

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>George Fox University</b> <b>Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership</b></p>
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EDFL 653

*Organizational Change and Decision Making*

Fall 2007: 9/24 to 11/30

On-line format

2-semester hours

ON-LINE LOGIN: <http://foxtale.georgefox.edu>

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## Course Syllabus

### **Organizational Change and Decision Making**

#### **Course Description:**

This course examines the principles of decision-making and policy formation, implementation, and analysis in the context of the educational system. Participants will explore change and diffusion of innovations, as well. Topics include: models for effective decision making; analysis of the influence of psychological, societal, and institutional factors in organizational decisions; and communicating decisions effectively to organizational stakeholders.

#### **Forward:**

This learning experience should provide you with the opportunity for personal and professional growth. Regarding our work together, we will do our best to work together and will respect others as individuals and as educators. I believe it is important that we all commit ourselves to an appropriate standard of professional conduct. The following statements will acquaint you with my general policy about level of participation and performance. I want to be faithful to these standards, as well, and expect you to point out to me if I am not as prompt in my responses to you or as thorough in my work as I ought to be. Change is a pervasive factor in our work as educators. The strength of our commitments and the worthiness of the standards to which we commit ourselves are the cornerstones for success in dealing with change.

#### **Objectives:**

As a result of this course student will:

1. Understand the process of making decisions in organizations,
2. Understand factors in organizations that relate to change,
3. Practice several process tools for facilitating change successfully in educational organizations, and
4. Examine personal attributes that contribute to or interfere with successful implementation of change.

#### **Assumptions:**

My assumption is that participants in this course are professionals involved in and committed to their own professional growth and development. Therefore, I will assume that all of us are concerned about the quality of the work and interactions we share in this course. Let us strive towards standards that reflect our commitment to excellence as professionals. The communication, research, and products of our efforts should all reflect this commitment to excellence. I ask you to hold your colleagues in this course (including the professor) with at least the same regard as you would your coworkers in your local community.

**Relevance:**

The objectives for this course relate to state and national standards and George Fox University educator conceptual framework and dispositions in the following ways:

**Alignment Matrix**

Course Objective	TSPC Standards OAR 584-017-0261	National ELCC Standards	GFU Conceptual Framework Element *	GFU Disposition Addressed **	Course Activity Assessed
1. Understand the process of making decisions in organizations	1.a; 2.a,b; 3.a,b,c; 4.a; 6.a,b	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2	TC PJ	CP	Hall & Hord Discussion Reflection Paper
2. Understand factors in organizations that relate to change	1.a; 2.a,b; 3.a,b,c; 4.a; 6.a,b	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2	TC PJ	CP	Hall & Hord Discussion Reflection Paper
3. Practice several process tools for facilitating change successfully in educational organizations	1.b,c,d; 2.a,b,c; 3.a,b,c; 4.b,c; 5.a,b,c; 6.b,c	1.2,1.3,1.4, 2.1,2.2, 2.3,3.1, 3.2,3.3, 4.2,4.3, 5.1,5.2, 5.3,6.2,6.3	TP PJ	CI	Final Project
4. Examine personal attributes that contribute to or interfere with successful implementation of change	1.d,e; 4.a,b,c; 5.a,b,c	1.d; 1.e; 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3	TP PJ	CI CC	Robbins Discussion Reflection Paper

\* GFU Conceptual Framework: Think Critically (TC); Promote Justice (PJ); Transform Practice (TP)

\*\* GFU School of Education Dispositions: Commitment to ... Courage (CC); Integrity (CI); Seeking Multiple Perspectives (CP)

**Structure:**

Our inquiry will take the form of five sessions in which you will do readings and post reflective writing and responses to your colleagues in the online format. You and your prior knowledge are an important part of our learning experience together. Thus, your active participation in this class is necessary. To prepare you for the online class sessions, our virtual classroom, you will need to do these readings and participate thoughtfully in the class discussions.

**Course Requirements:**

I will grade the course using the following three indicators: a) standard of work, b) timeliness, and c) participation. The following matrix portrays the grading scheme which is also reflected in the point allocation. I encourage you to express any concerns or questions regarding the grading scheme to me as soon as possible.

