**Minutes of the 10-13-2016 Meeting**

**Faculty Community of Practice in Equity and Privilege**

1. We shared two resources:
   1. Donella Meadows’ *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System* <http://donellameadows.org/archives/leverage-points-places-to-intervene-in-a-system/>
   2. Excerpts from Otto Scharmer’s book *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges*.
2. Each of the resources sheds light on our work
   1. Meadows’s paper is about effective ways in which we can change a system. She presents a list of 9 (then 10) leverage points, from the least effective to the most effective. The least effective and most frequently used is the changing constants, parameters, numbers (subsidies, taxes, scholarships, etc.). The most effective …. Drum roll is *“The mindset or paradigm out of which the system — its goals, power structure, rules, its culture — arises.”* She then proceeds further and adds another one even more effective “*The power to transcend paradigms*.” I’ll let you all read the paper. It is a gem and enlightens the cultural change that we seek in order to eliminate/weaken inequity.
   2. Otto Scharmers’ excerpt is a discussion of scope of the system that we try to change. He articulates the major challenges we face into three divides:

* **Ecological** - divide between self and nature (overuse of non renewable resources, global warming),
* **Social** - divide between self and others (inequity, conflicts), and
* **Spiritual** - divide between self and self (misalignment between our sense of identity and sense of purpose on the one hand, and our actions and preoccupations on the other hand).

The position of Theory U is that the three divides are inter-related; solving each in isolation is what we have tried in the past 50+ years. It does not work. We must address the whole system as a whole.

1. How does this relate to us?
   1. We have been focusing on a collective endeavor to reveal, examine, and evolve the mindset from which we design and conduct our classes. In this respect we are –in theory – aligned with Meadows’s (2nd) most effective leverage point.
   2. We have been focusing exclusively on inequity. Our modus operandi has been that we come together to explore, learn, discuss and practice in our respective classes and classrooms.
2. Reflection/suggestion
   1. We have converged during the last year on participating in
      1. group discussions of syllabi and course plans for whoever is ready and willing to bring their class materials
      2. mutual class visits to provide an external reflection on aspects we have discussed.

Question: Are we still interested in the discussions and visits? Most of the group said yes.

* + - 1. Ron reminded us all that we have his syllabus and class schedule and made an open invitation to anyone who wants to visit.
      2. Helen sent me her syllabus and schedule with an offer to use it as another case study.
      3. Others suggested we revisit the worksheet we started last year and finalize it so that the visits are targeted.
  1. A complementary idea that would allow us to look at a bigger system:
     1. Together we formulate a multi-disciplinary minor/certificate/competence (let’s call it a minor for now)
     2. Such minor would focus on preparing the students for the future they will be facing.
     3. The design would be motivated by the three divides or a modified version thereof.
     4. Overall there seemed to be enough interest for the idea.
     5. My reading is that the consensus was to pursue both.

Thank you all. I always leave these meetings renewed, re-energized, and hopeful.

Fatma