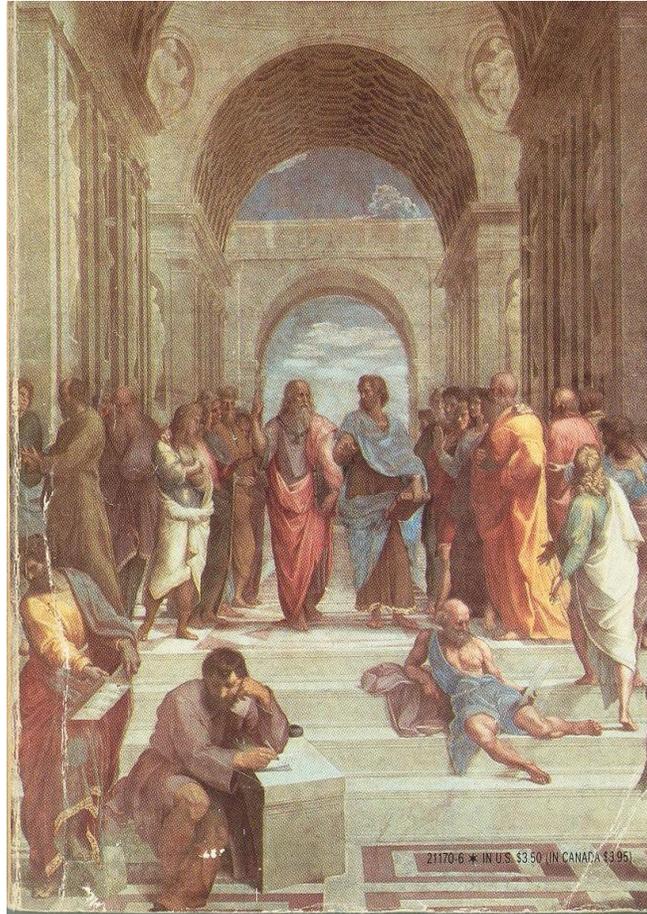


**FIELDING GRADUATE UNIVERSITY
HOD DOCTORAL PROGRAM
ASSESSMENT CONTRACT**

KA*717 – ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES



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ASSESSMENT BEGIN DATE: 1 AUGUST 2009

ASSESSMENT COMPLETION DATE: 1 JANUARY 2010

AGREEMENT IS FOR CREDIT

LEARNING GOALS:

Through the course of this study, I will:

- Enter into a broad investigation of organizational theories.
- Delimit and selectively discriminate the broad investigation into a genre of organizational theory that could be considered "organic," "timeless," or "perennial."
- Research the organizational structure of Plato's Academy.
- Synthesis: I then want to see if I can take the purpose and organizational structure of the Academy, and align these with a particular school of modern organizational theory, rephrasing them in the language of that school.
- With the synthesis thus articulated, I will apply this new (or renewed) organizational structural framework to the proposal of creating a "campus" prototype - which may very well be called an "Academy" - for a group I work with named Gaia Education.

READINGS: TEXTS, JOURNALS, AND WEB RESOURCES:

Organizational Theory Texts:

- Burton, Richard M., DeSanctis, Gerardine and Borge Obel (2006) *Organizational Design: A Step-by-Step Approach*. Cambridge University Press; UK
- Miles, Raymond and Charles Snow (2003) *Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process*. Stanford Business Books; Stanford, CA
- Morgan, Gareth (1986) *Images of Organization*. SAGE Publications; Beverly Hills
- Tsoukas, Haridimos and Christian Knudsen, editors (2003) *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Theory*. Oxford University Press; UK

Plato's Academy Texts:

- Bremer, John (2002) *Plato and the Founding of the Academy*. University Press of America; New York
- Cornford, Francis MacDonald (1997) *Plato's Cosmology: The Timaeus of Plato*. Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis, IN
- Cornford, Francis MacDonald (2003) *Plato's Theory of Knowledge: The Theatetus and the Sophist*. Dover Publications; New York
- Dillon, John (2005) *The Heirs of Plato: A Study of the Old Academy (347-274 BC)*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Fowler, David H. (1999) *The Mathematics of Plato's Academy: A New Reconstruction*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Guthrie, W.K.C. (1986) *A History of Greek Philosophy: Volume 5, The Later Plato and the Academy*. Cambridge University Press; UK
- Plato, translated by G.M.A. Grube (1992) *The Republic*. Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis, IN
- Reeve, C.D.C. (2001) *Women in the Academy: Dialogues on Themes from Plato's Republic*. Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis, IN
- Zeller, Eduard and Sarah Frances Alleyne (2007) *Plato and the Older Academy*. Kessinger Publishing, LLC; Whitefish, MT

Background Reading:

- Jaeger, Werner, translated by Gilbert Highet (1944) *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture (Volumes I, II, III)*. Oxford University Press; UK
- Marrou, H.I. (1982) *A History of Education in Antiquity*. University of Wisconsin Press; Madison

LEARNING PLAN AND DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING:

OVERVIEW PHASE: I understood this Phase to be completed by attending the Organizational Studies seminar at the Spring RAP session, 2008, in Anaheim. A broad overview of organizational theories and authors was presented.

