

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
SOC 3660: Social Organization
Spring 2013

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Office Hours: MW: 10.00am-12.00pm, or by appointment

Course Description

Organizations—the state, corporations, schools, the military, hospitals, churches, etc.—pervade nearly every aspect of our lives. In this class we will study how organizations are structured and how they act; relevant topics will include the nature of organizational power, organizational leadership, and organizational decision-making. We will also examine how organizations influence individual life chances and outcomes through the workplace, federal government policy, and community institutions. Finally, we will study how external environments influence organizations, how organizations manage these environments, and how organizations change. It is imperative that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course you should:

- Have an understanding of the dominant sociological perspectives on organizations, and how these perspectives have been used to study a wide array of topics related to organizations.
- Be able to critique the perspectives and related empirical research by pointing out strength and weaknesses, and identifying areas where you could make a scholarly contribution to the study of organizations.

Required Readings

Handel, Michael J. 2003. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary and Critical Readings*. Sage Publications.

Desire2Learn. This course uses Desire2Learn (D2L) for communication and course management purposes. You can access your courses in D2L using your Panther ID and password.

Evaluation Criteria

Grades for this course will be derived from five sources: weekly discussion responses, a reading presentation, two case study analyses, a mid-term and a final exam or research paper.

Discussion responses 10@10pts each	100 pts
Reading quizzes/class activities	100 pts
Reading presentation	50 pts

Mid-term exam	50 pts
<u>Final exam/research paper</u>	<u>100 pts</u>
Course total	400 pts

Grading scale: A=100-90 (358-400pts), B=89-80 (318-357pts), C=79-70 (278-317pts), D=69-60 (238-277), F=59-0% (0-237pts).

Discussion responses.

I will assign at least one discussion question each week for which readings are assigned. You are required to write and submit a thorough and thoughtful response to the assigned question. Your responses will be submitted to the discussion board on D2L. You are also required to respond to the written responses of two of your classmates after you submit your own response. No more than two persons should respond to the same classmate. Thus, if a classmate already has two responses to his/her submission, move on to the next classmate with fewer than two responses. These responses must be submitted to the discussion board by 11.30PM each Monday.

Individual Reading Presentations

Each student will select one reading from those assigned to present at the start of the class for which that reading is assigned. The presentation must satisfy three (3) objectives. (1) Provide a brief summary of the main point(s) of the selected reading. (2) Provide a critique of the reading, which means you must assess the strengths and weaknesses of the readings. For example, did the authors achieve what they set out to do? Did they make a strong argument? Was the argument sufficiently supported with the evidence presented? (3) Propose at least one way to improve the reading or some future research. Your assigned readings are edited excerpts of published scholarly books and journal articles, thus you may find some readings challenging, but not impossible for advanced college students. Most readings are fewer than 10 pages. Thus, saying the readings are long or challenging to read will not be considered a valid critique.

Midterm Exam. The midterm exam will be an in-class exam and may consist of multiple choice, true and false and short answer questions.

Final Exam/Research Project. For your course final, you must choose either a comprehensive in-class exam or a research project. The in-class exam will be consists of short answer and essay questions. The research project will take the form of an empirical research proposal or a research paper on a topic of your choosing. More details about the research project will follow.

Who might want to do the research project? You may opt for the research project if you have topic that you curious about and which to explore in more depth. Also, if you wish to continue on to graduate school, you might use your research project as the starting point of a Master's thesis. Because the research project will take some time to complete, *you must choose between the exam and the paper by the end of the second week of class.*

Missed Exam or Assignment Policy

Students will be permitted to make up examinations or assignments missed because of illness, and family emergencies. Please contact the instructor prior to missing an assignment, if possible, or immediately after.

Academic Fraud

Plagiarism and cheating are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the university administration. For more information refer the “Student Conduct Code” <http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) if they wish to discuss any necessary academic accommodations.

Severe Weather/Tornadoes

In case of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor, near the posted severe weather signs. Under no circumstances should you attempt to leave the building.

Fire Statement

In case of fire, activate the fire alarm & exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building & cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north & south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closest exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the north & south ends of the building. Under no circumstance should the elevator be used.

Student Classroom Behavior

The ability to learn is lessened when students engage in inappropriate classroom behavior, distracting others. When disruptive activity occurs, a University instructor has the authority to request that a student exit the classroom for the remainder of the period. Turn off or silent all cell-phones, pagers, or other electronic devices before the start of class.

