TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

Course Title: Complex Organizations
Semester: Spring 2012
Time: Tues/Thurs 4:20-6:50 p.m.
Classroom: TBA
Course #: SOCI 4315

Instructor: Dr. Bilaye Benibo
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Office Hours: 1-2 p.m.
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REQUIRED TEXT
Shafritz, Jay M.; Ott, Steven; Jang, Yong Suk Classics of Organization Theory
7th Edition Wadsworth, USA

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course systemically and critically examines a particular type of social formation referred to as complex (or formal) organizations. These organizations exist in various forms and operate in different modalities. Some of them are small, some are very large; some are privately owned, others are publicly owned; and still some are profit-making, others are non-profit-making.

Regardless, however, of their forms and modalities, complex organizations share some characteristics. Broadly speaking, they are perceived to be more or less “consciously coordinated and deliberately structured; composed of persons with established patterns of interaction; [possess] relatively identifiable boundaries...and developed to achieve a specific goal..."(Bedian and Zammuto, 1991:9).

The primary objective of this course is to study more closely the internal structures and processes of these organizations, and to explore how they affect, and are affected by their environments. A secondary objective is to examine the methodological and theoretical frameworks within which the structures and processes of complex organizations might be better understood.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
- Distinguish between complex (formal) and simple (informal) social organizations.
- Describe the internal structures and functions of complex organizations.
- Compare and contrast the different theories of the origins and development of complex organizations.
- Understand the various methodologies in complex organization research.
- Explain the relationships among complex organizations on the one hand, and between complex organizations and the societies in which they operate.
COURSE FORMAT

There will be lectures and class discussions in this course. The first 40 minutes of each meeting is devoted to straight lectures. This is followed by a ten-minute break. The last 20 minutes will be spent on discussions. The idea is to ensure that the topic for the day is well covered before questions are asked.

This format is, however, preferred not mandatory. When appropriate and/or deemed necessary, the format will be altered both in sequence of events and time allocation. Questions seeking further explanation on any section of the day’s topic will be entertained at any point during the lectures.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course requires, first and foremost, critical thinking. Assigned readings are to be studied carefully, thoughtfully, and with deep reflection. Your final grade is based on two mid-term exams, and a final exam, weighted 30%, 30% and 40% respectively. The final grading scheme is as follows:

- 90% and above ----- A
- 80-89%------------- B
- 70-79% ------------ C
- 60-69%------------ D
- 0 -59%----------- F

All three examinations require thoughtful and comprehensive answers to essay questions.

Study questions will be handed out one week before each of the three exams. These questions should be viewed as study guides only. Actual exams may combine, split or even rephrase any of the study questions. It may therefore not be prudent to selectively study the questions on the guide. All exams must be taken at the times and places scheduled, unless when validly supported medical emergencies make it impossible to do so. Also, every examination must be taken in a Blue (Examination) book.

Class attendance is very important. However, in all cases, the responsibility is on the student to find out and obtain what was taught and shared during his/her illness and/or medical emergency. Habitual late-coming and/or early departure is discouraged. Also, eating while classes are in progress is not allowed. You are permitted, however to drink (with civility) water and/or other non-alcoholic beverages during class.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1  Introduction: Critical Thinking and Formal Organizations:
(Reading 1: “Guidelines to Critical Reasoning” Paul Baker et al.)
Week 2  Complex Organizations: Definitions, Typologies and Significance
(Reading 2:“The Nature and Types of Organization” Richard Hall)
Week 3  Theoretical foundations and approaches to Formal Organizations
(Reading 3: “Sociological Paradigms…” Gibson Burrell & Gareth Morgan)
Week 4  Research Methods in Formal Organizations
(Reading 4: “Strategies for Studying Organizations” Arthur Bedian )
Week 5  Organizations as Rational Systems
(SOJ Chapter 1: 6&7)
**Notice to Students with Disabilities:** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the American with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

**Grade Appeal Process:** As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluations procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the
responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

****This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate students’ and/or instructional needs.