Civic Intelligence & Collective Action
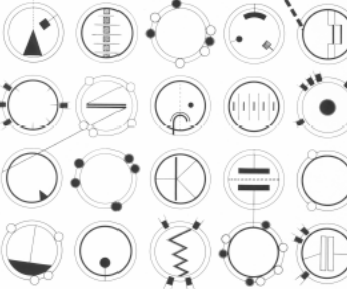
Wednesdays, 6-10:00 pm; **SEM 2 D1105**
Saturdays, 10 am - 5 pm (Jan 14; Feb 4 & 25; Mar 10); **SEM 2 D1105**

Fall 2011 Syllabus (version 1.0)
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Moodle site: http://moodle.evergreen.edu/course/view.php?id=2295
Program Wiki (http://wikis.evergreen.edu/civicintelligence/

Introduction

Doug and John share with Evergreen a commitment to linking theory and practice, the abstract and the concrete. To be useful they must be connected to each other. Our everyday reality is actually part of what we're studying in the program including how forces impinge on us and how we resist, reinforce, or otherwise play a role in social life. Abstractions don't have to be disconnected. (When they're too disconnected it becomes a purely aesthetic proposition. They can even become dangerous! More on that later…) Nor are abstractions only for researchers. Everybody uses them all the time! We believe that theory that purports to describe the world to some degree needs to at least check periodically with the world to make sure there is still a connection, however tenuous it might be. Therefore in the program we will use abstractions when they're useful and at the same time, try to build up, *construct*, theory from "common sense" and "everyday observations" —in addition to logic and established evidence. Common words for this "bottom-up" learning people are active players are grounded theory, constructivism, and others.

Civic intelligence describes the capacity for groups and societies to respond intelligently— effectively and equitably — to the challenges they face collectively. An exploration of civic intelligence considers how societies actually construct, maintain, and change their civic intelligence as well as how they could, or even, *ought* to do it. Civic intelligence informally describes how "smart" a society is and it's tested when societies confront shared challenges. It integrates social imagination, memory, cognition, learning, and engagement. And since civic intelligence doesn't have an established, precise definition we will be working to understand what "it" is — how to recognize it, measure it, etc.

We should also note that one objective of this program is to contribute to the establishment of an Evergreen-based Civic Intelligence Research and Action Laboratory (CIRAL, pronounced "*SEER-uhl*"). We will be discussing this in more detail as time goes on, but for now we can say that CIRAL is intended to help institutionalize (at Evergreen) relatively painless ways for the Evergreen community to collaborate with other social actors and entities in meaningful and mutually beneficial ways over possibly extended periods of time. In short, we are actively attempting to build on the Evergreen philosophy to help create a more vibrant and relevant 21st Century institution using civic intelligence as the conceptual foundation. (And note that about half the people in the program are earning an additional four credits working on CIRAL implementation.)

Students will also be expected to actively contribute to the program's own civic intelligence. Students will be working on projects — individually and in groups — that demonstrate and promote civic intelligence.

Based on ample evidence, a strong case can be made that *The ability of society to improve and apply its civic intelligence is currently undergoing its most difficult and urgent test.*

Benefits of Interdisciplinarity

- Leveraging the use of language and other intellectual tools developed for one realm in another realm
- Increasing the portability of knowledge and increasing the size and impact of intellectual communities
- Identifying areas of inquiry that are important but under-explored
- Discovering better mappings to the "real world"
- Bringing submerged or marginal issues to light

Learning Objectives

The program has 12 learning objectives. Obviously, not all of these objectives will receive the same emphasis in the program. Equally important, each student will find some objectives more important and interesting than others. For these reasons, we encourage every student to consider these objectives in relation to their own goals, interests, learning styles, etc. As you consider the objectives,

remember that the most important or interesting objectives may not be the easiest to achieve for you or for the class overall. Finally, a thorough understanding of program objectives will help both students and faculty in the evaluation process. The student's self-evaluation of progress and the faculty evaluation of student progress should both be based on the learning objectives to a large degree.

