



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

## McCOMBS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

SPRING

MAN 336: ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

2011

UTC 1.144

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**Course Web Page** via Blackboard (<http://courses.utexas.edu>)

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### Course Overview and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to enhance your learning about people in organizations and to help prepare you to be an effective organizational leader. Many of the courses in the business curriculum teach you to manage information, money, and other material organizational resources. All of those skills will help you become a better manager. But it is your "people skills" that will ultimately have the most impact on your success as a leader. This course focuses on understanding the people who are the heart and soul of any organization--their actions and interactions and how they affect the organizations in which they work. The class also seeks to increase your awareness of your own skills and strengths as an organizational leader. This course carries an ethics and leadership flag, and a special emphasis is placed in this course on the importance of being an ethical leader.

The cartoon *Dilbert* is based on examples of bad management practices. My mission as a management faculty member is to contribute to putting *Dilbert* out of business. My vision is that every one who leads people will learn enough about sound, ethical management practices that *Dilbert* no longer exists—or at least that no one who wears burnt orange ever provides material for a *Dilbert* cartoon. It is my hope that your learning in this course will help you accomplish that goal.

### Materials

#### Required:

Kreitner, R., & Kinicki, A. (2010). Organizational Behavior (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York: Irwin McGraw-Hill.

### Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

	<b>Points</b>	<b>Weight</b>
In-Class Contribution	1	1%
Learning Exercises & Activities	5	5%
Cross-Cultural Interview	3	3%
Exams	60	60%
Blogs	5	5%
Top Ten Take-Aways	1	1%
Team Service Project	15	15%
Final Exam	10	10%
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	100	100 %

## Assessment

Your final grade in the course will be based on the total points earned on the assignments. Anyone scoring less than 70% on an assignment needs to meet with me as soon as possible.

A	-	93-100 pts.
A-	-	90-92 pts.
B+	-	87-89 pts.
B	-	83-86 pts.
B-	-	80-82 pts.
C+	-	77-79 pts.
C	-	73-76 pts.
C-	-	70-72 pts.
D+	-	67-69 pts.
D	-	63-66 pts.
D-	-	60-62 pts.
F	-	0-59 pts.

## Description of Requirements

### Prerequisites

- Credit or registration for Business Administration 324 (or credit for Management Information Systems 324); and credit or registration for three semester hours of coursework in psychology, sociology, or anthropology.
- Grade Point Average of 2.0 or better

### Class Contribution (1%)

Each of you has valuable organizational experience, and that experience will provide different perspectives on the concepts discussed. Therefore, as you will see, both in your teams and in class, a sizeable portion of your learning will be dependent upon listening to, interacting with, and discussing issues with your peers. Moreover, this course demands analysis, synthesis and evaluation of those concepts for a variety of situations and applications. To this end, active discussion is required in order to permit the exploration of ideas. Therefore, as a member of this class, it is part of your responsibility to actively contribute to the learning of your peers. You are welcome to consult with me regarding your class contribution performance at any time during the course.

Some of the things that have an impact on effective class participation and contribution are the following:

- *Is the student a good listener? Does the student give the person speaking his or her full attention?*
- *Do the student's comments reflect an understanding of what previous students have said?*
- *Are the points that are made relevant to the discussion? Are they linked to the comments of others?*
- *Do the comments add to our understanding of the situation?*
- *Do the comments show evidence of analysis of the concepts being discussed?*
- *Does the student distinguish among different kinds of data (e.g., facts vs. opinions.)?*
- *Is there a willingness to test new ideas, or are all comments "safe"? (For example, repetition of case facts without analysis and conclusions or a comment already made by a colleague.)*
- *Is the student willing to interact with other class members?*
- *Does the student show professionalism in the classroom?*
- *Do comments clarify and highlight the important aspects of earlier comments and lead to a clearer statement of the concepts being covered?*

### **Learning Activities & Exercises (5%)**

This course is taught in an experiential workshop format. Most of the learning activities for the course will occur during class time. Therefore class attendance and active participation are very important to your learning. You will receive .5 point for successfully completing each of 10 learning activities throughout the semester.

