

BEXLEY SEABURY SEMINARY**ML 561/661 (designated for DMin, MDiv, and DAS students)****Course Title: Organizational Systems - Section 1 (3 credits)****Term and Year Offered: January 2021****Learning Environment: Online course with synchronous and asynchronous components****Meeting Dates/Times/Place:****Reading Week: January 3-9, 2021****Term: January 11 to 29, 2021****Synchronous sessions January 13, 15, 20, 22, 25 and 27 from 10 am to 1 pm central via Zoom.****Instructor(s): The Rev. Dr. Emlyn A. Ott****Contact Information: Cell: 614-314-7017 (eott@bexleyseabury.edu)**

Office Hours: Available by phone, video conference or e-mail prior to and during the course. If you desire an appointment, please e-mail your request first to determine a mutually convenient time. Appointments can be also scheduled immediately before or after synchronous sessions.

Course Description:

This course will provide an experience of relating integrated forms of general and systems thinking and organizational theory to leadership development that relates to organizational life, with particular attention to faith communities and non-profits. The course will begin with an invitation for students to listen to the multigenerational story of a family impacted by a significant and long-term societal process and observe that family's response over multiple generations.

The two significant lenses used during this course will be adaptive leadership and Bowen family systems theory. Students in the class will be challenged to look anew at Bowen family systems theory (or Bowen theory) and develop an increased capacity to analyze the various applications to organizational life offered by many experienced practitioner-scholars in the field. Adaptive leadership principles will be included to look at how leaders and organizations manage the emotional processes of change and loss and maintain the intentions of the organization and its mission.

Each student will prepare and present family and organizational systems that they are a part of and participate in a consultation/coaching session as a part of the course.

Course Goals and Outcomes:

Goal One: Develop awareness of and deeper understanding of the foundations and application of Bowen family systems theory and develop skill in diagramming families and organizations.

Outcome: Students will be able to articulate and apply the eight concepts and two life forces of Bowen theory to family and faith community dynamics and apply that to family and ministry systems.

Curricular Outcomes: DMin: 1.1, 2.2 and MDiv: 3.3, 5.3, 5.1

Assessment: Understanding one's own history of relationship dynamics and more neutral observation of that in leadership contexts. Presentation of family diagram (35%) in class coaching experience will engage level of application as well as asynchronous and synchronous discussions and Canvas activities posts (25%) and final project (40%)

Goal Two: Develop an awareness of and deeper understanding of the foundations and application of adaptive leadership theory.

Outcome: Students will be able to articulate and apply technical and adaptive change observations and the eight principles of adaptive leadership theory with particular attention to their leadership context.

Curricular Outcomes: DMin: 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.2 and MDiv: 3.3, 3.4, 5.1, 5.3

Assessment: Understanding the wide lens of adaptive thinking that includes current research and observation of their own leadership contexts. Presentation of ministry context diagram (35%) and in class coaching experience, asynchronous and synchronous discussions and Canvas activities posts (25%) and final project (40%)

Goal Three: Awareness of the differences and similarities between primary sources of Bowen theory and adaptive leadership theory and secondary interpretations and applications.

Outcome: Students will develop a deeper understanding of the application of both theoretical approaches and be able to discern a robust analysis for their own leadership.

Curricular outcomes: DMin: 1.1, 2.2, 3.2 and MDiv: 3.4, 5.1, 5.3

Assessment: Ability to discern distinctions between Creech, Brown and Heifetz' approach to the theories as compared to Richardson, Bolsinger, Friedman, and Steinke through Canvas projects, asynchronous and synchronous class discussion (25%) and the final project (40%)

Goal Four: Development of observational skills to discern the impact of multigenerational family experience that intersects with cultural, racial, gender and ethnic privilege, trauma and prejudice.

Outcome: Students will be able to observe and articulate the ways in which multigenerational experiences of marginalization and privilege impact families, organizations and institutions.

Curricular Outcomes: DMin 1.1, 2.2, 3.2 and MDiv. 3.4, 5.1, 5.3

Assessment: Ability to identify and distinguish areas of family and systems impact in the narrative of one family's story and compare it with their own experience. (25%)

In summary, students will develop their competence in:

- a. awareness of literature and research in the areas of natural systems and congregational life;
- b. the impact of maturity and integration of theology on leadership and clarity of personal and theological engagement;
- c. access to the adaptive leadership framework as a means of providing a focus on leadership in mission and ministry.

