

OBHR E 110

Organizational Behavior

Harvard Extension School

Syllabus - Fall semester 2007-2008

Meeting time: Tuesdays, 5:30 - 7:30 PM, Location: Sever Hall, Room 210

Instructor: Ines Mergel, DBA

Office: Location: Kennedy School of Government, 79 JFK St., Cambridge, MA 02138

Contact: The best way to reach me is by email ines_mergel@harvard.edu;
or leave a voice message on my office phone: 617-496-6166.

Office hours: I do not offer official office hours, but we can meet before or right after class.
Please give me at least 24 hours to respond to your emails.

Credits: 4

1. Goal of the Course:

This course deals with human behavior in a variety of organizations. Conceptual frameworks, case discussions, and skill-oriented activities are applied to each topic. Topics include communications, motivation, group dynamics, leadership, power, the influence of technology, and organizational design and development. Class sessions and assignments are intended to help participants acquire the skills that managers need to improve organizational relationships and performance. (4 credits)

2. Learning Objectives:

Primary course objectives. The first objective of this course is for you to arrive at informed responses to each of the above listed topics in Organizational Behavior. This will be done through discussions of the assigned readings and how they relate to your experience within your teams and individual corporate settings. The *secondary objective* is to enable you to analyze business cases by applying theoretical concepts in real life organizational settings.

3. Pre- or co-requisites:

None

4. Grading Method: The final grade will consist of the following different elements:

30% course assignments: There is a total of two assignments which are due on September 25 and October 2. The assignment text will be handed out several days before the assignment is due and there will be intensive class discussion and your presentations of the assignments. Assignments have to be uploaded by 9 A.M. on Tuesdays to the course website (dropbox).

30% case analyses and active participation during the semester: Students are expected to actively prepare all readings for class, email me in advance in case you were not able to prepare for class. You will receive the study questions to prepare the case analysis for each case we discuss in class. Come prepared to present answers to the study questions in class.

All readings have to be prepared and active participation in class discussion will be part of your final grade.

40% final exam: This is a take home exam and be handed out on the last day of class in December. Alternatively, you can write a 10 page term paper. Please let me know by November 1 what you prefer. The exam/paper is due on January 8th, 2008 – to be submitted by email to me.

5. Late assignment policy

Deadlines for assignment submissions are non-negotiable and missed work will have an effect on your overall grade.

6. Grading scheme

A+	97% - 100% of all possible points
A	93% - 96%
A-	90% - 92%
B+	87% - 89%
B	82% - 86%
B-	80% - 81%
C+	76% - 79%
C-	65% - 75%
F	0% - 64%

7. Academic freedom policy

You are expected to respect the right of your peers to express their views on topics relevant to the course as others respect that right as well. If you feel the need to discuss topics beyond the scope of the class, please talk directly to me and I will try to accommodate your needs after class or incorporate additional material in following lectures.

8. General courtesy

Please switch off your cell phones or mute them in class. Use your laptops mainly to take notes during the lecture, but please avoid checking your emails, chatting with your friends or surfing the Internet.

9. Required course materials

The following three text books are required and our main reading material for the class. Chapters and cases are outlined on the detailed course calendar. Come prepared to class and be ready to give a short overview of the main topics and questions presented in the readings. However, the objective in this class is not to repeat what is written in the books, but to understand the general underlying concepts and connect them with your experiences. Bring material you find in newspapers or tell the class about your own experience. We will upload your own contributions to the course website or make them available by email to everyone.

You are encouraged to read daily newspapers, such as the New York Times and business relevant publications such as Business Week or Economist. Remember that you can sign up for news feeds or RSS feeds, so that you automatically receive updates and news.

Required readings available for purchase at The Harvard Coop textbook department:*

- Staw, B. M.: Psychological Dimensions of Organizational Behavior; Pearson Prentice-Hall, NJ; 2004.
- Vecchio, R. P.: Organizational Behavior-Core Concepts; Thompson-South Western, Ohio; 2003.
- Buller, P./Schuller, R.: Managing Organizations: Cases in Management, Organizational Behavior and Human Resources Management: South-Western College Publishing, OH. => This book includes the class cases. Try to purchase it used or share with a colleague.