### **Blogs (5%)**

Bloggging provides you with an opportunity to synthesize your learning from the class readings, discussions, and activities. It also gives you a chance to learn from your classmates' reflections. Blogs should be posted on Blackboard by noon on the day they are due. More detail on bloggging will be provided in class. Each blog is worth 1 possible point.

### **Exams (Three-20% each)**

There will be three exams. These may include multiple-choice, true-false, matching, short answer, and discussion questions that focus on readings, lectures, and class discussions. They will require you to have carefully read the chapters assigned and to understand the class discussions and learning activities. You may bring one page of notes with you to the exam.

### **Cross-Cultural Interview (3%)**

This assignment involves a written analysis of an interview with someone from a cultural group different from your own about their experience working for an organization. The purpose of this assignment is to increase your awareness and understanding of difference and the related

theories. Typical cultural differences include gender, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. Generally, the most learning occurs when the person is as different from you as possible. You should address the following questions at a minimum:

- How would you show respect when doing business?
- What would you consider to be very rude business behavior?
- What would you consider unethical in conducting business?
- What differences do you perceive between yourself and members of other cultural groups in the workplace?
- What aspects of your culture or identity do you suppress at work and why?
- What aspects of your culture or identity can you use in your work with others?

Your written analysis should include a summary of the person's responses, as well as reflections about your own learning. The emphasis should be on what you learned from the interview. Be sure to use theory from your text to compare your experience with your interviewee's experience. The paper should be no longer than three pages. Grading will be based on how well you link theory to what your interviewee told you and your critical reflection on your own learning. Examples of papers are available in my office.

### **Team Service Learning Project (15%)**

Purpose. This project is the largest collaborative learning activity for the course. Class members will work in teams of four to five people to conduct a service learning project. The team will choose an organization to work with. The organization can be a business, university organization, or other nonprofit organization. UT Volunteers.org maintains a list of non-profit organizations that would benefit from student volunteers. The team should work with an organizational sponsor to select a project that will contribute positively to the mission of that organization. The project should be one that can be completed during the course of the semester and take approximately 8 hours of each team member's time. One goal of this assignment is obviously to take the initiative to make a positive contribution to an organization and the community. Another major goal is to provide an opportunity for you to learn more about organizational behavior first hand and to use your critical thinking and reflection skills to link your experience with this organization to your learning in relation to organizational behavior theory. The final goal is to provide a forum for you to hone your skills as a team member and leader and to reflect on the learning gained from this team experience. Each team will make a presentation to the class that describes what you did for the organization, what you learned about organizational behavior, and what you learned about working on a team.

Deliverables. This assignment includes five deliverables: (1) the presentation, (2) a team assessment, (3) an individual assessment, (4) a peer evaluation, and (5) an organizational assessment. Each one is described in more detail below.

Presentations. Each presentation should be a maximum of 10 minutes long. In the presentation, you should share your learning from your project. You will be graded on your application of organizational behavior theory to your experience working with this organization and with this team, as well as your use of creativity in the presentation itself. Remember—don't bore us!

Team Assessment. Please work together to complete the team self- assessment. Only one form needs to be submitted, but all team members should sign it. It should be completed and turned in on the same day as your presentation. There is no set length for the paper. It depends on what you learned related to that question.

A copy of the questions are included here:

1. What criteria was used in selecting an organization?
2. How was leadership negotiated?
3. How was work divided?
4. What was the most difficult conflict to resolve and how did you resolve it?
5. How were cross-cultural and diversity issues negotiated?
6. What is the team most proud of about this project?
7. What would your team do differently on this project if you could do it again?
8. What criteria should be utilized to evaluate the team?
9. What grade do you think this team should receive based on team performance according to the criteria you selected?
10. Should every member receive the same grade? Why or why not?

Individual Assessment. Each member of the team should also reflect on your own learning from this experience. The questions to ask yourself about this project are:

1. What did I learn about working on a team?
2. What did I learn about myself from this experience?
3. What will I do differently as a team member on future teams?

Peer Assessment. Each team member will assess the performance of all the other team members for the project. Peer assessments are done anonymously. The feedback may be shared, but not who provided it.

Organizational Assessment. The primary contact person in the organization you worked with also will be asked to provide feedback on the team's performance.