Learning and Methods of Engagement for the Course:

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a weekly rhythm via Canvas of reading, videos, and interactive exercises with colleagues via asynchronous assignments. Synchronous meetings will include presentations, full and small group discussions and projects. The final two weeks of synchronous class will include the experience of presenting family and ministry context diagrams for a coaching session guided by systems' parameters of small group process. Each student will engage in a research project that incorporates readings, discussions and the coaching experience in their final paper/project.

Required and Recommended Books and Resources:

In preparation for your diagram projects, which are due to be uploaded on Canvas by the start of class on the first day of synchronous class (10 am CT on 1/13/21). There are guides posted on Canvas to assist in the development of the diagrams, but you would do well in invest in:

Galindo, Boomer and Reagan. *A Family Genogram Workbook*. Educational Consultants, 2006.

All DMin, MDiv and DAS students will be expected to read the following:

Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing*. YNG Books, 2016. (Note: please read this prior to other readings)

Creech, R. Robert. *Family Systems and Congregational Life: A Map for Ministry*. Baker, 2019.

(This is the clearest connection between family systems thinking and ministry that I have seen in the past twenty-five years.)

Heifetz, Ronald and Marty Linsky. *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*. Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

In addition, DMin students will be expected to also read another family systems resource: Brown, Jenny. *Growing Yourself Up*. Exisle Publishing, 2012.

(An excellent investment, available in hard copy or via Kindle download. I highly recommend this text that explains the dynamics of natural systems thinking clearly and well.)

As well as the following secondary sources focused on contextual application:

For MDiv and DAS students:

Richardson, Ronald W. *Creating a Healthier Church*. Fortress, 1996.

Walters, Paul E. and Robert F. Holley. *Clear, Calm and Connected: Reflections on Church Leadership*. Fortress, 2020.

For DMin students:

Bolsinger, Tod. *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change*. IVP Books, 2020.

Friedman, Edwin. *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*. Church Publishing, 2007.

Steinke, Peter L. *Teaching Fish to Walk: Church Systems and Adaptive Challenge*. New Vision Press, 2016.

In addition, the following articles will be posted on Canvas and will be read and discussed during the synchronous sessions of the course:

Kerr, Michael. "Chronic Anxiety and Defining a Self" in *Atlantic Monthly*, 1988.

Wylie, Mary Sykes. "Murray Bowen, 1913-1990 Family Therapy's Neglected Prophet" in *The Family Therapy Networker*, 1991.

Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky. "Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis" in *Harvard Business Review*, 2009.

Luff, Susan. "The Fallacy of the Non-Anxious Presence" in *Family Systems Forum*, 2007.

Ott, Emlyn. "Search for Solidity in an Age of Urgency" in *Sources of Authority in the Church*, 2012.

Ott, Emlyn. "Leaving as Process" in *Trinity Seminary Review*, 2007.

Course Assignments and Expectations:

1. During each week of term (25% of course grade)

You will be given reading, response and interactive assignments as indicated by weekly Modules on Canvas.

After each synchronous session, you will be asked to post a response to questions generated by presentations and discussion during class time. Those questions will “go live” on Canvas at the end of each synchronous class period. (25% of course grade)

2. Family and Organization Diagram and Presentation (35% of course grade)

A. Prepare a personal family diagram that includes at least three generations in addition to the current family which you are creating. (That means, as best you can, head into great grandparent land...) (For guidance, there is a short-hand overview of diagramming symbols posted on Canvas. Galindo, Boomer and Reagan’s book, *A Family Genogram Workbook* would be a useful and clear resource.)

B. You are welcome to make use of online resources. Genogram.com provides free access to that program for three months. Please upload this on Canvas **prior to the start** of class on January 13, 2021 (10 am CT). Be prepared to access this diagram at the time of your class presentation.

C. Prepare a current organizational or ministry setting diagram that includes yourself and other key leaders and makes use of symbols that indicate connection, disconnection, conflict, fusion, cut-off, etc. Please upload this on Canvas **prior to the start** of class on January 13, 2021 (10 am CT). Be prepared to access this diagram at the time of your class presentation.

