

The Renaissance Project

A Transformation of the Catholic Educational Experience

A Catholic Companion Handbook to
An Alternative Framework for CLCs in the 21st Century

by

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 <i>Ex Corde Ecclesiae: Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities ...</i>	 1

And God said...

I distribute the virtues quite diversely; I do not give all of them to each person, but some to one, some to others....I shall give principally charity to one; justice to another; humility to this one, a living faith to that one....And so I have given my gifts and graces, both spiritual and temporal, with such diversity that I have not given everything to one single person, so that you may be constrained to practice charity towards one another....I have willed that one should need another and that all should be my ministers in distributing the graces and gifts they have received from me.

Quoted in the *Catechism*, p. 470: Saint Catherine of Siena, *Dialogues* I, 7

Background

As Catholics, we are blessed with the endowment of our educational institutions. From parish school to university, Catholic education fosters in each person the human virtues of prudence, fortitude, justice, and temperance as well as the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. In addition to attending to each person's spiritual development, Catholic education helps to provide for each individual the necessary knowledge and skills for living out his or her vocation in society.

Despite these good works that Catholic educational institutions do, they are now faced today with the dilemma of functioning in a fast-paced, interconnected changing world. It is quite evident that our social systems can no longer respond to today's changes in the traditional manner. Our current educational institutions in particular were designed for a world that reacted to change slowly and that did not give much credence to individual needs or differences. Furthermore, these systems were designed according to principles of scientific management as developed by Frederick Winslow Taylor for life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hence, the traditional student-to-teacher ratio that still exists today, thirty-six or forty students to one teacher, and the separation of learning concepts into subject matter are not based upon a science of human development and growth, but on a science of systems management.

In order for Catholic educational institutions to account for the realities of our world and the dignity of the human being, it is necessary for us as Catholics to re-visit our principles and re-conceptualize the Catholic educational experience for life in the 21st century and beyond. In re-designing our educational systems, we should do it in terms of the transformational and holistic outlook that Pope John Paul II promulgates in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* "so that the entire educative process be directed towards the whole development of the person" (Appendix, page 9). Furthermore, we should re-design our Catholic educational systems in a democratic manner so that all members can act upon the virtue of charity.

Purpose

The worldly activity of re-designing the Catholic educational experience is so named **The Renaissance Project**. It has received this name because we as Catholics are reviving within our learning systems a spiritual and human continuity that seems to be lost in today's social systems.

The purpose of The Renaissance Project is to create a global network of learning nodes that will re-conceptualize and re-design Catholic educational systems that are in alignment with the following principles:

- Catholic Belief and Value Systems
- Principles of Self-Actualization
- Principles of Brain-Compatible Learning and Theory of Multiple Intelligences
- Principles of Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology
- Principles of Self-Government
- Principles of Learner-Centered, Learner-Directed Education
- Principles of Systemic Design

Strategy

Generating Dialogue on Transformation

1. Create within each learning system, such as a parish school or university, learning nodes of ten to fifteen people who are interested in the idea of transformation. The facilitator of the group should provide a list of reading materials on new realities and future trends. The group should meet once a month or every two months to report on its findings.
2. Once the group feels it has a grasp of the idea of transformation, it should begin to include more people into the learning node so it reaches a size of about fifty people.
3. This new group is called a General Assembly. It should break into separate learning nodes of ten to fifteen people per node with one original member of the first learning group acting as a Learning Node Facilitator.
4. Each Node Facilitator should repeat “Step 1.”
5. All nodes should eventually report back into a General Assembly. The first meeting of this assembly should focus on thinking about issues from a futures perspective. Do not try to resolve issues, only make a list of issues that could be thought of from a futures perspective.
6. Each node should look at a particular issue and try to resolve that issue from a futures context.
7. Finally, each node should report back into a General Assembly. Representatives from each node should give a presentation on their Issue—a) What is the issue? b) What was the future context? c) How did you resolve it? A time for questions-and-answers should be allotted after each presentation.

Learning about Transformational Learning and Learning Networks

1. As a General Assembly, the members learn about transformational learning and learning networks. Members should become familiar with the literature on the aforementioned principles. Someone with in-depth knowledge on these issues should facilitate the learning in order to guide the members throughout the learning process. This person could be referred to as the Learning Facilitator.
2. The General Assembly should break into its learning nodes to research the aforementioned principles. Each node should be assigned only one principle.

The Node Facilitators guide the learning within each of their nodes and are supported by the Learning Facilitator.

