Course Title:
Creative Problem Solving

Course Number:
HR 5073-221

Course Description:
Challenges of living and working in the 21st century make it particularly important to develop adaptable and flexible thinking. The accelerating pace of change calls for new responses. This course explores the nature of creativity and creative problem solving from a variety of perspectives. A framework for creative problem solving (CPS) is presented blending theory and real-life application. Particular attention is given to defining and identifying problems, attitudes for thinking creatively and critically, creative problem solving tools and techniques, conceptual blocks to creativity, cases studies, and design and customization of CPS for your personal and professional use. We are all creative! I hope you find the course useful and fun!

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
Dates: September 15-20, 2015
Location: Naples, Italy. See Site Director for classroom site.
Hours: Tuesday - Friday 6:00-9:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: August 17, 2015

Site Director:
Terry Wilson. Phone: 39-081-568-6672; DSN 626-6672; Fax: 39-081-568-6671; DSN 626-6671; E-mail: apnaples@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Melinda M. Howard, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: 6232 Olde Harwick Circle
Oklahoma City, OK 73162
Telephone Number: (405) 603-7703 (home)
(405) 820-0218 (cell)
E-mail Address: mhoward6232@gmail.com
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail and phone to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session or by arrangement.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK, and can be ordered online, by phone, by email, or by fax. Ordering online at http://www.bkstr.com/oklahomastore/home is strongly recommended – students can track the status of their order within 48 hours. If an order has not been shipped within three days, students can contact the Follett textbook manager by phone (405) 325-3511, (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or email 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com. Phone orders (ask for the textbook manager and identify yourself as an Advanced Programs student) can be placed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). Fax orders can be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Text prices are available online.


3. Supplemental material for class activities will be provided during the course.

Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

**Instructional Strategies:**

We will utilize a variety of means to accomplish our objectives, including class discussion, video, supplementary handouts, group work, lecture, case studies, and practice.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon course completion, students should be able to:

1. Define creativity, different types of problems, creative problem solving, creative thinking and critical thinking (productive thinking), and conceptual blocks;

2. Integrate concepts of creativity and creative problem solving within individual, group/team, organizational, and societal/cultural contexts;

3. Identify and describe stages in the CPS process and practice with various CPS tools and techniques; and

4. Apply the CPS framework (content/process) to a student-identified problem or issue flexibly and successfully.

**Course Outline:**

Note: Subject to modification to meet class needs

**First session:**

Introductions; overview of CPS; setting the stage for CPS; problem identification; heuristic for problem solving; discussion of assignment 1; practice

**Second session:**

Relationships between attitudes, characteristics, and environment to creative thinking; blocks to creativity; discuss assignment 2; practice and or video

**Third session:**

Blocks, continued; framework for problem solving; problem solving languages, techniques, discuss assignment 3; practice and or video

**Fourth session:**

Overview and key issues in planning; design and application of CPS Principles; practice and or video

**Fifth session:**

Review key CPS principles; practice and or video; individual presentations

**Sixth session:**

Individual presentations continued; course wrap up activity
Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Pre-course reading assignments:

Note: Both texts should have been read before the first class meeting. The two textbooks complement and supplement each other, so, rather than reading one book and then the other from beginning to end, it is recommended that you read them as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Topics Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCPS Chap.1 - 5; Adams Chap. 1 – 6</td>
<td>Setting the stage; Problem identification; Heuristic for problem solving; Attitude, Characteristics, Environment; Blocks/Barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCPS Chap. 6 - 7; Adams Chap. 7</td>
<td>Generating solutions Tools, Techniques – Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCPS Chap. 8 – 10</td>
<td>Planning Overview, Key Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCPS Chap. 11 - 12; Adams Chap. 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Design and Application of CPS – Individual, Group, Organizational Level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Practice at least one exercise in each chapter of the SCPS text. Bring your practice activities to class to share with everyone. Enjoy!

Pre-course Written assignments:

With the exception of the final paper, all are due at the first class meeting on Tuesday. Be prepared to discuss them in class as we proceed.

