PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
THE GEORGE L. GRAZIADIO
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

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MBA 680.23
ORGANIZATION THEORY AND MANAGEMENT
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WEDNESDAYS
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SYLLABUS
Introduction

Course "Mission Statement"

The purpose of the course is to promote an appreciation for and understanding of the organization as a "social actor" that both reflects and determines the choices and behavior of other social actors, both internal and external, including individuals, interpersonal dyads, groups, other organizations, and society at large: global as well as domestic. All of us represent such internal or external organizational stakeholders, displaying effects both from and upon this pervasive social actor, as owners, managers or other employees, customers, suppliers, stockholders, partners, competitors, consultants, temps, researchers, or simply as ongoing observers and students of the subject. Accordingly, the focus of this course may best be characterized as, all at once, theoretical, practical, and, ultimately, personal.

Course Description

Course Content

The course will focus upon the environment that encapsulates the organization; the strategic purposes that position the organization within this environment; the nature of both individual and collective choices and actions that determine such purposes, as well as the methods to achieve them; the planned and "emergent" social, group, and organizational structures, processes, and dynamics that determine such choices and actions; the individual motivation, dynamics, and behavior that contribute to such structures and processes; and the practical methods and tools for best managing these individual variables,

In addition to the organization itself, the course will direct attention to the utility and role of the scientific method in understanding and effectively managing the organization. This attention will be directed through efforts to analyze, critically evaluate, and integrate research and practical knowledge from the organizational science discipline; to generate, articulate, test, and refine original, informed ideas on the subject; and to develop the analytical, interpersonal, leadership, organizational, and research skills to apply, communicate, and extend our understanding of the nature, sources, consequences, and
effective management of behavior, both by and within organizations. Course media for achieving such purposes include lecture, directed reading, interactive discussion, shared expertise and insights, experiential exercise, and case analysis.

Course Structure

Lecture

A "typical" class session is envisioned as a mix of lecture, class discussion, and case analysis, which serve to raise a set of issues and introduce a body of knowledge for addressing them, often followed by an experiential or other interactive exercise designed to apply this knowledge in order to explore such issues in greater depth. As experienced practitioners who will find much that resonates with familiar workplace issues, class members are strongly encouraged to contribute to the educational process by sharing their experiences, insights, and informed opinions.

Other course elements include the following, with the indicated percentage of the final grade:

1) Two open-book, open-note, single-authored, take-home essay examinations, including a midterm and a cumulative final. Each will present a brief case, and will require an analysis based upon knowledge drawn from text material and all class activities. The midterm consists of 4 questions and represents 20% of the final grade, while the final exam contains 5 questions and represents 25% of the final grade. Maximum length for each response is a one-and-a-half page, typed, double-spaced. The midterm and final will be distributed at the end of class on October 8 and November 26, respectively, and will be due at the beginning of class one week later.

2) Each student will be responsible for identifying an organization or organizations displaying problems concerning the following:

   a. Organizational mission or design
   b. Methods and systems for performance appraisal or rewards

In two 4-5 page papers, one devoted to each set of issues, the student is responsible for analyzing those problems. The written analysis is informal: simply present the facts of the case, apply course-related material to the analysis, and, based on that material, generate solutions to the problems identified. The papers are due on September 17 and October 1, respectively.

In addition to the written analysis, students should be prepared to contribute their findings to a general class discussion on the subject, to take place on the due dates. Each assignment is worth 5% of the student’s total grade for the course.

3) Case analysis represents a powerful tool for applying theory to practice. Typically, case material is presented in a text or handout. As noted above, however, students in this class tend to possess a wealth of practical experience, from which real-world "cases" are readily available. To exploit this resource (as
well as perhaps to resolve some real-world issues), cases will be provided by students themselves, from current or past experience.

Each student is responsible for two different cases - one as part of a group, and another as an individual. The outcome intended for each is an analysis that is useful for its recipient.

The recipient is the organization under analysis. As an analyst, the student is role-playing (or, for some cases in which the organization may expect an actual deliverable, actually serving) as a consultant. Representing a critical imperative for any consultant is not simply resolving problems but also framing problems in a way that allows for their analysis and resolution. What this means is that, as a role-playing consultant, the student is responsible to identify specific organizational sources of strength that should be preserved, and sources of weakness that need to be redressed. What this means as well is that the student’s responsibility is not to simply deliver a laundry list of all conceivably useful actions: rather, customize the list to the particular organization for which the consultant’s role is enacted.

a) The group project is an in-class, oral, interactive case presentation, by a self-selected team of 4-5 members. Due to constraints from class size and available time, presentations will be limited to 45 minutes, which are allocated as follows:

1. For the benefit of other class members, present the facts of the case, including the events and the major players, identified by position in the organization. 10 MINUTES.

2. Also for class benefit, identify the behavioral issues represented by the facts of the case, in explicit and clearly justified reference to concepts that have been explored in class or in the text. (For example, a discussant may observe that "this is a case of cultural conflict, given the earmarks of two different, incompatible corporate cultures.") Note that this part of the presentation falls short of in-depth analysis and discussion. These are reserved for the next part. 5-10 MINUTES.

