



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017

## GRA 2261 Managing for Excellence – Generative Practices

### Programme

Master of Science in Business (Leadership and Change)

### Responsible for the course

Arne Carlsen

### Department

Department of Leadership and Organizational Behaviour

### Term

According to study plan

### ECTS Credits

6

### Language of instruction

English

### Introduction

This is a course on how to manage for excellence in organizations through a dual attention to what makes people thrive and grow and what creates extraordinary performances. The course assumes that employee and group thriving is the key to organizational excellence and that we need to understand how work practice can be *generative* for both individuals and organizations. The course draws from a fairly new and exciting tradition of research and managerial practice called Positive Organizational Scholarship. It also borrows from recent developments within practice-based approaches to organizations, narrative psychology and the field of "design thinking". You will be challenged to discover and/or cultivate those generative practices in which you yourself can thrive, manage at your best and be valuable to others. In line with the focus on practice, the course will present rich examples from recent research along with new theory and historical overviews.

### Learning outcome

The overall objective of the course is to provide knowledge and attitudes for how to cultivate generative practices and manage for excellence in organizations. Three types of learning outcomes are sought:

- a. Knowledge: Students will get an overview of recent key contributions to generative practices, with an emphasis on empirical research and path-breaking new concepts.
- b. Skills:
  - Practical tools: Students will get familiar with examples of tools to enable generative practices in organizations, ranging from exercises of reflective best self-portrait to the making of physical space for creative work.
  - Personal development: The course will seek to practice what it preaches in terms of offering students possibilities to use theory and tools purposively to make their own practice as students generate more learning and vitality in themselves and others.
- c. Reflection: Students will be encouraged to maintain a critical approach and learn of research approaches that lend themselves particularly well to study and understand generative practices, with an emphasis on qualitative research, interventions and practice-based studies.

### Prerequisites

All courses in the Masters programme will assume that students have fulfilled the admission requirements for the programme. In addition, courses in second, third and/or fourth semester can have specific prerequisites and will assume that students have followed normal study progression. For double degree and exchange students, please note that equivalent courses are accepted.

### Compulsory reading

#### Books:

Carlsen, Arne, Stewart Clegg, Reidar Gjersvik. 2012. Idea work : lessons of the extraordinary in everyday creativity. Cappelen Damm akademisk. Also available in Norwegian

#### Collection of articles:

A collection of articles will be made available at the start of the course.

There may be additional smaller handouts throughout the course, including exercises and artifacts.

## Recommended reading

### Course outline

#### Course outline

The course will focus on the five sets of generative practices:

1. Practices of *high-quality connections* and energizing interactions;
2. Practices of *experiential learning* with a focus on designing experiments;
3. Practices for *making space productive* in collaboration and team mobilization;
4. Practices of *meaning making* and identity formation;
5. Practices of *organizational inquiry* with emphasis on appreciation and small interventions.

The last of these generative practices, organizational inquiry, involves a strong methodological component, one that can be used when doing research or when working more hands on with development efforts.

### Course structure

This is a course that relies heavily on active participation in class and that presupposes thorough preparations for each session.

For each of the five main components of the course – the five sets of generative practices – the following learning strategies will be pursued:

- Discussion of real life situations and cases, with small guest appearances by leading practitioners;
- Discussion of articles, some of which are presented in plenary (by teacher), some in smaller groups (by students);
- Brief overviews of theoretical roots (by teacher)
- Discussion of tools, some of which are the subject of active experimentation by students with small written assignments to reflect on what was learned.

In this course class attendance is mandatory. Absences can result in a lower score. Specific information regarding student evaluation will be provided in class.

A course of 6 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 160-180 hours.

### Computer-based tools

Not applicable

### Learning process and workload

A course of 6 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 160-180 hours.

Please note that while attendance is not compulsory in all courses, it is the student's own responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/It's learning or text book

### Examination

The course grade will be based on the following activities and weights:

- i. Participation and in-class activities 30%
- ii. Two to three small written assignments to be handed in 30%
- iii. Term paper 40% (groups of 2-3 students)

Form of assessment	Weight	Group size
Class participation	30%	
Assignment	30%	
Term paper	40%	Group of max 3 students

Specific information regarding student assessment will be provided in class. This information may be relevant to requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several components of the overall assessment. This is a course with continuous assessment (several exam components) and one final exam code. Each exam component is graded using points on a scale from 0-100. The final grade for the course is based on the aggregated mark of the course components. Each component is weighted as detailed in the course description. Students who fail to participate in one/some/all exam components will get a

lower grade or may fail the course. You will find detailed information about the points system and the mapping scale in the student portal @bi. Candidates may be called in for an oral hearing as a verification/control of written assignments.

**Examination code(s)**

GRA 22611 continuous assessment accounts for 100% of the final grade in the course GRA 2261

**Examination support materials**

Permitted examination support materials for written examinations are detailed under examination information in the student portal @bi. The section on support materials and the use of calculators and dictionaries should be paid special attention to.

**Re-sit examination**

It is only possible to retake an examination when the course is next taught. The assessment in some courses is based on more than one exam code. Where this is the case, you may retake only the assessed components of one of these exam codes. All retaken examinations will incur an additional fee. Please note that you need to retake the latest version of the course with updated course literature and assessment. Please make sure that you have familiarised yourself with the latest course description.

**Additional information**

Honour code. Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and are values that are integral to BI's honour code system. Students are responsible for familiarising themselves with the honour code system, to which the faculty is deeply committed. Any violation of the honour code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for academic misconduct. Issues of academic integrity are taken seriously by everyone associated with the programmes at BI and are at the heart of the honour code. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honour code, please ask. The learning platform itslearning is used in the teaching of all courses at BI. All students are expected to make use of itslearning.