IPS 302 Systems Thinking

Course Description
Systems Thinking addresses complex problems across disciplines by examining interrelations and interactions in the world as influenced by our perspective. Patterns of systems thread through ecology, business, social problems, health/wellness, personal relationships, economics, the arts—really, everywhere you look. Through understanding these patterns and archetypes, we can carefully consider how to make a more positive impact in the world—whether that impact is recovering a depleted resource, creating access to services for all, or improving business outcomes. In this course, we examine the impact that thoughts, perspectives, models, patterns, and perceptions have on the world. This course will then provide you with hands-on tools to help you examine both familiar and unfamiliar systems, so that you begin to see aspects of your experience and your world as truly interconnected. Through practice and a shift in perception, you will be able to use systems thinking tools to leverage for change in your world and the world around you. This course integrates IPS 301 Design Thinking and IPS 306 Self-Awareness.

SLOs
1. Understand systems thinking tools and techniques.
2. Fluently apply systems thinking tools to real world problems using a case study model.
3. Utilize systems thinking tools and techniques on a problem in your life.

Major Assignments
Case Study in Group Format
A case study examination conducted by a small group of students, demonstrating systems thinking concepts and submitted weekly.

Personal Project Resulting in a Final Presentation
A final presentation on a personal topic of the student’s choice that demonstrates the application of systems thinking tools. A draft with peer and instructor feedback polishes the final presentation.

Reflection Questions or Reading Quizzes
Weekly quiz or assignment that asks critical questions about the readings.

Weekly Worksheets
Weekly assignments that ask students to create archetypes and other systems thinking tools with examples drawn from life.

Reading List

Readings from thesystemsthinker.com:
2. Daniel Kim: Introduction to Systems Thinking

The Student Experience
“I appreciate how powerful these tools are in analyzing situations and discovering potential solutions.”

“The coursework in this class has allowed me to elevate my performance at work.”

“Working in a group was one of the best things about this course. It helped me learn the material better and understand it more when I could collaborate with others.”