



## Social System Design Lab Outreach & Education

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The mission of the Social System Design Lab at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis is to advance the science and field of practice of system dynamics as applied to human services. Through its Outreach & Education program, the Lab provides opportunities for people to learn and benefit from systems thinking and system dynamics.

### Courses and Workshops

- *S40-5660 A System Dynamics Approach to Designing Sustainable Social Policies and Programs* – This academic course teaches students how to design sustainable policies and programs by applying the principles and practices of modeling dynamic systems. Students learn how to build computer simulation models of complex problems in the sciences, social sciences, engineering, business, and social work. The course is open to advanced undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students.
- *Lectures and Classes* – Lab staff is available to provide live *in person lectures*, seminars, or workshops focused on system dynamics and system thinking. These presentations can also be delivered via *Webinar*. Some specific examples of these outreach activities are:
  - Colloquia on the campus of Washington University or your location.
  - Guest lectures on system dynamics or systems thinking in academic courses
  - A system dynamics track in the Missouri Public Health Leadership Institute
- *Professional Development Workshops* – Each semester, the Lab provides two workshops at the Brown School:
  - 90-minute general introductory workshop on system dynamics and group model building,
  - 3-hour hands-on workshop that introduces basic skills in system dynamics.

### Collaborative Networks

- *The Social System Modeling Group* - This group meets every two weeks at the Brown School. Its purpose is to provide a forum whereby people interested in modeling can get together and discuss their work, share ideas and receive support from practitioners of ALL levels – from beginner to advanced users. It also serves as a venue for people interested in learning about the various applications of system dynamics to hear about current projects.



- *Systems Thinking Leadership Roundtable* – This series provides leaders with opportunities to hear from other leaders who are using and applying systems thinking in their organizations and communities. Each roundtable focuses on a different systems thinking topic and gives leaders a chance to share their innovations, the challenges they have faced, and how they have overcome these challenges.
- *System Dynamics Learning Projects* - The Lab devotes a percentage of staff time to assist individuals or teams who want to use system dynamics to gain insight into any topic of interest in the human services sphere. Generally, these projects will be limited in time (1-3 months) with well defined purpose and scope. Lab staff may provide support or can act as “virtual mentor” to teams that want to go it alone. Students often participate in projects as a way to be of service while simultaneously building their knowledge, skills, and abilities to use system dynamics in real world settings.

## Additional Resources

- *Open Office Hours* – Lab staff are available every week during open office hours to interact with anyone who wants to discuss concepts, work on models, refine research ideas, etc. Office hours may vary by semester; check the website for current times.
- *Social System Design Network* - The Lab sponsors a LinkedIn Group that helps connect SD practitioners who are interested in applying system dynamics and systems thinking approaches to tough social issues.
- *Virtual Computing Resources* – Our computing resources allows us to provide support and consultation remotely with people whose schedules do not permit a physical visit.
- *Conferences and Meetings* - The Lab provides introductory as well as skills oriented workshops at allied conferences and meetings including the Waters Foundation Institute, International System Dynamics Conference, Society for Social Work Research, Institute for Systems Science in Health, and Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

## Contact Us

- *Lab Location* - The Lab is located in the basement of Goldfarb Hall on the campus of Washington University.
- *Phone* - We can be reached at 314.935.3598
- *Web:* <http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/research/systemdynamics/Pages/systemsdynamics.aspx>
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