1. **Program Themes.** To gain a better understanding of major program themes including intelligence, collective intelligence, and civic intelligence — and their relation to various sectors and components of society

2. **Understanding of Context**. To gain a better understanding of underlying social, technological, and other circumstances that affect the spectrum of possibilities for understanding and addressing challenges

3. **Processes of Social Change**. To gain increased knowledge of how social change takes place

4. **Understanding of Challenges**. To gain an increased understanding of the particular challenges of our era and the mechanisms that are now governing it

5. **Risks and Responsibilities**. To gain a better understanding of the risks and responsibilities of civic engagement and civic intelligence

6. **Speak the Language**. To gain a better understanding of pertinent lexicon, theories, issues, ideas, and data

7. **Skills, Tools, and Processes**. To gain a better awareness, appreciation, and proficiency with communication approaches and other skills, tools, and processes available to the public that can influence social directions as well as learning about the barriers to participation

8. **Tools and Frameworks**. To gain increased knowledge of useful analytic tools and frameworks

9. **Foundation for Future Work**. To build a foundation for future paid or unpaid professional, avocational, community, or activist work

10. **Foundation for Future Inquiry**. To build a foundation for pursuing the questions we didn't answer after the program ends

11. **Active Role in Personal and Community Education**. To improve your own approach to learning, to do what you can to ensure that your educational needs are met, and to help improve the educational environment around you, for you and for others.

12. **Personal Power and Social Imagination**. To gain a better sense of one's own power and social imagination for the future. To learn how to catalyze change; *to speak the truth even if your voice shakes*

Program Expectations

Students are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the class, to thoroughly prepare for each class session, and to complete all assignments on time. Late assignments may not be evaluated. Attendance and being on time for class are essential. Unexcused absences, late, incomplete or unsatisfactory completion of assignments or plagiarism, may result in loss of credit. Students will be evaluated on the quality and, to some degree, quantity of their participation.

In cases of legitimate, verifiably unavoidable absence, students may propose a make up assignment to their seminar faculty to consider. It is the student's responsibility to submit a make up proposal, without any prompting on the part of the faculty. Such proposals must involve work that appropriately compensates for the class activities missed and the collaborative learning time lost. *Note that submitting a make up proposal is no guarantee that a faculty member will accept it. Make up assignments are accepted or rejected at the sole discretion of the faculty.*

The faculty members shall assume that students have well-rounded college-level skills. In case of deficiencies in basic skills, students are expected to work with the Learning Resources Center. The faculty members do not assume that students initially will be conversant with critical terminology or special techniques for discussing the works to be assigned. It is assumed that by the end of the program, students will have developed the ability—both in the terminology appropriate for more advanced discussion and in their own words—to think, to speak, and to write about the issues and themes of the program. In addition, they will have improved their ability to participate in the various collaborative activities of the program.

Faculty are expected to be prepared for lectures and class sessions, to provide feedback on written assignments in a timely manner, to be available for consultation by appointment and to provide a written evaluation of the student's overall work in the program. Please refer to covenant for additional details. Students are expected to write a self-evaluation and a faculty evaluation. The faculty member will write an evaluation of each student.

Note that we are meeting four Saturdays instead of five. **This significant reduction in class-time needs to be accounted for primarily through online work**. Also, because of the nature of this enterprise it is very important to attend and participate.

Texts

In addition to our texts, all other readings can be found on our Moodle site. With few exceptions they are book chapters or magazine articles. Let us know if you can't find the reading on the Moodle when you need it!

Regular Work

Class activities will include discussions; faculty, student, and guest presentations; films; workshops; and occasional in-class writing. In addition, students will explore projects, campaigns or events that are based on their own interests using analytic tools and frameworks in conjunction with practical knowledge. Some reading and writing will generally be due for every class session.

Seminar Papers

To prepare for our regular seminar discussions, all students are required to write, print, and turn in a 200-300 word (about 1 page, double spaced or a half-page, single spaced) "seminar paper" *for each seminar session* (you should turn these in to your seminar faculty at the end of each seminar discussion).

In most cases, these papers are not intended to be fully developed essays, but rather quick initial reactions to the texts you have read before the class meeting. We expect you to not only use these brief writings to help you prepare your ideas for participating in seminars, but also to demonstrate your critical engagement with reading materials. We recommend that you identify at least one or two "big ideas" or arguments in the texts that you would like to work through in seminar, as well as at least one or two specific questions related to the readings that you could offer to keep the conversation lively and productive.

In some cases, however, faculty will provide students with a specific prompt to write a seminar paper that is more focused on specific questions and more "essay like" in form and style. If so, the prompt will be presented in class, prior to the seminar paper's due date.

