



Institute of Systems Wisdom

Fellows Newsletter

Volume 10, Number 3

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Institute of Systems Wisdom is an innovative social-academic-practice community that emerged in 2013 (and published a [Newsletter](#) beginning in 2014) as a result of applied consulting and research projects hosted within the Organizational Dynamics MS and MPhil programs at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn). When project members (faculty, scholars, practitioners, and students) moved from Penn to the Thomas Jefferson University Doctor of Management in Strategic Leadership and Doctor of Philosophy in Complex Systems Leadership programs, a co-laboratory relationship between the Institute and Jefferson was established. When Jefferson closed both leadership doctorates in 2021 then the School of Continuing and Professional Studies in 2023, the community continued within the ***Institute of Systems Wisdom*** where many were *Fellows*. For information contact Larrymtarr@gmail.com (Editor) or visit: <https://www.systemswisdom.com/institute-systems-wisdom>.

Congratulations to the newest members of the society of floppy hats!



Dr. John Ervin completed his dissertation defense and earned his DMgt degree in Fall 2024





Dr. Guy Thigpen completed his dissertation defense and earned his DMgt degree in Fall 2024.



Updates and Milestones to our Candidates, Alumni, Faculty and Fellows



Father Al Bradley is in the final stage of data collection and is anticipated to complete his manuscript in Spring 2025.

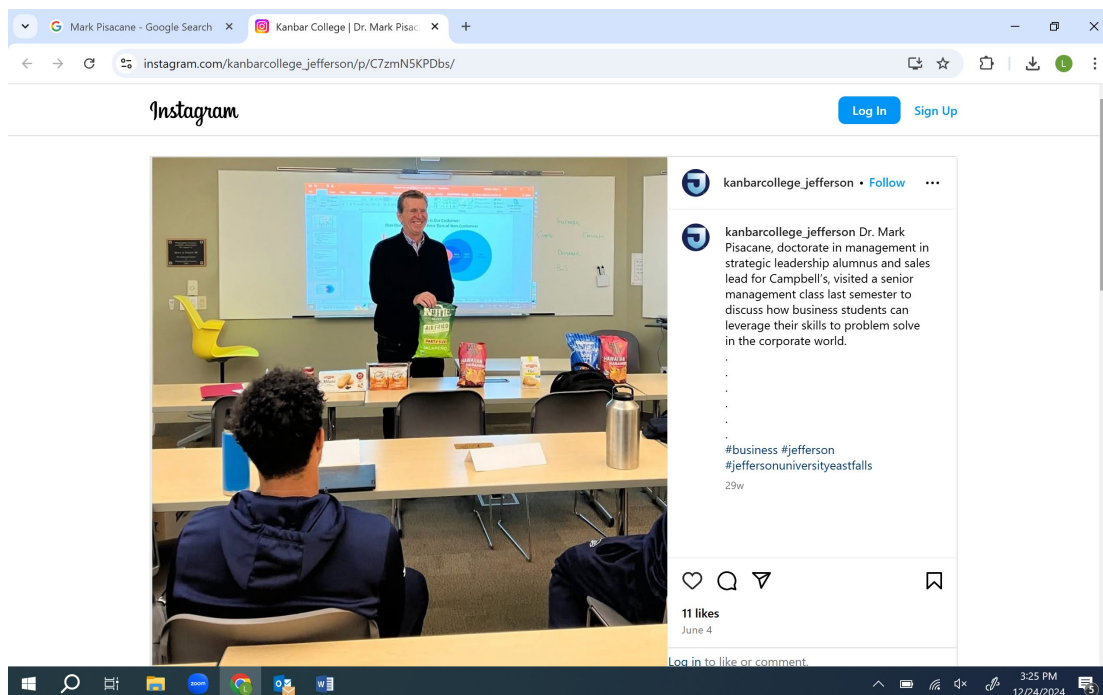




From Mark Pisacane, DMgt:

Great news! I executed a workshop of Interactive Planning at Amazon and was recognized (see photo). Your wisdom and support helped me to lead this. Thanks!

