learn about innovation and change theory as a grounding for understanding how change happens in organizations. Finally, students will learn how to implement a change idea that seeks to improve the performance of their organizational system and use disciplined inquiry to test their idea and determine the impact on the organization.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of full participation in this course, students will gain an understanding of:

- 1) Types and impact of culture in higher education systems
- 2) Impact of leadership on change in higher education
- 3) Diffusing change in organizational culture

Format & Expectations

Participation Expectations

- **Weekly Modules:** Each week will begin on Monday and end on Sunday evening at 11:59pm (when most assignments are due).

- **Active Engagement:** As this course is asynchronous, your active participation is demonstrated through timely completion of weekly activities and discussion board posts, peer reviews, and major assignments.
- **Discussion Boards:** On weeks when we are having online discussions, you are expected to post thoughtful responses to prompts by **Thursday** and respond to **at least two classmates** by **Sunday**. Posts should reflect critical thinking and engagement with course materials.
- **Peer Interaction:** Engaging with your peers through discussion forums and collaborative projects will enrich your learning experience. Active engagement is expected.
- **Deadlines:** Assignments and participation tasks have strict deadlines to maintain course pacing. Please review the course schedule regularly. In generally, all weekly work should be completed by the end of the module week by 11:59pmET.

Time Commitment

- **Weekly Time Investment:** This is a graduate-level course, and students should plan to dedicate approximately **8-12 hours per week** to reading, assignments, discussions, and other activities.
- **Workload Breakdown:**
Reading: ~3-5 hours/week
Discussion posts/responses: ~2 hours/week
Assignments/Projects: ~3-5 hours/week
- **Pacing:** While the course is asynchronous, materials are organized in weekly modules with recommended pacing to help you stay on track.

Instructor Availability and Support

- **Communication:** I am here to support your learning journey. While this is an asynchronous course, you are encouraged to reach out with questions or concerns. You can reach out to me by sending a message through Canvas, emailing my Pitt address, or scheduling a meeting using my calendly link: <https://calendly.com/jillalexaperry/30min>
- **Office Hours:** I have designated student time on Tuesdays and Thursdays via my calendly link. If these time do not work for you, email me to find a good time.
- **Response Time:** I will respond to emails and messages within **24-48 hours**, excluding weekends and holidays.
- **Feedback:** For major assignments, I will provide feedback within **7-10 days** after the due date. Shorter tasks will typically receive feedback within **3-5 days**.

Required Readings

A. Books to purchase:

- Berquist, W.H. & Pawlak, K. (2008). Engaging the Six Cultures of the Academy
 - *Note: I did not put this book in the bookstore as many of you will want to purchase used and cheaper copies. Unfortunately, it does not come in e-book format*

B. Books found in PittCat online with relevant chapters found in Canvas:

Hrabowski III, F.A. (2019). *The Empowered University*. – *I will upload required chapters*

Schein, Edgar H. (2017). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Fifth Edition—*I will upload required chapters*

Ruben et al. (2021). *A Guide for Leaders in Higher Education* – *I will upload required chapters*

C. Additional Readings: articles and viewings will also be included in the course schedule with links in each weekly module.

Assessment of Learning

Participation: 20pts

We do not have a class without your voice whether that be contributions from your readings, your professional experience, or asking a question. Participation will be measured by class discussions. We will use a few formats for discussion – Canvas Discussion Board and Perusall. The course has 9 discussion weeks. The first class will be worth 4 points (because there are both a Perusall project and introduction project) and the rest will each value 2 points for a total of 20 points for participation. The following rubric will be used for grading class discussions.

I will use the follow rubric for grading participation.

Criteria	Level of Effort		
	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
Relevance/ Understanding	Contributes little or no new ideas. Shows very little no grasp of the discussion topic. Mostly agrees or asks questions.	Contributes several new ideas. Postings contain some rehashing or summary of other postings. Seems to grasp discussion.	Posts offer excellent depth and insight, and some new ideas. Shows an outstanding understanding of the discussion

Posts	Posts only to one classmate's thread and does not create own thread.	Posts only to own thread.	Posts to at least 2 classmates' threads and creates own thread.
Timeliness	Does not make a post or makes one post that is late.	Only makes one post to the discussion or makes two posts and at least one is late.	Makes three posts for the discussion or makes four posts and at least one is late.

