Course Description

Organizational behavior is a new field dating back only to Kurt Lewin’s first experiments in the 1940s. It seeks to “understand, explain, predict, and change human behavior that occurs in the organizational context” (Wagner & Hollenbeck, 1995). It includes scholarship from many disciplines including psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science and economics. Organizational behavior has three levels of analysis, the individual, the group and the organization. While the workbook includes many examples from the private sector, we will focus specifically on the government and nonprofit sectors as these environments provide unique challenges to employees and managers and the people they serve.

Course Objectives

The course has three objectives. The first is to train you to think like an organizational behavior expert by learning and applying organizational behavior theories and strategies. The second is to teach you how to learn so that you will continue to develop new skills and insights throughout your lifetime. The final objective is to develop your self-knowledge and an understanding of how your behavior affects others so that you can become a better leader and team member.

Required Reading


Articles and Book Chapters: Available on Electronic Course Reserve (ECR)

Recommended Reference: Web site: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html (This is a simple guide to APA style.)

ADA If you believe that you require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please contact the Office of Disability Services (UC 434) at 687-2015.

Course Requirements

Course grades will be based on the following criteria:

Class preparation and participation - 15%
Attendance and dialogue are important components of this course. You are expected to come to class
prepared to thoughtfully discuss the assigned readings and to have completed the exercises within the chapters. For assignments to be handed in to me, please type your answers to the questions. Cite the chapter and page number of the assignment at the top of the page, along with your name. Number your answers in the same way that the questions are numbered in the book, for example, B. 1., B. 2, etc. You do not need to retype the questions themselves.

Please contact me before class if you are unable to attend. You are responsible for obtaining notes and information from missed classes.

**Weekly Assignments - 44%**
Instead of a midterm examination you will have assignments due each week. Each of the 22 assignments is worth 2 points.

**Research proposal - 6%**
In order to make writing your research paper more enjoyable, you will prepare a 3-5 page research proposal detailing the research problem/situation, audience, proposed solution(s), and proposed literature search. You are encouraged to study and develop solutions to an organizational behavior challenge in your workplace or in an organization that you belong to. We will then submit your proposals to the CSU Institutional Review Board to obtain permission to proceed with our projects.

**Research Paper - 15%**
The paper should be written using APA style and be 10-15 pages in length. The paper should demonstrate your understanding of the organizational behavior theory you are applying and some viable solution(s) using appropriate citations and at least 10 references from refereed journals.

**Presentation of research - 5%**
You will be able to share the results of your research with the class towards the end of the semester. You will have 10 minutes to present followed by five minutes for questions.

**Final Examination - 15%**
One final take home essay examination will be given at the end of the semester.

**Graduate course grading:** Using this table as a guide, you will always know how you are doing in the course.

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**Course Outline - Reading Topics and Assignments**

Aug. 27  
Introduction to Course  
Personal Introductions  
Research Project Brainstorming

Sept. 3  
**Labor Day – No Class**

Sept. 10  
*Note: You must complete the Premeeting Preparation and exercises within each chapter before class. You do NOT need to complete Section E in the Personal Application*
assignment for any of the chapters.

Read Setting the Global Stage: Introduction to the Workbook

Read Chapter 1, The Psychological Contract and Commitment. Complete the Personal Application Assignment pgs. 23-24 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 2, Theories of Managing People. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 45-46 to hand in during class.

Sept. 17  
Introduction to the Institutional Review Board: Protection of Human Subjects


Read Chapter 3, Individual and Organizational Learning. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 70-72 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 4, Decoding Human Behavior and Personality. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 91-92 to hand in during class.

Sept. 24  
Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry


Read Chapter 5, Individual and Organizational Motivation. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pg. 119-120 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 6, Values and Workplace Ethics. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 149-150 to hand in during class.

Oct. 1  
Proposals Due

Introduction to Emotional Intelligence and Intentional Change Theory


Read Chapter 7, Personal Growth and Work Stress. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 181-184 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 8, Interpersonal Communication. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on p. 214-215 to hand in during class.

Oct. 8  
Columbus Day – No Class
Oct. 15  Read Chapter 9, Perception and Attribution. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on p. 244-245 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 10, Group Dynamics and Work Teams. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on p. 278-279 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 11, Problem Solving. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 309-310 to hand in during class.


Read Chapter 12, Managing Creativity. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 329-332 to hand in during class.

Video: “Improbable Pairs”

Read Chapter 13, Conflict and Negotiation. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 360-361 to hand in during class.


Read Chapter 14, Managing Diversity. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 384-386 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 15, Leadership and Management. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 414-415 to hand in during class.


Read Chapter 16, Organizational Culture. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 451-453 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 17, Decision Making. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 485-486 to hand in during class.

Nov. 12  Veteran’s Day – No Class

Nov. 19  Research Papers Due

Course Evaluations

Research Presentations


Read Chapter 18, Power and Influence. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 518-519 to hand in during class.

Nov. 26

**Research Presentations**


Read Chapter 19, Empowerment and Coaching. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 547-548 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 20, Performance Management. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 592-593 to hand in during class.

Dec. 3

**Research Presentations**

**Final Exam distributed**

Read Chapter 21, Organization Design. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 621-622 to hand in during class.

Read Chapter 22, Managing Change. Complete the Personal Application Assignment on pgs. 658-659 to hand in during class.

Dec. 10

**Final Exam Due – No Class**
Guidelines for Research Proposal and Final Paper

** We will submit the research proposals to the CSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to protect human subjects.

Format: The proposal and paper should be written in American Psychological Association (APA) style. This is a very simple author/date style that we will discuss briefly in class. Please double space your paper, use a simple typeface (e.g., Times New Roman), 12-point type, and put a one-inch margin around the text. Make sure to number the pages and use paragraphs rather than spaces to separate groups of sentences. You may use headings and your final paper should include the results of any field research you have done. You do not need to prepare an abstract or use a running header on each page.

State the problem: What organizational behavior problem or appreciative inquiry intervention do you want to study? You will probably need to give some background on the organization in this section. Be very specific about the problem / intervention.

Audience: Who are you writing this paper for? Your tone will vary depending on who you are speaking to. Your audience may be the members of the class, or you may want to share your work with your supervisor.

What do you think the solutions are? Be very specific in stating what you think the solutions may be, given your experience in the organization. Explain why you hold that opinion.

Literature search: Indicate where you will look in the literature. Will you look at the organizational behavior literature, in public administration, or is the issue so specific to your discipline or situation that you need to look into that field’s literature (e.g., health care administration, law enforcement)? You do not need to list your references in the proposal. Your final paper however, must contain at least 10 references from peer-reviewed journals that you have found on your own. You must discuss each article in your paper. You may also use book references but these do not count towards the 10 articles. If you are unable to do field research, you must have at least 15 references from peer-reviewed journals. The CSU librarians are very helpful and a wonderful resource.

Research design: Explain, in detail, how you will test your proposed solutions. Will you look at existing statistical data; will you survey your co-workers or employees? Will you interview people? How will you present your data? When and how will you perform your research?

Conclusion (for final paper only): Discuss whether the literature supported the solutions that you proposed initially. Then discuss the research results and how they can be applied to the agency problem / intervention.

Note: It is extremely important that you perform your research on your own time unless you have permission from your supervisor to do the work while you are on the job. A cooperative relationship with your supervisor is extremely important! If you do not believe you can safely study a problem in your organization, please discuss your proposal with me before proceeding.