Level of Performance	Standard of Work	Timeliness	Level of Participation
Excellent (A)	Of professional quality. Written products are	All work is	Level of participation in

	complete, yet concise. Language is clear and focused. Form, style and appearance would be acceptable to a professional audience. Length of products will meet published standards. Suggestions for improving drafts are accepted and incorporated into documents.	completed within the established deadlines.	discussion and other communication with colleagues exceeds the minimum expectation. Discussion is to the point, and clear, but may be informal.
Good (B)	Of professional quality. Products may not reflect the highest standard, but will still be well accepted by professional colleagues. Slight problems with style, appearance, length and form will be noted. Suggestions for improvement will generally be adopted.	Most work, including all major assignments will be completed within established deadlines.	Level of participation in discussion and other communication will meet the minimum expectations.
Fair (C)	Approaching professional quality. Products will not reflect high standards, with difficulty noted in length, form, language usage, etc. Suggestions for improvement are ignored.	Due dates are not met.	Level of participation does not meet the minimum expectations.
Poor (F)	Disregard for professional standards. Conventions of form and style are ignored. No regard for length requirements. Failure to complete work. No response to suggestions for improvement.	Due dates are not met.	Participation is nonexistent, or nearly so.

The course has three basic requirements:

- Session-by-session meaningful participation and completion of assignments,
- A research assignment or alternative final project (due by 8am, December 3),
- Personal reflection on change and decision making (due by 8am, December 6).

All assignments are to be submitted electronically unless previously arranged.

### Grading

Activity or Assignment	Points
Unit Discussion and Participation 5 units @ 7 points	35
Reflections	25
Research Study or Alternate Activity	40
Total	100

**Session Discussion and Participation:** Course units are two weeks or less long (session one is less than one week long). Each session will consist of activities that encourage analysis of concepts from the text and other sources, provide building blocks for the completion of course products, and encourage interaction amongst the participants. While the course is not delivered in a real-time format, it will still be possible to create an ongoing discussion regarding concepts and issues as long as we are all prepared and committed. I do expect that each of the participants will make appropriate contributions to the overall flow of learning in the course, just as would happen in a good face-to-face discussion. Specific requirements related to session participation will be presented for each session (lesson) of the course.

**One of the following two Final Project choices (due by 8am December 3):**

Focused Research Project: Each participant will design, conduct and report on the findings of an abbreviated research study. The study must investigate change and/or decision making. A brief proposal will be reviewed and approved by the instructor. Consider doing interviews with several colleagues, conducting a survey of teachers or parents, or reviewing documents. There are many possibilities, but a key here is to be brief and very focused. Most of these projects focus on a particular type of change or a particular type of organization or group. The study will be presented in a written document which could either take the form of a journal article or a research report. Length of this document should not exceed 2500 words. Sections of the document should include

- Introduction and statement of the problem,
- Review of the literature (based on texts and other course readings),
- Methodology,
- Findings, and
- Summary, Conclusions (and recommendations, if applicable).

Please do not overdo this assignment. Remember, this is a two semester-hour course and there is no need to go overboard. The assignment is designed to allow you to explore change or decision making through a focus that is of interest to you. Do not try to solve “all the problems of the world” or write your dissertation.

## **OR**

Student’s Choice Assignment: Participants will select one option from the following list:

1. A parable or some other type of story which illustrates change and decision making.
2. A case study which describes and analyzes a specific example of change or decision making.
3. A media production (film, PowerPoint-type, musical composition, or other) which serves to illustrate change and/or decision making.
4. An essay which examines change and decision making. This essay could be a policy document which describes an issue and examines the possible policy options. The document could be a marketing device which is constructed to sell change and a particular decision to a group of stakeholders. For example, the document could be presenting a new curriculum program for adoption consideration, a proposed local bond for capital improvements in a school, or a recruiting program for a school.
5. Other options: participants may propose to me other types of products which they believe illustrate change or decision making.

Each option in the Student’s Choice Assignment must also include two addenda:

- a) a teaching guide, and
- b) an assessment scheme.

a) The teaching guide should include a lesson plan and supporting documents to use the student’s choice product as a teaching device. The lesson plan must contain (at a minimum) the following elements:

- Objective and goals for the lesson;
- Contextual information regarding the students and the environment (age level, organization, institution or school in which the students are situated, purpose of the lesson and whatever background is needed to provide rationale for the lesson);

- Resources needed to conduct the lesson;
- Teaching plan, with activities briefly described;
- Assessment (how will you determine that the students met the objective?)

b) The assessment scheme for the Student's Choice Assignment must describe the standards and measures by which the product is to be evaluated. That is, if you are writing and producing a song about change, what is the measure by which the music should be evaluated and what is the standard for "excellence" and "acceptability"? By allowing great flexibility in the type of product you will be creating, I need some help in determining the quality of the product. Refer to the general standards of professional quality that I have presented in the Policies section of this syllabus as a set of broad guidelines.

