

COURSE INFORMATION: Organizational Theory
COURSE NUMBER: COMM 331
SEMESTER: September 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Steven F. Cronshaw
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CLASS TIME: Thursday 6:00-8:50 pm
CLASS LOCATION: 5-172

Information regarding the School of Business at UNBC can be found at:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on the structure of the organization, examining such determining factors as the organization's size, environment, technology and strategy. It also examines internal politics, conflict, decision-making, and culture from a macro perspective.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the course are to (1) familiarize course participants with major theories, issues, and controversies in organization theory; (2) review major topics of current concern in organization theory; and (3) have participants apply course concepts and content to the analysis and understanding of structure, process, and functioning of organizations in Northern British Columbia.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Morgan, Gareth (2006). Images of organization. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The course outline will be handed out on the 2nd class.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE WEIGHTING

Assignment	Due Date	Grade Weight
Individual assignment 1	November 1	20%
Group project 1	Week after presentation	25%
Group project 2	Week after presentation	25%
Discussion write-ups	Week after discussion	20%
Attendance	Weekly	10%
Total		100%

EXAMINATION/ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

1. Group assignments (2 X 20%) Choose two topics in the area of Organization Theory. As a group, write up and present papers that review current thinking on those topics. Please use and cite relevant references from the academic literature in making your major points. Tie your papers/presentations, where possible, to current issues in the North. In addition to making presentations to the class, please submit short papers summarizing your findings. A single grade is assigned to all the members of the group for these two assignments.
2. Individual assignment (1 X 20%). Choosing a topic from the list below or one of your own choosing, write up and present a paper that reviews current thinking on that topic. Please use and cite relevant references from the academic literature in making your major points. An example of a reference article that addresses topic 4 in the list (How can organizational problems and opportunities be identified?) is given on Blackboard ("Reinstating the Lewinian vision"). The project is done and submitted individually.
3. Discussion write-ups (8 X 2.5%) You will have ten break-out discussions. Summarize and submit the results of your group discussions in short reports. Graded individually.
4. Attendance (10%). One mark is deducted for missing a class without a valid reason. Please sign up on the attendance sheet starting on the second class session.
5. Research participation. Up to 2 additional marks will be added to your final grade if you participate in the department research pool.

Nov. 15	Presentations
Nov. 22	Presentations
Nov. 29	Wrap-up and synthesis 8 th group discussion

Possible Topics for Group Presentations

1. What are the limits to technology improvements?
 2. How is internal conflict effectively resolved (individual, group, organizational)?
 3. How to foresee (anticipate, plan, deal with) and counter changes in culture and decision making?
 4. How do you instill and develop an organization culture?
 5. How organizational size affect culture, internal environment, strategy and/or technology?
 6. How do you overcome resistance and objections to the introduction of new technology?
 7. How do different international organizations approach operations and culture?
 8. What is the effect of senior managerial decision making on lower level employees?
 9. What is the effect of competencies on organization strategy?
 10. Cost-benefit of developing a learning organization?
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Possible Topics for Individual Assignment

1. What is organizational culture and how is "it" measured?
2. What impact does culture have on organizational productivity and morale? How can this impact be assessed?
3. What techniques are available for changing organizational culture? How should they be used?
4. How can organizational problems and opportunities be identified?
5. What is participative management? How do participative management practices work?
6. How are bureaucracies structured? What are their strengths and limitations?
7. What is organization strategy? What is its role?
8. What types of strategy are available to senior management?
9. What is the impact of strategy, and choosing the "right" strategy, on organizational productivity?
10. What are the roles of senior management and the Board? How do/should they work together?
11. How are different types of organizational environment classified?
12. What is the impact of organization environment on organization structure and process?
13. What types of technologies do organizations use to produce goods and services?
14. How does technology affect organizational structure, functioning, and effectiveness?
15. What types of organizational alternatives produce the best quality of work life for workers?

Respect

Please demonstrate respect to your fellow students who express their thoughts and explore new ideas in the course.

Ethical Standards

The following behaviors are considered unethical:

- xTelling the instructor that you "need" a certain grade
- x

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