


SYLLABUS

Course Description

Theoretical perspectives, processes and techniques utilized in problem solving, both adaptively and innovatively. Individual cognitive preference for working within a prevailing paradigm in order to effect change in institutional structures. Utilizing coping behavior to successfully work within the context of cognitive diversity and organizational change. Pre: Graduate Standing. (3H, 3C)

	Instructor	Jerald H. Walz, PhD Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education jhwalz@vt.edu; 540-231-4469 2270 Litton Reaves Hall, Blacksburg VA
	Location/Time	Virtual Campus; Asynchronous
	Office Hours	Thursdays 9 am – 12 pm, or by appointment via Zoom, Phone, or In-Person
	Learning Management System	Course facilitated through Virginia Tech's CANVAS platform

Learning Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the diversity of and preferences within the way people think, solve problems, and create novelty.
- Analyze and classify types of problems using a problem typology.
- Examine different types of problems and construct a holistic understanding of wicked and complex problems.
- Perceive how individuals apply appropriate coping strategies in the context of cognitive diversity and change.
- Illustrate complex connections among multiple learning theories and constructs that can be utilized in problem solving.

Required Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed). American Psychological Association. **ISBN: 978-1433832161**.

Kirton, M. J. (2003). *Adaption-Innovation in the context of diversity and change*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group. **ISBN: 978-0415298513**.

Also available from Newman Library as an e-book:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/vt/detail.action?docID=199328>

Additional readings posted on Canvas course site.

Assignments

Weekly Asynchronous Participation (300 points)

Each week you will create a video at least 5 minutes long that reflects on the readings for the week. After viewing other students' videos, you will respond to at least 3 of your classmate's videos, attempting as best as possible in an asynchronous context, to engage the other students' presentations with your response. Specific instructions will be posted in Canvas.

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A. Video Reflection Posts (150 points)

The purpose of the Video Post is to demonstrate your knowledge of key concepts from the readings.

Prompts, such as the following questions, will be provided for each weekly topic.

- What are the key points of significance in the assigned readings?
- What are one or two new concepts you learned from the readings? Why did this concept stand out to you?
- What is one thing you do not agree with or gives you pause? Why?
- What is one question you would pose for further discussion?

Upload your weekly video posts to the Canvas discussion forum any time from Monday thru Wednesday.

Video posts are due each WEDNESDAY @ 11:59 pm during the week assigned. Posts will be graded for BOTH completion and quality. It is not enough to answer the questions; to score well, one should answer with depth of thought and substance, reflecting a thorough understanding of the readings. Video posts will be evaluated according to a 10-point scale (Excellent=10, Very Good=8, Good=6, Passing=4, Failing=2, No Attempt=0).

B. Peer Response Posts (150 points)

Once video posts are uploaded to the discussion forum, each student should watch all of the other weekly video posts and then share thoughts, points of significance, and continued conversation in a written response to at least 3 peer video posts. The purpose of the Reflection Posts is to extend your knowledge of the readings by offering alternative views, additional comments, or critique of the readings. Upload your reflection posts to the Canvas discussion forum any time Thursday through Saturday. **Reflection Posts are due on SATURDAY at the end of the week @11:59pm.** Discussion forum posts will be evaluated according to a 10-point scale (Excellent=10, Very Good=8, Good=6, Passing=4, Failing=2, No Attempt=0). Cursory posts (i.e. "I agree") will only be considered failing and will receive minimal credit.

Facilitation of Learning Group Project (150 points)

During the course student groups will facilitate the weekly discussion topic using a design template provided to frame the project. Groups will be established during Week 2 of the course. The design template will be similar to the weekly reflection/response assignments. The group project should include a 5-minute video and simple PowerPoint presentation addressing the topic and reading(s) to the class. Topics and readings will be selected by the group from a list of KAI-related readings. Weekly topic and readings should be submitted for approval by **9/23 by 11:59pm**. Course calendar will be updated by 9/30. Week selections will be determined by the instructor to create flow of the topics and be posted by 9/30.

