

What follows are two reports written by John Ehrenfeld, a leader in the Sustainability field.

They are based on conversations with Dwight Collins, Scott Kelley and Ron Nahser begun during the Presidio Graduate School "Renewal Project" 2018-2019.

We are in the process of bringing the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry back as one of the 3 pillars of the Presidio founding educational philosophy, in Appendix.

Part I: Flourishing, Pragmatism, the Brain and
Education John Ehrenfeld

August, 2019

*Logic and sermons never convince,
The damp of night drives deeper into my soul.*

*Only what proves itself to every man and woman is so,
Only what nobody denies is so.*
(Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass, 1855)

Introduction

Pragmatism, to make sense and, eventually, to be employed practically, must first be understood as an entirely distinctive way of apprehending reality. If this point is not made and embedded, then any application of pragmatic thinking, such as the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry¹, is limited to its methodological value. What I have just written pertains to the ontological character of pragmatism, that is, it is about how we apprehend and talk about the existence, reality, or truth of things, including words. A second key point about pragmatism is that it is fundamentally normative, in that it leads to actions that are always rooted in making the world better. In that sense, it carries an inherent ethical teleology or purpose. It is never merely descriptive as are all forms of science, and much of philosophy. Pragmatic forms of inquiry end with something like, “OK, this is what we should now do.” Scientific/analytic forms of inquiry end with something like, “Now I know about the object under scrutiny.”

Pragmatism, Reality and Truth

To go fully into elaborating this terse introduction would take hundreds of pages, but I believe I can do a reasonable job by calling on the words of a few scholars. The fundamental difference between pragmatism and positivism or essentialism or other related broad terms is that, in the latter frameworks, we come to know what the world is like by getting to know (though science) what constitutes all the discrete pieces that are in and constitute that world. Another way is to say we get to know the intrinsic content of these objects, or, as some say, their essence or nature. If we do not stop and reflect on what we have been thinking and doing, we will have almost certainly been dealing with their intrinsic properties.

The late Richard Rorty, who is considered to be a neo-pragmatist (to distinguish him and other philosophers who got into it long after the concepts were developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries), made the distinction between these two systems of thought about as clearly as it is ever going to be in the following few paragraphs.

Pragmatists insist on nonocular, nonrepresentational ways of describing sensory perception, thought and language, because they would like to break down the distinction between knowing things and using them. Starting from Bacon’s claim that knowledge is power, they proceed to the claim that power is all there is to knowledge — that *a claim to know X is a claim to be able to do*

something with or to X, to put X into relation with something else. To make this claim plausible, however, they have to attack the notion that knowing X is a matter of being related to something intrinsic to X, whereas using X is a matter of standing in an extrinsic, accidental, relation to X. (my emphasis)

In order to attack that notion, they need to break down the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic — between the inner core of X and a peripheral area of X which is constituted by the fact that X stands in certain relations to the other items which make up the universe. The attempt to break down this distinction is what I shall call antiessentialism. For pragmatists, there is no such thing as a nonrelational feature of X, any more than there is such a thing as the intrinsic nature, the essence, of X. So there can be no such thing as a description which matches the way X really is, apart from its relation to human needs or consciousness or language. Once the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goes, so does the distinction between reality and appearance, and so do worries about whether there are barriers between us and the world. (PSH p.50)

The first formal pragmatist, Charles Sanders Peirce, built a system of meaning based on the connection of things to practice or outcomes. Pragmatism owes its existence to the work of Peirce, who was concerned about how humans think and how ideas ultimately relate to actions. Following his critique of Cartesianism (Peirce, 1877) as a way of settling doubt and establishing beliefs (the absence of doubt), Peirce (1878) presented his own criterion for providing the meaning of concepts or things based on the practical effects they produced. His idea can be summed up in these three related quotes. The first related the cognitive (conception) to the actual action (habit). The second quote became known as the “pragmatic maxim.” The third entails the communal sense of pragmatic truth. All are from his 1878 article in *Popular Science Monthly*.

To develop [a thought’s] meaning, we have simply to determine what habits it produces, for what a thing means is simply what habits it involves.

It appears, then, that the rule for attaining the third grade of clearness of apprehension is as follows: Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object.

The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real. That is the way I would explain reality.

Peirce used the concept “hard” as an example. Being hard has the effect of not being able to be scratched. Our conception of what it means to be hard is wholly determined by this effect. I find his somewhat stilted language become clearer if you substitute “understanding” for “conception.” Rather than know how the world works by deductions from the intrinsic properties of things, pragmatism works in the opposite direction, getting to understand what the world is all about by observing everything conceivable that something (or concept) does. It follows from these two assertions that 1) we understand

the world by observing what things do to/in the world; 2) we form our beliefs about of such understandings; and 3), we act on the basis of such beliefs.

A corollary of this basic description of “isness” (this is what it really is) is that what we call truth or true is always embedded in the context of the situation(s) from which we have drawn that conclusion. What has been true about something may not be true if the context changes. This means that what we take for conventional knowledge, say all the theories we have about the way everything works, is always contingent, or, all the stuff we have learned in school is of very limited use outside the classrooms and study halls in which most students spend their “educational” hours. *This is the fundamental argument for experiential or pragmatic learning.*

Here is another Rorty quote that adds more to this subject.

Pragmatists hope to break with the . . . Cartesian-Lockean picture of a mind seeking to get in touch with a reality outside itself. So they start with a Darwinian account of human beings as animals doing their best to cope with the environment – doing their best to develop tools which will enable them to enjoy more pleasure and less pain. Words are among the tools which these clever animals developed.

There is no way in which tools can take one out of touch with reality. No matter whether the tool is a hammer or a gun or a belief or a statement, tool-using is part of the interaction of the organism with its environment. To see the employment of words as the use of tools to deal with the environment, rather than as an attempt to represent the intrinsic nature of that environment, is to repudiate the question of whether human minds are in touch with reality — the question asked by the epistemological sceptic. No organism, human or non-human, is ever more or less in touch with reality than any other organism. The very idea of ‘being out of touch with reality’ presupposes the un-Darwinian, Cartesian picture of a mind which somehow swings free of the causal forces exerted on the body. The Cartesian mind is an entity whose relations with the rest of the universe are representational rather than causal. So to rid our thinking of the vestiges of Cartesianism, to become fully Darwinian in our thinking, we need to stop thinking of words as representations and to start thinking of them as nodes in the causal network which binds the organism together with its environment. (PSH, p xxii-xxiii)

This is also one of the central points of the Toyota Production System (TPS). When anything goes wrong within the manufacturing system, the next step is not to call in the experts, either from inside or outside, to get the system moving again. Instead whoever is in charge gathers those from the inside that have been in a position to observe and, after applying appropriate methodological tools designed to explicate all the conceivable effects, make a stab at finding a way to move on. An old slide I found on the Web used this simple, but powerful phrase for this aspect the TPS, “Go see for yourself.” Toyota understands that they may not be able to explicate everything of causal importance and that things will always change in the future, so whatever is done is always taken as contingent and that the process may (probably will) have to be repeated. This is why the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry is circular and dialectical. This framing is the basis of “lean” management, production, thinking...

