Public Organizations

Course Description

A course designed to develop an understanding about public sector organizations, their environments, and the political subsystems in which they exist. The course explores organization theory and administrative behavior to understand and diagnose organizational problems and dynamics in the public sector. Emphasis is placed on organization-environment relationships.

Learning Objectives

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the numerous aspects or subfields that comprise the study of public sector organizations. At the completion of this course students will be able to:

- Discuss what is known about the environmental and political factors that affect human behavior in public organizations
- Describe contemporary approaches to management and leadership
- Identify the core behavioral principles on which personal, inter-personal, and public leadership skills are based
- Analyze management problems from the standpoint of individual behavior
- Demonstrate competency in critical management and leadership skills—that is, to exhibit the capacity to act effectively and responsibly under the stress, complexity, and uncertainty of the “real world” of public administration

Major Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>(100 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review Essay</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td>(250 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review Essay Presentation</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>(50 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>(300 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>(300 points)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading

- A (900-1000 points)
- B (800-899 points)
- C (700-799 points)
- D (600-699 points)
- F (000-599 points)

Class Participation (100 points): Attendance and participation is expected in this course, evidenced through active discussion and questioning, and will be worth 10 % of your overall grade. Participation is defined as contributing to discussion on the assigned readings and other presentations, asking and answering questions, participating in group activities in-class, and generally contributing to the intellectual development of the group and to the learning process. Participation DOES NOT mean merely attending
Learning is an active not a passive process!

- Literature Review Essay and Presentation (300 points): The literature review essay is designed to help the student achieve all five course objectives in one assignment while developing the writing, oral, and research skills necessary for public service. The student is to select a topic in the area of public sector organization in which he or she has a practical interest. Prepare a literature review utilizing recent (1994-present) databases and periodical indices, as well as browsing of the most current journal issues. Select at least 10 full-length scholarly articles. This assignment is not a descriptive "term paper" about the topic chosen, but rather an examination of the literature on the problem. Do not simply describe the problem, but instead focus on how it is analyzed. That is, emphasize what you think about the literature more than your views on the problem itself. What is (and is not) discussed, how well, and why? Using this approach, the paper must state the nature and importance of the literature on the issue (one page), review themes found in literature (most of the paper), and articulate conclusions (about 2-3 pages). The final paper should be approximately 10 -12 pages in length, not including the title page or bibliography, and will be due on December 2. Papers should be turned in with 1 inch margins, double-spaced, Times New Roman, and 12-pt font. Citations and note style should be consistent throughout, using Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition (Author-Date referencing). Papers should be of professional quality, thoroughly proofread, and clear of spelling and grammatical errors. A small portion of the grading of the final paper will be on your presentation (50 points) and should be limited to approximately 10 minutes (this may change depending upon how many students are enrolled in the course). Presentation will be graded on content and professionalism. Content should include an introduction to your topic and a concise but thorough overview of the examination. Final paper to include presentation will be worth 30 % (300 points) of your overall grade.

- Mid-Term Exam (300 points): The mid-term exam will be essay and short answer, covering the key themes and materials up to this point in the class.

- Final Exam (300 points): The final exam will be essay and short answer, covering the key themes and materials from the second half of the class.

**Required Readings**


Articles as they are posted on Blackboard

**Recommended or Supplemental Reading**


**Course Policies**

*Attendance/tardiness*

Attendance is vital to the success of this course as material presented in lectures and discussed in class may not always appear in the assigned texts. Attendance will be taken during the class. Students who miss more than three classes without a documented excuse (medical or family emergency) will lose two percentage points from their final grade per additional class that they miss. Attendance means attending the entire class! It means paying attention, taking notes, etc. It DOES NOT MEAN reading the newspaper, completing assignments for other courses, or engaging in any activity not directly related to
the day’s topic. Students who do not attend the whole class or who engage in such inappropriate behavior as described above will not receive attendance credit for that class. Students should make every effort to arrive 5 minutes before the start of class.