3. Preparations for First Synchronous Session (Related to Expectation 1)

Students will respond to questions on Canvas, reflecting observations of the multigenerational impact demonstrated in Yaa Gyasi’s *Homegoing*.

4. Final Integrative Project/Paper (40% of course grade)

- a. Submission of a 17 to 20 page Project/Paper for DMin students. Due date and time will be determined during the first synchronous session of class. (1/13/21)
- b. Submission of a 10 to 12- page paper due by 11:59 pm CT on January 29, 2021 for M.Div. and D.A.S. students.

This paper will reflect the integration of the theoretical portions of this course, the experiential small group work done throughout the weeks, and form that learning into a research project in the student’s ministry setting.

Engage in a research project that incorporates ministry leadership in congregational systems that were outlined in this course:

1. Have a title: Choose an image or a description that defines the exploration you are facing.
2. Tell the story:

Talk about your family system, specifically of the family in which you were raised. Include key dynamics that you have observed related to triangles, over/under-functioning, closeness and distance, projection, sibling position and multigenerational process over at least three generations. Focus on your own functioning, how you relate to others in your system, how you manage anxiety and how you would describe your current “research projects” in your own family. In your description, make use of at least one primary text about natural systems theory, and at least two other references to the “second generation” thinking. How has this family process prepared you (or not) for the way that you function in leadership in your current setting? What do you need to include to further equip yourself?

3. Tell the intersection of your story with that of your ministry setting:

Choose an **adaptive** challenge facing a ministry setting in which you serve. Choose a situation in which your exercise of leadership could and perhaps does lead to some form of marginalization, diversion, seduction or attack.

Describe the challenge and its history and your involvement to date. What would you consider to be *the adaptive and technical aspects* of the challenge? What dynamics do you observe are operating that controls the conflict and maintains equilibrium? What would you describe as the *theological* themes present in the challenge? Think about the ways in which you might or have engaged in observing, orchestrating, thinking politically, giving the work back, holding steady, managing your hungers and sacred heart.

4. Making use of both family systems thinking and adaptive leadership, describe where you see the family process that you were a part of in past experiences intersecting with the adaptive challenge:

What specific family capacities do you guess would contribute toward your adaptive thinking and ability to engage in ways that are responsive and to observe neutrally when you are reactive?

What limits your ability to do that? What would you like to commit to so that you can you mobilize better capacities for your own maturity in leadership? How will you (or will you not) approach the adaptive challenge making use of your theological perspective, your family relationships and the approach of adaptive analysis? What plans do you have to hold yourself accountable to greater clarity of purpose and self and ability to manage a changing environment and changing church?

Course Grading & Feedback:

Dr. Ott will do her best to provide feedback and grading each week within the term and within 2 weeks of submission of final projects. All students will be invited to have a conversation around the final project via phone or video conference. Papers submitted via Canvas will be returned via Canvas, and papers submitted via email will be returned via email with comments and connections made to the course objectives. Any questions about the comments or grades should be directed to Dr. Ott via email.

Grading for this course:

DMin students will receive a Pass or Fail grade.

MDiv and DAS students will receive a letter grade.

Bexley Seabury requires a minimum grade of C to pass a course.								
Grade	Points	Description	Grade	Points	Description	Grade	Points	Description
A (4.00)	96-100	Superior/Mastery	A- (3.67)	90-95	Excellent	B+ (3.33)	87-89	Very Good
B (3.00)	84-86	Good (high)	B- (2.67)	80-83	Good (low)	C+ (2.33)	75-79	Acceptable (high)
C (2.00)	70-74	Acceptable/Adequate						
F/NC (0)	<70	Unacceptable (Fail/No Credit)						
A grade of "P" in a Pass/Fail course is equivalent to a grade of C or above.								

A Word about Assessment:

Bexley Seabury Seminary regularly evaluates the quality of our programs using a variety of data, including documents that are deposited into student portfolios. These portfolios consist of designated student work (artifacts) from each course, along with the instructor's graded artifact and a scored rubric that assesses the work in light of desired curricular outcomes. The designated assessment artifact for this course is the final project.