One of the principal reasons that it has not been successfully implemented in most instances is that everyone involved from the CEO to the floor sweeper has to acknowledge that this framework rests on a

distinctively different way of thinking and getting to understand the particularity of the world that every individual setting entails. Another slide noted that the TPS and all its principals and philosophy worked because it had become an integral part of the company's culture. That level of embeddedness is difficult to create, given that modern cultures swim in a sea of positivism. Most of we human animals think we will die if we ever jump out of that ocean.

Pragmatism, Inquiry, Improvement, and Hope

So far, that is about all you have to know about the ontological side of pragmatism. Now for the very important normative or ethical/moral side. Nothing about “flourishing” so far, but it will come as another part of the puzzle of pragmatism. I have found, as I write this, important links between the two that I had not seen before. In a nutshell, pragmatism, at work as opposed to philosophical debates, is always about making things better. Another way to say this is that pragmatism is always about making the future better than the present. Again, let me use a few Rorty quotes:

If there is anything distinctive about pragmatism it is that it substitutes the notion of a better human future for the notions of ‘reality’, ‘reason’ and ‘nature’. One may say of pragmatism what Novalis said of Romanticism, that it is ‘the apotheosis of the future’. (PSH, p. 27)

Pragmatists — both classical and ‘neo-’ — do not believe that there is a way things really are. So they want to replace the appearance–reality distinction by that between descriptions of the world and of ourselves which are less useful and those which are more useful. When the question ‘useful for what?’ is pressed, they have nothing to say except ‘useful to create a better future’. When they are asked, ‘Better by what criterion?’, they have no detailed answer, any more than the first mammals could specify in what respects they were better than the dying dinosaurs. ...They are limited to such fuzzy and unhelpful answers because what they hope is not that the future will conform to a plan, will fulfill an immanent teleology, but rather that the future will astonish and exhilarate. (PSH, p. 27-28)

Pragmatists are never involved in idle inquiry, that is, inquiry for inquiry's sake. There is always a purpose to what pragmatists do. They become interested in some system because they care about it in the sense that it has some kind of practical meaning for them. Rorty's pragmatists – the ones he is writing about – are concerned with making the world better, but at different scales ranging from one's immediate personal world to communities, businesses, nations, and even the planet.

They differ from most mainline philosophers who seek certainty, gleaned from reason and theorizing, to guide action, or, in Rorty's words, believe the future will turn out the way their plans tell them it will. Pragmatists, eschewing such theorizing out of the context and immediacy of the very situation they aim to alter, have only the outcomes of their observations on which to act. They will know if their actions or practices work only in the sense of making the future better than the present, but this sounds pretty precisely like the ordinary way we use the word “hope.” We have a vision of the future in mind and hope that what we are about to do will get us there. If we thought that the present was perfect, why would we ever try to change anything. The importance of pragmatic thinking and action comes, in

part, because the world is always changing from minute to minute, either destroying the existing perfection or offering glimpses of an even better future.

This aspect of pragmatism, and, more specifically of pragmatic inquiry, is critical to the education of just about anybody, but particularly for students seeking an MBA or MPP. Virtually all institutions of business, government, and civil society have purposes; otherwise they wouldn't have been created. It is incumbent on all involved to do the best they can, to continuously get better, and to solve and eliminate all the problems that stand in the way of those objectives. Managers or any other careerists that involve these degrees, whether they are explicitly aware or not, take on those objectives. The idea of always doing better is ever present. Given the complexity of such institutions and an ever-changing world, most effort is devoted to solving problems that prevent even doing whatever is supposed to be done in some satisfactory manner. But this is also a variation of doing better.

I will argue in a few paragraphs to come that this does equate to growth for growth's sake, either in profit or shareholder value. Again referring to the TPS, it is pragmatic in the sense the management and other employees are primarily pragmatic problem-solvers, not profit-maximizers or anything like that. Toyota's [pragmatic] business philosophy has been that, if they continuously do better at making and selling cars, the profits will come or, better, emerge out of the system. The TPS is fundamentally a learning system, based on pragmatic inquiry methodology and its view of reality. It is distinctly different from most organizational learning programs, which do little more than replace one set of "mental models" (Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*), with another. They do not connect the before and after with a pragmatic inquiry process, but tend to jump from one set of abstractions to another.

An exception is the work of Don Schön, a MIT researcher who studied how master architects worked. In his book, *The Reflective Practitioner*, he used two related terms to describe the reflective process he ascribed to the exceptional successes of masterful practitioners in architecture: reflection-in-practice and reflection-on-practice (Schön, 1983). The first term refers to the presencing or the bringing to consciousness of feelings, emotions, and similar experiences *as they occur* in such a way to impact the brain and influence future actions. The second refers to a recounting of a situation *after the fact* that similarly captures the context of emotions and other related experiences. Clearing the brain of its preconceptions is a critical step in addressing almost all problematic, planning, or design situations, but it is only that – a step along the way.

Pragmatism and Flourishing

For this section, I am going to draw on some work by the philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre, about the failure of the so-called Enlightenment project. The connection to pragmatism is mine; his discussion is about what might seem a completely different subject, the Humean-derived is-ought conflict. Here is Hume's original statement:

In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surprised to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of

the last consequence. For as this *ought*, or *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention would subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason. (Hume, p. 335) (emphasis in the original)

In the vernacular I tend to use, what he is saying is that one cannot derive a normative or moral statement (ought) by any logical or reasoned argument, based only on statements of fact (is). MacIntire disagrees. (I apologize for the length of this quote, but he develops the argument I seek much better than I could.) He writes that:

There *are* several types of valid argument in which some element may appear in a conclusion which is not present in the premises. A. N. Prior's counter-example to this alleged principle illustrates its breakdown adequately; from the premise 'He is a sea-captain', the conclusion may be validly inferred that 'He ought to do whatever a sea-captain ought to do'. This counter-example not only shows that there is no general principle of the type alleged; but it itself shows what is at least a grammatical truth — an 'is' premise *can* on occasion entail an 'ought' conclusion. MacIntire, p. 57) (emphasis in the original)

[I]t is helpful to consider another type of counter-example to the 'No "ought" conclusions from "is" premises' thesis. From such factual premises as 'This watch is grossly inaccurate and irregular in time-keeping' and 'This watch is too heavy to carry about comfortably', the evaluative conclusion validly follows that 'This is a bad watch'. From such factual premises as 'He gets a better yield for this crop per acre than any farmer in the district', 'He has the most effective programme of soil renewal yet known' and 'His dairy herd wins all the first prizes at the agricultural shows', the evaluative conclusion validly follows that 'He is a good farmer'. Both of these arguments are valid because of the special character of the concepts of a watch and of a farmer. Such concepts are *functional concepts*; that is to say, we define both 'watch' and 'farmer' in terms of the purpose or function which a watch or a farmer are characteristically expected to serve. *It follows that the concept of a watch cannot be defined independently of the concept of a good watch nor the concept of a farmer independently of that of a good farmer; and that the criterion of something's being a watch and the criterion of something's being a good watch — and so also for 'farmer' and for all other functional concepts — are not independent of each other.* Now clearly both sets of criteria — as is evidenced by the examples given in the last paragraph — are factual. Hence any argument which moves from premises which assert that the appropriate criteria are satisfied to a conclusion which asserts that 'That is a good such-and-such', where 'such-and-such' picks out an item specified by a functional concept, will be a valid argument which moves from factual premises to an evaluative conclusion. Thus we may safely assert that, if some amended version of the 'No "ought" conclusion from "is" premises' principle is to hold good, it must exclude arguments involving functional concepts from its scope. But this suggests strongly that those who have insisted that all moral arguments fall within the scope of such a principle may have been doing so, because they took it for granted that no moral arguments involve functional