**Late Work and Make-up Exams**

Excused later papers will be allowed only for significant and verifiable personal emergencies (serious personal illness, etc.). Unexcused late assignments will be penalized half of a full letter grade for each day it is late. (For example, after 2 days a paper goes from an A to a B). Please contact the instructor if you will not be able to complete an assignment on time. If you are not able to attend class, you still must turn in the assignment via e-mail by the due date. No un-penalized extensions will be granted due to pressures of academic life (such as work due in other classes). Make-up exams will not be permitted except in cases of genuine medical emergency, upon production of appropriate documentation, and with the consent of the instructor. There will be no extra credit in this course.

**Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage**

Over the past two decades there has been a dramatic expansion in electronic mail, cell phones and PDAs. While these devices are helpful they have also created some communications issues with which we are all familiar. First, when writing e-mails regarding issues or assignment with regard to this class, please utilize the messages function in Blackboard. Please be aware that I access Blackboard every weekday to answer e-mails, provide feedback to students and answer questions. If you do send e-mails in the evening, please be aware that they may not be read and no response provided until the next day at the earliest. Finally, do not assume that I have received an e-mail because you sent one. There are numerous system problems in software and in Internet Service Providers that can mean that e-mails do not reach their intended destination. I will acknowledge e-mail when I receive it.

Important information for this course will be distributed via Blackboard. Class readings, discussion forums, and additional course resources are available on the Blackboard site for this course. It is your responsibility to monitor your Blackboard account regularly to obtain these materials.

PLEASE KINDLY TURN ALL CELL PHONES AND PDAS OFF FOR THE DURATION OF THE CLASS. CELL PHONE CALLS IN OR OUTSIDE OF CLASS ARE EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN DURING EXAMINATIONS.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an automatic F for that assignment/test.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must
initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 7 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Preferred Methods of Scholarly Citations**

For written assignments, please use standard fonts (Times New Roman, 12 pt), 1-inch margins, and double-spacing. Citations and note style should be consistent throughout, using Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition (Author-Date referencing). Papers should be of professional quality, thoroughly proofread, and clear of spelling and grammatical errors. References or sources of information for papers must consist of scholarly articles or journals, government reports or legal citations, or the readings for the class. The use of Wikipedia or other Internet encyclopedia for any paper is not acceptable for graduate level work and will not be accepted.

A quick guide to the Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition can be found at the following: http://libguides.wwu.edu/content.php?pid=123723&sid=1063051

**Classroom/Professional Behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Statement of Civility**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation 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 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 Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.
Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.
Syllabus

1. Course Review and Introductions
   September 2  Course overview and introductions

2. The Manager and the Organization
   September 9  Organizational Behavior as a Way of Thinking and Acting
                 Denhardt (Chapters 1 - 2)
   September 16 Leadership in Public Organizations
                 Denhardt (Chapter 7)
   September 23 Power and Organizational Politics
                 Denhardt (Chapter 8)

3. Managing Critical Organizational Behaviors
   September 30 Fostering Creativity
                 Managing Stress
                 Denhardt (Chapters 3 - 4)
   October 7  Decision Making
                 Motivating Yourself and Others
                 Denhardt (Chapters 5 - 6)
   October 14 Mid-Term Exam

4. Managing Groups
   October 21  Communicating Effectively With Others
                 Denhardt (Chapters 9)
   October 28  Working in Groups and Teams
                 Denhardt (Chapters 10)
   November 4  Managing Conflict
                 Denhardt (Chapter 11)

5. Organizational Change and External Relationships
   November 11 Organizational Change
                 Denhardt (Chapter 12)
   November 18 Representing the Organization “On the Outside”
                 Denhardt (Chapter 13)
   November 25 Managing Behavior in the Public Interest
December 2  **Turn-in paper; student presentations**

December 9  **Final exam**

**NOTE**: Every attempt will be made to follow the guidelines outlined in this syllabus as closely as possible. However, I reserve the right to change the course from the guidelines outlined in this syllabus (e.g., the schedule of topics, etc.) if circumstances require it.

(Current as of: June 17, 2014)