

EdLead 593  
CRN 25751, Section 1  
**Colleges as Organizations**  
Fall 2007 – University of New Mexico  
Wednesdays, 4:30 – 7:00pm, 201 EDUC

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*Organization is always shaped by underlying images and ideas; we organize as we imaginize;  
and it is always possible to imaginize in many different ways.”*

- Morgan -

### **Course Goals**

1. To critically examine and apply organizational theories in relation to colleges and universities.
2. To develop the skill of “reading” and understanding organizations using multiple lenses or theoretical perspectives.
3. To use organizational and chaos theories as a basis for intelligent action in the task of leading and transforming colleges and universities.

### **Individual Needs**

Students with physical or learning disabilities or with other individual needs are encouraged to contact Alicia early in the semester if there are services or adaptations which would be helpful in accommodating your individual needs.

### **Course Expectations**

Morgan argues that in times of change “it is vital to be in touch with the assumptions and theories that are guiding our practice and to be able to shape and reshape them for different ends” (p. 364). This course will attempt to teach you this skill. It is designed to help you learn to see and analyze organizations through different “lenses” or perspectives (the skills of “reading,” framing and reframing). The class format will comprise analysis, discussion, and experiential learning activities designed to help you compare and contrast the usefulness of organizational theory for your practice as educational leaders. Students are expected to:

- a. Read all assigned materials and be prepared to apply them fully in class discussions and activities. Lectures are minimal. The quality and enjoyment of the class depends on the nature of our class interactions and that is the responsibility of all of us. Clearly, attendance is essential for lively participation. Although I realize that at times an absence cannot be helped, it is important to minimize absences. *Please notify me if you must miss a class prior to the session.*
- b. Utilize assignments as deep learning experiences and be ready weekly to share what you are learning and how this is or will affect your professional practice in higher education.

*The great danger in all decision-making  
is in concentrating on the things that are easy to find out  
and neglecting the things that are hard to find out.*  
- Kenneth Boulding -

### Course Texts

Allen, K. & Cherrey, C. (2000). *Systemic Leadership: Enriching the meaning of our work*. Lanham, Maryland: American College Personnel Association.

Morgan, G. (2006). *Images of organization, 3rd edition*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Wheatley, M. (2006). *Leadership and the new science, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

*Acknowledging the value of another perspective does not require commitment to it,  
but rather an attitude of allowing it life, seeing what happens as it grows.*  
- Shepherd -

### Course Schedule & Outline

#### *Introduction to the Study of Collegiate Organizations*

Class 1 <b>August 22</b>	Overview of the Course,  Establishing the Learning Community	Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No Readings for Today</li> </ul> <p>Come prepared to join in discussions, get to know everyone in the class and start learning together!</p>
Class 2 <b>August 29</b>	Understanding & Working within Complex Organizations	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Systemic Leadership</i>, Chapters 1,2,3,4 &amp; 5</li> </ul>
Class 3 <b>September 5</b>	Leadership Amidst Increasing Complexity	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Systemic Leadership</i> Chapters 6 &amp; 7</li> </ul> <p><b><i>New Ways of Working Essay due</i></b></p>

*The challenge facing modern managers is to become accomplished in the art of metaphor:  
to find appropriate ways of seeing, understanding,  
and shaping the situations with which they have to deal.*

