**NURS 526   
Managing Organizational Effectiveness Within Care Systems**

**Spring 2010**

This course is taught 100% as a web-based course; there are no in-person class meetings.  Appointments with either the lead or the co-instructors are available; if requested.

**Lead Instructor:**

Carol Boston-Fleischhauer, JD, MS, RN

Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Washington School of Nursing, and

Senior Director, Education Services

The Advisory Board Company

Washington.DC   
Phone: (360) 689-4279  
Email: [fleischc@advisory.com](mailto:fleischc@advisory.com) [OR](mailto:carolanneflash@OR) <[carbos@u.washington.edu](mailto:carbos@u.washington.edu)>

Office Hours: By appointment

**Credits**: 3

#### **Course Description:**

In today's healthcare environment, regardless of setting, clinicians are challenged to understand and adopt new approaches to advancing overall goals and objectives at both the micro-system and macro-system level.  This course is focused on organizational effectiveness in healthcare systems; including a detailed analysis of key drivers and enablers of organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, the course explores the use of information technology to monitor and increase organizational effectiveness. The content of this course builds on topics covered in NURS 524 Conceptual Foundations of Care Systems, and NURS 525 Managing Clinical Effectiveness within Care Systems, or their equivalent. Readings, discussions, assignments and projects will focus on widely recognized and emerging theories related to organizational effectiveness, in order for students to understand how to apply these key concepts to healthcare organizations and care systems.

#### **Course Objectives:**

#### The objectives of this course are:

* 1. To understand organizations; including approaches to organizational analysis.
  2. To define and compare drivers and enablers of organizational effectiveness; internal and external
  3. To analyze specific drivers and enablers of organizational effectiveness within the context of care systems
  4. To apply organizational effectiveness learning to care study examples in healthcare
  5. To examine approaches to identifying and removing barriers to organizational effectiveness in care systems

#### **Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

Final grades for the course will be based on the following:

1. Weekly online participation in instructor-led discussion board:  30%
2. Midterm project :  35%
3. Final project:  35%

Regarding the discussion board, each week you can anticipate a discussion board question posted by the instructor; as students, your requirement is to complete the discussion board question by the end of the (school) week.  Each week starts on Monday morning, and concludes at 11:59pm the following Sunday.  Discussion board questions are intended to provide students with an opportunity to synthesize learning from the course readings and lectures, and provide a cohesive response.  Please work for clarity and brevity with your answers; but analysis is what is being looked for; not only a restating of what was heard in the lectures and read in the readings.  If you wish to use additional resources to bolster your answer, that is fine; just please provide the footnote.  The instructor will provide feedback re individual student answers; but will also provide a summary statement re the overall teaching points for all students to review as an additional step in the learning process.  If a student cannot complete a discussion board assignment according to the timeline, just let the instructor know via email; no penalty as long as the instructor is notified.

Further details about both the midterm and final will be posted in the course home page with sufficient time for students to review the requirements and ask questions prior to the assignments' due dates.

**Required Text:**

There is NO required text for this course; all assignments will be supported by relevant, recent professional journal articles and readings; from sources both in and outside of healthcare in order to expose the student to a variety of concepts, theories, and perspectives on organizational effectiveness. These articles are posted are provided through e-reserve.

**Midterm Project**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE MIDTERM PROJECT PROBLEM:**

The Synergy Model, has been officially endorsed by the AACN (American Association of Critical Care Nurses) as a comprehensive approach to linking nursing competencies to organizational goals in order for an organization to be effective.

You are the new Chief Nursing Officer of the 300-bed “ABC hospital” that also has 10 primary and multi-specialty clinics as part of its organization (The prior CNO was terminated, she had no vision). The entire “organization” is organized in a traditional (functional/hierarchical) line structure; with inpatient nursing reporting to the CNO, but ambulatory nursing reporting to a physician who ‘runs’ the clinics. The span of control of front line nurse managers in the inpatient hospital is huge (on average: approximately 100 clinicians per nurse manager); there are three layers of management positions between the front line nurse managers and the CNO; the prior CNO met with the managers once per quarter, delegating that responsibility to her directors to manage the managers. The clinic staff are organized in various work units or teams; however, no universal approach to integrating nursing with the inpatient hospital exists. In other words, nursing in the clinic settings is essentially ‘on its own.’