I also did a presentation to students in the Senior Management class in the Jefferson B-School.





Jerin Juby, DMgt reports three updates:

First, I was on the campus of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania participating in their Fall Symposium. Second, I presented papers at the 70th [AARC](#) Congress!

And my most important professional honor is that I have been elected to a 4-year leadership role in the Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care. In 2025, I will assume the role of President-Elect, followed by President in 2026 and 2027, and Past-President in 2028.





Boris Vishnevsky, MBA, CISSP, DIA wrote:

I am leading the *Architecting the Innovation and Innovating the Architecture* workstream community, and helping businesses to realize the practical value from Artificial Intelligence (AI) by integrating AI into Learning, Innovation, and Modern Solution Architectures by leveraging Integrative Thinking. Here is more:

<https://chiefarchitectnetwork.com/>

and [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/grantecker_chief-architects-join-boris-vishnevsky-activity-7248825914245951489-](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/grantecker_chief-architects-join-boris-vishnevsky-activity-7248825914245951489-Fz7m?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop)

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John Ervin, DMgt:

John is expanding his Allnet Coaching and Consulting LLC, a service-disabled veteran-owned and government-contracting coaching service. Allnet offers clients shipping refund delivery supply chain programs, an electronic medical record, and compliance software programs. The new division, Allnet Medical, www.allnetmedical.com, is a medical distribution division that sells surgical instruments, operating rooms, and wound care products to the marketplace.

On October 30th, 2024, in Atlantic City, NJ, John presented at the annual American Legion's New Jersey Veteran Permanent Affordable Housing Consortium—"Innovations in Independent Living—Aging in Place Model." This was directed to real estate developers, municipal entities property managers, and service providers about his efforts to provide "aging in place" services to veterans and veteran families.





Joseph Sweeney, EdD:

Thank you, Larry. I'd love to share with the community that I've launched a new business, the Decision Leadership Institute: [Decision Leadership Institute](https://www.decisionleadershipinstitute.org) (DLI).

DLI was created in response to the growing demand from CEOs, professionals, military leaders, and policymakers for practical, high-impact decision-making training. We heard time and again that they needed a trusted partner to help them apply decision science in their organizations to make decisions that drive long-term success. That's where we come in.

Our mission is to equip leaders with the skills, tools, and support to make high-quality decisions, transforming decision-making into a core leadership strength that drives lasting organizational success.

What We Offer

Decision-Making for Leaders: We've recently launched a new series of highly engaging, live virtual courses [designed to equip leaders \(of all levels\) and decision-makers like you with practical tools](#) for improving decision-making within their organizations. Our inaugural course, [Managing Cognitive Biases](#) is now open for enrollment, with [Thinking Probabilistically](#) launching early next month!

Learn more, enroll in a course, and subscribe to our newsletter: www.decisionleadershipinstitute.org. You can also connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) or [X @decision-leader](#).





Larry Hirschhorn, PhD posted the following:

Wilfred Bion was a founding member of the Tavistock Institute. I've been thinking about his phrase, "Anxiety serves as the shadow of the future." I doubt he meant something as obvious as the future makes us anxious. Could he mean that anxiety is a prediction? But the future is inherently uncertain, and anxiety is a feeling, not a thought

A moment's consideration shows that there is one situation when it can. This is when anxiety arises from our unconscious recognition of warning signs, which we suppress. The future is about to break through, but we ignore its signals. This is often how people succumb to disease. For example, Bob Marley, the great reggae pioneer, ignored the early signs of skin cancer on his toe—a dark spot under his toenail—attributing it to a soccer injury instead. One likely explanation is that Marley dismissed this early warning sign because it scared him. He couldn't tolerate the anxiety long enough to think about what was happening to him. In this sense, anxiety is a foretelling rather than a prediction.

