

Organizations and Society 201

MWF 12:50 – 1:40

Spring 2008

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Course Description:

Modern society is an organizational society. We are born in organizations and we die in them. In between, our lives are shaped by organizational entities, such as schools, universities, business firms, the music and entertainment industry, government agencies, prisons, labor unions, voluntary associations, and political parties, that we take for granted. This course provides an introduction to the central authors and themes in the sociology of organizations. We will use a loose historical framework to examine various research paradigms detailing core topics associated with the study of organizations such as, bureaucracy, power and conflict, rationality, authority, work, and technology. The course is based on a mixed pedagogy of in-class and service-learning, which requires student participation in a field practicum. There are two main learning components: in-class lectures, papers and exams, and, participant observation of university-community partner organizations. Through these combined activities, students develop a theoretical and practical understanding of this unique sociological perspective as it applies to organizations as diverse as the CDC, Enron, Atlanta Community Food Bank, and Al-Qaeda.

Service Learning:

The course includes a service-learning component. Students participate in a number of service learning trips of their own choosing. Voluntary commitments will place students in community-based organizations where they will broaden their sociological knowledge of organizations. These non-profit organizations address social problems ranging from AIDS/HIV to elder care, delinquency, and the homeless. There will also be several speakers from the greater Atlanta community including local business leaders and non-profit volunteers and activists who will conduct class sessions.

Grading:

Since this is an introductory class, there will be no research paper. Instead, there will be seven short summaries (one to two pages each) covering the material. In the summaries students will respond to questions provided by the instructor. Questions will be drawn from the daily readings as well as from material located in the library, in library databases and on the internet. Some of the summary and exam questions will focus on your volunteer work in the community. Lastly, there will be two exams. Grades are based on in-class and service-learning participation (15%), summaries (35%) and the two exams (50%).

*** Nota Bene:**

There will be no make-up exams given nor will I accept summaries after the due dates. In addition, you are responsible for meeting your volunteer commitments. Most importantly, the

material is difficult and requires daily vigilance, class attendance and active participation throughout the entire session.

Texts:

I. Bookstore:

- Scott, W. Richard. 2003. *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*. Fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

II. Virtual reader:

- Bates, Frederick L. and Clyde C. Harvey. 1986. *The Structure of Social Systems*. Malibar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Co. Pp. 142-146
- Marx, Gary T. and Douglas McAdam. 1994. *Collective Behavior and Social Movements: Process and Structure*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Pp. 12-13
- O'Neill, Michael. 2002. *Nonprofit Nation: A New Look at the Third America*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Pp. 1-35.
- Hardcastle, David A. and Patricia R. Powers. 2004. *Community Practice: Theories and Skills for Social Workers*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 244-246, 253-260.
- Gibson, James L., John M. Ivancevich, and James H. Donnelley, Jr. 1979. *Organizations: Behavior, Structure and Processes*. Third edition. Dallas, Texas: Business Publications, Inc. Pp. 239-266
- Taylor, Frederick Winslow. 1947 [1929]. *The Principles of Scientific Management*. N.Y.: W.W. Norton and Co. Pp. 9-29, 30-55
- Braverman, Harry. 1974. *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Monthly Review Press. Pp. 100-123
- Linhart, Robert. 1981. *The Assembly Line*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. Pp. 13-41
- Hacker, Andrew *The New York Review of Books* Volume 52, Number 17 • November 3, 2005
- Chandler, Alfred D. Jr. 2003 [1984]. The Emergence of Managerial Capitalism (selections). In *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings* (Pp. 303-314) Handel, Michael J. (ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Hall, Peter Dobkin, 1998. "Religion and the US Organizational Revolution," In *Sacred Companies: Organizational Aspects of Religion and Religious Aspects of Organizations* (Pp. 100-113). Demerath, N.J. III, Peter Dobkin Hall, Terry Schmitt and Rys H. Williams. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Perrow, Charles. 1986. *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*. New York: Random House. Pp. 1-3
- Jackall, Robert. 2003 [1988]. The World of Corporate Managers (selections). In *The Sociology of Organizations : Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings* (Pp. 157-169) Handel, Michael J. (ed.) Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.
- Westley , Frances 1991. "Bob Geldof and Live Aid: The Affective Side of Global Social Innovation" *Human Relations* 44: 1011-1036.
- Handel, Michael J. 2003. " Part X: Organizational Culture." In *The Sociology of Organizations : Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings* (Pp. 347-350) Handel, Michael J. (ed.) Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.
- Vaughan, Diane. 1997. "The Trickle-Down Effect; Policy Decisions, Risky Work and the Challenger Tragedy." *California Management Review*, 39: 80-102.