The transactional leadership theory has been in place for about 10 years in the nursing department, as a result of the prior CNO’s belief in this approach to tightly managing the bottom line. The nurse workforce is very stable, turnover essentially non-existent due to the community’s poor economy, but workforce lethargy is obvious, and employee satisfaction levels have been declining steadily. In addition, the approach to staff and leadership development has been historically conservative, essentially focusing on only required/continuing education to comply with licensure and regulatory requirements.

You wish to implement the Synergy model as a strategy to support ABC’s increased attempts to improve both its clinical outcomes and its declining financial situation. Your CEO and the rest of ABC’s executive team are in full support of this strategy, and have given you the authority and accountability to do ‘whatever it takes’ to get this model in place as quickly as is possible.

1. Describe what the Synergy model is.
2. Discuss how you would successfully execute this new strategy as quickly as is possible.
3. Identify what structural and leadership changes and/or initiatives should be considered in order for this model to be most effectively implemented; and why.
4. What impact on the nursing workforce might this model have?
5. Based on your understanding of ABC, identify what you think would be the ONE biggest challenge to effectively implementing this strategy and why.
6. Final question—choose one:
7. If you are currently employed in a healthcare organization: identify the organization/position and briefly discuss WHY OR WHY NOT you think the Synergy model would be feasible to implement in your organization.
8. If you are NOT currently employed in a healthcare organization: Identify the competencies you believe the new nurse executive will need to have in order for the CNO to personally be effective with this strategy.

**DESCRIPTION OF MIDTERM PROJECT GUIDELINES/SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

1. This paper is to be written in a scholarly format using APA or another appropriate style you are comfortable with.
2. While there is a lot to cover here; I would urge you to be as succinct as possible.
3. Synergy model description-1 page
4. Execution of model---2-3 pages
5. Leadership/structure changes-2-3 pages
6. Impact on workforce-2 pages
7. Challenge with implementation-1-2 pages
8. Final question-1 page

If you go a little over that’s ok; but I am trying to give you a feel here regarding focus.

1. If there is a fact that you don’t have in this case study, and for example, you wish you had it, then go ahead and make an ‘assumption,’ and then reflect that assumption in your paper. For example, I have not stated whether or not the workforce is unionized or not; if you want that fact as part of your project, go ahead and say ‘…for purposes of my project, I am making the assumption that the RN workforce is unionized.) Again, this is a hypothetical example.
2. References/citations to current learning critical. Start with the readings that are part of your assignments as well as lectures. If you need extra citations, that’s fine; but don’t forget to cite/defend your points according to course learning in addition to anything else you may find (obviously, you will probably do a little research on Synergy, for example).
3. Think logically about this: start from the top, identify all of the ‘things’ that are at issue with this organization in relation to the new ‘strategy’ that needs to be implemented. Your overarching goal is to think this through in order to assist this organization with being ‘effective.’
4. Rather than submit your papers in Moodle, submit your papers via my email; I will send you an email confirmation.

**FINAL PROJECT**

***BACKGROUND***

The purpose of this final project is to provide students an opportunity to apply key learning from this quarter regarding organizational effectiveness in care systems to a strategic challenge facing GreenForest Health System. Resources to be used for completion of this project include the GreenForest Health System case study posted on the 526 website and any course readings/lectures already completed. Additional resources needed for completion of this project are at the discretion of the student.

***STATEMENT OF THE (FINAL PROJECT) PROBLEM***

GreenForest Health System recognizes a key external driver to its long term effectiveness and viability is the recently approved healthcare reform legislation, entitled the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.” This Act seeks to expand healthcare coverage, improve access, and decrease costs. To that end, GreenForest has amended its strategic plan to include the achievement of nursing care and operational process standardization throughout all facilities in order to improve system effectiveness, eliminate waste, improve outcomes, and decrease costs.

The modification of the GreenForest Strategic Plan is on everyone’s minds within GreenForest right now, in particular the system CEO. The CEO knows that nursing’s contributions to this Strategic Plan will be critical, and he knows that historically he has not leveraged the value/contribution of nursing as effectively as he should, and as GreenForest now needs.