3. Each month the General Assembly gathers to listen to a presentation by one of the nodes on the principle it researched. Each presentation should be supplemented by a hardcopy to be given to the audience. A time for questions-and-answers should be allotted at the end of each presentation.

Creating a New Learning System

1. After the nodes have given their presentations and the entire group feels comfortable with the new knowledge and ideas, the General Assembly breaks into its nodes to address the question, "What kind of learning system do we create that is in alignment with the new knowledge and ideas?" This is only a brainstorming session and short phrases should be generated.
2. After each node has generated a list of ideas or short phrases, the nodes should gather again in General Assembly to select the ideas. A selection committee of about one-third of the assembly should be created to select the top five ideas.
3. After the top five ideas have been chosen, the next question for each node to address is "How do we create a learning network?" This is only a brainstorming session and short phrases should be generated.
4. Repeat Step 2. The selection committee decides if the "what's" are commensurate with the "how's."
5. The group creates an Action Framework to address the "why," "what," "how," "when," and "where" of implementing the ideas. This framework should be brought forward to the larger community, such as the Parish School Council or University Board of Regents.

Presenting the Framework to the Community

1. The Framework should be presented to the community via a variety of media, such as the Internet, and at general meetings so everyone in the community has an opportunity to ask questions about it. Another idea is to present the Framework in increments to the community so it is not too overwhelming.
2. Once people become familiar with the Framework, they should learn more about the ideas in the Framework. Organize a group of people from the General Assembly to work with the community in creating learning webs, small groups of people who become familiar with the ideas of transformation.

3. Create a website that includes the Framework, discussion groups, bibliographies for worthwhile reading, and links to other Learning Nodes that are participating in The Renaissance Project.
4. Establish an electronic community network. Ensure that everyone in the community has Internet access.
5. Establish a Knowledge Democracy Network within the community that assists members with understanding and practicing direct consensus democracy.

Implement the Framework using a democratic system of decision-making.

Activities

Welcome to the activity section of The Renaissance Project. You are probably very anxious to learn more about transformational learning and how to systemically design a transformational learning system for your Catholic institution.

In order to help you get started, a short guide has been prepared. Think of this guide as short homework assignments that develop your understanding of systemic thinking and assist you in designing your group's educational system. Suggested answers are provided at the end of most of the homework assignments; so you should compare your answers with the suggested answers, but please don't think of them as THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH. Just think of them as one perspective and as a guide to help you think about the possible solutions to the problem-situations.

Also, the following icons are provided to highlight important points:



HOMEWORK



ANSWERS

SO, LET'S GET STARTED!

Generating Dialogue on Transformation

The Learning Facilitator should introduce the group to the idea of transformation. It is suggested that he or she make the group aware of some new realities. The kinds of realities that you can brainstorm can be categorized as such: *Cognitive and Human Growth Realities*, *Sociocultural Realities*, *Economic Realities*, *Socio-technological Realities*, *Technological Realities*, *Scientific Realities*, and *Organizational Realities*.



Homework 1. Make a list of up to 10 or 15 observed or forecasted realities of the 21st century for each of the below categories. Please feel free to consult the *Appendix: Reference Materials*.

Cognitive and Human Growth Realities

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Sociocultural Realities

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Economic Realities

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Socio-technological Realities

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Technological Realities

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Scientific Realities

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Organizational Realities

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Homework 2. Can you list some of the implications that these new realities might have for life in the 21st century and beyond?

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Answers. The following list includes some of the new realities and their implications that we as human beings face in the 21st century and beyond.

Cognitive and Human Growth Realities

- Fifty-percent of a child’s neuron connections, or learning capacity, is developed by age five and an additional thirty-percent is developed by age eight.
- The more positive experiences a child has that are commensurate with his or her self, the more his or her brain’s capacity will develop.
- A healthy diet is important for both brain growth and development.
- Each person’s brain develops differently and at different rates.
- A learning slump occurs during the age of nine or fourth grade because of histological development activities, such as the differentiation of the two hemispheres of the brain.

Sociocultural Realities

- The environment is integral to the culture of a society; thus rising as the fourth sphere of societal affairs, the other three being political, cultural, and economic.
- It is now recognized that a society can function best when a harmonious and equitable relationship exists amongst the political, cultural, economic, and environmental spheres.
- A concept of democracy has re-arisen in the political sphere—participatory democracy. It empowers individuals to have a more active role in societal affairs.
- All spheres or sectors of society are now seen as educative and being directly tied to a community’s learning environment.