Consider the case of *Lolita*, the musical, which failed in its pre-Broadway tryout. The complexity of turning a dark tale of pedophilia into a musical created a storyline that mystified people. There were early warning signs. "Evening after evening, the cast and crew convened at nearby bars and—uncharacteristically for theater people—spent their drinking time trying to figure out what the show was about." In a post-mortem, Lerner acknowledged that his intellectual vision for the musical could not engage the audience's feelings. Why did he ignore the warning signs? Perhaps, as one journalist suggests, he needed a hit after 11 years since his success with the musical *Camelot*. One typical response to the anxiety associated with warning signs is to double down rather than revisit and reconsider. Lerner reworked scenes and dialogue rather than confront the musical's core problem.

My readers can apply this idea to cases of business failures. Think of *Blockbuster's* refusal to buy *Netflix* or *Polaroid's* inability to build a business based on the digital camera it had

already developed. In these cases, group dynamics also play a role in suppressing warning signs. For example, the executive staff of *Polaroid* dismissed the plans and proposals of its own Electronic Imaging Division. The result was a chronic clash between the two. In these cases, the threat posed by the “shadow of the future” is experienced instead as the threat that one group within the company poses to another. This is a classic social defense. Danger is internalized as an intergroup conflict and, in this way, goes unrecognized as a danger from the environment. The warning signs are discounted.

If you are interested in thinking this way, consider enrolling in the Dynamics of Consulting Program. See https://lnkd.in/g_232_6q and write to me at lhirschhorn@dynamicsofconsulting.net.



Drs. Myles Bassell, John Pourdehnad, Larry M Starr, and Elana Starr outside *In Riva*, in East Falls, after Myles delivered a lecture to students in the Jefferson B-School.





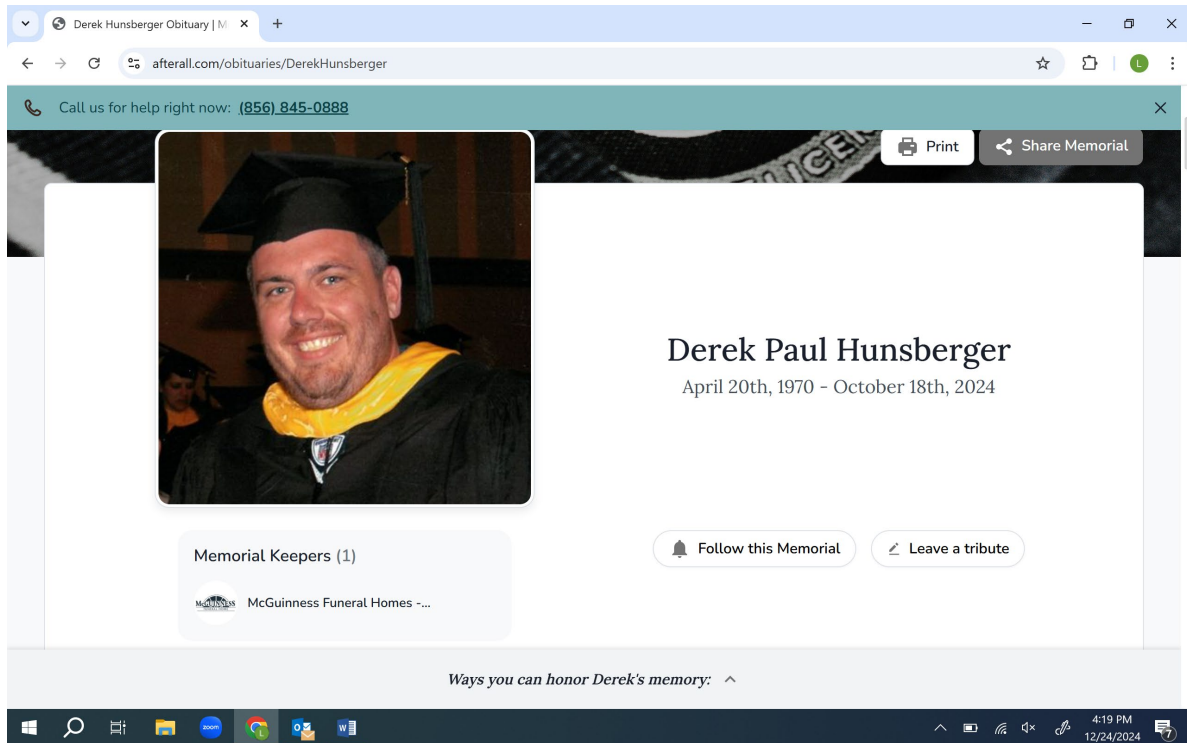
Scott Koerwer, EdD, PhD, Executive Director of the Iacocca Institute at Lehigh University gives regular online video updates of activities and opportunities, and travels abroad to meet with alumni and organizations connected to the University and Institute.