Other Work

As part of our exploration of civic intelligence, we will be placing our attention in a number of areas. These include TED talks which will be used to introduce a variety of relevant and interesting ideas; the use of "pattern language" as extended by Schuler & colleagues in the *Liberating Voices* book and project; the SeeMe graphic modeling system; the development and support of a Civic Intelligence Research and Action Lab (CIRAL) that can provide enduring structures for useful collaboration with, and creation of, community organizations; and the program wiki, which we will be using substantially.

Major Assignments

1) **Analytical Paper:** All students will be required to write and submit an original analysis between 6-10 pages in length (1.5 spacing, 1" margins, 11-point Times New Roman font). Sources and in-text citations should be in APA format (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/ for examples and advice). A minimum of three outside sources should be cited in the paper and included in the APA-formatted References list, added to the end of the paper.

   The paper should apply a Civic Intelligence based approach to analyze a collective action case study of your choice. The analysis should be focused and concise, and it should use the six dimensions of *Orientation*; *Organization*; *Engagement*; *Intelligence*; *Products and Projects*; and *Resources* as a framework for understanding the case that you select. Case studies may either be current or historical, or a combination of both. Key questions to consider or address in your paper might include:

   - How/where were the collective actors in your case study positioned in larger social networks of power and privilege?
   - What may have contributed to the success/failure of the collective action attempt in question?
   - How might the individuals/collective actors in your case study have been more successful in reaching their goals?
   - When plans went awry or obstacles presented themselves, how did the collective actors react (or fail to react) to adapt to the situation? What social arrangements among actors allowed for (or hampered) such adaptation?
   - What future directions/strategies/tactics might be fruitful for these collective actors, moving forward?

   Of course, we understand that answering these questions may seem difficult or impossible, but do not despair! We encourage you to offer your own speculations, deductions, and ideas. Just make sure to identify them as your own, and explain your logic and/or reasoning. We will go over this assignment in more detail during class sessions.

2) **Final Presentation:** All students will be required to give a final presentation to the class, which will include a poster that presents their case study using the "SeeMe" modeling framework. More details about this assignment will be offered later in the quarter.

Moodle Site — Information, Postings, and Responses

Our program Moodle site is an all-purpose online support site. It will contain information about the program, many of our readings, and links to other readings and resources. It may also contain "prompts" for writing that each student will do in relation to the readings. The Moodle also includes an open, unmoderated discussion forum for program participants.

Seminar Guidelines

Seminars are discussions generally convened with a faculty facilitator. They are intended to be a form of civic intelligence (where each person is contributing to the intellectual development of the entire community). Using our readings and the ideas surfaced in class we are striving to increase the individual knowledge of every person. Beyond that, the conversation that is created is a *collective* achievement. While seminar discussion is collegial and relatively relaxed in format, it is not a casual conversation about the readings or ideas, nor is it a psychological encounter. We need not speak with the same clarity and carefully constructed structure of an academic essay, but we can strive to eliminate excessive repetition, unnecessary fillers and talking just to avoid awkward silences.

Participation in seminar is *evaluated* because seminar is an essential part of your education at Evergreen. It is a verbal, social way of constructing knowledge and of building a learning community. During seminar, serious, honest differences inevitably arise. These differences should be respectfully considered. Evergreen values diversity and learning across differences – this is a challenge to all of us, but it does not mean capitulation or agreement with every point of view. Seminar is a way to demonstrate knowledge of program content and to demonstrate higher order thinking skills. It is also a way to expand on or clarify relevant issues. Asking questions, therefore, is a useful form of participation.

There are a variety of roles that can be played in a seminar context and each participant will engage in several, sometimes in the span of a single seminar. It's always a good idea to come to seminar with a question of your own about content or clarification, for example, but you may also want to read passages from the text to illustrate ideas, compare two or more passages from the text, sum up arguments that others have made, return to previous points, help steer towards seminar goals, or contribute / intervene in many other ways. If you *haven't read* the material your ability to contribute will obviously be somewhat limited, although you can still learn from the seminar discussion. Generally speaking it's best to defer to people who did read the material.