Economic Realities

- Our economies come to resemble more the ecology of organisms as they continue to exemplify the characteristics of interlinkage, coevolution, and constant flux.
- Information exchange in the economies is ubiquitous.
- Our economies are moving from the production of material goods toward the creation of intellectual opportunities.
- Consumers have a greater stake in the production of the goods they consume and the services they receive—They are now “prosumers.”
- Currency transactions are occurring electronically and ubiquitously.
- Digital markets are replacing physical markets.

- Wealth is created not in money but in opportunities—one new invention spawns several new inventions that generate a decentralized system of wealth.

Socio-technological Realities

- New technologies not only create complexity and chaos, but also are the tools for dealing with the complexity and chaos that they create in our social systems.
- New technologies are breaking down all forms of barriers between people.

Technological Realities

- New technologies such as “hydrogen fuel cells” or “plasma waste converters” are redefining our energy needs.
- New technologies have allowed us to unlock the DNA code.
- New technologies have allowed us to better understand our universe.
- New technologies have the capacity not only to benefit humanity, but to destroy it.

Scientific Realities

- Systems Thinking has replaced the Cartesian/Newtonian Paradigm.
- New insights into the universe support a more metaphysical viewpoint of human existence.

Organizational Realities

- New insights into systems thinking have given rise to new organizational concepts such as “transformational leadership,” “learning organizations,” and “capacities for transformation.”
- The idea of “externalizing costs” onto society is giving way to new organizational concepts such as “ecological commerce,” “natural capitalism,” and “green manufacturing” in which costs are either internalized or designed out of the system of the organization.

Implications of the Realities

- A more learner-centered educational environment.
- Better diet for children and a change in the food supply.
- A transformation *in the relationship* amongst the four spheres of society in most, if not all, developed and developing nations.
- A transformation *within* each of the four spheres of society.
- A more citizen-centered political sphere.
- A more integrated cultural sphere.
- A more globally integrated economic sphere.
- A cleaner, more sustainable environment.

- A universal and digital monetary system.
- An increase in digital bartering.
- A recognition of universal human rights.
- A more decentralized energy system.
- The creation and empowerment of a “prosumer” class.
- The necessity of systemic design architecture for proper citizenship.
- Greater travel and cultural exchange between people.
- The resolution of many of our biological and social ills.



Homework 3. Using reference material from some of the suggested references, can you write a one or two paragraph description of what transformation means to you? (Please type on a separate sheet of paper or write on the next page.)

Suggested Reading:

- **Communities of the Future** has a site with various articles on future trends and transformation. <www.communitiesofthefuture.org/>
 - **The Futurist** is a magazine that addresses future trends and transformation. <www.wfs.org/wfs>
 - **Designing Social Systems in a Changing World** by Bela Banathy addresses transformation and transformational learning.
 - **The Transformational Leader: The Key to Global Competiveness** by Noel M. Tichy and Mary Anne Devanna addresses transformation and the global economy.
 - **Transformational Leadership in Government** by Jerry W. Koehler and Joseph M. Pankowski is an important resource on transformational leadership.
 - **New Rules for the New Economy** by Keven Kelly discusses the transformational economy.
 - **The Fifth Discipline** and **The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook** by Peter Senge, et al. are important resources on transformational learning organizations.
 - **Learning Organizations** edited by Sarita Chawla and John Renesch is another important resource on transformational learning organizations.
-

Working within Learning Nodes

It is time to invite more people to the group. The group should reach to about fifty people, but no more than fifty. Break the larger group into separate learning nodes of ten to fifteen people each with one original member of the first group acting as a Node Facilitator for his or her node. Do Homework Assignments 1-3.

First General Assembly

Congratulations! You have just taken your first step into the realm of transformation. Now it is time to begin thinking about issues in a futures context as they relate to Catholic education.



Homework 4. Make a list of issues in regards to Catholic education that could be thought of within a futures context.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Answers. The following issues have been identified as those issues that concern Catholic education and could be thought about within a futures context.

1. Type of Learning System
2. Type of Curriculum
3. Type of Parent Involvement
4. Type of Method to Foster Catholic Virtues
5. Types of Assessment (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?)



Homework 5. Each node should look at a particular issue and try to resolve it from a futures context. One person should serve as secretary and record the nature of the issue, the futures context, and method of resolution upon which the node has decided.

Second General Assembly

Report back into a General Assembly. Representatives from each node should give a presentation on their group's issue. The presentation should address the nature of the issue, the futures context, and method of resolution. Finally, a time for questions-and-answers should be allotted after each presentation.