3. Now, here is where you pose (or serve) as the consultant. In clear reference to the concepts that have been applied to the case, conduct a “role-play” in which YOU are assigned the part of a consulting team, and the rest of the class serves as the client. Your presentation will present case issues, dynamics, and solutions to problems. 25-30 MINUTES.

A single grade is assigned to all group members, intended to represent the outcome of “real-world” team analysis and presentation. Grading criteria include 1) informativeness and constructive focus (also referred to as "getting to the point") with which the facts of the case are presented; 2) based upon their demonstrated relevance and utility, the plausibility of justification for referencing selected issues and
concepts; 3) professionalism in conducting a simulated consulting presentation; and 4) evident command of knowledge. The group's presentation grade represents 20% of the student's course grade. Group presentations will take place on November 26.

It is recognized that group responsibility can pose many problems, including conflict, coordination issues, and "guilt by association" with poor work. Perhaps the most common, familiar, and frustrating problem - reflecting the interdependence imposed on group members - is posed by individual irresponsibility, resulting in, at best, the unequal allocation of work, or, at worst, an incomplete or substandard product.

Without denying or trivializing such problems, group members are urged to recognize and exploit the advantages of group process. These include opportunities to stimulate, test, and refine ideas; to draw upon a variety of knowledge, skills, interests, and experiences; and to develop individual knowledge and skills. Members are also urged to anticipate and prevent group problems, through planning, judicious allocation of work, and through clear, work-related norms. Failing that, there is developmental value in effectively handling group problems as they arise.

Nevertheless, some group problems are undeniably intractable, severe, and unfairly burdensome for the more responsible group members. To manage these problems effectively, plan far enough in advance to leave sufficient time to do so - if necessary and as a last resort in conjunction with the instructor.

b) The individual project is an individual, written case analysis, concerning a case different from (although it could involve the same organization as) the one presented by the group. The paper is 8-10 pages in length, typed, double-spaced. The intended (although likely “role-played” rather than actual) recipient is a corporate decision-maker, to whom the analyst should feel free to present and explain relevant conceptual material. This means that the writer should not assume the reader’s professorial knowledge of this material.

As in the group presentation, grading criteria include 1) informativeness and constructive focus with which the facts of the case are presented; 2) the plausibility of justification for referencing selected issues and knowledge; and 3) command of knowledge. However, additional grading criteria, appropriate to written rather than oral work, include the following:

4) literacy, coherence, articulateness, and conceptual organization;
5) clarity and persuasiveness of reasoning;
6) appropriateness with which selected issues and concepts are referenced and applied;
7) feasibility and utility of proposed solutions to problems; and
8) thoughtfulness, originality, and creativity reflected in such solutions.
The grade received for the individual analysis represents 25% of the student's final course grade. The individual project may be submitted any time throughout the term, although some delay is urged to permit learning of relevant course concepts.

A word of advice: Writing represents a critical, marketable, and, arguably, widely declining skill. Students are reminded that the purpose of an educational institution is to educate, to the potential benefit of developing this all-important resource. Such benefit can be maximized by exploiting the case analysis as an opportunity to develop writing skills, by alerting the instructor to any anticipated writing problems as early as possible, in order to maximize the time available to remedy them. Remember that poor writing represents not a character flaw to be tolerated and accommodated but rather a problem that should, and can, be solved.

A reminder: Students are strongly urged to retain disk copies of all submitted written work, to guard against the various mishaps that can befall hard copies.

Lectures are intended to supplement rather than simply reproduce the text material, and along with interactive discussion, case analyses, shared expertise and insights, and experiential exercises represent valuable learning tools. Therefore, attendance and involvement in class are strongly encouraged, as sources of learning that are otherwise unavailable. Encouragement is provided by underscoring the clearly demonstrated indispensability of attendance to performance, and by utilizing class participation as a final grading criterion: viz., as a "tie-breaker" if, based on other criteria, the course grade falls between two letter grades.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, and in partial reiteration of previous descriptors, students should be able to know and do the following:

1. Recognize that the organization is both a cause and effect of human choice and action.

2. Understand that such choice and action may best be analyzed through the scientific method rather than through "common sense": not simply through intuition and guesswork but rather through systematic study, of often remote and nonobvious variables, and often complex and counterintuitive dynamics among such variables.

3. Comprehend the nature, requirements, utility, and function of the scientific method; the rationale for favoring it over alternative ways of knowing; and the specific reasons for and manner in which it is applied to the analysis, understanding, and management of behavior by and within organizations.

4. Recognize the multiple levels on which such behavior can effectively be analyzed, including that of the individual, interpersonal or "dyadic," group, organization itself, and society in which the organization is embedded.
6. In some cases, recognize familiar behavioral dynamics and identify the management methods, tools, and procedures to which they are demonstrably tractable; in other cases, apply the inferential, learning, and analytical orientation and skills to approach unfamiliar behavioral issues proactively, systematically, and thoughtfully.

7. Apply the self-reflective, interpersonal, communication, leadership, and organizational skills to effectively manage the behavior of self and others in organizations.