Jumpstart your brain:

Three fun exercises to free your brain and get you thinking creatively without using your texts. This is to be one document in 3 parts (a, b, and c below.) Total Length: 2-3 double spaced pages Value: 15 points

a. Aha! Brainstorming Activity (Empty the Glass): A glass of water is placed on a card table. Write down at least 10 ways to empty the glass without touching it or knocking it over, OR create and write down 10 new names for a light green paint color, OR write down 10 new ways to hold shoes on feet.

b. A Stroke of Genius: Think of a time or situation when you came up with a unique idea or solution to a personal problem or a problem in your workplace. In about one double spaced page, discuss the incident and your thoughts on the outcome(s), e.g. reactions of other people, what you learned, rewards, importance, etc.

c. Eureka! 1) Cite and write a definition for serendipity; 2) Describe one historical event, e.g. an invention that had something to do with serendipity; and 3) Has anything serendipitous ever happened to you---personally, professionally, both? Describe.

Improving Your Creative Ability:

Address questions 6.6, 6.9, and 6.16 on pgs. 144 & 145 of the SCPS textbook. Total length 2 – 3 pages. Be prepared to discuss in class. Total Length 2 – 3 pages Value: 15 points

Creative Practicing & Essay:

One document in 2 parts. Total length 4 – 5 pages Value 20 points

Part 1 – Creative Practicing: Use both texts. As you read both texts, take time to practice the exercises, games, puzzles, and problems (at least 5 from each book, not all from the same chapter). As you work through the activities, document your progress in the format of a log. Include the name of the activity, description of activity and process, why you chose it, indication of where you were, time of day, what you learned, and how you might apply the learning. Then, prepare a 1 page report summarizing your overall practicing experience.
Part 2 – Essay on Blocks: In about 3 – 4 pages, (1) write an overall description of types of blocks to creativity as explained by Adams, and (2) address which creative block is the biggest barrier to your creative thinking. How might you overcome this block? Be prepared to discuss in class.

Putting it All Together… Application Paper and Presentation:

You will plan, design, develop, and work through a personal or professional issue or problem using heuristic, concepts, tools, techniques and other relevant concepts covered in your texts. Problem solving stages and concepts should be clearly identified. The complete paper will be 6 – 8 double spaced pages, plus reference page. APA style is preferred and writing skill consistent with graduate level work is expected. You will present your project in about a 15-minute presentation using powerpoint, charts, models, or other appropriate visual aids, and turn in a one-page summary of your project to the instructor at the time of your presentation. Each presentation will be followed by student critiques. The completed Application Paper should be emailed to me as a Word document attachment no later than Friday, Oct. 2. Due: Presentation: Sept. 19 or 20 - Value 5 points; Paper: Oct. 2 - Value: 20 points

Attendance and participation:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions, arrive on time, and participate fully in class discussion, practice, and other class activities (see “Policies and Notices” below.) Due: ongoing throughout class, Value: 25 points

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc... in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at http://studentconduct.ou.edu/

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Melinda Millsap Howard, Ph.D.

Education

• Ph.D. Adult and Continuing Education, University of Oklahoma
• M.Ed. Counseling Psychology, University of Central Oklahoma
• B.A. Sociology, Oklahoma City University

Current Positions

• Owner, Howard Consulting
• Adjunct Associate Professor for University of Oklahoma Advanced Programs since 1985

Previous Experience

• Director of Organization and Clinical Development, Saint Thomas Health in Nashville
• Manager of Learning and Development, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
• Manager of Organization and Clinical Development, Deaconess Hospital
• Consultant for Personnel Decisions International (PDI)
• Director of Learning Resources, Integris Health
• Co-developer of a National Executive Leadership Institute for vocational rehabilitation administrators
• Senior Consultant for a management training and consulting organization for nonprofits
• Training Coordinator for the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management
• Conducted workshops and classes for business, government, education, financial, and health care organizations for over thirty years.
• Experienced facilitator of team building, visioning, and strategic planning.

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

• HR 5043 Seminar in Organization Change & Development
• HR 5113 Stress Management
• HR 5153 Human Emotions
• HR 5183 Issues in Human Relations Training

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

• Organization behavior, change, and development;
• Human resource development
• Performance consulting
• Team building and facilitation skills
• Adult learning theory and training design
• Interpersonal and intrapersonal skills

Representative Honors and Awards Received

• Selected as Outstanding Board Member and Outstanding Chapter Member (twice) for the Central Oklahoma Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development
• Nominated for “Manager of the Year” three times at Integris Health

Major Professional Affiliations

• The American Society for Training and Development
• Senior Organization Development Association