Learning about Transformational Learning and Learning Networks

Now begins the journey into *thinking* about transformational learning and learning networks. It is important to become familiar with some basic principles before you can create a new learning system that is commensurate with the Catholic ideals.

Working within Learning Nodes

The General Assembly should break into its learning nodes. Each node should select one of the below topics to research. NOTE: IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT YOU BECOME EXPERTS! You are only expected to develop a familiarity with the topics and distill from them their basic principles so that as a group you can design your new Catholic learning system within a futures context.



Homework 1. Each learning node chooses from one of the below topics. Learning nodes should meet at least once a week for study and reflection. Each month the General Assembly gathers to listen to a presentation by one of the nodes on the principles it discovered and how they relate to the Catholic educational experience.

- Catholic Belief and Value Systems
- Self-Actualization Ethics
- Brain-Compatible Learning and Multiple Intelligences
- Symbolic Interactionist Psychology
- Self-Government
- Learner-Centered, Learner-Directed Education
- Systemic Design



Answers. The Catholic Belief and Value Systems are provided below. For the other topics, please consult Michael Reber's *An Alternative Framework for Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in the 21st*

Catholic Belief System as expressed in The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Catholic Values

We value...

- The Dignity of the Human Person.
- Our Vocation to Beatitude.
- Man's Freedom.
- The Morality of Human Acts and Passions.
- Moral Conscience.
- The Human and Theological Virtues.
- The Human Community.
- The Common Good.
- Social Justice, Moral Law, Grace, and Its Merits.
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery, The Church, and Its Commandments.

Creating a New Learning System

In this part of the project you will acquire the skills of parallel processes in the creation of your new learning system. If you have been serving as a Learning Node Facilitator, you already have become acquainted with parallel process leadership, which is leading people to “think” and “do.”

Rick Smyre and his colleagues at Communities of the Future (COTF) developed the method of parallel processes. It is the ubiquitous activities of strategic planning and “capacity building.” Strategic planning is the setting of goals, objectives, and benchmarks that allow people to reach tangible outcomes and defined projects. Whereas, capacity building is the coming together of small groups of people to discuss generatively how to react to changes that affect their social systems.

In the following activities, you will use a systemic design method developed by Bela Banathy that is the strategic planning side of the design effort. The Learning Node Facilitator should consult Banathy’s *Designing Social Systems in a Changing World* (1996), *Systems Design of Education* (1991), and *A Systems View of Education* (1992) before leading the group in an activity. In addition, all members should continue to read and study the reference materials. It is suggested that you meet with other members in small study groups, separate from your learning node, so that you will be able to have a “feel” for the two processes and be able to make a mental distinction between them.

Strategic plan (1st Parallel Process)

Creating the Image

Step 1: Initial Exploration

Step 1-1: Develop a Vision of Society

Step 1-2: Develop a Vision of the Future Learning System

Step 2: Transcending the Current Learning Paradigm

Step 2-1: The Option Field

Step 2-2: The Option: Transformational Learning

Step 3: Statement of Values and Core Ideas

Step 4: Image of the Future Learning System

Step 5: New Knowledge, Context, Content, and Methods

Step 5-1: Statement of Principles

Creating the Learning Framework

Step 6: The Learning System

Step 6-1: Core Definition—Formulate Mission and Purposes

Step 6-2: Develop Specifications

Step 6-3: Design Functions

Step 6-4: Design Enabling Systems

Modeling the New Learning System

Step 7: Tripartite Model

Step 7-1: Systems-Environment Model

Step 7-2: Functions/Structure Model

Step 7-3: Process/Behavioral Model

Generative Dialogue (2nd Parallel Process)

Step 1: In your learning nodes address the question, “What kind of learning system do we create that is in alignment with the new knowledge and ideas that we have explored?” This is only a brainstorming session and short phrases should be generated.

Step 2: Gather again in General Assembly to present the ideas each node has generated in addressing the question.

Step 3: Create a selection committee of two-thirds of the assembly to amalgamate, categorize, and select the “Top five ideas.”

Step 4: After the selection committee has decided on the top five ideas, each learning node addresses the question, “How do we create a learning network?” This too is only a brainstorming session and short phrases should be generated.

Step 5: Repeat Steps 2 and 3. The selection committee decides if the “what’s” are commensurate with the “how’s.”

Step 6: Discuss how the group will employ the Strategic plan (1st Parallel Process). We suggest the group continue to work within its learning nodes and meet in assembly until Step 6-2.