* In addition, I might ask you ad hoc to prepare additional material for class.

Optional (really good) readings:

- Stone, D./Patton, B./Heen, S./Fisher, R.: Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most, New York: Penguin Books, 2000.
- Kilduff, M./Tsai, W.: Social Networks and Organizations, Sage Publications, London, 2003.
- Baker, W.: Achieving Success Through Social Capital, Jossey-Bass, New York, 2000.

10. Course outline - Fall semester 2007-2008*

Date	Topics	
9/18	Introduction: Organizational behavior	Individual Processes
9/25	Individual social capital, Relations	
10/2	Attitudes and personality	
10/9	Motivation and goals	
10/16	Self-perception and social cognition	
10/23	Power and leadership	
10/30	Decision making	Interpersonal Processes
11/6	Group dynamics	
11/13	Communication	
11/20	No Class	
11/27	Teams	
12/4	Cultural differences	Org. Structure
12/11	Organizational change	
12/18	Organizational social capital	
01/08	Take-Home Final Exam or Paper <u>due</u>	

* I will keep the right to make adjustments to the syllabus if necessary.

11. Tentative course calendar and readings

	Date	Topics	Readings and Assignments
1.	9/18	Introduction: Organizational Behavior	
2.	9/25	Individual social capital, Relations	<u>Read:</u> Baker, pp. 1-67 (Handout) Kilduff/Tsai, pp. 13-34 (Handout) <i>Assignment 1 due</i>
3.	10/2	Attitudes and personality	<u>Read:</u> Vecchio, pp. 25-46 Staw, pp. 3-23
4.	10/9	Motivation and goals	<u>Read:</u> Staw, pp. 25-87 Vecchio, pp. 71-120 <u>Be prepared to discuss</u> – Case analysis of Nordstrom Case (Cases in Mgt), pp. 249-257
5.	10/16	Self-perception and social cognition	<u>Read:</u> Staw, pp. 123-155 Vecchio, pp. 36-45 (re-read)
6.	10/23	Power and leadership	<u>Read:</u> Vecchio, pp. 123-172 Staw, pp. 369-394 <u>Be prepared to discuss</u> - Case analysis of Lincoln Electric case (Cases in Mgt), pp. 279-300
7.	10/30	Decision making	<u>Read:</u> Staw, pp. 181-241; Vecchio, pp. 181-204
8.	11/6	Group dynamics	12 Angry Men - movie <i>Final paper ideas due on 11/12/2007 (1/2 page by email)</i>
9.	11/13	Communication	<u>Read:</u> Vecchio, pp. 293-336 <u>Be prepared to discuss</u> – Be prepared to discuss Motor Parts Corporation Case (Cases in Mgt), pp. 301-304
10.	11/20		<i>No class</i>
Thanksgiving vacation November 21 – November 25, 2007			

Syllabus cont'd

11.	11/27	Teams	<p><u>Read:</u> Vecchio, pp. 211-231 Staw, pp. 407-443</p> <p><i><u>Assignment 2 is due on 12/3/2007</u></i></p>
12.	12/4	Cultural differences	<p><u>Read:</u> Vecchio, pp. 341-363 Staw, pp. 307-334</p> <p><u>Be prepared to discuss:</u> Case analysis of American Express Case (Cases in Mgt), pp. 29-44</p>
13.	12/11	Organizational Change	<p><u>Read:</u> Staw pp. 513-546, Vecchio, pp. 365-382</p> <p><u>Be prepared to discuss</u> - Case analysis of Implementing Teams at AAL and IPS (Cases in Mgt), pp. 341-357</p>
14.	12/18	Organizational social capital	<p><u>Read:</u> Krackhardt on leaders and social capital (handout) tba</p>
<p>Winter vacation: Friday December 21, 2007 – Tuesday January 1, 2008</p>			
15.	01/08	Take-Home Final or Final Paper <u>due</u>	<p><i>No class – instructor travels</i></p>
<p>Exam period: January 8 – January 10, 2008</p>			