concepts. Yet moral arguments within the classical, Aristotelian tradition – whether in its Greek or its medieval versions – involve at least one central functional concept, the concept of man understood as having an essential nature and an essential purpose or function; and it is when and only when the classical tradition in its integrity has been substantially rejected that moral arguments change their character so that they fall within the scope of some version of the ‘No “ought” conclusion from “is” premises’ principle is to hold good, it must exclude arguments involving functional concepts from its scope. But this suggests strongly that those who have insisted that all moral arguments fall within the scope of such a principle may have been doing so, because they took it for granted that no moral arguments involve functional concepts. Yet moral arguments within the classical, Aristotelian tradition – whether in its Greek or its medieval versions – involve at least one central functional concept, the concept of man understood as having an essential nature and an essential purpose or function; and it is when and only when the classical tradition in its integrity has been substantially rejected that moral arguments change their character so that they fall within the scope of some version of the ‘No “ought” conclusion from “is” premises’ principle. That is to say, ‘man’ stands to ‘good man’ as ‘watch’ stands to ‘good watch’ or ‘farmer’ to ‘good farmer’ within the classical tradition. *Aristotle takes it as a starting-point for ethical enquiry that the relationship of ‘man’ to ‘living well’ is analogous to that of ‘harpist’ to ‘playing the harp well’* (Nicomachean Ethics, 1095a 16). But the use of ‘man’ as a functional concept is far older than Aristotle and it does not initially derive from Aristotle’s metaphysical biology. It is rooted in the forms of social life to which the theorists of the classical tradition give expression. For according to that tradition to be a man is to fill a set of roles each of which has its own point and purpose: member of a family, citizen, soldier, philosopher, servant of God. It is only when man is thought of as an individual prior to and apart from all roles that ‘man’ ceases to be a functional concept. (MacIntire, p. 57-59) (emphasis added)

The whole point of this passage is to point to the fundamental connection between man and flourishing as the ultimate good that defines man as distinct from other animals.² Aristotle knew that, but for the wrong reasons, which may be part of why his powerful notion of eudaimonia died out. In the sense of understanding what objects are by reference to what they are being good at doing (extrinsic) instead of knowing how they are constituted (intrinsic), humans could be said to be good at language use and culture building. These are the two primary tools that have allowed humans to move toward their potential as a unique animal species. Without that, as someone has said, they are just very smart animals. MacIntire captures Rorty’s arguments about the connection between pragmatism and Darwin in this long passage, just above.

I based much of my development of flourishing in my new book on the philosopher, Loyal Rue (2011). I now realize that his arguments are consistent with the approach that MacIntire has taken in the above paragraph. Following Rue, I have used “flourishing” as metaphor for the attainment of the human existential potential, in two domains, the personal and the institutional/cultural. The first pertains to the “continuous improvement” of an individual toward being authentic, coming from within, taking care of herself, other humans, the rest of the world, and the transcendental. Loving, as an authentic act, lies within this aspect of flourishing. Language is a primary tool in this domain. To be fully human, one needs to be “good” at using it properly. Empathy is another.

The second domain is the cultural. Culture can be said to be a tool created by humans to reflect the intersubjective or social nature of our species. Flourishing also reflects the goodness of the ways that a human being copes with cultural settings. Rue’s two aspects, personal wholeness and social coherence, can be easily fitted into MacIntire’s framework. Humans are animals that are good at authentic care (personal wholeness) and cultural life (social coherence). Flourishing reflects the attainment of a certain level of competence in these domains. Flourishing is pragmatically-determined because it is the outcome of processes of continuous betterment/learning applied to individual human existence. Connecting what something means to the kind of practices that make it distinct does not imply that its action always produces “good” outcomes.

The unique thing about human beings is that they are good for/at so many more things than anything else as a result of the historical development of language, culture, and technology. So much so, you would never compare them to a watch, although that comparison is perfectly reasonable and categorically correct. And that is why flourishing is so hard to pin down in words, but not in practice.

The Divided Brain

The last piece of this jigsaw puzzle is the divided-brain model, most easily accessed by reference to Iain McGilchrist (2012) and Leonard Shlain (1998, 2014). It forms the biological foundation for all the above philosophical talk. Basically, pragmatism is the result of using the right-side of the brain to interact with the world. The right presents a highly interconnected, context-rich picture of the world to an actor, and provides understanding of the functions of things. The left presents a world largely drawn from the past, full of objects that have been abstracted from experience. The table below contains a partial list of opposing aspects of the two hemispheres. I drew this up by cribbing from slides McGilchrist used in several YouTube videos and from his book.

Functional Attributes of the Brain Hemispheres

Left Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
Uses logic	Uses feelings/intuition
Is detail-oriented	Is big-picture-oriented
Ruled by facts	Ruled by imagination
Words & language	Symbols & future
Lives in the present & past	Lives in the present & future
Acts instrumentally	Acts out of care/love
Knows (objects names)	Believes/understands (objects functions)
Forms strategies	Presents possibilities
Is deliberate	Is impetuous
Plays safe	Takes risks

Prefers quantities	Prefers qualities
Controls	Explores
Analyzes	Empathizes

The full story of McGilchrist’s model is presented in his magisterial work, *The Master and his Emissary*. Leonard Shlain, apparently without any knowledge of McGilchrist’s work, developed an uncannily similar picture and presented it in several books that precede McGilchrist’s. He makes a case that the dominance of the left-brain, together with all its modern baggage, began with the emergence of alphabetic writing and the spread of literacy.

This model of the human brain provides a biological, objective basis of the dichotomous opposition of pragmatism (anti-essentialist) and any thread of philosophy that be traced back to the Platonic/Aristotelean essentialist tradition. It also provides an understanding of the emergence of cultures and sociological eras that were centered about the characteristics of one side or the other. Modernity, the current stage of Western and other developing cultures, is a paradigm example of the left at work. Its tentacles can be found virtually in every nook and cranny of modern cultures like ours. The research university, disciplinary knowledge, didactic pedagogy are all left-brain creations.

The idea of authentic care does not live in the left hemisphere, which acts out of strategic purposes, in a world composed of static, lifeless objects. There is no room for passion, as an expression of what someone thinks is a very good thing to do – not as some psychological state. Passion is strongly tied to the pragmatic, flourishing model of being human. It is an indication that someone has been able to reflect and bring forth whatever they believe is good for a human like him or her to get involved with.

Relevance to Presidio and Academic Institutions in General

For people who intend to find careers in business (MBA students), are already immersed in business, or teach, or research about business, this dichotomous distinction is critical. Most intriguingly, it is the same distinction between the ways the right and left-hemispheres of the brain work. The left sees things as objects defined/existing by virtue of their intrinsic properties. The right sees things as defined/existing by virtue of their relationships to other things, that is, by the context.