Homework 1. In your learning nodes address the question, “*What* kind of learning system do we create that is in alignment with the new knowledge and ideas that we have explored?”

We want a learning system that...

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Homework 2. In your learning nodes address the question, “*How* do we create a learning network for our Catholic organization?”

We should create a learning network using...

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Visions

The first part of the strategic plan is to develop a vision of society and a vision of the future learning system based upon your new knowledge base.



Homework 3. In your learning nodes address the question, “What is our vision of society?” Write a one-paragraph description of this society.

One possible vision of society could be...



Homework 4. In your learning nodes address the question, “What is our vision of our future learning system?” For a model, consult Reber’s *An Alternative Framework for CLCs in the 21st Century*.

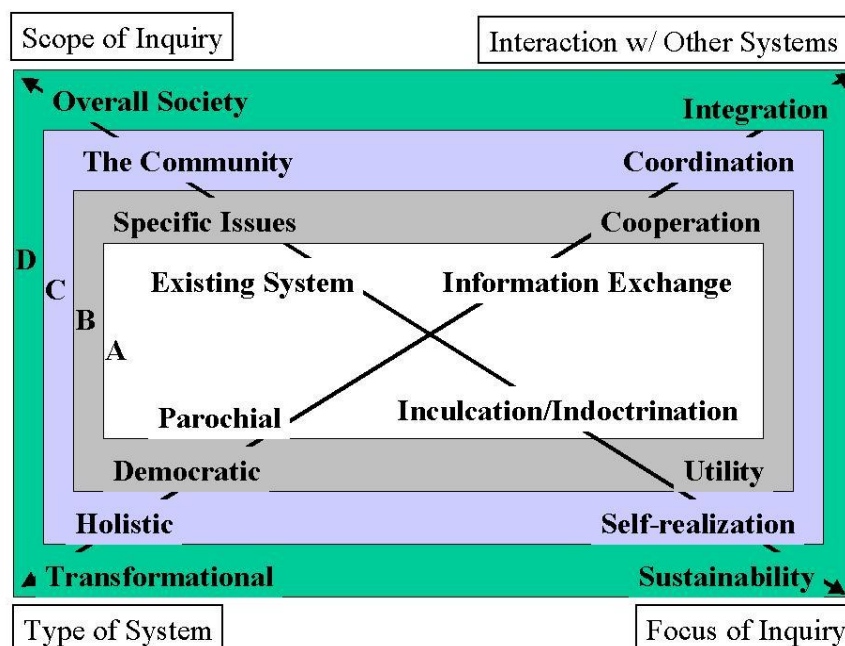
One possible vision of our learning system could be “An open and transformational learning environment that exists to...”

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Options

The second step in the strategic plan is to *transcend* the current learning paradigm by creating an option field and choosing an option. The option field that is used for your exploration is an adaptation of Banathy's Learning Society. Since the purpose of The Renaissance Project is to *transform* Catholic educational systems into "transformational systems," we will choose to work within "Option D: Transformational Learning System." Your task is to develop a learning system within this context. In order to help you understand the different kinds of learning systems, Figure 1 and a brief description for each learning system are provided.

Figure 1. Option Field for The Renaissance Project



Option A: Exploration within the Existing System

Option A is exploration within the existing system, a parochial system. A parochial system is one in which principles, methods, and applications are strictly defined by the institution or teachers (masters). The primary focus of this system is the inculcation of values and beliefs and the indoctrination of a specific core of knowledge. Because of its narrow focus, it only interacts with other social systems through information exchange; there is no desire to develop special partnerships or relationships with systems that are far outside of its own realm.

Option B: Exploration of Specific Issues

Option B is the exploration of specific issues that affect the system. It is democratic because it calls for democratic participation by all of those members who are affected by the system's activities, such as teachers, parents, other organizations, and sometimes pupils. When specific issues need to be addressed, the system cooperates with other systems to address such issues.

Option C: Exploration within the Community

Option C is the exploration and redefinition of community and is grounded in holistic educational principles that have been developed by educators over the ages. It focuses on "self-realization" that educational pioneers such as John Dewey, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, Henry Morris, and Frank Manley discuss throughout their works. In a holistic educational system the learner is the center of the learning situation and all learning principles, methods, and applications are in alignment with the individual learner's cognitive abilities, learning needs, and learning interests. Furthermore, other systems work in coordination with the holistic system.