- Gareth Morgan –

#### *Images of Organizations*

Class 4 <b>September 12</b>	Organizations as Machines	<i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 1,10, 11 then 2 (read in this order)  <i>Reflective Prompt: Machine.</i> “Under the influence of the same kind of mechanism that has helped make Taylorism so powerful, we often think about and treat ourselves as if we were machines” (p. 26). Using examples from your own life (both personal and professional)
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		<p>develop an argument that supports or refutes this statement. Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
<p>Class 5 <b>September 19</b></p>	<p>Organizations as Organisms</p>	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 3</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Human Relations.</i> Identify where in your past organizational experiences you have experienced the “informal organization” at work. Analyze how the values/functioning of the informal organization both helped and hindered the functioning of the formal organization. Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
<p>Class 6 <b>September 26</b></p>	<p>Organizations as Brains</p>	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 4</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Brains.</i> Identify and discuss what you see as the greatest barriers to and catalysts for the adoption of the five principles of the brain model to collegiate organizations. Be ready to share examples from your own experiences in higher education to ground this in practice. Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
<p>Class 7 <b>October 3</b></p>	<p>Organizations as Cultures</p>	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 5</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Cultures</i> “In the most fundamental sense, culture has a holographic quality. Characteristics of the whole must be encoded in all the parts. . . Organizationally, shared meanings provide alternatives to control through external procedures and rules” (p. 143). In your experience how have higher education professionals tried to invoke cultural change to influence campus issues or goals? When and why did it work well? When and why did it fail? Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
<p>Class 8 <b>October 10</b></p>	<p>Organizations as Political Systems</p>	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 6</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Political Systems.</i> The political metaphor encourages us to see how all collegiate organizational activity is interest based and to evaluate all aspects of higher education functioning with this in mind. How does this politicized view of collegiate organizations integrate with and/or stand in opposition to your philosophy of education and of educational leadership? Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
<p>Fall Break <b>October 11-14</b></p>		<p>Enjoy the Break!</p>

Class 9 <b>October 17</b>	Organizations as Psychic Prisons	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 7</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Psychic Prisons</i> “It is pointless to talk about creating ‘learning organizations’ or of trying to develop corporate cultures that thrive on change if the unconscious human dimension is ignored’ (p. 246). Develop an argument that supports or refutes this claim. Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
Class 10 <b>October 24</b>	Organizations as Instruments of Domination	<p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 9 &amp; Postscript</p> <p><i>Prompt: Instruments of Domination.</i> Reflect on forms of bias/discrimination that you have either experienced first hand in collegiate environments or that you have observed in institutions with which you have affiliated. Given your examples, indicate to what extent you agree and disagree with the argument posed in this chapter that organizations are used as instruments of domination to further the selfish interests of elites at the expense of others. Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>

*As chaos theory shows,  
if we look at such a system long enough and with the perspective of time,  
it always demonstrates its inherent orderliness.*

- Margaret Wheatley -

### **Chaos Theory, Leadership, and Change**

Class 11 <b>October 31</b> Class will meet from 2-4:30 today in a residence hall conference room tba	An Introduction to Chaos Theory	<p><i>Leadership &amp; the New Science</i> – Preface, Intro, Chapter 1,2,3 &amp; 4</p> <p><b>Organizational Analysis Paper Due</b> – be prepared to informally share some insights from your analysis in class</p>
Class 12 <b>November 7</b> Alicia at ASHE  Guest &/or student facilitated session	Chaos, Flux & Transformation: Self- Organizing Systems	<p><i>Leadership &amp; the New Science</i> –Chapters 5, 6 &amp; 7</p> <p><i>Images of Organizations</i> – Chapter 8</p> <p><i>Reflective Prompt: Chaos, Flux &amp; Transformation.</i> Identify the inputs, thru puts and outputs of your current assistantship or job site. What is the feedback loop? How does your site respond to/use this feedback? Be ready to discuss this in class.</p> <p><b>Case Study due:</b></p>
Class 13	Transforming Higher	<i>Leadership &amp; the New Science</i> –Chapters 8, 9, 10 & Epilogue

<b>November 14</b>	Education	<i>Case Study due:</i>
Class 14 <b>November 21</b>	No Class	Thanksgiving Break
Class 15 <b>November 28</b>	Implications for Life & Work	<i>Bring a short passage to read from your chaos paper and/or share some other aspect of your project and share your thoughts on implications for life &amp; for higher education organizations.</i>  <i>Chaos Projects Due</i>
Class 16 <b>December 5</b>	Wrap Up	Putting it all together – review readings, class session themes, and assignments. Come to class ready to discuss some of <b>what you’ve learned</b> from organizational theory that can assist you as a transformative educational leader.  Be ready as well to offer your suggestions about improving this course for future students in a discussion as well as through formal <b>course evaluations</b> .  <i>Return of Chaos Projects</i>