We use your portfolio to assess student learning (in the aggregate) and the effectiveness of our curricula in reaching desired goals and objectives. This process does not involve any further evaluation of your work for grading purposes. No identifying information will be included in any evaluation or report provided to our accreditors or other outside parties. For further information, see the Student Handbook. You may also talk with your instructor, your advisor, the Assessment Coordinator (Lelia Fry, lfry@bexleyseabury.edu), or the Academic Dean, (Terry DeLisio, tdelisio@bexleyseabury.edu).

Course Schedule:

Module One: Reading Week (January 3-9, 2021)

READ: Completion of reading texts (Gyasi, Creech and Heifetz for all; Richardson, Walters and Holley for MDiv and DAS; Bolsinger, Steinke and Galindo for DMin)

WATCH: “*Citizen Kane*” (1941 classic Drama/Mystery) by your favorite streaming service (1 hour, 59 minutes)

Module Two: January 11-13, 2021

Does Systems Thinking and Emotional Process Have to Do With Me?

Prior to Sync Session on January 13:

UPLOAD: Family and Organizational Diagram

REVIEW: Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing*, Creech (DMin, MDiv and DAS) Brown (DMin) and Richardson (MDiv)

RESPOND: The Dynamics of Multigenerational Impact (Canvas)

VIEW: Video posted on Canvas

READ: “Family Therapy’s Neglected Prophet” and “Chronic Anxiety and Defining a Self”

Then

WATCH (via favorite streaming service): *Schitt’s Creek* episodes: Season 1, Episode 1; Season 4, Episode 13; Season 6, Episode 14 (each episode is 25 minutes)

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 13, 10 am to 1 pm central

POST: Response to Sync Class Discussions

Module Three: January 14-16, 2021

Adaptive Challenges in the Middle of a Pandemic

Prior to Sync Class on January 15:

REVIEW: Heifetz and Linsky

READ: “Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis”

VIEW: Video on Canvas

ENGAGE: Preparations for Class Presentations and Review of Process

Then

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 15, 10 am to 1 pm central

POST: Response to Sync Class Discussions

Module Four: January 17-20, 2021

Chaos, Change and a Failure of Nerve

Prior to Sync Class on January 20:

REVIEW: Friedman (DMin), Richardson (MDiv and DAS)

READ: “Search for Solidity in an Age of Urgency” and “The Fallacy of the Non-Anxious Presence”

VIEW: Video on Canvas

ENGAGE: Preparations for Class Presentations and Review of Process

Then

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 20, 10 am to 1 pm central

POST: Response to Sync Class Discussions

Module Five: January 21-23, 2021*Adaptive Challenges are Not for the Faint of Heart*

Prior to Sync Class on January 22:

REVIEW: Bolsinger and Steinke (DMin), Walters and Holley (MDiv and DAS)

READ: "Leaving as Process"

VIEW: Video on Canvas

ENGAGE: Preparations for Class Presentations and Review of Process

Then

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 22, 10 am to 1 pm central

POST: Response to Sync Class Discussions on Canvas

Module Six: January 24-26, 2021*Bringing It All Together as a Research Project*

Prior to Sync Class on January 25:

VIEW: Video on Canvas

ENGAGE: Preparations for Class Presentations and Review of Process

Then

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 25, 2021

POST: Response to Sync Class Discussions on Canvas

Module Seven: January 27-29*For Such a Time as This*

Prior to our Final Sync Class on January 27:

VIEW: Video on Canvas

POST: Reflections on "Such a time as This" on Canvas

ENGAGE: Preparations for Class Presentations and Review of Process

Then

JOIN ON ZOOM: Synchronous Class on January 27

ENGAGE, WRITE and DOWNLOAD: Final Paper (MDiv and DAS) by 11:59 pm central January 29, 2021.

A Reminder:

ALL STUDENTS IN BEXLEY SEABURY COURSES ARE EXPECTED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION THAT IS PROVIDED ON CANVAS:

- ACADEMIC POLICIES AND FORMS;
- REQUESTS FOR WITHDRAWALS, EXTENSIONS, AND INCOMPLETES;
- TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSISTANCE,
- WRITING GUIDELINES AND ASSISTANCE;
- COURSE NETIQUETTE;
- PROHIBITION OF PLAGIARISM