Option D: Exploration within the Overall Society

Option D is exploration within the overall society. Because the scope of inquiry is the overall society, the system of education is transformational. A transformational educational system recognizes the realities of our universe and integrates itself into other systems so that it will be highly responsive to the changes of our world. The focus of inquiry of a transformational learning system is on sustainability. Problem-situations are seen as interconnected and, wherever and whenever possible, systems will be integrated in order to create and maintain sustainability between the four spheres of society—political, cultural, economic, and environmental. Thus, through self-realization within a transformational context, an individual is able to create something of benefit for himself and for the *total human good* which in turn creates and maintains sustainability.

Values



Homework 2. Each learning node should develop a statement of core values for the future learning system.

Core Ideas

The Core Ideas for our learning system include...

- Catholic Belief and Value Systems
- Principles of Self-Actualization Ethics
- Principles of Brain-Compatible Learning and Multiple Intelligences
- Principles of Symbolic Interactionist Psychology
- Principles of Self-Government
- Principles of Learner-Centered, Learner-Directed Education
- Principles of Systemic Design

Core Values

We believe that...

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Image 



Homework 3. Each learning node should develop an image of the future learning system based upon the current knowledge and ideas developed by the group.

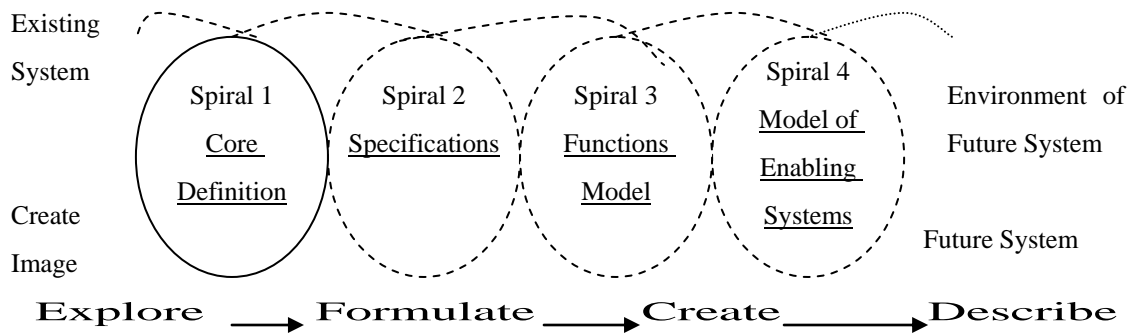
Education should...

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Core Definition

In this part of the Project your group will use Banathy's Core Definition Spiral in defining the future learning system. Figure 2 illustrates the process.

Figure 2. Adaptation of Banathy's Core Definition Spiral (1991, 178)



Mission Statement and Statement of Purposes

The Mission Statement is a general statement about what the future system will do for a) learners and the community, b) the environment, c) other systems, d) its members, e) and itself. Table 1 represents examples of mission statements for the different kinds of educational systems that were previously identified. It is your group's task to develop a mission statement for your future learning system.

The Statement of Purposes is a direct reflection of the image that you created. It focuses on how the system will implement the mission; that is, it addresses the design arrangements for learning and human development.

Table 1. Mission Statements for Four Possible Kinds of Learning Systems

Elements of System	Option 1 Parochial System (Modern State)	Option 2 Democratic System	Option 3 Holistic System	Option 4 Transformational System
Learners and Community	Operate as separate entities. Community is “something out there” and learning is “something in the school” and occurs in large classes with school-sanctioned textbooks and materials. Learners have little or no say in choosing course of study.	Operate on the basis of democratic participation and call for all of those members who are effected by the school’s activities to participate in its decision making processes. The community works as a partner with the school only at the level of issue resolution. Learners are empowered to take a more active role in learning and civic duty.	Operate on the basis of holistic educational principles, such as education for human development, within the context of the school. Learning is centered on the learner and the community works as a partner with the school in helping learners to achieve individual learning goals.	Operate within the framework of a community learning network so that learners of all ages have access to learning resources and arrangements throughout the entire community and that they may be assisted in actualizing their true potentials.
Environment	Closed	Design, develop, and offer programs and arrangements that create an enlightened electorate so all can contribute to the greater democratic community.	Design, develop, and offer programs and arrangements that integrate the environment into the learning experience so “good-growth-toward-self-actualization” can occur.	Encourage the creation of a true learning society in which all individuals are able to contribute to one another’s learning without the impediments of geographical location.
Other Systems	Closed	Work with government agencies in achieving federal, state or district educational goals.	Work with other systems in achieving the learning goals of the learner.	Integrated with other systems in order to achieve the learning goals of individual learners.
Its Members	Develop a learning community that focuses on achieving the “basics” of education. Hire teachers as servants of the State who report directly to a Principal and School Board.	Develop a learning community that encourages learners to become more active participants in their own learning as well as their civic duties.	Develop a learning community in which learners, parents, teachers, and administrators are working in concert for the greater good of the school.	Develop a learning community in which all are able to participate and contribute to the greater good of learning and becoming human.
Itself	Become a system that works cooperatively with teachers and others within the school.	Become a system that works cooperatively with learners and other social agencies in achieving educational goals.	Become a system that works cooperatively with parents, teachers, and administrators in order to meet learners’ educational goals.	Become a transformative system in which individuals are transforming themselves daily, from the mental to the spiritual.



