

Phase 1- DIDACTIC ORIENTATION

Week 1 Unit 1.1. Welcome. A Definition of the Situation; Individuals and Groups (Selves, dyads, and Societies); Human Systems: Singular and plural persons in Contexts; Sets and Settings -- Start of the 9.70/13 Collaborative Learning System lifecycle; Housekeeping.

Handouts

1. Preliminary Information Form and Benchmark Questionnaire
2. Syllabus (Why such a gigantic document?)
3. Working Groups (paper)
4. Human Systems: Aspects and Levels of Organization and Development (table)
5. Human Systems: A Selection of Development Schemes (pamphlet)
6. Timesheet
7. Study Group Roster (Form)
8. Draft Formative and Summative Evaluation Form

Introduction

What is going on here? We (1) introduce ourselves; (2) survey this document and (3) discuss what lies ahead in terms of the subject matter and our approach to it.



Painting is in public domain.

Paul Gauguin (French; 1848-1903):
D'ou Venons Nous? – Que Sommes-Nous? – Ou Allons Nous?, 1897
Collection-- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Who and where are we? Where are we coming from? What are we doing here? Where are we going? (Review Benchmark responses).

“Everything that is said is said by someone”
Why is this important?

After reviewing a few bits of the data submitted in benchmarks, we take a short break. This is partly to give everyone a breather but mainly to enable those who don't like the way this is going and think that there are better things they could be doing with their Thursday afternoons this semester to leave quite unobtrusively.

Students remaining after the break will be presumed to be "serious students" making a sincere statement of a readiness, willingness, and ability to explore the subject before us.

INITIATING the Collaborative Learning System

The class membership as a whole will be divided randomly into Study Groups consisting of 6-7 students each. No group will be allowed to exceed a membership of 8.

Group members come together in groups for the first time within the classroom. They introduce themselves to each other, exchange pertinent items of personal data; not yet much more than a random collection of MIT undergraduate students who happen to find themselves in the same boat and are not all equally sure that they are entirely happy with how all this is turning out. Are people in different study groups experiencing pretty much the same things? Are there notable “invisible loyalties or animosities” in/across the groups thus formed?

With due patience and in due course, all previous study groups in all previous 9.70 classes have managed, in the time available, to agree where and when to hold the first of their regular weekly 2-hour study group meetings. (In past years, the proportion of dropouts at this point has tended to be higher than the fraction of those who drop-out between this point and drop date.) Good Luck.

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