The good news for Presidio and elsewhere is that they can now choose between two fundamental ways of being, thinking, acting, and adopt a teaching system related to the choice. The bad news is that, if they choose the pragmatic, right-brain, flourishing human path, they have to buy into all the pieces. Any suggestion otherwise would be coming from the left-brain. The right-brain triad forms a tightly interconnected whole that becomes unstable and collapses into the (modern,) left-brain, positivistic, Smithian (or similar essentialist) human path, if any parts are left out.

Without perhaps being aware, Presidio has already chosen to play with parts of the right-brain triad with its inclusion of experiential learning, the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry, probing its students’ passions, and perhaps more. But neither the students nor the faculty and staff know why these non-standard pieces

are there, a lack that disables them as powerful change agents. They need to understand the huge impact that the difference between these two “programmes” have on the basic idea of “business, firm, company,” and on how that produces very different descriptions of what they ought to be doing.

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1. The Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry is a formal pedagogy, developed by Dr. Ron Nahser and put into practiced at the Presidio Graduate Institute in San Francisco. This memorandum was prepared for the Presidio and, specifically their management programs, but is applicable to other educational settings. The Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry, originally trademarked, is described in an attachment to this memo.

2. In my recent book, *The Right Way to Flourish: Reconnecting with the Real World*, I used some work by the American philosopher, John Searle, to talk about reality (Searle, 2009). My reason is the same one that underlies this discussion: the further one departs from reality, the higher is the likelihood, that she will be disappointed in the outcome. Pragmatism allows one to approach closer to the reality of the immediate, contextual world in which the action is taking place than does any form of acontextual knowledge. Whitehead captures this in his wonderful notion of “the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.” Searle defines two kinds of facts: brute and institutional. I have lifted the next six paragraphs from my book.

Brute facts are statements about the existence and properties of objects in the material world. That my house has three stories and is made of wood is a brute fact. My pen contains black ink. The Earth is about 93,000,000 miles from the Sun. The words fit the part of the world at which I am pointing. That is all the words do. They represent a part of the existing reality. That fact comes forth in my words, but it was a brute fact even before I said so. Even if I should lie and say my house has two stories, the brute fact is that it has three. Brute facts rarely give us trouble in practice; lying, however, about them does. Brute facts about things that are familiar in the sense of being directly related to my own experience reside in the right-brain.

When I talk or think about my house and describe it, I am drawing on the right side, but, when I talk similarly about objects in the abstract, that is, houses in general, I am drawing on the left-brain.

Institutional facts are categorically different. Unlike brute facts that exist prior to being talked about, institutional facts only appear when someone's words imbue a common object with some status or power (Searle, 2009). The social world within which humans exist is unlike that of other creatures and is constituted by such language. Humans can impose “[status] functions on objects and people where the objects and people cannot perform the functions solely in virtue of their physical structure (Searle, 2009: 7).” The amalgamation of these functions establishes the structure of institutions that range from those involving a few people to whole societies. Order in the institutions is maintained by an explicit or implicit agreement of all individuals to acknowledge the legitimacy of the functions and the authority of institutional actors, whether humans or artifacts, to perform them. Judges, parents, chess pieces, private property, or bosses are a few familiar examples of such actors.

Status functions are imposed on objects simply by saying that this or that function now exists, but only if spoken in a special linguistic manner. Neither any old speaker nor any old words will do. The words have to come in the form of a particular speech act, a Declaration. Declarations create a new reality, that is, they change the world in the act of uttering them. When a Professor says, “You failed,” you have, in fact, failed. Your future is different now from what it has been. No further action is needed, unlike the case of, say, a request, another kind of speech act that requires a world-changing action in order to be satisfied. Declarations alter reality merely by stating that something new now exists, and simultaneously causes it to actually exist.

A Declaration must have sufficient legitimating power or authority behind it to make it last after the words fade into thin air. That power can come from the collective acceptance by those whose reality is now changed, or from some previously acknowledged authority of the speaker. In the former case a new social institution is created; in the latter, the power of the speaker, say, a Judge, comes from an already established institution, in this case, the justice system and its legal legitimacy. If we ignore the powers of institutional facts, we may be subject to some sort of sanction. For example, if we disregard the powers attached to private property, we may find ourselves facing a judge on charges of robbery or trespassing.

The importance of this capacity to create what Searle calls “status functions” is that they endow the target object with what he calls “deontic power(s).” Deontic, in linguistics or moral logic, refers to rights, entitlements, duties, obligations, and so on. A metal slug with a special pattern stamped on it becomes “money,” constituted by the powers that have been given to it, by Declaration. A fifty-cent coin obligates others to accept it in exchange for goods and services. A Professor has been endowed with duties like teaching, maintaining decorum, and assigning grades. All institutional facts are associated with ordinary objects or persons. The fifty-cent piece entails some legitimating stamping on a slug made of an alloy of copper and nickel; the Professor is an ordinary human being who has been given a title and powers by a university. In some places, Professors are distinguished from ordinary adults by the robes they wear. Without the (deontic) powers, both the money and the Professor are merely brute facts: a piece of metal or a human being, respectively. The winner of a chess match, the game of soccer, students, credit cards, banks, The U.S. Treasury, spouses, hospitals, and CEOs are all examples of institutional facts. On reflection, most of us would recognize that we exist in a veritable sea of such facts and the institutions that afford them such power. Searle argues that these status functions and their deontic powers are the “glue that holds human civilization together (2009: 9).”

All of this note is intended to show that MacIntyre's critique of the 'No "ought" conclusion from "is" premises' principle is consistent with Searle's definitions of facts. The Humean argument holds for brute facts, but fails for institutional facts, like watches, because they exist only by virtues of the obligations/oughts by which they were created. It includes human beings as well, as long as they are understood to have duties beyond their role as primates.

Part II: Thoughts on the Revitalization of the PGS

John Ehrenfeld

April 2018

This memorandum is being offered following a series of discussions among John Ehrenfeld, Ron Nahser, Dwight Collins, and Scott Kelley examining options for the renewal of the PGS. The primary impetus for this is the belief that PSG needs a radical change in its mission, core pedagogy, and its offerings to regain its former high standing among pioneering institutions of higher education.

I. A quick argument for making a transformative change at Presidio

1. The world isn't working. It isn't even sustainable.
2. We can't find a way to make the problems disappear. Our solutions, mostly science-based, not only fail to work, but are producing even worse problems. We have been applying and continue to apply, in the lingo of systems dynamics, the same old fixes-that-fail, shifting-the-burden, and addiction archetypes.
3. Maybe the "problem" is the underlying story we tell about the world and us humans from which our institutions and normal behaviors come.
4. Let's change the story and see what happens. Creating and learning a new one is a transformation, not simply a repair job. Changing stories that are so deeply entrenched can't happen unless we raise the present tale to the level of consciousness and unlearn it. We need to discover why we have been telling the same old story. It turns out that the way the brain works has a lot to do with our present situation (more about this below and in Appendix 1).
5. A central feature of the new story is a move from the "standard" mechanistic, abstract model of the world and its separate parts to an organic, interconnected complex model. We know that any model is an abstraction, but the complexity model can explain things better and help us find ways to move forward toward our aspirations.
6. We find the emergence of many qualities arise from the very complexity, including the quality of flourishing, the realization of living organisms' potential.
7. The old reductionist epistemology no longer works, but, thanks to C. S. Peirce, we have another way of understanding and intervening in the system, called pragmatism. It is important to understand that pragmatism, as inquiry, is not only a way toward understanding, but is also a powerful design methodology, the necessary tool for mucking around in complex systems (at all levels) in hopes they will give us what we want from them. Most of the time, they do not care about us. Pragmatism is more than an epistemology; it is a way of being, hence the need for personal transformation.
8. Based on complexity, we now need to start with the recognition that everything is interconnected, and only focus on the parts when their connections are weak enough to justify reductionist knowledge.