Short Papers (400 points)

Throughout the semester, students will prepare four short reflection & application papers. The topics for each paper will be vary; some will be assigned, others will be chosen by the student. Each paper should reference course topics and readings. Each paper shall be one to two pages in length incorporating at least 1,000 words. Submissions should reflect a scholarly writing style citing sources and making reasoned arguments. They should be in correct APA Style (7th edition) formatting, 1-inch margins, double-spaced, using appropriate section headings, etc. Papers are due at 11:59 PM on each date assigned in the Course Schedule.

Final Exam (150 points)

Each student will complete a final exam during the last week of class. Consisting of 30 multiple choice, matching, and true/false questions, the exam will be available in Canvas. Once started, 60 minutes will be allowed to complete the exam. The exam is CLOSED book and no outside assistance may be given or received.

Optional Bonus Assignment (50 points)

Should you desire, you may complete a bonus assignment worth up to five percent of your final grade. The assignment involves completing a 1 to 2-page written reflection of about 800 words responding to a question or prompt posted in Canvas.

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Course Assessment

Assignments	Points	Evaluation Scale			
Video Reflection Posts	150	A	1000-930	C	769-730
Peer Response Posts	150	A-	929-900	C-	729-700
Facilitation of Learning Group Project	150	B+	899-870	D+	699-670
Short Papers	400	B	869-830	D	669-630
Final Exam	150	B-	829-800	D-	626-600
<i>Optional Bonus Assignment</i>	50				
Total Points	1000				

COURSE POLICIES**In Brief**

I expect students in this course to:

1. Understand and adhere to all course policies in Canvas and/or the Syllabus.
2. Read assigned texts and actively participate in discussions.
3. Submit assignments on time.
4. Act as a professional in a professional setting.
5. Adhere to the Graduate Honor Code.
6. Respect everyone in the course according to the VT Principles of Community.
7. Seek help from the professor or other university organizations when needed.

More detailed explanations of Course Policies follow below.

Attendance/Participation

This course is a 3-credit graduate course offered online. Participants in this course should expect to spend 6-9 hours per week involved in the activities and completion of assignments for this course.

Professionalism

Leaders are professionals guided by specific values and who engage in particular behaviors. These values and behaviors include respect, cooperation, active participation, intellectual inquiry, punctuality, and regular attendance. In addition to what you know and can do, you will be evaluated on your growth as a professional. Professional characteristics on which you will be judged include punctuality, attendance, collegial attitude, and participation. Because this course relies extensively on discussion and other class interactions, active participation in a timely manner is crucial to your success and that of your classmates. If you need an assignment extension for any reason or an emergency occurs, contact your instructor as soon as possible before or after any scheduled deadlines to determine a reasonable revised deadline; otherwise, posted deadlines are firm expectations.

Submission of Assignments

All assignments are expected to be submitted by due date indicated on the course schedule and assignment description (subject to revision by instructor with advance notice). No late submissions will be accepted unless a request for extension of due date is requested by the student **IN ADVANCE**, or in cases of emergency as soon as possible after the deadline. Assignments submitted after the due date without reasonable notice and a request for an extension will not be graded and will receive 0 points.

Course Conduct & Graduate Honor Code

All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Graduate Honor Code. All assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified. Students in this course are expected to engage in discussion and activities with respect and in a manner that supports peers in their learning experience. Should you feel at any time that there are barriers or challenges to your participation in the way the course is facilitated, you are asked and encouraged to discuss with your instructor. The [Graduate Honor Code](#) "establishes a standard of academic integrity...[and] demands a firm adherence to a set of values," centered around

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honesty and respect for the intellectual efforts of yourself and others. Students enrolled in this course are responsible for abiding by the Honor Code. A student who has doubts about how the Honor Code applies to any assignment is responsible for obtaining specific guidance from the course instructor before submitting the assignment for evaluation. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the University community from the requirements and expectations of the Honor Code.

Virginia Tech Principles of Community

All students are encouraged to read and abide by the [Virginia Tech Principles of Community](#).

Virginia Tech is a public land-grant university, committed to teaching and learning, research, and outreach to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world community. Learning from the experiences that shape Virginia Tech as an institution, we acknowledge those aspects of our legacy that reflected bias and exclusion. Therefore, we adopt and practice the following principles as fundamental to our on-going efforts to increase access and inclusion and to create a community that nurtures learning and growth for all of its members:

- We affirm the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.
- We affirm the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely.
- We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.
- We affirm the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and the University.
- We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.
- We reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status.