Homework 5. Each learning node should develop a Mission Statement for the future learning system. The sentence for each mission point should start with a “verb.”

A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a solid black dot on the left margin.



Homework 6. Each learning node should develop a Statement of Purposes for the future learning system. The sentence for each purpose point should start with a “verb.”

A series of 20 horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a solid black dot on the left margin.

Functions

As a General Assembly, compose a “Functions Explanation” that address how the system functions in relationship to learners and community, greater community environment, other systems, the system’s members, and the system itself. After you have composed a “Functions Explanation” for each of the elements, translate the explanations into a “system of key functions.” This means presenting the key functions as a model that is built on “verbs,” such as in the statement, “**Provide** a learning environment that is global, national, regional, and local in character.”

The best way to do this is via an electronic e-mail list serve and website bulletin board. Choose one person to set-up the list serve and post on the website the agreed upon *Key Functions*. Next, break into your learning nodes and have each learning node choose a function with which to work. Each learning node should explain how its key function interacts with the other functions to create a **system of functions**. Also, each learning node should decide the subfunctions of its key function until the node has identified all the necessary subfunctions and systems of subfunctions. Finally, the results should be posted on a website and discussion of these “function issues” should take place via an electronic e-mail list serve. For an example of functions, consult Reber’s *An Alternative Framework for CLCs in the 21st Century*.

Enabling Systems

The enabling systems are those people and organizational components that are necessary to carry out the functions. The enabling systems are comprised of the management model and the organization model. Banathy refers to the management model as “The first noun-based model that...will have the organizational capacity and staff capability to guide the educational system and ensure that the functions will be carried out as specified in the functions model” (1991, 188-189). The second noun-based model is the organization model, the modeling of “a system which will have the organizational capacity and the staff capability to carry out the functions as specified in the functions model” (ibid., 189). For an example of these, refer to Reber’s *An Alternative Framework for CLCs in the 21st Century*. The questions (Banathy 1991, 189-190; 1996, 140-141) that you will address for both of these models include:

Management Model

- 1) What design will enable the system to select the processes that “transform” the functions into ongoing actions?
- 2) What design will enable the system to conceive and framework the initiation of those actions?
- 3) What design will enable the system to motivate and energize the individual and collective action of those who carry out the processes?
- 4) What design will enable the system to work with the environment in order to collect and analyze information that is of value to the system and that enhances the accomplishment of functions?
- 5) What design will enable the system to work with the environment in order to acquire and manage the resources that are needed by the system?
- 6) What design will enable the system to identify actual and potential problems, threats and opportunities?
- 7) What design will enable the system to engage the system in continuous organizational learning and nurture design capacity?

Organization Model

1. What organizational and personal capabilities are required to carry out the identified functions?
2. What system components and people will have those capacities and capabilities?

3. How should we organize the selected components in relational (vertical/horizontal) arrangements?
4. What authority/responsibility should be assigned to whom?
5. What resources should be allocated to what component?

The best way to address these questions is in the same manner as the “functions” were addressed. Break into your learning nodes and have each learning node choose a question to address. Each learning node should post its answer and allow for on-line discussions to occur via e-mail list serves and the website bulletin board. The purpose of the generative dialogue is to allow all members to provide input into the development of the learning system. Finally, as an on-line general assembly, the group should compose a final statement about the enabling systems as they relate to the questions that were addressed.

Tripartite Model

In this section of the Project your group will create three models for your learning system. These are the systems-environment model, functions/structure model, and the process/behavioral model. The systems-environment model is a birds-eye view of the learning system. It is a general description of your system that helps you to “define ‘the rules of the game’ that guide systems-environment relationships, interactions, and mutual interdependence” (Banathy 1992, 22).