Seminar Purpose and Expectation

Since one of the purposes of seminar is to cultivate a learning community, we must make every effort to make the (limited) time available for all to contribute. This should be self-policed but faculty may intervene if necessary. A good rule of thumb is three comments per seminar unless everyone has contributed or someone is specifically invited to speak. Seminar members will allow each person to complete her/his statements, that is, cutting speakers off, interrupting, or carrying on side conversations are not appropriate behaviors.

Sometimes silence is needed to allow for reflection and even if it is uncomfortable, this is an important part of processing information. If things get quiet, just assume that everyone is thinking so hard they can't speak quite yet. Different members of the seminar group may have radically different learning styles – this enriches the discourse and allows students to learn across differences. We must allow for and be respectful of a wide range of approaches to learning.

Seminar is centered on the content of the texts under consideration. Our discourse must refer to the texts in a meaningful way but should also include individual, outside learning or experience that is relevant. In this way, the community is enriched by all of its members' knowledge. Personal experiences, anecdotes, or revelations shared in classroom or seminar discussions should be considered confidential.

Notes on Assignments

Everything that is turned in (i.e. not Wiki or other online work, or informal work during class) will be typed, (preferably) double-sided, printed — *not* emailed — to us (unless there is an emergency or other extraordinary situation), spaced at 1.5 lines (i.e. half way between single spaced and double-spaced), with 1" margins, in Times or Times-Roman font with 10 or 11 point font size. The major assignments should include suitable references sections in APA. Finally, put a suitable *title* of your own on each submission you turn in.

Plagiarism

Although plagiarism is relatively rare at Evergreen, it does occur. Please don't do it! It is unpleasant for the student and the faculty member. Plagiarism represents a serious breach in community expectations at Evergreen and within the scholarly community at large. It can result in loss of some or all program credit and a discussion with the college's grievance officer.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft in which one person presents the ideas or work of another person without acknowledging that fact, thus wrongfully implying that the work is their own. Note that there is nothing wrong with using or presenting the work of others; indeed scholarly progress would be impossible without it. It's important to acknowledge the debt however, specifically what is being borrowed and whom it is being borrowed from.

Plagiarism occurs when deception is intentional or when proper scholarly procedures are not followed.

Proper scholarly procedures require that all quoted material be identified by quotation marks and/or indentation on the page (in the case of lengthy quoted passages), and the source of information and ideas must be identified and be attributed to that source.

Plagiarism charges can be brought against you for the following offenses:
- Copying, quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing from any source — *including your own work* — without adequate

      documentation
- Purchasing a pre-written paper
- Paying or letting someone else to write a paper for you
- Submitting as your own someone else's unpublished (or published) work, either with or without permission

Prohibitions against plagiarism apply to all communication within the program.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on:
- Attendance in class and participation in seminar and other class activities;
- The quality of ideas and the writing in your written assignments;
- Successful completion of group and individual assignments;
- Demonstration of acceptable understanding of program content and success with learning objectives; and
- Adherence to the agreements in the covenant.

Evaluation conferences will be held at the end of the quarter. *Credit is not the same as positive evaluation.* Students receive credit for fulfilling minimum requirements and standards. The evaluation is a statement describing the quality of the student's work. It is possible for a student to receive credit but receive an evaluation that describes poor quality work. It is also possible for a student to attend regularly yet receive no or reduced credit because of unsatisfactory performance. Incomplete status will be granted only for reasons of family crisis, illness, or similar emergencies.

Students must complete a formal self evaluation which should be brought to the last class session. The student evaluation should focus on what was learned, what improvements were made, and how this fits into future plans. Keep the learning objectives in mind while planning and writing the self evaluation.

A faculty evaluation is also required. This can be brought to the evaluation conference (preferred) or handed in to Sharon Wendt, our program secretary. Self-evaluations must be submitted by the student to Registration and Records (in the Library) *after* the evaluation conference. (We invariably spot typos.)

Students should plan to be on campus on Wednesday March 21 during evaluation week for their evaluation conference.

Access Services

If you are a student with disability who would benefit from support or services to ensure full access to this course, please contact access services. In order for your program faculty to make accommodations, we must be informed no later than the second week of the quarter by the student and in writing from Disability Support Services.

Other support, e.g. the Writing Center or QuaSR (http://www.evergreen.edu/mathcenter/, "The mission of The QuaSR Center is to promote retention and equitable outcomes across gender, race, and background in science and mathematics. We create a safe environment where students can develop and expand the analytical skills they need to be successful in their programs and in their lives. We are a community of scholars built around promoting excellence and empowerment in math and science that leads to social justice.") are also available.