8. Apply the organizational, information-gathering, and research knowledge and skills to effectively manage the multifaceted, complex, and interrelated problems frequently encountered in human systems, as a planner, administrator, or consultant.

9. Apply attention to society as a dynamic and often unpredictable source of the opportunities, problems, demands, and constraints imposed on organizations, and to organizations as a powerful and influential contributor to societal outcomes.

10. Apply the analytical and decision skills, methods, and tools to the formulation of organizational purpose and strategy that best exploits such opportunities, solves such problems, meets such demands, and addresses such constraints.

11. Apply the requisite knowledge and skills to design and as needed to refine the organization, to meet such purposes and implement such strategy.

12. Apply the learning and teaching orientation and skills to seek, share, test, and extend our knowledge of behavior by and within organizations, as a researcher, educator, and ongoing student of the subject.

Texts and Course Materials:


Other material, to be distributed as needed to supplement or clarify the course curriculum.

Grading

Grades assigned to all course components will be letter grades (including "plus" or "minus"), because it is felt that a written or oral assignment lacks sufficiently precise referents to calculate a numerical grade. The final grade will be calculated based upon the weighted numerical equivalent of letter grades received on individual course components. There is no curve: the absolute grade earned is the grade received. It is expected that, as graduate students, all members of the class will receive a grade of "B" or higher.
Conduct

“The University expects from all of its students and employees the highest standard of moral and ethical behavior in harmony with its Christian philosophy and purposes. Engaging in or promoting conduct or lifestyles inconsistent with traditional Christian values is not acceptable.

The following regulations apply to any person, graduate or undergraduate, who is enrolled as a Pepperdine University student. These rules are not to be interpreted as all-inclusive as to situations in which discipline will be invoked. They are illustrative, and the University reserves the right to take disciplinary action in appropriate circumstances not set out in this catalog. It is understood that each student who enrolls at Pepperdine University will assume the responsibilities involved by adhering to the regulations of the University. Students are expected to respect order, morality, personal honor, and the rights and property of others at all times. Examples of improper conduct for which students are subject to discipline are as follows:

• Dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, illegal copying of software, and knowingly furnishing false information to the University.
• Forgery, alteration, or misuse of University documents, records, or identification.
• Failure to comply with written or verbal directives of duly authorized University officials who are acting in the performance of assigned duties.
• Interference with the academic or administrative process of the University or any of the approved activities.
• Otherwise unprotected behavior that disrupts the classroom environment.
• Theft or damage to property.
• Violation of civil or criminal codes of local, state, or federal governments.
• Unauthorized use of or entry into University facilities.
• Violation of any stated policies or regulations governing student relationships to the University.

Disciplinary action may involve, but is not limited to, one or a combination of the alternatives listed below:

Dismissal – separation of the student from the University on a permanent basis.
Suspension – separation of the student from the University for a specified length of time.
Probation – status of the student indicating that the relationship with the University is tenuous and that the student’s records will be reviewed periodically to determine suitability to remain enrolled. Specific limitations to and restrictions of the student’s privileges may accompany probation.”

GSBM Catalog.

Policy on Disabilities
Assistance for Students with Disabilities

“Students with disabilities, whether mental or physical, are encouraged to contact the Equal Opportunity Office before the academic year begins or soon after classes are in session. This office will assist each student by providing general information about campus facilities and available resources. The office will assist in providing reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities pursuant to applicable laws. Inquiries should be directed to equal opportunity officer at (310) 506-4208. (Students who wish to file a formal grievance should refer to the “Nondiscrimination Policy,” which is listed in the “Legal Notices” section of this catalog.)” —GSBM Catalog.

Course Schedule

Chapters listed as “D” refer to readings in the Daft texts; “K” chapters are in the Klein text. All readings should be completed by the indicated class date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 27</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 3</td>
<td>The Emergence of Organizational Purpose</td>
<td>D: 2, 4, 6, 12 (447-69); K: 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 10</td>
<td>Job and Organizational Design</td>
<td>D: 3, 11; K: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 17</td>
<td>Staffing and Leadership: PAPER #1 DUE</td>
<td>K: 3, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 24</td>
<td>Training, Evaluation, and Reward Systems</td>
<td>K: 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Group and Collective Behavior: PAPER #2 DUE</td>
<td>D: 9, 12 (440-447); K: 7, 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>Communication DISTRIBUTION OF MIDTERM EXAMINATION</td>
<td>K9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>COLLECTION OF MIDTERM EXAMINATION Decision-Making</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Organizational Change</td>
<td>D: 10; K: 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>How Organizations Learn To Fail</td>
<td>D: 5, 7; K: 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 5</td>
<td>The Cost of Organizational Failure</td>
<td>K: 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>Learning From Failure</td>
<td>K: 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Evolution Past Failure</td>
<td>K: 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 26</td>
<td>GROUP PRESENTATIONS; DISTRIBUTION OF FINAL EXAMINATIONS</td>
<td>None</td>
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Having formally presented its components, I would now like to informally welcome you to the class, to an area of knowledge that I feel you will find to be valuable, and to the experience of learning from it that I hope you will find to be rewarding as well as challenging.