Short Activities: 30pts

Three short activities will be assigned with the aim of providing reflective process to support your learning and others. Each activity is worth 10pts.

I will use the following rubric for activities.

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Readings (2pts)	Demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the readings with clear and insightful references.	References the readings but lacks depth or clarity in some areas.	Fails to reference or shows limited understanding of the readings.
Critical Thinking (2pts)	Offers thoughtful analysis and connections, addressing key questions and implications.	Provides basic analysis with some connections but lacks depth.	Analysis is superficial or absent.
Application of Concepts (2pts)	Clearly applies concepts from the readings to the specific context of the assignment.	Partially applies concepts but lacks specificity or relevance.	Concepts are misapplied or not applied.
Clarity of Expression (2pts)	Communicates ideas clearly, with well-structured responses and precise language.	Communicates ideas adequately but with minor issues in structure or clarity.	Responses are unclear or poorly organized.
Engagement with Task (2pts)	Fully engages with all aspects of the assignment, exceeding minimum expectations.	Meets basic expectations but lacks full engagement or detail.	Shows minimal effort or engagement with the assignment.

Assignments: 50pts

You will have three major assignments for this course. Each of these assignments will have individual rubrics that will be included with the assignment instructions.

Assignment #1: Cultural Assessment Report (15pts)

Conduct a cultural assessment of your institution or department, analyzing artifacts, espoused values, assumptions and any other evidence you can provide. Write a 2-3-page summary of your determination and recommendations. **Due Feb 23 at 11:59pmET**

Assignment #2: Leadership Cases (15pts)

You will investigate two university presidents that have transformed their institutions and write a 3-5page compare and contrast paper. **Due April 6th 11:59pmET**

Assignment #3: Group Project - Executive Coaching Case (20pts)

For this final assignment you will work in teams of 3-4 to serve as an executive coaching team to an associate dean confronting issues with graduate assistants. Due April 27th 11:59pmET

Course Schedule

WEEK	DATES	TOPIC	To Do
1	January 8 – 12	Introductions to the course and your classmates	Do: -Review introductory Video -Complete introduction Mural Activity -Review syllabus with Perusall
2	January 13 – 19	Introduction to Organizational Culture	Read: Schein Ch 1; Berquist & Pawlak: Introduction Watch: Six Cultures Summary https://youtu.be/3vi2PIG_usg Discussion Board: Defining Culture
3	January 20 – 26	Dimensions and Depths of Culture	Read: Schein, Chapter 2; Berquist & Pawlak: Ch 1 Collegial & Ch 2 Managerial Cultures Discussion Board: Cultural Conflicts
4	January 27 – February 2	Dimensions and Depths of Culture	Read: Berquist & Pawlak: Ch 3 Developmental & Ch 4 Advocacy Cultures Activity 1: Pitt Faculty Unions
5	February 3 – 9	Dimensions and Depths of Culture	Read: Berquist & Pawlak: Ch 5 Virtual & Ch 6 Tangible Cultures: How This Professor Made History Cool Again (https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-this-professor-made-history-class-cool-again); Can we create a culture that values teaching? (https://www.chronicle.com/article/can-we-create-a-culture-that-values-good-teaching/) Discussion Board: Virtual vs. Tangible Cultures
6	February 10 – 16	Macro-cultures	Read: Schein Chapter 6 Activity 2: Power Distance Vignette