**Reflection** (due 8am December 6): Participants will be asked to reflect on their own experience with change and decision making. Guidelines for the reflection paper will be provided by the instructor. The reflection paper should address personal, departmental or group, and organizational change and decision making. The intent of the assignment is to allow for an examination of personal reaction to change and how each person responds to change of various types. In addition, factors contributing to decision-making should be identified. I expect that each participant will use examples from their personal and professional life. Specific examples regarding schools, families, churches, community groups, professional organizations and employment situations are encouraged. This paper should be between 900-1500 words.

This assignment is due by **8am, December 6**. You should be able to begin building your reflection paper during session three and four, as I believe that the readings should be helpful in prompting your personal reflections. Since I am asking for a personal reflection, I will allow for great latitude in the presentation and content of the paper. This will not be assessed as a scholarly paper. What I would expect that the depth and quality of your reflections are evident via the following:

1. Length meets the required range;
2. Reflections will be personal, however, you should use concepts from our texts in "explaining" or "framing" your paper;
3. An examination of your personal decision-making with either a case study or a more general look at factors involved with decision making is required.

Refer to the rubric above for other grading criteria.

### **Required Readings:**

*Implementing Change: Patterns, Principles and Potholes*, Hall and Hord, Allyn and Bacon, 2001, 0-205-16222-3

*Decide and Conquer: Make Winning Decisions and Take Control of Your Life.* , Stephen Robbins, Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2004, 0-13-142501-3

Additional readings may be assigned in selected units and will be available electronically.

### **Course Schedule:**

<p>Session 1</p> <p>September 24 through September 28</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Introductory Session (Session 1)</b></p> <p>Monday, September 24, 2006 through September 28 (this is a five-day session)</p> <p>Our introductory session will allow for participants to get acquainted with another, with the course, content and requirements. This will be a relaxing week so please enjoy it! Specific goals for the session include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each participant should prepare a one-two paragraph biographical statement and submit it to the Biographies discussion area by September 28 (Thursday). Please include, at a minimum, an explanation of your picture (see below), your current professional role, your geographic location, and your experience as an educator. You are welcome to include personal information, as well. Please greet one another as folks begin posting their statements in the discussion area.</li> </ol> <p>Participants should also post in FoxTale a photo of themselves. This is done in “My Profile.” Additional photos may be attached to the biography in the Biographies forum area. The photo(s) may include family or friends or colleagues but must include you also. This will help make our online interaction more personal and effective. Please do not post a picture of your dog unless you are also prominent in the picture. (I like dogs very much but I do not discuss complex issues with them or email them.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Obtain the textbooks for the course. See the course syllabus for textbook information. Please obtain books from your local or internet-based sources, or from the Fox bookstore which will send them to you and match prices. Reading assignments will begin in session two.</li> <li>3. Read the course syllabus and related information on the course site. Post a brief (1-2 paragraphs) statement expressing your personal interest about the change process and decision-making to the Course Introductions discussion area by September 26 (Wednesday). Please read your colleagues’ statements as well and respond to a minimum of two by end-of-the-day Friday, September 28.</li> </ol>
<p>Session 2</p> <p>September 29 through October 14</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2</b></p> <p>Saturday, September 29 – Sunday, October 14. By the beginning of this session, you should have obtained the textbook and have completed the assignments for session one. You should begin exploring ideas for your final assignment and make a statement of intent to the group by the end of this session. As with all the sessions, successful completion of this session is worth seven (7) points.</p> <p>Session Expectations and Assignments:</p>

1. Read the session two reading assignments. In *Decide and Conquer*, read chapters 1-11. In *Implementing Change* read chapters 1-2. Try and have this reading assignment completed by about October 7 so that you can reflect on the reading and develop discussion postings (addressed below).
2. Prepare **two** brief (one-three paragraphs) discussion postings and place them in the appropriate discussion area by October 7.
  - a. In response to your reading of *Decide and Conquer*, respond to **one** of the following and place it in the “Decision Making” discussion area by October 7.
    - Summarize Robbins' scheme for rational decision making and then present barriers to rational decision making. Only summarize the points, do not analyze or react to them. **Or**
    - Based on your reading of the Robbins text and completion of the assessments provided in Part two, present your personality profile and how it might influence how you make decisions.
  - b. In response to your reading of *Implementing Change*, address the following prompt and post your response in the “Context for Change” discussion area by October 7.
    - Briefly describe several (two or three) key change principles, as presented by the authors; and then discuss, from your point of view, why you believe these principles are important.
3. By October 15, please respond to at least two colleagues in each of the two decision areas by presenting a brief statement which either affirms or challenges their view, and/or compares or contrasts their statements with others.
  - Begin thinking about your final assignment. As you reflect on how you react to change, think about your experience in groups that have experienced change, or anticipate leading change in your organization, consider what aspects of change and decision making are of interest or bring concern. By October 15, post a brief statement of intent in the “Final Project Ideas” discussion area, in which you introduce possible format and concepts that you will explore. During session three, we will have a chance to reflect on one another's ideas and hopefully bring additional clarity for each of you in the type of final project you will complete.