*Practice is never theory free.*

- Gareth Morgan –

## Learning Assignments

### Grading Percentages

Learning Assignment	Final Grade Percent	Due Date
New Ways of Working Essay	20	<b>September 5</b> in class or due electronically prior to class via Alicia’s e-mail
Case Study & Facilitation	25	Case Study and Facilitation due in class on date negotiated in second class
Organizational Analysis	35	<b>October 31</b> in class or due electronically prior to class via Alicia’s e-mail
Chaos Project	20	<b>November 28</b> in class

### *New Ways of Working Essay*

Develop a 3-5 page essay describing some of the ways you’ve observed and/or experienced collegiate and/or other organizations operating in traditional and new ways of working in higher education including relating, influencing change, learning, and leading as described by Allen and Cherrey in part II of *Systemic Leadership*. **Essay due September 5 in class or electronically prior to class.**

Evaluation: This essay will be evaluated by how well you offer examples of various ways of working in higher education from traditional and new ways according to the authors concepts. The paper will also be evaluated for attention to APS style as noted in this syllabus.

- To assist you in developing your writing as a graduate student, for this first paper, I will assign a grade and you can either accept the grade or revise and turn in by the date given for a better grade.

### **Case Study & Facilitation**

Individually or with a partner, develop a 1-page written case study using one of Morgan's 7 metaphoric images of organizations, bring enough copies for each member of the class including the instructor, and facilitate processing this case study in the class session on the day this metaphor is assigned. **We will determine partners and choose dates in the second class session.**

Case studies should be developed in accordance with the characteristics/principals outlined in the chapter on the specific metaphor chosen and be designed to assist your peers in processing these principals and metaphor in a simulated higher education context. You are encouraged to be creative! You will have **30 minutes to facilitate** the class in processing your case study.

Evaluation: Your case study and simulation/processing by the class will be evaluated primarily on how well you have incorporated characteristics/principals of this metaphor and facilitated their application in a higher education context.

### **Organizational Analysis Paper**

Organizational analysis involves a process of thinking about a situation, constructing and reconstructing it in different ways that seem consistent with its nature, so that one can develop a basis for intelligent action. Expected paper length is 15 to 20 pages **Paper due October 31 in class or electronically prior to class.** Come to class prepared to discuss your analysis and what you learned toward your practice as an educational leader.

*Organizational analysis involves a process of thinking about a situation, constructing and reconstructing it in different ways that seem consistent with its nature, so that one can say something that may provide a basis for intelligent action. If the analysis has been done well, the course of action which is appropriate for managing or changing the situation will become apparent.*

Morgan & Zohar

The purpose of this paper is to use the concepts and tools learned in this course to analyze a collegiate organization. We have studied organizations through concepts of systematic leadership and through the use of metaphor. You have been asked to "read" and understand organizations from these various metaphors/ lenses/ frames. Now it is time to put these new insights to use in a real organizational situation. You are to select a collegiate organization (department, division, academic college, university etc.) of your choice to serve as the basis of your analysis. In making your selection, identify an organization in which you have had enough experience to produce a complex analysis( i.e., one that you can assess using several metaphors).

The analysis of the collegiate organization you select will comprise three parts:

#### **I. A description of the organization and the situation being investigated (10%)**

In this description, you need to provide enough information for the reader to understand the nature of the organization and its context. For example, if you select a student affairs office please describe its mission, the services it offers, the number of staff, important historical data and any other pertinent background information that relates to your analysis. If you choose a college/university as a

whole, for analysis please provide the demographic, staffing, funding, curriculum and historical data that are relevant for the analysis. In essence, provide the information that the reader needs to get a “feel” for the organization and its issues.

This section should also offer a clear, concise statement of the problem, issue or situation you will be examining as a focus for your organizational analysis. This is a *critical dimension* of your paper that cannot be overemphasized. Recall that your objective in this course is always to demonstrate the **application** of sound theory to practical organizational issues. To assure that your analysis is firmly rooted in a specific situation or series of events, it is essential for you to explicitly identify this at the onset of your analysis. This will enable your reader to distinguish the direction and purpose of your analysis. In addition, it will provide you with a useful point of reference for determining what information about your organization should be included in your paper. *This section should not exceed three pages.*

## II. A diagnostic “read” of the organization (50%).

The point of the diagnostic read is for you to use the various metaphors/lenses we have studied to read and understand the educational organization you are analyzing. In this section of the paper it is your task to apply the concepts we have studied to practice, identifying in a detailed way how you “see” these metaphors in action in the organization and how these lenses help you make sense of the situation or issue you are analyzing. In conducting a diagnostic read, the purpose is to gain as comprehensive an understanding as possible of the organization and the issue you are studying and to remain open to many interpretations.