Other student and academic support centers include: Academic Advising, Access Services for Students with Disabilities, Career Development, First Peoples' Advising, KEY Student Services, Student Activities, Health and Counseling Centers. Check the Evergreen Web Site for more information on these services.
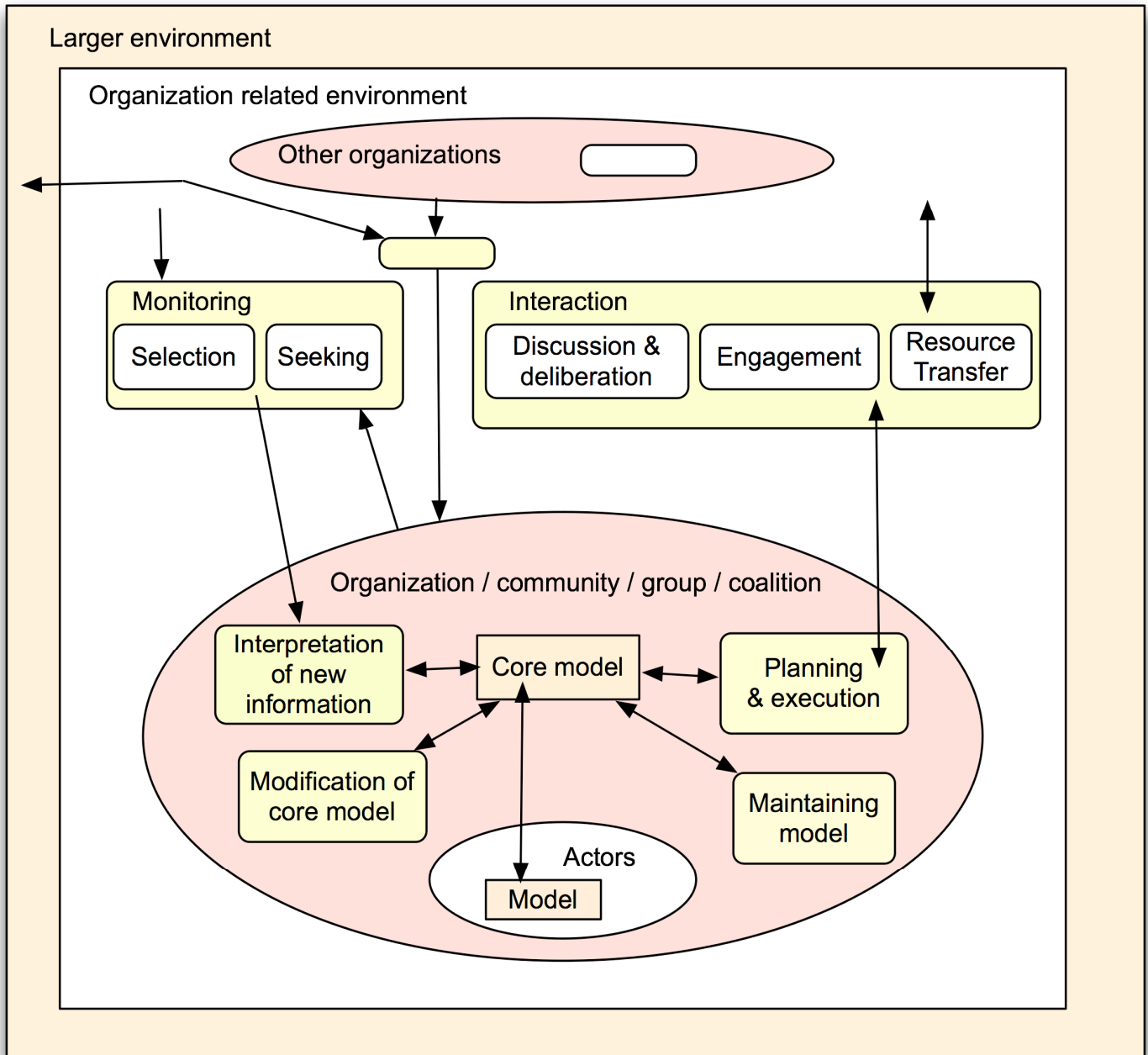
Relational Framework for Civic Intelligence