To that end, the system CEO is committed to a structural change that will better leverage the value, contribution, and expertise of nursing in the achievement of the Strategic Plan. The CEO is weighing the pros and cons of two, specific organizational structure changes that could help GreenForest successfully leverage nursing, thereby contributing to the Plan’s success.

The two structure changes being considered are related to nursing leadership and include the following:

EITHER

1. Appointment of a System Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) to serve as a member of the GreenForest System Executive Team; with all facility CNOs reporting directly to the System CNO. Among other things, this system CNO would be responsible for overseeing and coordinating all nursing-related actions to support the aforementioned Strategic Plan re nursing care/operational process standardization.

OR

1. Creation of a System Nurse Executive Council (or Committee) to collectively oversee and coordinate nursing’s contributions to the aforementioned Strategic Plan re nursing care/operational process standardization. Members of this Nurse Executive Council would include all CNOs of each GreenForest facility; chairmanship responsibilities for the Council would annually rotate, but will start with the CNO of TreeHope Medical Center. Further, the Council as a whole would report directly to the CEO of Clinical Operations of the GreenForest System Executive Team.

***FINAL PROJECT***

The GreenForest CEO has retained you as an independent consultant to evaluate the two structural options listed above and make a recommendation as to which of the two you believe should be implemented in order for Greenforest to be most successful with achieving its Strategic Plan.

Additional facts include the following:

1. GreenForest has NO additional resources to support either structure, other than the potential monies needed to fund the salary of a system CNO, if that’s the structure selected.
2. GreenForest’s Board of Directors is demanding that results of this commitment are demonstrated in three years-very aggressive by any standard, but especially for GreenForest, who has historically moved slow on strategic initiatives that cut across all facilities.

As a consultant, your recommendation document is to include the following:

1. A brief restatement of the strategy that the CEO is trying to address and why
2. A specific recommendation of which of the two structural options you believe will best assist GreenForest with achieving this strategy WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS; in this section, include your rationale for selecting the option chosen, AND your rationale as to why the excluded option won’t be as effective; especially given the time frame.
3. For the structural option you select, identification of key organizational changes that will need to put in place in order to enhance the structural option you are recommending (for example, reporting relationships, culture, etc). Use the organizational components that you have studied this quarter to guide your answer.
4. For the structural option you select, the identification of the BIGGEST barrier to your selected option being successful; again, using the organizational components that have been studied this quarter.

***Format***

1. Your recommendation should be developed as a word document; with sections/headers aligned with each of the recommendation requirements. An introduction/closing to your document is encouraged.
2. Use a standard word document format; ie, APA.
3. Be sure to document references
4. This document should be concise, but thorough; I would anticipate no more than ten pages, excluding references.

***Grading criteria***

1. Responsiveness to each requirement
2. Demonstration of analytical capability aligned with course learnings-this is critical
3. Structure/clarity/readability as a stand-alone document

There is no right or wrong answer; either structural change COULD work; you decide which of the two, given what you know about GreenForest and your understanding of the circumstances, would work the best; and defend your recommendation.

Good luck with this project!

If you need to contact me re any questions, etc. don’t hesitate to do so; at

[fleischc@advisory.com](mailto:fleischc@advisory.com)

**WEEKLY READINGS AND DISCUSSION BOARD**

**Week 1**

**Week 1 Readings:**

Neilson, GL. et al. The secrets of successful strategy execution. Harvard Business Review 2008 June: 86(6): 60-70, 138.

**Week 1 Assignment:**

Discussion board question:   (By going to [www.SSM.com](http://www.ssm.com/)) Investigate the mission/vision/values of SSM Health System (St. Louis, MO.).  Identify one specifc strategy or priority that you could reasonably anticipate would be unique to SSM as compared to Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound and provide brief rationale for your choice.

**Week 2**

**Week 2 Readings:**

1.  Corrigan, J, McNeill, D.  Building organizational capacity: a cornerstone of healthcare reform.  Health Affairs (MIllwood).  2009, Jan 27.

2.  Cowen, M, Halasyamani, LK, et al.  Organizational structure for addressing the attributes of the ideal healthcare system.  Journal of Healthcare Management.  2008 Nov-Dec; 53(6):  407-419.

3.  Lega F.  Organizational design for health integrated delivery systems:  theory and practice.  Health Policy. 2007 May;81 (2-3):  258-279.  Epub 2006 Jul 18.