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9. If we are committed to getting the World to reach its potential of flourishing, we have to learn the new story and start applying it in our lives.

10. So...

II. The context for transformational change at Presidio

PGS has had a topical flavor, sustainability, since its founding that has distinguished it from its peers, served as a magnet for students, and empowered its graduates. That topic has waned in recent years in all of those aspects and needs to be replaced if PGS is to continue its pre-eminence. Flourishing, to be elaborated below, is a powerful alternate, per se, and is beginning to show up as, perhaps, the next broad rubric for socially oriented practices. It can serve as the vision that drives the student along the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry® while at PGS and thereafter.

In the background of this discussion lie some recent developments in the understanding of the brain that both help understand why modern nations are floundering and also offer a model for designing remedial pathways, including education. The fundamental message is that the two brain hemispheres present different, dichotomous worldviews, and that the character of individual human actors and the culture in which they are immersed depend on which side dominates. (See Appendix 1 for a summary of this model.) Flourishing exists in the right-brain world, one that is complex and meaningful, with caring, empathetic humans highly interconnected to each other and to the non-human world. The actual modern world is the product of the left—a decontextualized, cold, abstract place of cookie-cutter, rational, needy, insatiable human beings, putting everything else out there to their service. It should be clear which one is currently in charge. This discussion rests on the ground of restoring the primacy of the right.

The need for a radical shift is also reflected by the market place. The glamorous beginning of the Bainbridge and Marlboro sustainability MBA programs could not be sustained due to lack of a market. PGS has limped along, but faced the same reality. The Bard program is enveloped in a larger institution. I have my doubts about its survival potential as an independent institution. The presence of “sustainability” programs in many conventional MBA and other professional programs does now and will continue to threaten the existence of any independent program with a similar shape.

As the short story above indicates, the more pressing need for radical change lies even deeper, in the basic educational philosophy underlying virtually all professional education in the United States and elsewhere. The positivistic, disciplinary model of knowledge simply is inadequate to understand the real, complex world and to serve as a paradigm for the design of solutions to the great problems we face. Others and I have argued that the very problems we struggle to cope with are the result of that philosophy. A. N. Whitehead named the shortcomings of this way of thinking, “the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.

The story does not end there. We do not have to be stuck with fixes that fail, to use the lingo of systems dynamics. Pragmatism provides an effective alternate to positivism as a pedagogic philosophy. Dewey shows how it could power education, especially education with the purpose

to create the ‘good’ life. The experiential learning that has been the base of PGS had been a good start toward embodying a pragmatic structure ay PGS, but goes only part way. Given that PGS is, first, an educational institution, the move to pragmatic inquiry should be the first element of its transformation. Flourishing, as the topical theme, complements this structural change as a specific objective and continues the commitment to educating students that can and will “change the world” for the better.

Conceptual Foundations

Any program that aims to be “radical” and “transformative” must modify the underlying assumptions at work in most of higher education:

It must transition:

- from a focus on mastery of *content* to mastery of *inquiry*; i.e. from *content-centric* to *student-centric*.
- from mastery of *skills* to mastery of *method*.
- from accumulation of discrete *knowledge* to an ongoing process of *learning*.
- from *curriculum, or courses of study* in a school or college, to *domains of inquiry*.
- from courses of *specified content* over a specific duration of time to a demonstration of *sufficient inquiry* through the use of mentor feedback.

The central themes running thorough this memorandum are the strengthening of pragmatic inquiry as the pedagogic backbone and the replacement of sustainability (as the coalescing topic) by flourishing. The design presented in Appendix 2 is based on the offering of a 12-month Masters degree program.

III. Leaving sustainability behind

The focus on sustainability at Presidio and other institutions arose largely out of an awareness of failures in the global social-economic system and concerns that the global environment was being threatened. Virtually all sustainability programs have lacked a clear vision of what was to be sustained, other than the modernist notion of progress toward some fuzzy end, usually couched in some measure of wealth. The more generic notion of progress has showed up as growth, but as the end itself, not the means to some vision of a healthy thriving (sustainable) planet.

Sustainability has attained significant social power, but is a mixed metaphor. Its positive side carries a sense of permanence in some desirable state of a system. Its most expansive application is to the whole earth system in a time scale reaching far into the future. More specifically, in its semantic sense, sustainability means that something currently present will continue to exist in the future in such conditions that it is of equal or equivalent intrinsic or instrumental value. “Strong” sustainability requires that all of the Earth’s contents be kept at a level so as to allow for present and future generations to enjoy their fruits. “Weak” sustainability allows for substitution of the natural world by human inventions of equivalent “value,” however that is to be taken.

The metaphor of sustainability in a systemic sense has been reduced to foci bearing on individual aspects of the system: sustainable cities, business, buildings, luxury, fashion, brands, consumption, and on and on. The word also can refer to specific aspects of the system, as in the idea of sustainable yield of a forestry or fishery, that is, the ability of the system to allow the removal of some part for extended periods without affecting the integrity of the system. The word is generally misused, however, as in “sustainable business.” Semantically, the only way to interpret this phrase is to think about sustaining the business as an entity. Attaching it to any institutional reference, as in sustainable business or sustainable city or sustainable building, is redundant in general usage as the institution or artifact named was, in most instances, designed to last in the first place.

In practice, however, the basic metaphor has gotten lost (if it was ever present); at the same time, its prevalent use as an objective for individual and collective action suggests that it is perceived to be in a precarious condition. The idea of sustainability has come to mean engaging in activities that are intended to reduce the negative impact of human activities on the world’s social and environmental systems. This usage would be meaningful if there were some way of relating the activities of each sustainable node of the Earth system to the whole Planet.

We do have and apply such a relationship: the neoclassical economic (capitalistic) model of the market as the model and growth as the condition to be sustained. The limitations of this model have been apparent to many for a long time, but are becoming increasingly apparent to non-professionals and ordinary folks simply by observing the conditions around the globe. Applications of this model have led us to exploit the Earth far beyond its sustainable yield; footprints analyses, however rough they are, indicate we are living off at least 1 1/2 Earth’s and headed for much more as the developing and undeveloped nations continue to strive to reach economic levels of the affluent ones. On the social side, growth has raised the average wages of many, but not improved their general living condition. In the US, increased growth has also increased inequality. With no further elaboration of the insufficiency of our present models, mental and practical, the present use of sustainability as a guiding vision is both flawed and perverse, taking us further away from our goals should be.

