

Working with transition and change

Course ID: SKSM.07FA.SKSL.107

Instructor: Helen Bishop

Purpose

The world we live in presents constant change at an ever-increasing rate, and those who lead faith communities, congregations and nonprofit organizations are faced with the necessity of working effectively with transition and change. This course will present methods of change management, guidance on self-management, information on how groups respond to transition, and case studies for analysis.

Format and Approach

Participants will read materials on various aspects of change management, select and demonstrate self-management practices that deepen spiritual development in times of transition and change, analyze case studies for evidence of group and organizational responses to transition and change, and prepare a case study of a nonprofit organization demonstrating effective change management. The course is 7 weeks long. Each of the 7 units includes assigned readings and a bibliography of selected reference materials. Each unit includes a lecture by the instructor designed to support and illustrate the reading assignments as well as encourage dialogue. The course will include one required on-line chat session.

Students will log in periodically throughout the week to post assignments, review materials posted by other students, and participate actively in an ongoing discussion. Students are encouraged to engage with the course materials and each other, creating a learning community as the course progresses.

Booklist

Please note that all titles are available from www.amazon.com.

Other on-line booksellers such as Powells, Borders and Barnes & Noble may also have these titles in stock.

Branson, Mark Lau (2004). Memories, Hopes and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change. Washington, DC: Alban Institute. ISBN 1-56699-288-5.

Campbell, Dennis G. (2000). Congregations as Learning Communities: Tools for Shaping Your Future. Washington, DC: Alban Institute. ISBN 1-56600-237-0.

Heifetz, Ronald A., and Linsky, Marty (2002). Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading. Boston: Harvard University Press. ISBN 1-57851-437-1.

Houff, William H. (1994). Infinity in your Hand: A Guide for the Spiritually Curious. Boston: Skinner House. ISBN 1-55896-311-1.

Rendle, Gilbert R. (1998). Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders. Washington, DC: Alban Institute. ISBN 1-56600-187-0.

Steinke, Peter L. (2006). Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What. Washington, DC: Alban Institute. ISBN 1-56699-328-8.

Syllabus

Unit 1: Using systems thinking to examine transition and change
Sept 4—9

Students will introduce themselves by posting a brief bio and photo, create an action learning plan for this course, and use systems theory to examine issues related to transition and change in congregations and nonprofit organizations.

Unit 2: Effective behaviors situations involving transition and change
Sept 10—16

Students will assess behaviors that help move a congregation or nonprofit organization either toward or away from working effectively with transition and change.

Unit 3: Appreciative Inquiry in transition and change
Sept 17—23

Students will use Appreciative Inquiry to help a congregation or nonprofit organization plan for effective transition and change.

Unit 4: Case study involving transition and change
Sept 24—30

Students will continue to use Appreciative Inquiry as a resource to analyze a case study of a congregation or nonprofit organization involved in transition and change.

Unit 5: Predictable times of transition and change
Oct 1—7

Students will examine predictable times of transition and change in congregations and nonprofit organizations, and develop ways of keeping themselves grounded and centered.

Unit 6: Dealing with areas of vulnerability as a lay leader
Oct 8—14

Students will assess ways in which leaders are more vulnerable during periods of transition and change, and plan ways to deal effectively with areas of vulnerability.

Unit 7: Using a case study to plan for transition and change
Oct 15—21

Students will analyze a case study of a congregation or nonprofit organization involved in transition and change, and describe effective

leadership in which the organization is strengthened during this important time. s