7	February 17 – 23	Assignment 1: Assessing Culture	Assignment 1: This week, you will conduct a cultural audit of your institution or department. Due Feb 23 at 11:59pmET
8	February 24 – March 2	Leadership in Higher Education	Read: Ruben Chs 8 & 9 Perusall: Read and comment via Perusall
9	March 3 – 9	Spring Recess - Enjoy your break	
10	March 10 – 16	Leadership & Cultural Change	Read: The Hrabowski Chpts 3 & 4; Schein Ch 7 Perusall: Read and comment via Perusall
11	March 17 – 23	Leadership & Cultural Change	Read: Hrabowski Ch 7; Ruben et al. Ch 15 Activity 3: Personal Cultural Assumptions
12	March 24 – 30	Leadership & Cultural Change	Read: Kezar Provocations 1, 2, & 5 Perusall: Read and comment via Perusall
13	March 31 – April 6	Assignment 2: Leadership Cases	Assignment 2: This week you will read about two university presidents who have transformed their institutions during their leadership tenure. You will compare and contrast their leadership styles and successes. Due April 6th 11:59pmET
14	April 7 – 13	Diffusion of Innovation	Read: Perry (2010) Summary of DOI; Menzili et al (2022); Thede (2014) Discussion: DOI in Higher Ed
15	April 14 – 20	Cases of Diffusion of Innovation	Read: Perry (2010) Exploration of the Change Process Perusall: Read and comment via Perusall
16	April 21 – April 27	Assignment 3: Executive Coaching Case	Assignment 3: For this final assignment you will work in teams of 3-4 to serve as an executive coaching team to an associate dean confronting issues with graduate assistants. Due April 27th 11:59pmET

Grading

Grading: Grading for this course is letter grade.

Grading Scale:

Point Total	Final Letter Grade	Point Total	Final Letter Grade
94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C

87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	60-69	D
80-83	B-	59 or below	F

G Grades and I Grades:

Under certain conditions you may receive a “G” or an “I” grade for the course. The Graduate Catalog explains the difference between two kinds of Incompletes: the G grade and the I grade as:

G Grade: The G grade signifies unfinished course work due to extenuating personal circumstances. Students assigned G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. As of August 16, 2018, G grades after one year automatically become non-changeable NG grades (no credit, no impact on grade point average) After this one-year deadline has passed, the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation.

I Grade: The I grade signifies incomplete course work due to the nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars. For this course, an “I” (Incomplete) Grade will be granted only if the student has actively attended to the course requirements but needs extended time to complete the required work to meet minimum expectations. If an Incomplete grade becomes necessary, the instructors will require you to propose a plan of action outlining how you will complete the work within no more than one term from the end of the course (and preferably a shorter period of time).

As of August 16, 2018, G grades after one year automatically become non-changeable NG.

Policies & Supports

Departmental Grievance Procedures. The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in EFOP believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow the procedure described in the Guidelines by (1) first trying to resolve the matter with the faculty member directly; (2) then, if needed, attempting to resolve the matter through conversations with the associate chair of the Department of Educational Foundations, Organizations, and Policy (Dr. Lori Delale-O’Connor); (3) if needed, next talking to the academic integrity officer of the school (Dr. Andrea Zito, Assistant Dean); and (4) if needed, filing a written statement of charges with the academic integrity officer. The grievance process is further specified in the [School of Education’s Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#).

Academic Integrity. Students in this course are expected to comply with the [School of Education’s Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual

suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

Disability Services. If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services, call (412) 648-7890 (Voice or TTD) to schedule an appointment. The Disability Resources and Services office is in 140 William Pitt Union on the Oakland campus.

Basic Needs. Some students are unable to afford groceries or access sufficient food to eat every day. Some students lack a safe and stable place to live. Some students experience challenges balancing school with paid work, childcare, and other family obligations. Those challenges can create considerable anxiety for students and may also affect students' performance in their courses. Resources are available in the Division of Student Affairs: [The Pitt Pantry](#), the [Care and Resource Support Team](#) (412-624-5756 or PittCares@pitt.edu), and [Health, Wellness, and Counseling Services](#). Furthermore, if you are comfortable doing so, please notify your instructor, department chair, and/or associate department chair who may provide access to resources.

Religious Observances. See the [Provost's annual memo](#) about religious observances.

Emergencies. Do you have Pitt Police saved on your mobile phone? 911 works, or Pitt Police, 412-624-2121

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI). Resources, consultation, and bias incident reporting: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/> Title IX office, [resources](#) regarding sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence.

Catalogs. The University Catalogs have comprehensive information about policies, programs, and courses. There are University-level policies and policies specific to the School of Education. Bookmark these links and review these documents periodically.

[University of Pittsburgh Graduate Catalog](#)
[School of Education Catalog](#)