IV. Why pragmatic inquiry!

Almost all systems thinkers propose their own unique process to address complexity; not surprising since the intrinsic nature of the systems precludes any single procedural method. Almost all can be placed in the single framework of pragmatism. The originator of the concept, C. S. Peirce, came up with it as a means to “make our ideas clear.” Clarity was determined by examining how well the ideas fitted practical situations. The importance to complexity should be obvious. If one wants to understand and interact with complex entities/systems, what matters is that the concepts being used for both explaining and manipulating the system should be effective in practical, not theoretical, terms. Real, down-to-earth performance is what matters, not some abstract set of expressions or sentences.

Pragmatism refers to the insistence on the meaningfulness of practical consequences as a test of truth, and opposes the formalism and rationalism of intellectualistic philosophy. The founder of

pragmatism, C. S. Peirce, in opposition to the Cartesian way of capturing the world's truths, saw this method as a way to "make our ideas clear." It is different from and more than, as it is often pejoratively called, a way of justifying any act. It is a path toward discovering responses to persistent problems that might make them disappear.

Pragmatists object to the view that concepts, judgments, and reasoning processes represent reality and the processes of reality. Such concepts and processes are merely symbols, signs, schemata, or hypotheses of human origin designed to facilitate or render possible the use, or experience, of reality. The true test of real existence is only what shows up in practice to the exclusion of all other standards. Truth is determined by some practical test, such as action, satisfaction of needs, realization in conduct, and the possibility of being lived. Pragmatism values "can do" over "should do"; practical results over what theory predicts. Pragmatism is a framework for action where the actor will settle for what works in opposition to what some ideology or principle says should be done. Truth lies in the results of action, not in the logical outcome of some theory. The same is true when individuals are acting authentically; truth about the external world is revealed in the process of action.

In practice, pragmatic inquiry is performed by a community of individuals concerned about, that is, with an interest in, the outcome. This characteristic can be traced back to Peirce who wrote, "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real. That is the way I would explain reality." John Dewey extended this idea to the practice of democracy. The truths necessary to ground collective action were called "warranted assertability" by Dewey and were to be discovered by the methods, values, and practices of a community of competent inquirers. Such inquiry was thought to apply to both practical and moral judgments.

The understanding of systems that come from pragmatic thinking and investigation is more like wisdom than objective, scientific knowledge. There certainly is a lot of bona fide pragmatic thinking around, but it is rarely identified as such. The well known and widely practiced lean manufacturing system developed by Toyota utilizes basic pragmatic principles to improve the functioning of their manufacturing systems and to solve problems that arise within them. Inquiries to uncover the underlying causes are performed by concerned people involved with the system, independent of their organizational status. Solutions are held as contingent, and the system is constantly monitored to prepare for the inevitable future issues that will crop up.

In practical terms, flourishing as a (complex) systemic emergent quality means that, in order to intervene intentionally in it, the students (and teachers) must employ pragmatic processes that envelop the whole system, as well as the prevalent reductionist methods used almost exclusively to gain knowledge about the world. This means building a program around pragmatic inquiry, or whatever name is chosen, as the primary method of inquiry, rather than an exclusive focus on knowledge derived from positive, reductionist science. Since both business and the public sector are complex systems, nested within the larger world system, virtually all significant, persistent problems of governance similarly demand a pragmatic approach.

Such a focus on pragmatic inquiry would replace or define “systems thinking” as a core competency. “Critical thinking” also belongs under this rubric. The current foundation on “different types of data and interpretive tools” is the antithesis of critical thinking. Critical thinking is all about understanding how a system really works. It involves inquiry beyond that which produces all the “data” we typically use. Pragmatic inquiry was the only method of relating to the world for most of human history and pre-history, It is only relatively recently (maybe since the Greek classical period) that we possessed sufficient linguistic power to change our way of relating to the world to one of abstraction and theory. Pragmatic inquiry is both a way of being and a practice. In both aspects, it could be the single most important distinguishing factor of PGS, next to flourishing, per se.

V. Why flourishing!

Aristotle wrote that the objective of living should be flourishing—his metaphor for the “good” life. Since his time, many philosophers and other sages have tried to define flourishing and lay out various routes to attain that state. Flourishing, defined as the *realization of the human or non-human potential*, provides a powerful vision for the creation of the Program and the commitments of its graduates. Flourishing is an objective emergent property of all life, arising from the fundamental process of self-reproduction, guiding by a species’ genetic possibilities.

The fundamental biological viability of all life is complemented, for humans, by two existential goals: one related to the individual and the other to the social. The philosopher, Loyal Rue calls these two, respectively: personal wholeness or personality and social coherence.¹ He notes that, of all the possible ways that all species realize viability, the simultaneous pursuit of these two goals is a “distinctively human way” to “pursue the holy grail of viability.”² The two objectives are mutually interdependent; they compete and cooperate as the circumstances change. Rue writes further, “ ... inherent in our nature are the twin imperatives to construct healthy, autonomous individual personalities while simultaneously constructing cohesive, cooperative social groups. We are by nature a social species...”³

Flourishing, like beauty, is an emergent property. We cannot define it by some set of rules without stripping away its miraculous aura, but we can picture the kind of words that might be used to express the feeling of flourishing: joy, richness, honesty, perfection, playfulness, simplicity, justice, goodness, aliveness, beauty, uniqueness, truth, effortlessness, completeness, wholeness, etc. Erich Fromm wrote, using joy as his symbol for flourishing:

Joy is the concomitant of productive activity. It is not a “peak experience,” which culminates and ends suddenly, but rather a plateau, a feeling state that accompanies the

1. Rue, L. *Nature Is Enough: Religious Naturalism and the Meaning of Life*. Albany, NY: State University Of New York Press, 2011: 65.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

productive expression of one's essential human faculties. Joy is not the ecstatic fire of the moment. Joy is the glow that accompanies [B]eing.

Flourishing is linguistically verbal, expressing some kind of action; it is not a static property. It is the outcome of a combination of biological and existential processes, that is, having to do with how life is being played out. If humans were nothing but animals whose nature is determined largely, if not only, by their genes, flourishing would be a metaphor for life itself, living out the potential provided by one's genes. Flourishing exists in an entirely separate domain from happiness or pleasure, one way to measure how we are doing in the world. The latter are ephemeral, momentary states. Flourishing follows a process that is ongoing, that is, like life itself, but, unlike the case for other animals, it has an autobiographical, historical aspect that serves as a standard by which its presence or absence is also to be judged.

The failure or success of individual and institutional behaviors to produce flourishing can be related to the balance between the left and right brain hemispheres. Flourishing emerges when whatever the necessary conditions become present in the complex system of the Earth as a whole or in whatever sub-system is the focus. This requires that humans recover their cognitive ability to "see" themselves as part of and interrelated with the world out there instead of as standing outside of and able to control it. This shift requires a transformation in individual's perceptions of the world and the way they act within it. Flourishing is beginning to enter what have been conversations about sustainability with more frequency. Well-being and flourishing are linguistic relatives, but not when well-being takes on a quantitative sense, as it does through an economics lens.

Flourishing should be used only in reference to living beings, not to institutions, particularly businesses. There can be no such entity such as a flourishing business. While often described as living organisms in narratives and laws, businesses are not alive. The people that populate them are. If institutions are designed properly with the right beliefs and norms, life within and without the institution may, indeed, flourish. It would be linguistically proper, but clumsy, to talk about "businesses-for-flourishing," but not about "flourishing businesses." The compound phrasing makes clear the normative purpose, and requires looking for the presence of flourishing everywhere that the business has an influence and intends to enable flourishing.