For this section of the paper you are to use **four of the lenses** to interpret what you see in the organization you have selected. Specifically, for each lens indicate the elements of the lens that you see operating in the case. For example, if you are using the political lens, show how interests, conflict, power and coalitions are manifest in the situation and how that influences the organization.

In Chapter 11 in Images of Organizations, Morgan provides examples of how a diagnostic read is done. He states: “A good diagnostic reading seeks to generate a comprehensive range of insights that allows us to discern the unfolding tendencies and character of a situation” (p. 350). A diagnostic read pushes us to address these questions: What is happening in the organization? What understandings or lessons can we glean from the perspective of this lens? How can we use the knowledge thus attained?

## III. A critical evaluation of the organization integrating key insights (40%)

While the diagnostic read asks you to look at the same situation from a number of different viewpoints and to remain open to numerous interpretations, the critical evaluation asks you to integrate those insights into a storyline (see Morgan, chapter 11). A storyline prioritizes the insights gained from the diagnostic reading. “An effective diagnostic reading and storyline hinges on an ability to play with multiple insights with a view to integrating them into a coherent pattern. . .that provides a basis for effective action” (Morgan, 2006, p. 357). The diagnostic read provides a basis for understanding; the critical evaluation suggests a course of action for the manager or leader.

In this section you are to use the insights gained from section two above to produce the best analysis or storyline that you can. This asks you to use your data and more importantly to judge its significance. For example, of the four lenses you used to examine your organization, which do you think is the dominant lens (the one which is better at capturing the dynamics of this organization) and which lenses do you think play strong supporting roles in explaining the functioning of this organization? Given this storyline, what course of action makes the most sense for the leader or manager who wishes to address a problem or to initiate change in the organization? *To reiterate, the*

*point of the critical evaluation is to move from analysis to action.* Your task here is to suggest appropriate action based on a solid integration of your insights gleaned from using the lenses.

It is expected that this paper can be completed in approximately 15 to 20 double-spaced, typewritten pages (12 pt. font) using correct APA style.

Evaluation criteria:

1. the paper fully addresses each of the three sections above
2. the paper demonstrates a good understanding of the metaphors used and an ability to apply them accurately to the educational case selected
3. the paper demonstrates an ability to integrate the insights gained from the metaphor analysis into a relevant course of action
4. the paper manifests the ability to link theory to practice, shows rigor in analysis and soundness in the conclusions reached
5. the complexity of the case (simple cases will not be evaluated as highly as cases that offer more depth)
6. the paper is completed in accurate APA style

### **Chaos Theory Project & Informal Sharing**

Develop an analysis and application of chaos theory using at least 3 of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, one must be written as noted below. What is the relevance of chaos theory for your personal life and for your professional work as an educational leader? Expected paper portion of this project is 6-8 pages and should be supplemented with other elements such as a poster, shadow box, performance, audio visual piece (3 minutes or less) etc.. **Due November 28 in class *Come to class on Nov. 28 prepared to creatively share*** some of your project and insights from this learning assignment with the class. You may wish to briefly share images, read a poem or act out your insights with the class.

#### Minimum Specifications:

- Explore the relevance of chaos theory for your work as a leader in higher education. This can include its relevance for both your personal and professional life.
- The paper should incorporate the accurate use of three key elements of chaos theory, specifically, **butterfly effects, fractals, and strange attractors.**
- Make clear connections (in the paper) between these three concepts, your own leadership and ideas in *Systemic Leadership* and *Images of Organizations*. Be sure to provide citations and references.
- Students are encouraged to be creative in the approach to this paper. The use of your own metaphor to capture your sense-making about the relevance of chaos theory for your professional and/or personal life would certainly fit with the spirit and substance of this course!
- Length of the paper should be 6 to 8 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font using correct APA style.