Grading. This assignment is worth a maximum of 15% of your grade. It is designed to provide 360-degree feedback on the project. All members of the team will receive the same grade unless the team decides otherwise. The team assessment form should include information on how the team's product should be graded and the team's own assessment of its work. The class will also provide feedback on each team's presentation.

### **Top Ten Take-Aways (1%)**

This assignment provides a final opportunity for you to synthesize and share your learning with the class. Reflect on your learning in this class and write up a list of your "Top 10 Take-Aways" from the course. Explain why you chose each concept, how you have utilized it in your

own life, and how you think it will help you in your future role as a leader. There is no set length of the paper. That depends on your learning.

This assignment is worth 1% of your grade. Obviously you will not be graded on whether your choice of a learning point is valid or not. Your learning is your learning. Your grade will be based on how well you explain that concept's application to your life.

Your presentation in class will be fairly informal. Each member of the class will have about a minute or so to share a point or two about your most important learning from the course. It is simply an opportunity to reflect on your learning with your peers. Sometimes hearing what is important to other people can also contribute to your own learning.

An example of a learning point follows:

*"Team Tools. As I continue studying in college, concentrating in accounting, and ultimately hoping to one day work on an audit team, the team tools that I learned in this class will play a big part throughout the remainder of my education and into my career. When working on a team, it can be difficult to reach a decision. Others often mistake stepping up as a leader or taking charge as arrogance or greed. Therefore, team tools such as "in/out" help keep a group focused and on track, because teams are usually short on time. My team for the special project used "dot voting" as a means to democratically and fairly choose an organization to observe. Dr. Edwards showed how useful "lump and clump," or an affinity diagram, can be through a simple class exercise. Working in groups has become more and more common in school and in the workplace. The team tools learned in this class will aid me all along the way."*

## **Final Exam (10%)**

**Purpose.** The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for you to synthesize your learning about leadership and organizational behavior. Models can serve as a succinct summary of what you want to remember about the course. Ideally your model will provide a tool for you to use as a guide in your own practice as a leader.

**Directions.** Think about what your beliefs about leadership are, your ethics as a leader, the style of leadership you want to emulate, and the theories you have learned that you think are essential to doing an excellent job as a leader. What do you want to keep in mind when you are in a leadership role? Create a one-page visual image of your model of leadership. You can use a visual of your own design or a metaphor, especially if it is one that has special meaning for you. For example, a previous student was a golfer and created a model based on that. The sand traps represented conflict, etc. Another student was a pre-med student and created a visual of the circulatory system as an analogy for the process of leadership. Once you have created your model, write a paper that explains each of the elements of your model in more detail. The paper should be between 5 and 10 pages.

**Grading.** The final is worth 10 points of your grade. It will be based on the creativity, comprehensiveness, and the theoretical soundness of your application of theory to your model. The final is a take-home, out of class assignment that you do on your own time. This final assignment can be turned in anytime between now and the final exam date listed on your

syllabus. It can be delivered to Dr. Edwards' office, CBA 6.458, or placed in her box in the Management office, CBA 4.202.

### **Extra Credit**

You may earn up to one-half point of extra credit in this course by attending presentations by the many excellent speakers that the Business School sponsors. Examples include the Distinguished Speaker series and presentations sponsored by student organizations such as the University Management Association, etc.

Each presentation is worth up to .25 pt., so you can receive credit for a total of two presentations. To receive credit, write a one-page paper summarizing the speaker's main points, and explaining what your most important learning from the presentation was. Be sure to include the speaker's name, the date, and which group they spoke to. Papers must be turned in to Dr. Edwards by the last day of class to receive extra credit.

### **Guidelines for Completing Assignments**

Check the course calendar for specific due dates for assignments. The syllabus, gradebook, and other documents related to this course can be found on Blackboard. Blackboard can be accessed at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. If you have any problems, contact the ITS Help Desk, 475-9400. The formatting for all assignments is based on double-spaced, 12 point font pages, with 1" margins. Please attach a cover page to each assignment which includes your name, date, title of assignment, and time your class meets—for example, TTH 2:00-3:30 p.m. Assignments not submitted on or before the due date are subject to a penalty. All assignments are designed to build your knowledge and skill as an organizational leader.