- Klass, Perri. 1999. "A Weekend in the Life of a Medical Student." In *Health, Illness and Healing: Society, Social Context and Self, An Anthology*, eds. Kathy Charmaz and Debora A. Paterniti. L.A: Roxbury Publishing. Pp. 121-131.
- Gillespie, Richard. 1991. *Manufacturing Knowledge: A History of the Hawthorne Experiments*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 7-26, 37-68
- Mitchell L. Stevens. 2001. *Kingdom of Children: Culture and Controversy in the Homeschooling Movement*. Chapter 4, "Authority and Diversity" (pp. 107-142).
- Knoke, David. 1989. "Resource Acquisition and Allocation in U.S. National Associations." *International Social Movement Research* 2:129-154
- Knoke, David and David Prensky. 1984. "What Relevance Do Organization Theories Have for Voluntary Associations?" *Social Science Quarterly* 65:3-20.
- Seabright, Mark A. and Jacques Delacroix. 1996. "The Minimalist Organization as a Postbureaucratic Form" *Journal of Management Inquiry* 5:140-154
- Hall, Richard H. 2002. *Organizations: Structures, Processes and Outcomes*. Eighth edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Pp. 151-180 (decision-making)
- Lipsky, Michael. 1980. *Street-level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Pp.1-27
- Hall, Richard H. 2002. *Organizations: Structures, Processes and Outcomes*. Eighth edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Pp. 260-273 (other theories)
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 2003 [1977]. Men and Women of the Corporation (selections). In *The Sociology of Organizations : Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings* (Pp. 381-396) Handel, Michael J. (ed.) Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.
- Collins, Sharon. 2003 [1997]. Black Mobility in White Corporations (selections). In *The Sociology of Organizations : Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings* (Pp. 387-407) Handel, Michael J. (ed.) Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.

Course Outline and Calendar

Week1

1/16 The Sociology of Organizations : Syllabus and Outline

1/18 Introduction: The Sociology of Organizations

Week 2

1/21 Holiday

1/23 Formal Complex Organization, Social Organization, Collective Behavior, and Social Movements

Readings: (1) Bates and Harvey *Structure of Social Systems*. Pp. 142-146;

(2) Gary Marx and McAdam *Collective Behavior*. Pp. 12-13

Topics:

I. Why study organizations?

II. Defining organizations

Summary #1: What are the different ways that organizations produce social change and reproduce social order? Give examples to support your claims. Due 1/28

1/25 The Civil Sector: Non-profit Organizations

Readings: O'Neill, Michael. *Nonprofit Nation*: Pp. 1-35.

Topics:

Readings: 1) Scott *Organizations*. Pp. 33-37, 38-42

Topics:

- I. Taylorism and scientific management

Week 5

2/11 Power, Authority and Control

Readings: Braverman *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. Pp. 85-123

Topics:

- I. Taylorism reprised
- II. Braverman's critique

2/13 Life in the Factory

Readings: Linhart *Assembly Line*. Pp. 13 -41

* Summary #2 Due Today

Topics:

- I. Linhart's study of the factory
- II. Class, ethnicity, status and work

Summary #3: Use the fast-food industry to explain how formal structure leads to both efficient realization of ends and also disciplined performance of participants (refer to Scott 42-55). Due 2/20.

2/15 Education, Occupation and Mobility

Readings: Hacker, Andrew *The New York Review of Books Volume 52, Number 17 · November 3, 2005*

Topics:

- I. How does education shape occupational mobility?
- II. How do class, ethnicity, and other markers of social status shape educational attainment?

Week 6

2/18 The Origins of the Modern Business Organization

Readings: 1) Chandler "The Emergence of Managerial Capitalism." Pp. 303-314; 2) Peter Dobkin Hall, 1998. "Religion and the US Organizational Revolution." Pp. 100-113

Topics:

- I. Characteristics of modern businesses
- II. Economic origins of modern business organizations
- III. Religious origins of the organizational revolution

2/20 Modern Business Organizations

Readings: none

* Summary #3 Due Today

2/22 Weber: Bureaucracy

Readings: 1) Scott *Organizations*. Pp. 43-55 2) Perrow *Complex Organizations* pp. 1-3;

Topics:

- I. Three types of weberian authority
- II. Six characteristics of bureaucracy
- III. The routinization of charisma

Week 7

2/25 Corporate Management, Leadership and Charisma

Readings: (1) Jackall "The World of Corporate Managers." Pp. 157-169;
(2) Westley, Frances 1991. "Bob Geldof and Live Aid: The Affective Side of Global Social Innovation" *Human Relations* 44: 1011-1036.