Larry M. Starr, PhD wrote:

That's me 3rd from left in case you are unsure. I am transitioning out of Jefferson - my appointments will end Spring 2025 - and I have started my new appointments as of November 1 at the Iacocca Institute of Lehigh University where I am Executive Fellow, Director of Applied Research, and Editor of the series on Complex Systems Leadership. Working with Scott and the others in the Institute is great fun and a great opportunity.



Derek loved learning so he decided to pursue academic teaching.



Adjunct Faculty, University of Delaware, Lerner College of Business and Economics: 2023-2024



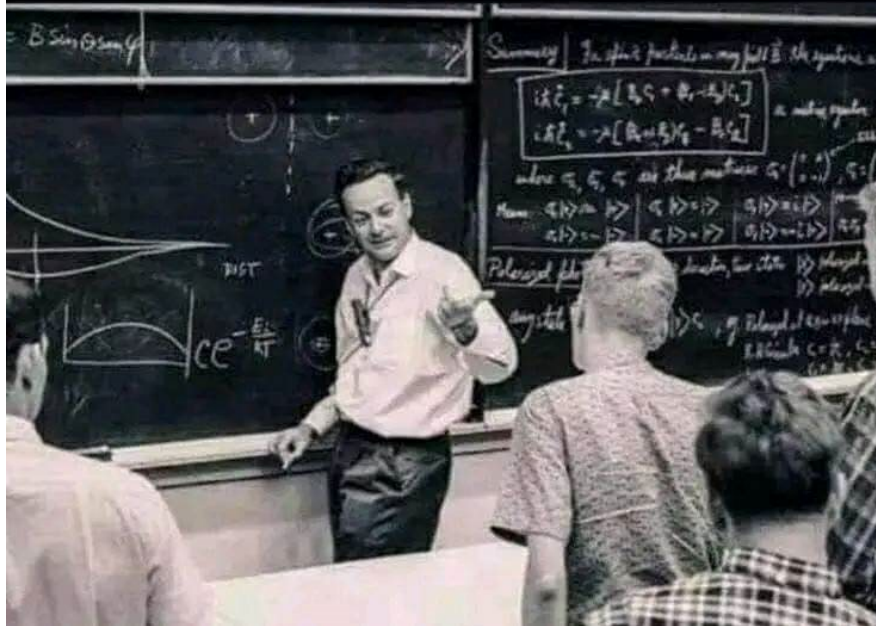
Adjunct Faculty, Rowan University, College of Business
<https://www.coursicle.com/rowan/professors/Derek+Hunsberger/>: 2023 – 2024



Adjunct Faculty, Salem Community College: 2023 - 2024

**"If you want to master something, teach it.
The more you teach, the better you learn.
Teaching is a powerful tool to learning."**

- Richard Feynman.



 **HAPPY** 
HOLIDAYS