IN-DEPTH PHASE: For completion of this Phase, I will delve deeply into the literature cited above: first, delimiting those organizational theories that could be considered "organic," "perennial," or "timeless," then collating the qualities, characteristics, processes that make them so; second, gaining a grasp of what was going on at Plato's Academy: how it was organized, what its intended purpose was thought to be, what a typical curriculum might look like; and third, reviewing the background literature to get a general feeling for culture, education, and the role of organizations in Classical Greece, so as to gain some perspective on how the human condition has evolved since then.

APPLIED PHASE: For the Applied component of this HOD*717 study, I will write a proposal for the creation of an organizational structure for a prototype "campus" for the international educational consortium Gaia Education. Presently, the group has created a curriculum that is being delivered at various "ecovillages" around the world. These deliveries are inevitably colored by whatever are the distinctive qualities of the host ecovillage and its supporting cast. My purpose in creating an organizational structure for a prototype "campus" is to provide a framework that can introduce a certain uniformity in the delivery of the curriculum irrespective of its location. In this way, the Gaia Education campus - *or let's call it an Academy from now on* - the Gaia Education Academy will be organizationally distinct from its host ecovillage while maintaining a certain consistency wherever in the world it may appear. Realistically, a prototype for such an Academy would not need a host ecovillage for its existence, but could become, rather, the first stage in creating new ecovillages; that is, set up the Academy and the ecovillage will grow around it.

Of course, the Academy I am envisioning could not be an exact replication of Plato's Academy; yet I'm sure there will be a lot to learn from his example - it was, after all, the *first*. The word 'Academy' is very powerful: it suggests an 'elite' sort of education; and from what I understand, the first Academy was a broadly holistic education that mixed philosophy with calisthenics, for example. The first Academy was probably intended to produce the "Guardians" of Plato's *Republic*, and I also like that parallel, in the sense of the new Academies

producing leaders for the transition into what's been called "sustainability." I doubt that Plato could have envisaged the need for 'sustainable community designers,' as such, but I believe he did have the forethought of preparing a regimen for producing highly qualified individuals - in character, mind, body, reasoning - who could assume leadership roles in their communities, not based on given arbitrary 'authority' but earned through virtuous example.

I also like the idea that by referencing the Academy there is a sense of continuity in the ongoing relation to the roots of the Western tradition. For my own personal scholarship, this particular HOD*717 study will be a prelude to understanding the irruption of neo-Platonism in Renaissance Florence, among the informal school that included the like of Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and their host Lorenzo the Magnificent. I believe the ideas this circle pondered still have relevance for our times; indeed, they helped to shape the world we are living in. I've suggested to Gaia Education to frame their purpose as heralding a new Renaissance of humanist values.

Continued scholarship will also include an investigation of Medieval Scholasticism, which I understand to be a revival or edification of the teachings of Aristotle - and there again is another vivid example of the continuing influence of the Western tradition that could be said to have had its roots in the Academy. I like the idea of including Medieval Scholasticism in this extended study because I have a scholarly friend who views 'Medieval' as being not just a single isolated historic period but rather a recurring quality of the times following the collapse of a great empire, which is usually coincident with the exhaustion of an energy regime. In that sense, we may very well be heading for another Medieval period - what will feel like a collapse of the centralized power structures into a simpler, more localized and geographically dispersed pattern of socio-economic organization. In those days, a study of the organizational structure of the Florentine guilds will be far more relevant than study of the organizational structure of transnational corporations. In the coming Medieval period, as in periods past, the role of the Academy will be to preserve artifacts of the decaying culture that can be deemed "timeless" or "perennial," storing these as seeds for a future Renaissance, while producing individuals of high moral caliber with the

capability of providing leadership (by example) for their communities.

SPECIFIC SCHOLAR-PRACTITIONER SKILLS TO WORK ON:

- Awareness of alternative perspectives
- Synthesis of Ideas
- Appropriate use of reference format
- Appropriate use of primary and secondary references

EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY ASSESSOR:

- Clear and explicit communications regarding faculty expectations at the outset of this study
- Reasonable expediency in evaluating materials at the scheduled completion of this study
- Honest, critical, growth-directed objectivity when evaluating materials