### **Pedagogical Purpose**

If the learning goal of the course is to develop your management skills as an organizational leader to the point where you will never be the subject of a Dilbert cartoon, then it is important that you understand organizational behavior beyond just the knowledge of facts. Educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom (1956) developed a taxonomy of educational objectives that includes knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The assignments are designed to tap all of those categories in examining your learning in the course.

Since your organizational experience is somewhat limited at this stage of your career, I will do the best I can to create activities that help you apply the theories you are learning to the real world. So the goal is not to torture you with obtuse and obscure assignments for a grade. The goal is that you learn as much as possible about organizational behavior that you can actually use in your own life. It is my hope that you will find each exercise educational and useful, as well as enjoyable. If not, you can console yourself with how long it's going to take me to grade your work.

Theory. Organizational expert Kurt Lewin once said, "There is nothing as practical as a good theory." Organizational behavior is an interdisciplinary subject with a rich and growing body of research to support its principles. However, theory is not truth. In fact, you can only disprove theory. If a theory could be proven, it would by definition no longer be a theory. What theory does provide in terms of organizational behavior is a framework for attempting to understand complex and sometimes inexplicable human behavior and to utilize that understanding to build more effective and sometimes counter-intuitive strategies as a successful business leader. Because this is a survey course, there are a wide variety of theories and concepts to absorb.

Practice. Theory can only be useful if it can be applied to your practice as an organizational leader. Without analysis and application, theory stands only as a sterile and unquestioned jumble of jargon. In order to make theory practical, you must be willing to engage it and experiment with it in your own life. The assignments in the course are intended provide opportunities to test theory in relation to your own life and future career. However, as another educator once noted, “Experience is mandatory. Learning is optional.” The two primary processes for examining theory in relation to practice and for fostering your learning about organizational behavior are critical thinking and critical reflection.

Critical Thinking. Critical thinking involves examining each theory in terms of its logic, its rationality, and its usefulness to you as a leader. Just blindly accepting whatever the textbook or professor says without intellectually wrestling with it and assessing the significance of it to your own life is of no value to you. Instead, as a critical thinker you need to actively analyze each concept for its usefulness to your own life as a leader.

Critical Reflection. Critical reflection involves questioning the assumptions of the course, and what is even more difficult to do, questioning your own assumptions in light of new information. Critical reflection is crucial in organizational behavior because there is so much data that you have to make choices about what theories you will actually attempt to apply in your own life.

## **Common Mistakes**

There are two primary mistakes that many students make on assignments:

(1) **Lack of Critical Thinking.** In evaluating your critical thinking in relation to organizational behavior, it is important that I be able to see the theories of the course reflected in your work. What are the primary theories you think are important in relation to the questions asked? What is your rationale for choosing those particular concepts? For example, assume you are asked a question about how you will utilize teams in your organization. One error would be not putting enough detail about theory in your response. Just saying “I want to be a strong team leader,” or “I will use Tuckman’s stages of team development as a team leader,” is not sufficient. I need enough detail to know that you understand the concepts and are using them appropriately in the situation. The opposite mistake of doing a “data dump” is also a danger. Just dumping every theory you’ve ever heard of into an answer without explanation or connecting it to your own experience is also an error.

(2) **Lack of Critical Reflection.** Linking theory to your own life is very important. What concepts resonate for you and do you think you will really use in the future? How will you apply those theories to your work as a leader? Test the theory in your own life. The most common mistake in critical reflection on assignments is not explaining how you will use your learning in your own work. Also choosing a theory that is inappropriate to your situation is also an error. For example, on an exam, saying you will set up self-managed teams when the business you’ve chosen only employs you and an office manager would show a mismatch between the theory and your application of it.

While the pedagogical approach of the course is somewhat unorthodox, I hope it is one that will enhance your learning. Good luck in the course.

## **Assistance**

Your learning is my highest priority as a faculty member. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

### **McCombs Classroom Professionalism Policy**

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the McCombs experience hinges on this.

Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects.