**Week 2 Assignment:**

**Discussion board:**  Based on your readings and lecture, identify three specific features of an organization's structure that you believe could significantly increase the organization's ability to effectively  and quickly make decisions and disseminate information, and provide brief rationale for each feature identified.

**Week 3**

**Week 3 Readings:**

1.  Burns, LR, et. al.  Hospital Physician Collaboration.  Landscape of economic integration and impact on clinical integration.  Milbank Q., 2008 Sept; 86(3),  375-434.  See e-reserves.

**Week 3 Discussion Board Assignment:**

You are learning about the relationship between external and internal drivers and the various components of an organization.  Your readings this week include a discussion of functional, physician-system, and clinical integration.  If your organization was challenged by a significant drop in revenues due to reimbursement changes AND your organization wanted to position itself to be as economically strong as is possible, which of the three types of integration would you recommend that your organization strive to achieve and why?

**Week 4**

**Week 4 Readings:**

1.  Casida, J, Pinto-Zipp G.  Leadership-organizational culture relationship in nursing units of acute care hospitals.  Nurs Econ 2008 Jan-Feb; 26(1):  7-15.

2.  Huston, c.  Preparing nurse leaders for 2020.  Journal of Nursing Management.  Vol 16 (8), 905-911.

**Week 4 Assignment (discussion board):**

• Your lecture and readings underscore the importance of nursing leadership competencies and skills to the achievement of organizational goals/objectives.  Yet, research also suggests that nurses are underprepared for contemporary leadership/management positions.  Of all of the nursing leadership/management competencies discussed in this week's learnings, which TWO should be an immediate priority for nursing education and why?  Be specific.

**Week 5**

**Week 5 Readings:**

1.  Harrison, MI, Kimani, J.  Building capacity for a transformation initiative:  system redesign at Denver Health.  Healthcare Management Review.  2009 Jan-March; 34(1), 42-53.

2.  Lukas CV, Holmes, SK, Cohen, AB, Restuccia J.  Transformational change in healthcare:  an organizational model.  Healthcare Management Review.  2007 Oct-Dec; 32(4):  309-320. **Week 5 Discussion Board Assignment:**

•Identify how and what Denver Health did to align its workforce strategy in order to effectively achieve its transformational change.  Be specific according to course learnings.

**Week 6 – Work on Midterms**

**Week 7**

**Week 7 Readings:**

1.  Schoessler MT, Aneshansle P.  et al.  The performance appraisal as a development tool.  J Nurse Staff Dev.  2008 May-June:  24(3):  E12-18.

2.  Steff M. Common competencies for all healthcare managers:  the healthcare leadership alliance model.  Journal of Healthcare Management.  53(6), Nov/Dec, 2008, 360-374.

3.  Nohria N.  Employee motivation:  a powerful new model.  Har Business Review.  2008 Jul-Aug:  86(7-8):  78-84, 160.

**Week 7 DISCUSSION BOARD Assignments:**

Your healthcare organization is experiencing increased RN turnover, in fact, 25% higher than other organizations in your community. Discuss how Providence Portland's performance appraisal system described in your readings would increase employee motivation to 'stay' with your organization, and provide brief rationale; thereby decreasing RN turnover.  In addition, identify 1-2 negative effects to organizational effectiveness of increased RN turnover.

Week 8

**Week 8**

**Readings:**

NO assigned course readings this week; however, you are encouraged to independently review the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as it pertains to the IT stimulus provisions.  Either google or go to the federal government's website for this very recent information.

**Week 8 discussion board Assignment:**

1.  As an external driver, the health IT provisions of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (also referred to as the 2009 economic stimulus package) have tremendous impact on a healthcare organization's resources.  Briefly describe what 'meaningful use' is according to this law, and how an organization's human, planning, and financial resources will be effected as the organization attempts to achieve 'meaningful use.'

**Week 9**

**Week 9 Reading:**

• Hartman CW, Meterko M, Rosen A. et al.  Relationship of hospital organizational culture to patient safety climate in the Veterans Health Administration.  Med Care Rev, 2009 Feb 24. (Epub ahead of print)

**Week 9 Assignment:**

• Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining a hierarchical organizational structure in order to advance a 'patient-safety' culture.