We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training, and interaction with others. We pledge our collective commitment to these principles in the spirit of the Virginia Tech motto of Ut Prosim (That I May Serve).

Student Support

Accommodations for Special Needs:

Any student who has been confirmed by the University as having special needs for learning must notify me in the first week of the course. For more information please go to the [VT Services for Students with Disabilities website](#).

Technology:

Working and reliable computer and Internet access is required as well as access to Canvas and Zoom. Participants will need Microsoft Office suite and ability to save to pdf.

Library Services:

All information on the services provided by the University Library including online access to those services can be found on the [Library Services website](#). There is also a link to library services in the left-side menu of our Canvas course site. Students are encouraged to make use of all library services as they complete this course. The librarian liaison for Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education is Ms. Inga Haugen (ihaugen@vt.edu).

Writing Center

If you need help with your written assignments, please contact the Virginia Tech [Writing Center](#). The Writing Center aims to support all writers within our community and foster an environment in which students' learning differences are respected and addressed. It employs a diverse group of graduate and undergraduate writing coaches working in multiple disciplines across campus to support students in all stages of the writing process.

Course Site & Technology Support:

Requests for technical support can be directed to 4Help by calling (540) 231-HELP (4357).

For Canvas help or just to ask a quick question

Click **Help** at the upper right corner of any screen within the Canvas.vt.edu domain, and select one of the help options from the pop-up window. Canvas helpdesk consultants are available 24/7 via chat, phone, or through online ticket.

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Course Schedule – *NOTE: The “week” begins Monday and concludes Sunday.*

Week	Topic	Activity	Readings & Assignments Due
Wk 1 8/23	Course Introduction; A-I Theory Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & Course Introduction 	<p>Read: Kirton (1999) Adaption & innovation; Kirton (1999) Adaptors & innovators;</p> <p>Due: Introduction Video Post & Response; Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>
Wk 2 8/30	A-I Theory & KAI Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAI Theory KAI assessment 	<p>Read: Jablow (2005) Problem solving in the 21st Century; Kirton (2011) Ch. 1</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>
Wk 3 9/6	A-I Theory & KAI Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAI Theory: Problem Solving KAI Theory: Brain Function Discuss KAI assessment 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 2</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response Short Paper 1</p>
Wk 4 9/13	Describing A-I Theory, measuring Adaption-Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description Perception of change Measure 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 3</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>
Wk 5 9/20	Typology of Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem A, Problem B Tame, Wicked, & Critical problems Other types of problems 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) pp. 5, 202-208; Kirton (2009) Problems A & B; Grint (2009) Wicked problems & leadership; Jonassen (2011)</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>
Wk 6 9/27	Cognitive Style, Personality, & Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate cognitive style, personality, and function Relationship of structure and style 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 4</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response Short Paper 2</p>
Wk 7 10/4	Cognitive Style, Personality, & Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem-solving & learning theory Decision making Paradox of structure 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 5</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>
Wk 8 10/11	Problems with Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of creativity Creativity, innovation, invention 	<p>Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 6</p> <p>Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response</p>

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Wk 9 10/18	Style, level, process, and technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level ▪ Process ▪ Technique 	Read: Kirton (2011) Ch. 7 Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response Short Paper 3
Wk 10 10/25	In Practice: Student Group Facilitation	TBA 9/30	Read: TBA 9/30 Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response
Wk 11 11/1	In Practice: Student Group Facilitation	TBA 9/30	Read: TBA 9/30 Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response
Wk 12 11/8	In Practice: Student Group Facilitation	TBA 9/30	Read: TBA 9/30 Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response Short Paper 4
Wk 13 11/15	In Practice: Student Group Facilitation	TBA 9/30	Read: TBA 9/30 Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response
Wk 14 11/22	Thanksgiving Break: No Class Activities This Week!		
Wk 15 11/29	Leadership for Wicked Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership required to address wicked problems • Different ways leadership processes needed 	Read: Friedel (in press); Pearce (2010); Beinecke (2009) Due: Weekly Reflection Video; Peer Response
Wk 16 12/6	Review & Wrap-Up		Due: Final Exam, Dec 9

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