The McCombs classroom experience is enhanced when:

- **Students arrive on time.** On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- **Students display their name cards.** This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
- **Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks.** The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
- **Students are fully prepared for each class.** Much of the learning in the business program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
- **Students attend the class section to which they are registered.** Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience. When section hopping takes place some classes become too large and it becomes difficult to contribute. When they are too small, the breadth of experience and opinion suffers.
- **Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues.** Disagreement and discussion are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- **Laptops are closed and put away.** When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of laptops in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate to use them. In such cases, professional behavior is exhibited when misuse does not take place.
- **Phones and wireless devices are turned off.** We've all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.
- **Late Policy.** Late assignments will not be accepted unless arrangements with Dr. Edwards have been made in advance of the due date. Assignments should only be emailed to Dr.

Edwards in the case of an emergency. Do not put off completing or printing assignments until the last minute when problems may arise.

- **Missed Classes.** If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any notes, handouts, additional reading materials, or assignment changes from your classmates or from the website.
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### Academic Honesty

Academic honor, trust and integrity are fundamental to The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business community. They contribute directly to the quality of your education and reach far beyond the campus to your overall standing within the business community. The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Honor System promotes academic honor, trust and integrity throughout the School of Business. I have no tolerance for acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts damage the reputation of the school and the degree and demean the honest efforts of the majority of students. The minimum penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be a zero for that assignment or exam. The responsibilities for both students and faculty with regard to the Honor System are described <http://mba.mcombs.utexas.edu/students/academics/honor/index.asp>. As the instructor for this course, I agree to observe all the faculty responsibilities described therein. By signing up for this course, you agreed to observe all of the student responsibilities of the Honor Code. If the application of the Honor System to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/> or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

As specific guidance for this course, you should consider the *writing* of all examinations to be an individual effort. Group *preparation* for examinations is acceptable and encouraged. Homework assignments are to be turned in individually. The team service project requires you to collaborate fully with other members of your team. The final exam should be prepared without consulting current or former students in the course.

### Students with Disabilities

Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is housed in the Office of the Dean of Students, located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. Information on how to register, downloadable forms, including guidelines for documentation, accommodation request letters, and releases of information are available online at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/index.php>. Please do not hesitate to

contact SSD at (512) 471-6259, (471-4641 TTY) VP: (512) 232-2937 or via e-mail if you have any questions.

### **Class Web Sites and Student Privacy**

Web-based, password-protected class sites are available for all accredited courses taught at The University. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging e-mail, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1. For information on restricting directory information see:

<http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi00-01/app/app09.html>.

### **Course Schedule Spring 2011 TTH 2:00**

<b>Class Date</b>	<b>Primary Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Jan 18	Review Syllabus	None	Student Information Sheet
Jan 20	Intro to Course	Chap 1	
Jan 25	Ethics		
Jan 27	Group Dynamics	Chap 10	
Feb 1	Teams	Chap 11	Blog 1

Feb 3	Team Decision Making	Chap 12	
Feb 8	Communication	Chap 14	
Feb 10	Feedback	Chap 9	(pp. 249-254 only)
Feb 15	Conflict	Chap 13	Blog 2
Feb 17	Negotiation		
Feb 22	Exam 1		Exam 1
Feb 24	Diversity	Chap 2	
Mar 1	Stereotypes & Inclusion	Chap 7	
Mar 3	International OB	Chap 4	Blog 3
Mar 8	Cross Cultural Panel		Cross Cultural Interview
Mar 10	Organizational Culture	Chap 3	
Mar 14-18	Spring Break	No Class	Have a fun, safe break
Mar 22	Individual Differences	Chap 5	
Mar 24	Values & Satisfaction	Chap 6	Blog 4
Mar 29	Exam 2		Exam 2
Mar 31	Motivation	Chap 8	
Apr 5	Goals & Reinforcement	Chap 9	
Apr 7	Influence & Power	Chap 15	
Apr 12	Leadership	Chap 16	Blog 5
Apr 14	“ “		
Apr 19	Exam 3		Exam 3
Apr 21	Change & Stress	Chap 18	
Apr 26	Team Projects		Team Presentations
Apr 28	Team Projects		Team Presentations
May 3	Learning Reflections		Top 10 Take-Aways
May 5	Celebration & Evaluation		Course Evaluation and Party
May 14	Final Exam		Final due by 5:00 p.m.