

Bi-Annual Newsletter



What is Systems thinking?

Have you ever noticed that solving one problem can sometimes lead to another issue? This is where systems thinking becomes valuable. It *encourages us to step back* and view the entire situation, considering how people, ideas, and resources are interconnected. In the context of education and research, this approach involves addressing *not just the symptoms* of a challenge, but also asking deeper questions: Why is this happening? How are the different components related? By connecting these dots, we can create solutions that are more sustainable, impact a larger audience, and genuinely strengthen our communities.

Consider school lunches as an example. If students aren't eating healthy meals, a quick solution might be to add more options. However, systems thinking delves deeper by considering various factors such as nutrition, budgets, family habits, cultural preferences, and how lunchtime schedules influence choices. By connecting these elements, we can create solutions that are more sustainable, reach a wider audience, and genuinely strengthen our communities.

We believe that everyone, not just a select few, should have access to the tools and insights needed to navigate today's rapidly changing world. By focusing on applied research, we strive to address real-world challenges and provide sustainable solutions for our communities.

Idealized Design

Idealized design begins with a simple yet powerful question: If we could create our system or community from the ground up, what would it look like? Instead of merely addressing existing problems, this approach fosters bold and creative thinking—envisioning the “ideal” and then working backwards to make it a reality. In the fields of education and research, this method allows us to move beyond quick fixes and develop sustainable solutions that reflect the values, needs, and aspirations of the people we serve.

IGS team x

In this newsletter you can expect:

Systems thinking

Idealized Design

Stories of Impact

Volunteer
Spotlight

Invitation for new
project ideas



Dr. Steven F. Freeman, Offering an Overview of Idealized Design

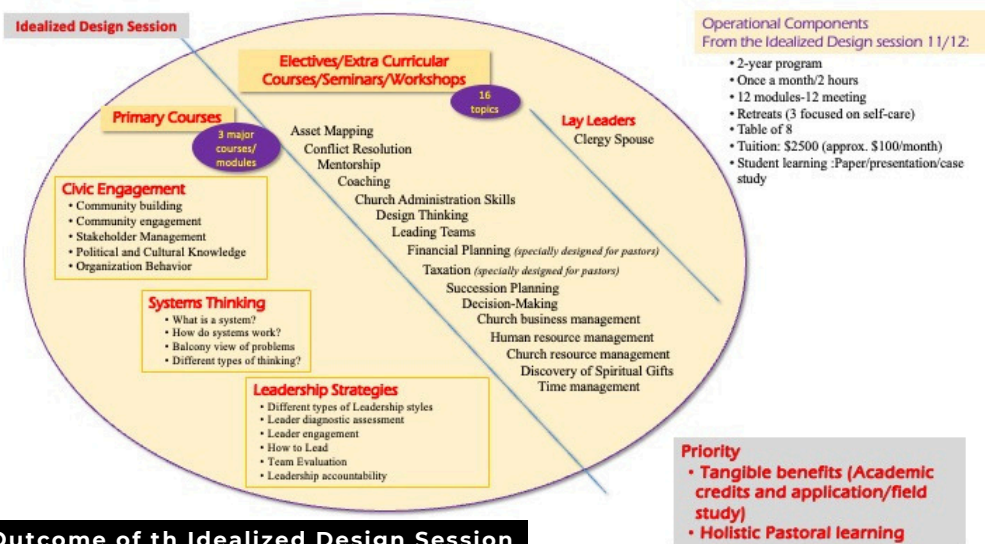
Designed Outside in Leadership (OIL) program to equip church leaders to thrive professionally, emotionally, spiritually and economically.

An Idealized Design session was conducted for the Program for Urban Leaders and Pastors in Transition (PULPIT), a two-year initiative funded by a Lilly grant at Missio Seminary in Philadelphia. This program aims to support clergy and church leaders in improving their spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional health. Before the design session, all 12 stakeholders received a copy of *Leadership on the Line* by Heifetz and Linsky. Dr. Freeman introduced the concept of Idealized Design via email.

The workshop featured four facilitators: Dr. Steve F. Freeman (project consultant), Dr. Darshi Mody, Dr. Valerie Andrews, and Robyn Chin. On the evening before the session, Dr. Freeman invited everyone to share their experiences as clergy.

The group then participated in breakout sessions focused on design thinking, with discussions led by Dr. Mody on "What's Next for PULPIT," Robyn Chin on "Curriculum," and Dr. Andrews on "Growth/Marketing." Recommendations from the breakout groups included implementing certification programs, developing tangible projects, and creating relevant tracks for ministry and leadership. Proposed new courses included Community Engagement, Asset Mapping, Stakeholder Management, among others. Dr. Andrews' team suggested redesigning the program, enhancing its social media presence, and expanding outreach beyond urban demographics.

The ideas generated during the Idealized Design Session will help shape the future of the PULPIT program.



Final Outcome of the Idealized Design Session



Invitation to Share Project Ideas on Applied Research and Idealized Design

I hope this message finds you in great spirits. As we endeavor to explore innovative approaches within our field, I would like to extend a warm invitation for you to share insights and details about your project.

Your unique contributions could greatly enrich our collective understanding and inspire new ideas.

Here are a few guiding questions to consider as you formulate your ideas:

- What specific challenges do you see in our current practices that could benefit from applied research?
- Are there any particular areas you feel passionate about that could be explored further through a collaborative effort?

Thank you for your contributions and enthusiasm!



Volunteer Spotlight

Dr. Darshi Mody facilitated an Idealized Design session. She is a graduate of Thomas Jefferson University (East Falls Campus) formerly, Philadelphia University, where she completed and received a doctoral degree in Management of Strategic Leadership in December 2019.

She published a paper titled "Our Invisible Enemy" in a Young Korean Magazine titled Love and Wisdom discussing about Coronavirus design.

A FEW NOTES TO REMEMBER

- For any inquiries about our projects or to share your ideas for potential projects, please email us at info@igslearning.org.
- Our projects can be time-consuming and time-sensitive, as they involve extensive research, analysis, and careful design to ensure they are meaningful for the communities we serve. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this process.
- Please keep in mind that our team is primarily composed of volunteers, so your kindness is greatly appreciated!

Thank you for reading!