I encourage spirited classroom discussions of the readings and related material. You are not required to agree with me or anyone else as I welcome a variety of opinions. However, personal attacks will not be tolerated. We can respectfully disagree without being disagreeable.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1: Introduction

January 08-10

Handel, Michael. "Introduction." Pp. 1

PART II. ORGANIZATIONS AS RATIONAL SYSTEMS

Week 2: Introduction to the Rational Organization

January 15-17

Handel, Michael. "Organizations as Rational Systems I." Pp. 5

Week 3: Bureaucracy and Scientific Management

January 22-24

Weber, Max. "Bureaucracy and Legitimate Authority." Pp.17

Taylor, Frederick. "Scientific Management." Pp.32

Week 4: Contingency and Structural Variation

January 29-31

Burns and Stalker. "The Management of Innovation." Pp.45

Woodward, Joan. "Technology and Organization." Pp.52

Pugh, D.S. "The Measurement of Organization Structures." Pp. 66

PART III. ORGANIZATIONS AS NATURAL SYSTEMS

Week 5: Early Human Relations and Humanistic Management

February 05-07

Homans, George C.. "Hawthorne Experiments." Pp. 85

Bramel and Friend. "Hawthorne, the Myth of the Docile Worker." Pp. 97

McGregor. The Human Side of Enterprise." Pp. 108

Week 6: Increased Emphasis on Employee Involvement

February 12-14

Walton, Richard E. "From Control to Commitment in the Workplace?" Pp. 114

Rubinstein, Saul A. "A Different Kind of Company." Pp. 123

Graham, Laurie. "Inside a Japanese Transplant: A Critical Perspective." Pp. 131

Week 7: The Informal Organization

February 19-21

Dalton, Melville. "Conflicts between Staff and Line Managerial Officers." Pp. 149

Jackall, Robert. "The World off Corporate Managers." Pp. 157

Burawoy, Michael. "Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process." Pp. 170

Week 8: Power and Decision-making

February 26-28

Allison, Graham. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis." Pp. 185

Michels, Robert. "Organizations and Oligarchy." Pp. 211

Week 9: Rational and Natural Systems Review

March 05-07

Review and Exam 1

Week 10: SPRING BREAK

March 11-16 –NO CLASS

PART IV. ORGANIZATIONS AS OPEN SYSTEMS**Week 11: Theories of Organizations and Their Environments**

March 19-21

Pfeffer and Salancik. "The External Control of Organizations." Pp. 233

DiMaggio and Powell. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism." Pp. 243

Carroll and Hannan. "Density-Dependent Processes." Pp. 254

Week 12: Economic Theories of Organizations

March 26-28

Jensen and Meckling. "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Cost." Pp. 269

Williamson, Oliver E. "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost." Pp. 276

Perrow, Charles. "Markets, Hierarchies, and Hegemony." Pp.276

Week 13: Organizational Transformation

April 02-04

Chandler, Alfred D. Jr. "The Emergence of Managerial Capitalism." Pp. 303

Powell, Walter W. "Neither Market nor Hierarchy." Pp. 315

Harrison, Bennett. "Lean and Mean: The Changing Landscape." Pp. 331

PART V. PROBLEMS & RESPONSES IN ORGANIZATIONS**Week 14: Managing and Responding to Environment**

April 09-11

Kanter, Rosabeth. "Men and Women of the Corporation." Pp. 381

Collins, Sharon. "Black Mobility in White Corporations." Pp. 397

Clawson, Neustadtl, Scott. "The Access Process." Pp. 423

Week 15: Organizational Culture and Deviance

April 16-18

Kunda, Gideon. "Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment." Pp. 351

Perrow, Charles. "Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technologies." Pp. 437

Vaughan, Diane. "Rational Choice, Situated Action and the Social Control." Pp. 443

Week 16: Alternative Forms of Organizations

April 23-25

Rothschild-Whitt. "The Collectivist Organization." Pp. 461

Whyte, Blasi and Kruse. "Worker Ownership, Participation, and Control." Pp. 475

Lipsky, Michael. "Street-Level Bureaucracy." Pp.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday 02 May, 08.00 – 10.00am

Disclaimer:

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as the semester progresses.