### Session Three

Session three of our course begins on Monday, October 15 and concludes on Sunday, October 28. The primary activity in Session three is to read and respond to our two textbooks and to interact with colleagues regarding the concepts. Session expectations and assignments include:

1. Read Part Three in *Decide and Conquer* (chapters 12-26), which presents common errors and biases in decision making. In addition, read Part Two in *Implementing Change* (chapters 3-5). Be prepared to respond to *Decide and Conquer* by October 20, and *Implementing Change* by October 24, as described below.
2. Please read the following assignment regarding *Decide and Conquer* carefully, as it requires each participant to respond to a particular section of this session's reading. By **October 20**, post in the "Decision Making Errors" discussion area a brief (2-4 paragraph summary) of your assigned chapter. Assume that the summary would be used to share with a colleague who has no knowledge of this book, and is interested in learning about some common errors in decision-making. Do not critique, praise, or editorialize, just present a summary of Robbins' material. The chapters are assigned as follows:
  - a. Rhonda Bonham: Chapters 12 & 13
  - b. Katie Jorgensen: Chapters 14 & 15
  - c. Anna Keifer: Chapters 16 & 17
  - d. Tina Mondale: Chapters 18 - 20
  - e. Jim Sours: Chapters 21 & 22
  - f. Ken Van Meter: Chapters 23 & 24
  - g. Mystery participant: Chapters 25 & 26

As always, provide a brief response to several colleagues in this discussion area. You may editorialize in your responses. Our goal is gain a broad understanding of the Robbins's concepts and their applications.

3. By **October 24** share your impressions of *Implementing Change* by responding to **one** of the following:
  - a. Briefly describe Innovation Configurations (IC) and IC Mapping and your impressions of the utility of this concept, **or**
  - b. What light does the concept of Stages of Concern shed for you on understanding why change is often resisted or abandoned?

Your impressions should be posted (one-two paragraphs) in the "Change: Part Two" discussion area by **October 24**. Interactions with your colleagues are expected during the rest of the week. You should discuss the implications of this model. Interaction with the thoughts of your colleagues is an essential part of this activity.

4. You should begin developing your reflection paper.

From the syllabus,  
 "the reflection paper should address personal, departmental or group, and organizational change and decision making. The intent of the

Session 3  
 October 15  
 through  
 October 28

<p>Session 4</p> <p>October 29 through November 11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session Four</b></p> <p>Session four of our course begins on Monday, October 29 and concludes on Sunday, November 11. The primary activity in Session Four is to read and respond to our two textbooks and to interact with colleagues regarding the concepts. Your Reflection Paper and your Final Project should also be developed during this session. The session expectations and assignments include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Part Four (Chapters 27-36) in <i>Decide and Conquer</i> and Chapters 9-10 in <i>Implementing Change</i>.</li> <li>2. By <b>November 4</b> respond to <b>one</b> of the following discussion prompts and by <b>November 11</b>, please respond to at least four of your colleagues' postings. Post your statement in the "Applications" discussion area.       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Select one or two chapters from <i>Decide and Conquer</i> and create a brief teaching device based on that chapter. That is, select one of the key concepts from part four and develop an example, a brief case, or an exercise that you could have a group work through to learn key points about the concept and reflect on or apply it. If you have visions for a large project, just present an outline or a summary of what that project would look like. Or, you could produce a handout that would be used in your lesson. Please provide brief contextual information, as well, such as grade level and cultural or social arena in which the lesson would occur. <b>Or</b></li> <li>b. Write a brief essay on "The Leader as Change Agent, the Change Agent as Leader." Use concepts from Part Three of <i>Implementing Change</i> and convey the key points about leadership and change in your essay. Try and limit the essay to a maximum of 600 words.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Your Reflections Assignment is due soon (<b>12/6</b>). This might be a good time to begin developing the paper. Since I am asking for a personal reflection, I will allow for great latitude in the presentation and content of the paper. This will not be assessed as a scholarly paper. What I would expect that the depth and quality of your reflections are evident via the following:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Length meets the required range (900-1500 words)</li> <li>b. Reflections will be personal, however, you should use concepts from our texts in "explaining" or "framing" your paper.</li> <li>c. An examination of your personal decision-making, with either a case study or a more general look at factors you involved with decision making is a required element.</li> <li>d. Please also include a case or example, <b>or</b> your general reaction to organizational change.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
	<p><b>Session Five</b></p>