VI. Looking forward

We see this proposed change as transformative, both for PGS, as an institution, and for the individual students. We believe that the combination of flourishing, as a vision, and pragmatism, as a continuing inquiry reaching far beyond the walls of PGS, will instill a calling to action in the students, and, perhaps, also in the faculty. Calling seems the right word although we caution using it in the theological sense often given to it. Authentic personal development, the tools to discover one's calling, is to be one of the cornerstones or axes of the program.

A second axis is flourishing and the system out of which it emerges. The third axis is aligned with knowledge of the existing institutions that make up the modern world—the one from which the students have come and into which they will go. (It would be possible also to incorporate

institutions in the developing and undeveloped worlds, but that has been left for a future project.) The capstone project, previously seen largely as a separate element of the program, will be the glue that anchors the arc of inquiry we see as holding everything together.

The new program would rest on the foundational (ontological) theme that the world is a highly interconnected *complex* system and must be understood as an organic whole. As an educational institution, its objective is to provide its graduates with the necessary understanding and capabilities to nurture and maintain that system and its living creatures, human and non-human alike, in a state of flourishing. While recognizing that the world system is composed of a web of both natural and cultural subsystems, the program focuses on the cultural, but acknowledges and respects the interconnections with the natural. The program has been designed to serve the general needs of critical institutions, in general, especially business, NGOs, and public organizations.

One distinctive feature of the new Presidio program compared to virtually all other educational programs at all levels is the *focus on connectedness*, rather than separateness. Human beings are seen as fundamentally connected to each other and to the Planet, not as autonomous, self-interested individuals as are constituted by the modernist model of Homo economicus. The world is taken, as noted above, as a (technically) complex system that works as a whole, and cannot be understood by the reductionist epistemology of modern science. The urgency of this new program is largely a result of threats to the global system caused by unintended consequences of an over-reliance on such reductionist theories and disciplinary knowledge in designing and managing human institutions and the natural environment.

The program is to be *transformational*, not incremental. The modernist story with its beliefs about the world and its human inhabitants has run its course, but still remains as the primary driving force for individual professionals and the institutions they will occupy. To transform these institutions to new forms coherent with complexity and the possibility of flourishing, the students, themselves, will, first, have to under go a transformation in the way they think and act. The students will have to learn a new way of apprehending the world and different tools for transforming the institutions they enter upon graduating.

Appendix 1 A quick Introduction to the divided-brain model of Iain McGilchrist

The following brief summary of the work of Iain McGilchrist, a British neuroscientist is included to provide background on the design of the program. The pedagogy is designed around recent developments⁴ in neuroscience that indicate that the two hemispheres of the brain attend to the world in two distinctive, manners, each competing with the other to guide individual action and shape the cultural world. The findings underlying this structure and course content are summarized here:

1. In McGilchrist's words, "[A]ttention brings into being a [-n inner] world and, with it, depending on its nature, a set of values."⁵ The right side's attention is broad, persistent, and flexible; the left's is narrow and focused. As a result the right sees scenes and things

4. McGilchrist, I. *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. Reprint ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

5. *Ibid.* 29.

in their entirety while the left sees things as separate, broken into parts, and removed from their context. ("See" is being used a metaphor here to represent the processes by which the brain engages with the outside world.) Which form of attention is active determines the nature of the things we perceive and subsequently interact with. The choice affects the actor's responses and the ensuing effects on the target objects.

2. The right captures the present moment in its context-rich fullness. It feeds the left as experiences become familiar through repetition. It is the site of the present, the new. McGilchrist lists the following as attributes of the world it creates: presenting, new, whole, integration, context, things/individuals, personal, living, and contemporaneous.
3. The left "re-presents" old facts that have been abstracted from experience and generalized. It is like a scientist who breaks down phenomena into small life-less pieces, each with its own set of features. The left cannot make sense out of incoming sensory inputs except by some sort of comparison with whatever is already known and resides there. The list of its attributes includes: re-presenting, known, part, division, abstraction, and categories, impersonal, non-living and timeless. The left-hemisphere-dominated human is the familiar Homo sapiens or Homo economicus or Homo faber, all names given to our species by various scholars.
4. Each hemisphere produces a different kind of actor, as if we were naturally schizoid (but not crazy). Metaphorically, the right is attached to a self that acts out of its sense of connectedness or relationship to the world; mediates social interaction; more particularly, in the case of living things, acts out of authentic concern, via empathetic interchanges; accepts uncertainty and paradox; is open to exploration and possibility; values living things over lifeless representations; relies on intuition or insight to lead to conclusions; owns its worldly understanding as personal; applies metaphor to understand what is new and unfamiliar; expresses hope; and would call itself a pragmatist. The right hemisphere is the dominant side for both emotional receptivity of others and expressivity of oneself. It provides the capacity to sense what the other is feeling or thinking, sometimes referred to "theory of mind." It is the larger home of emotions of the two sides.
5. The self of the left is acts in a world that is self-contained and disconnected from the outside; engages out of undifferentiated and inauthentic conformance to the commands of others; is rational; knows and follows the rules; uses past knowledge to plan and execute action; wants/needs certainty to go on; is strategic and instrumental; tends to be optimistic about outcomes; is self-interested and individualistic; uses language literally; wants control; knows the rules; and would call itself a realist. This actor would express anger and other negative emotions.

The importance of this distinction is that modernity has arisen and remains under the dominance of the left-hemisphere. The left has brought us the wonders of modernity, but also separation from one another and the world. The right-brain has retreated and seems to be getting further away all the time. Flourishing, which depends on the connections of that half has largely vanished. *Both sides are required to create flourishing individuals and a thriving world, but in balance.* The right-brain generates one's authentic self and powers its full expression and commitment to caring for the world. It is the home of one's "calling." *Recognizing its role and the need to develop it against the dominance of the left has guided the design of the personal development thread of the program (see below).*

The left-brain plays a primary role in guiding life within institutions with their rules that both constitute and regulate them. These abstract rules become embedded in the left-brain and are called on in the course of everyday practices. *The professional development elements of the program (see below) rest on the functions of the left.* This feature of the left-brain is quite familiar to Presidio (although perhaps not the connection to the brain) as it is the primary principle underlying the pedagogy here and in all education: fill up the mind (left-brain, only) with facts, theories, and rules. But the left-brain never knows the full context of the situation and so the outcomes, based only on decontextualized abstractions, deviate from the expectations. Most of the times we simply say, “Good enough,” and move on, but the accumulations of the errors is exactly the reason for the renewal process.

The third element, flourishing systems, rests primarily on building an appreciation of complexity as the way the world works and the importance of the right-hemisphere in apprehending and interacting with it. The criticality of recognizing the dichotomous nature of the brain needs to be made explicit in the curriculum, including provisions for strengthening right-brain functions. *Adopting the Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry® as the core of the learning process is a direct consequence of the right-brain way of apprehending the world and learning from it.* Without some form of right-brain learning, the richness and life of the complex world can never be more than an abstraction.

