Course Title: Complex Organizations
Semester: Spring 2018
Time: Tue/Thu 12:30-1:45 p.m.
Classroom: Island Hall 157
Course #: SOCI 4315.001

Instructor: Dr. Bilaye Benibo
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T/R 4-6 p.m.
Wed 2-4 p.m.

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REQUIRED TEXT
Gortner, H.F., Mahler, J., and Nicholson, J.B. Organization Theory: A Public Perspective
2nd 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, followed by another 40 minute lectures. The last 25 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 1-4

Introduction: Critical Thinking and Formal Organizations:
(Reading 1: “Guidelines to Critical Reasoning” Paul Baker et al.)
Complex Organizations: Definitions, Typologies and Significance
(Reading 2: “The Nature and Types of Organization” Richard Hall)
Theoretical foundations and approaches to Formal Organizations
(Reading 3: “Sociological Paradigms…” Gibson Burrell & Gareth Morgan)
Research Methods in Formal Organizations
Week 5-8 **(02/14/19)** **First Examination**
Organizational Structures and Designs  
(GMN Chp. 4)
Organizational Communication  
(GMN Chp. 5)
Bureaucratic Control  
(GMN Chp. 6)

Week 9-12 **(03/14/19)** **Second Exam**
Decision-making in Organizations  
(GMN Chp. 7)
Work Motivation  
(GMN Chp. 8)
Leadership and Followership  
(GMN Chp. 9)

Week 13-15 **(04/11/19)** **Third Exam**
Organizational Politics and Conflict  
(Reading 5)
Organizations as cultural systems  
(Reading 6)
Innovation and Change in Organizations  
(GMN Chp. 10)

**(05/09/19)** **Final Examination 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

*Notice to Students with Disabilities:* The American 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 that you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

**Returning Veterans:** 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.

**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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any
amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood, #203. For more information please call (361) 825-4366.

***GRADE APPEALS: As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *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 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 and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rulesprocedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.03_student_grade_appealprocedure.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rulesprocedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.03_student_grade_appealprocedure.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process for submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/students/student-rescources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/students/student-rescources.html).

**** 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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me before you decide to drop this course.** 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.

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