Topics:

- I. Authority and leadership
- II. Mobilization and charismatic authority

2/27 Life in Corporate America
Readings: none

2/29 Natural Systems: Organizational Culture part 1
Readings: (1) Handel Intro to Organizational Culture pp. 347-350; (2) Klass, Perri. "A Weekend in the Life of a Medical Student." Pp. 121-131
(3) Scott *Organizations* 56-81

Topics:

- I. Organizational culture
- II. Rational and natural systems perspectives
- III. Review

Week 8

3/3 Review

3/5 Midterm exam

3/7 Organizational Culture part 2
Readings: none

Summary #4: The rise of the engineering profession is associated with a rational systems' perspective, while the rise of personnel or human resources is associated with a natural systems' perspective. Explain the connection between the rise of each profession and its associated perspective. In doing so, explain how the two perspectives differ. Due 3/19

Week 9

3/10-3/14 Spring Recess

Week 10

3/17 Human Relations and the Hawthorne Experiments
Readings: Gillespie *Hawthorne*. Pp. 7-30

Topics:

- I. Hawthorne experiments
- II. Hawthorne effect and organizational culture
- III. Personnel

3/19 Human Relations and the Hawthorne Experiments Continued
Readings: Gillespie *Hawthorne*. Pp. 30-68

Topics:

- I. The rise of the human relations school

3/21 Social Movement Organizations: The Culture of Political Groups
Readings: none
* Summary # 4 Due Today

Topics:

- I. Do social movement organizations look the same as other organizations?
- II. How do movements mobilize participants?
- III. Is personalism in politics effective?

Week 11

3/31 Commercial and Noncommercial Organizations
Readings: Knoke. "Resource Acquisition and Allocation in US National Associations" Pp. 129-153; (2) Readings: Knoke and Prensky. "What Relevance Do Organization Theories Have for Voluntary Associations?" Pp. 3-20 (3) Seabright, Mark A. and Jacques Delacroix "The Minimalist Organization as a Postbureaucratic Form" Pp. 140-154

Topics:

- I. Main differences between social movements and corporations/bureaucracies
- II. Expressive goals versus purposive ones
- III. Costs associated with compliance?

4/2 Bureaucracy: Decision-Making part I
Readings: (1) Hall *Organizations*. Pp. 151-180;

Topics:

- I. Factors affecting decision-making
- II. Managing uncertainty

4/4 Bureaucracy: Decision-Making part II
Readings: (1) Hall *Organizations*. Pp. 151-180; (2) Lipsky *Street Level Bureaucracy*. Pp. 1-28

- I. Street-level bureaucrats

Week 12

4/7 Bureaucracy: Decision-Making part III

* Caddie Putnam Rankin's exercise

- 4/9 Bureaucracy: The Challenger Launch
Readings: (1) Vaughan, Diane. 1997. "The Trickle-Down Effect; Policy Decisions, Risky Work and the Challenger Tragedy." *California Management Review*, 39: 80-102.
* Caddie Putnam Rankin's lecture

Topics:

- I. How do policy decisions influence organizational decision making?
- II. How does organizational culture influence risk taking?
- III. How do organizations normalize deviance?

- 4/11 Organizational Environments
Readings: Scott *Organizations*. Pp. 125-149; 185-229

Topics

- I. What are technical environments? What are institutional environments?
- II. What strategies does an organization use to protect production?

Summary #5: Select 4 or 5 task buffering strategies (not institutional ones). Explain and describe each using two organizational examples: one from manufacturing and one from the service industry. If you are feeling particularly clever, you can use an example from another sector (e.g., government). Due 4/18.

Week 13

- 4/14 Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis
Readings: Scott *Organizations*. Pp. 133-139

Topics:

- I. What are institutions?
- II. Analytic levels
- III. Organizations and institutional environments

- 4/16 Service Commitment Presentations
Readings: none

- 4/18 Service Commitment Presentations
Reading : none
* Summary # 5 Due Today

Summary #6: Using regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional characteristics, describe how an organization in the manufacturing industry, and how an organization in the service industry, becomes isomorphic with other organizations. Be sure to explain exactly why this happens. Due 4/21

Week 14

- 4/21 Resource Dependence and Other Theories

Readings: Hall *Organizations*. Pp. 260-273

Topics:

- I. Resource dependence and associated theories
- II. Population ecology

Extended Summary #7: Using Scott, describe the various components of your service commitment organization. Then compare these with a commercial organization. What are the differences and similarities? Be sure to provide a couple of good examples of each point to make your argument concrete. Due 4/28

4/23 Organizations and Society: Gender

Readings: Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. "Men and Women of the Corporation." In Handel *Sociology of Organizations*. Pp. 371-387

Topics:

- I. Reproducing gender inequality

4/25 Organizations and Society: Race and Ethnicity

Readings: (1) Collins, Sharon. 2003. "Black Mobility in White Corporations." In Handel *Sociology of Organizations*. Pp. 371-407 (2) Rimland, Bernard. 2005. (2) Lola Ogunnaike "Jay-Z, from Superstar to Suit." *The New York Times*, August 28, 2005.

* Summary # 6 Due Today

Topics:

- I. Ethnic/ racial inequality
- II. What are individual solutions? What are structural solutions and what is the difference?
- III. Does Jay-Z's success contradict Collin's argument?

Week 15

4/28 Review

* Summary # 7 Due Today

Week 16

5/6 Exam Tuesday 4:30-7:00 pm