<p>Session 5</p> <p>November 12 through November 30</p>	<p>Session five of our course begins on Monday, November 12 and concludes on Friday, November 30. This is the concluding session of the course and is about three weeks long. Your final project may be submitted up to December 3. The project and reflection must be submitted electronically (or received by me if sent via postal mail) by the due dates. The session expectations and assignments include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the concluding chapters in your textbooks. Read the epilogue (chapter 37) in <i>Decide and Conquer</i> and chapters 9-11 in <i>Implementing Change</i>.</li> <li>2. By <b>November 19</b>, post a brief statement in the Personal Decisions discussion area that responds to the following: List one or two key learnings and/or personal reflections regarding group or individual decision making that you will take away from the course. As always, interact with your colleagues regarding their statements.</li> <li>3. Send me your Reflection Paper by December 6. Please submit this paper by email attached as a Word document.</li> <li>4. By Wednesday, <b>November 28</b>, post a 1-3 paragraph statement in the Summarizing Change, Final Project discussion area which provides a brief summary or highlight(s) from your final project. You will not be posting your complete project for the group. You are not required to, although you are encouraged to also post an additional brief personal reflection regarding the last section of your reading in <i>Implementing Change</i> in the same discussion area.</li> <li>5. Submit your final project to me, Steve, via course mail or email by <b>December 3</b> at the latest! Early projects are appreciated. (Postal mail is acceptable as well, however, you must mail your assignment in time to arrive in my office by <b>12/3</b>). As stated in the syllabus, the final assignment is worth 40 points and should reflect the guidelines in the syllabus.</li> <li>6. Please evaluate the course sometime between <b>11/30 and 12/15</b>. Your prompt, anonymous and honest feedback about the course is very helpful to me in improving my efforts. You may complete the course evaluation by following the link on the course homepage.</li> </ol>
<p>Week of December 3</p>	<p><b><i>Submit Final Work</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Project due by 8am December 3</li> <li>• Reflection Paper due by 8am December 6</li> <li>• Online course evaluation finish by December 15</li> </ul>

Letter Grade	Points
A	100 – 93.5
A-	93.4 – 90
B+	89.9 – 87.5

B	87.4 – 83.5
B-	83.4 – 80
C+	79.9 – 77.5
C	77.4 – 73.5
C-	73.4 – 70
D+	69.9 – 67.5
D	67.4 – 63.5
D-	63.4 – 60
F	59.9 – 0

Formal Reflection Paper Assessment					
Score	Scale	Organization	Detail	Content	Mechanics
22-25	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly states ideas.</li> <li>Clear focus in direction.</li> <li>Draws Reader into context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific examples provided.</li> <li>Details are consistent with theme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content has a balanced and natural flow of thoughts and ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One or two minor errors.</li> <li>No major errors.</li> <li>Good use of mixed resources.</li> </ul>
19-21	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States ideas.</li> <li>Focus is well directed.</li> <li>Reader is not encumbered by context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples are adequate.</li> <li>Details generally align with examples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content has balance of one or two consistent thoughts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few minor errors</li> <li>No more than one major error.</li> <li>Good use of mixed resources.</li> </ul>
14-18	Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main ideas are stated and may not be clear.</li> <li>Focus strays at times.</li> <li>Reader is sometimes encumbered by context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few examples given to support text.</li> <li>Details are provided but are unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content is rough but maintains some focus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some minor and some major errors</li> <li>Some errors cause reader confusion.</li> <li>Adequate use of mixed resources.</li> </ul>
1 - 13	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main ideas are unclear and vague.</li> <li>Strays often and does not stay focused.</li> <li>Reader is confused by content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few if not examples are given.</li> <li>Details are clumsy and hard to understand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content lacks focus and points are not fully developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many major errors.</li> <li>Errors cause consistent confusion.</li> <li>Poor use of mixed resources.</li> </ul>