The functions/structure model is a still picture lens view of the learning system. It projects the image of the learning system that you created earlier. The functions/structure model enables you to “describe the goals of the system...; identify the functions that the system carries out in order to attain the purpose(s) and goals; specify the relational arrangements of those functions; define the components and parts that engage in attending to those functions; and describe how the components are organized in relational arrangements” (ibid.).

The process/behavioral model is a motion picture lens view of the learning system that looks at what the system does throughout time (ibid.). Through this lens you look at how the system (ibid., 22-23):

- receives, screens/assesses, and processes input;
- transforms input for use in the system;
- engages in operations that attend to the purpose(s) and goals of the system and produce the expected outcomes;
- continuously assesses and guides the transformation operations;
- processes the outcomes and assesses their adequacy; and makes adjustments and changes in the system and, if indicated, transforms the system based on the assessment as well as information (feedback) coming from the environment.

In order to create these models, the group will need to use Banathy’s *A Systems View of Education* since it contains step-by-step activities for understanding and designing the models.

The group should break into three learning nodes and each learning node should choose only one model with which to work. Again, each learning node

should have a facilitator who leads the node in doing the activities. It is recommended that the learning nodes once again use e-mail list serves and website bulletin boards so that all members can know what is happening in the other learning nodes.



Systems-Environment Model Homework. Using Banathy's *A Systems View of Education*, do the activities for pages 25-50.



Functions/Structure Model Homework. Using Banathy's *A Systems View of Education*, do the activities for pages 59-98.



Process/Behavioral Model Homework. Using Banathy's *A Systems View of Education*, do the activities for pages 99-172.

Presenting the Framework to the Community

Now that your group has finished designing a new Catholic learning system for your particular situation, the next step is to communicate this design to the greater community as a “Framework.”

Since your group already has an electronic bulletin board, the best way to present the Framework is via the Internet. Create a Public Relations Committee of about ten people to work on the framework and advertise it. The committee should do the following:

- Compose the Framework as an “easy-to-read, easy-to-understand” document that summarizes the key points of the new learning system. Provide it in *Adobe Acrobat* pdf format for easy accessibility.
- Provide on your website contact names, e-mails, and addresses for those who are interested in learning more about the Framework or who have questions.
- Create a small brochure to advertise the Framework.

In addition to the PR Committee, your group should create a Learning Web Committee that helps the greater community in becoming familiar with the ideas of transformation. The Learning Web Committee should have individuals who act as Learning Node Facilitators and who lead small groups of people (ten to fifteen) in becoming familiar with the ideas of transformation and how those ideas relate to the Framework.

Finally, a Direct Consensus Democracy Committee should be created to assist the greater community with understanding and practicing direct consensus democracy. Using the group’s electronic bulletin board, this committee will work with the Learning Web Committee in allowing the greater community to experiment with electronic direct consensus democracy. This familiarity gives members of the greater community the capacity to participate more directly in the decision-making processes of the implementation phase of the Framework.

Implementing the Framework

Using a democratic system of decision-making, the greater community should decide how to implement the framework. Since your group has created new system components that replace current system components of the old learning system, consideration must be given to the *transformation* of these components. In order to give such consideration, the group should use the General Assembly approach. This will allow all members of the community to participate and make the transformation process much easier.

The General Assembly should break into committees that will address different aspects of the implementation process. Furthermore, a website listing the committees and their activities should be maintained. The PR and Direct Consensus Democracy Committees should be responsible for the website so that both “information dissemination” and “democratic participation” are considered in developing and maintaining the site.

Finally, the General Assembly should meet at least once a month so that the committees can give their reports and important decisions can be made. This can be done electronically, but it is recommended that the General Assembly be an actual gathering of members in a designated location at a designated time. One person should chair the General Assembly in order to set the agenda and maintain order during the proceedings.

Appendix

Catholic Belief and Value Systems

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Edition*
- *The Catholic Encyclopedia*

Self-Actualization Ethics

Top Reads

- ✧ Maslow, Abraham H. "Self-Actualization." *Motivation and Personality*. Third Edition, revised by Robert Frager, James Fadiman, Cynthia McReynolds, and Ruth Cox. New York, New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 1987.
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Brain-Compatible Learning and Multiple Intelligences

Top Reads

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- Dryden, Gordon and Colin Rose. *Fundamentals Guidebook*. United Kingdom: Accelerated Learning Systems Ltd., 1995.
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Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology**Top Read**

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Self-Government

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Learner-Centered, Learner-Directed Education

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