Appendix 2 A model arrangement of the curriculum

The three strands of the brand value proposition, outlined in a related document—flourishing, Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry®, and cross-sectoral solutions—are to be embedded in the pedagogical structure, built on familiar themes Flourishing is directly recognized as one of the three elements. Pragmatism, as the fundamental means of learning and design, would pervade a number of the courses, and acts as the glue that holds everything together. Institutions, as an encompassing and constituting concept, captures all sectors and dissolves the idea of boundaries between them.

Figure 1 illustrates the way each course may incorporate all of the elements in varying degrees.

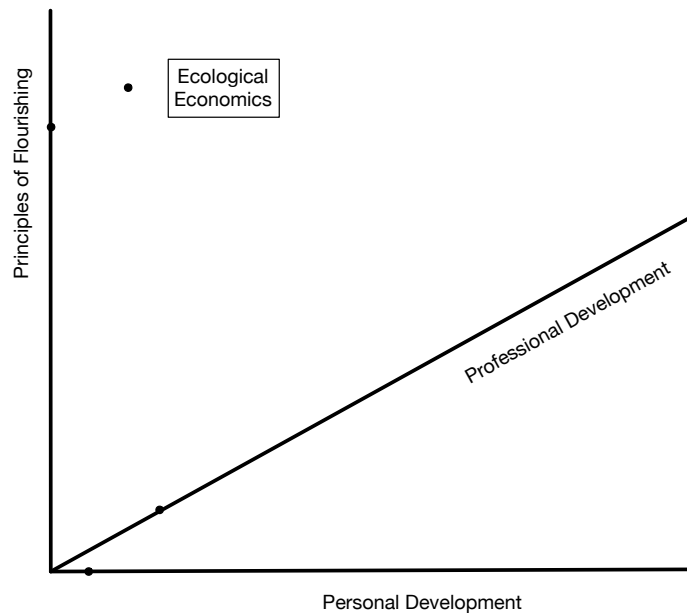


Figure 1 The tripartite structure of the MIDM Program

A set of possible course themes for a program constructed from the foregoing principles follows. The entries below are not meant to be syllabi. The sources are indicative of the ideas to form the syllabi. Not all fit pedagogical requirements, but secondary sources are readily available.

A. [Authentic] Personal Development

- (FLO 5030). *Leading change*. Change is made explicit in relation to leadership to reflect the transformative heart of the program. Key to building authenticity and commitment. Topics relating to personal development. Strong core on speech acts and communicative action. Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, (Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Searle, *Speech Acts*); Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We live By*; Schön, *The Reflexive Practitioner*, Fredrickson, *Positivity*, Kabat-Zinn *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World through Mindfulness*. Incorporate Leadership for Sustainable Management (SUS 6210) and Effective Management, Communication & Action (SUS 6195).
- (FLO 5150). *Human ontology*. An existential view of the human being as opposed to the rational view of modernity. This course provides the foundation for the more practically oriented entries, shifting the emphasis from the modern, abstract view of human beings to living, autonomous individuals. Heidegger, Sartre (secondary sources), Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*; Grignon, *On Being Authentic*; Buber, *I and Thou*,
- (PGS 6145). Capstone.

B. Flourishing Systems

- (FLO 5000). *Principles of Flourishing Systems*. Mostly about seeing the world from both halves of the brain, instead of only the left side. Ethical framework. Possible place for some of the sources in Nahser's Ecological Economics syllabus. Maturana and Varela, *The Tree of knowledge*; McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*;

Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (Nahser's choice of others); MacIntyre (Nahser's choice also); Rue, *Nature Is Enough: Religious Naturalism and the Meaning of Life*; Ehrenfeld, *Flourishing*; Ehrenfeld, New book forthcoming; Leopold, selections from *A Sand County Almanac*.

- (FLO 5090). *Living with Complexity*. What complexity is and how to deal with it. The fundamentals of pragmatic practices would be a central part. Includes systems thinking, but not limited to systems dynamics. Capra, *Hidden Connections*; Gunderson & Holling *Panarchy*; Pragmatism (Nahser's choice); Ackoff, "The Art and Science of Mess Management"; Rittel and Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning." paper on wicked problems).
- (FLO 5010). "Ecological" economics. More critical thinking with a focus on the actual processes of cultural life. See Nahser syllabus. Emphasis on Sen and Nussbaum and the idea of capabilities. Parts of Schumacher are great. Max-Neef *Real-Life Economics: Understanding Wealth Creation*, edited by Ekins P. and M. Max-Neef, good on developing nations; Jackson *Prosperity without growth*, and similar stuff by others. Incorporate and de-emphasize (PGS 6025) Micro-and macro-economics.

C. Current Institutions

- (FLO 5050. Critical studies of modernity. The title is descriptive. Galbraith, *The End of Normal*; Toulmin *Cosmopolis*; Turkle *Reclaiming Conversation*; Fromm, *To Have or to Be*; Fromm, *The Sane Society*; Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies*. Could subsume *Market Failure and the Regulatory Environment* (SUS7025).
- (FLO 5100). *Designing for care*. Replaces and incorporates *Sustainable Products and Services* (SUS 6090) but is similar in focusing on the innovation and marketing of products and services that enable users to act out of concern for the others involved either directly or indirectly. Sources to include behavior-steering design and participatory design. Introductory learning about care as opposed to need. Ehrenfeld, *Sustainability by Design*.
- (FLO 5020). *Institutional design and change*. Introduction to models of society as frameworks for design and change. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*; Wright, E. O. "Transforming Capitalism through Real Utopias"; Searle, *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization*; Dewey could also go here. Fold *Strategy* (SUS 6025) into this. Business and public agencies would be treated simply as special cases of institutions.

Specialized offerings

Some of the content of these course could be integrated into the core courses, above, as indicated.

- Quantitative methods (SUS6021). Not everyone needs this. The whole thrust of the program is on a qualitative and emergent world. FLO 5090 provides the grounding in pragmatic inquiry and systems thinking essential for understanding whole systems.
- Principles of Sustainable Management (SUS6010) plus Implementation of Sustainable Practices (SUS6130). Needs a name change, maybe Principles of Unsustainability Reduction since that is what all the materials are all about. A

combined course would open up space. Much of the books and other textual material is redundant.

- Capital Markets (SUS6175) and Managerial Finance (SUS6040). These appear to be able to be merged into one course. Not all students are likely to care much or require these subjects. For the entrepreneurially inclined, emphasis on sources of and raising funds would be helpful. Maybe incorporate in the background of the Capstone.
- Market Failure and the Regulatory Environment (SUS7025). Not necessary as a free-standing course. Could be woven into FLO 5020, which is basically a “strategy” course, writ large. The regulatory environment is not different in concept from, say, Michael Porter’s framework.
- Managerial Accounting (SUS6000). Pretty specialized, but probably necessary. Need to introduce qualitative metrics.
- Operations and Production (SUS6110) -- Would re-label it as Integrative Operations, Focus on lean practices and theory (Womack and Jones, *Lean Thinking*. Maybe include Meadows, *Thinking in Systems* here.
- Managerial marketing ((SUS6060). This could be combined into the design course (FLO 5100), above. Marketing takes on a different challenge within this program, the selling of a new way, as well as new goods and services. Combining it with the design course would help integrate the two threads.