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## **ILROB 1220: INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

**Summer 2012**

### **Course Description:**

The character and quality of our lives are determined by our involvement in organizations and our interactions with a world shaped and affected by organizations. This survey course is an introduction to the study of human behavior in the workplace. An important theme in this course is that peoples' behavior at work is a result of their individual personalities, the organizational context and the complex interplay between these two factors. Drawing from theory and research on social psychology and sociology, we will examine organizational behavior topics at the individual level (e.g. personality, job attitudes, motivation), the group level (teams, leadership, power, social networks) and the organizational level (e.g. organizational culture and change). We will examine organizational behavior topics at each of these levels and consider how they are interrelated.

### **Course Objectives:**

- To introduce you to classic and contemporary research in organizational behavior through lectures, videos, readings, interactive discussion and exercises.
- To teach you to think theoretically by giving you a general framework that can be used to predict, understand and control behavior in a wide variety of situations.
- To develop your skills in the following areas: Problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, and group discussion.

### **Course Information:**

Class time: Monday through Friday, 10:00-11:15 a.m.

Class location: 108 Ives Hall

Course website: <http://blackboard.cornell.edu/>

## Course Readings

- **Textbook:** The course textbook is available for purchase on Amazon or in the Cornell Bookstore:

Essentials of Organizational Behavior by Robbins and Judge (11th edition)

- **Additional required readings:** The additional required readings listed in the syllabus are available on blackboard.

## Course Website

All students should register at the course website as soon as possible:

[www.blackboard.cornell.edu/](http://www.blackboard.cornell.edu/)

The course website will serve several purposes including:

- The most current version of important course documents (e.g. the course syllabus) will always be available from the website.
- Important announcements about the lectures, guest speakers and assignments will be posted on the website regularly.
- The main overheads used in lectures will be posted on the course website every week. You should note, however, that everything I say in lecture will not be on the slides and you are responsible for all of the content delivered in the lecture. In other words, these overheads are not a substitute for attending class.
- Students' grades will be posted on the website throughout the course of the semester.

## Course Evaluation

Final course grades for ILROB 122 will be based on the following scale:

A+	97-100%	C+	77-80%
A	93-97%	C	73-77%
A-	90-93%	C-	70-73%
B+	87-90%	D+	67-70%
B	83-87%	D	63-67%
B-	80-83%	F	Below 60%

Evaluation of your performance will be based on a combination of individual and team efforts. The weighting of each of these components of the final grade is shown below.

A. Exams (one prelim, one final)	50%
B. Team paper and presentation	30%
C. Class participation	10%
D. Assignments	10%

Details about each of the course components are provided below:

### **A. Exams (50%)**

There will be one preliminary exam and one final exam. These exams are intended to track your progress, help you keep on top of the material and allow you to show a thorough understanding of the issues addressed in the course. Each exam will consist of multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and short answer questions. The questions may refer to any content covered in the lectures, readings, and section discussions, including the guest lectures, videos, exercises, cases, etc.

All the exams are required and all will be graded similarly, but to give you the greatest opportunity to achieve a good final grade in the course, the exam on which you perform the best will be worth 30% of your grade and the exam on which you perform the worst will be worth 20% of your final grade.

The preliminary exam will cover all of the course material from June 25<sup>th</sup> to July 12<sup>th</sup> inclusive, and will be held during lecture time on July 13<sup>th</sup>. The final exam will cover all of the course material from July 16<sup>th</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup> inclusive and will be held on August 2<sup>nd</sup> in class.

### **B. Team project (30%)**

This assignment is designed to (a) provide you with an opportunity to apply OB concepts to a contemporary issue in a real organizational setting of your choice, (b) give you practice working in a team, and (c) offer you an opportunity to stand up and deliver a formal presentation in front of a group in a safe and supportive classroom environment.

Students will be assigned to project teams of 3-4 persons during Week 1. The teams will meet to exchange contact and scheduling information, plan meeting times and begin discussing the team project.

Team members will jointly conduct the project. The team will make a presentation to the class in week 5 and will co-author a paper due Wednesday, July 25. The team presentation will count for 20% of your team project grade and the paper will count for 80% of your team project grade. All members of the team will receive the same grade for the project, with rare exceptions made in cases of free-riding (see note on teamwork below).

#### *The project assignment*

Your team is to study a real organization, making use of the concepts and methods of the course. You should hone in on an aspect of organizational behavior that interests your team and is relevant to the organization you are studying (see examples below). Your study should be analytical and issue oriented, not merely descriptive. You should adopt the clinical pose of a management consultant,

endeavoring to understand the organization, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and ultimately propose actions that solve problems and improve performance.

The team project is time consuming and a major portion of the course and what you will get out of it. You should therefore begin thinking about possible organizations to study **NOW** and begin working on your project as soon as your team is assigned in Week 1. Specifically, you should do the following:

- a. *Select an organization to study.* It can be a for-profit or non-profit organization of any size that consists of employees, volunteers, students, or hobbyists. An important criterion to consider in choosing your organization is accessibility—you need to have a contact person who will cooperate with your study and give you access to needed information.
- b. *Establish a contact person.* Choose someone in the organization you select who can grant you access to organizational information and members. Tell that contact person you wish to study their organization for this class and obtain their permission to do so. If you already have a problem or issue in mind, run that by your contact person and see if s/he is comfortable having you study it and thinks it is relevant to the organization. If s/he says no or you do not have a problem or issue in mind, ask your contact person for suggestions given what s/he knows about the organization.
- c. *Select a particular issue.* The range of options is large. It needs to involve an organizational behavior topic that is relevant to the organization you select. If you think you might be interested in a topic covered later in the semester, read ahead to check it out.
- d. *Gather relevant information.* Familiarize yourself with the organization. You should interview your contact person and may want to ask him or her for relevant materials (e.g. organization charts, demographic information, annual reports, statements of corporate goals). Web and library sources of information may also be useful. It is important to interview or survey other members of the organization who are representative of the employees who are part of or affected by the organizational issue you are studying. Use what you have learned or read from the course to guide what information is “relevant” and what questions to ask given your topic of interest.
- e. *Analyze your problem or issue.* Given the information you have gathered about the organization and your interview and/or survey analysis, try to draw some conclusions about the issue you are studying. Draw on the organizational behavior literature relevant to your topic to help you analyze it. Your analysis should be clear, logical and based on what you’ve learned from the class.
- f. *Generate suggested solutions.* Given your analysis of the problem, generate key steps the organization can take to improve any problems and build on any strengths. Your suggestions should involve things the organization could actually do given its constraints. It might be helpful to first lay out all possible solutions, including the ideal ones in a world without constraints, and then select from those, attempting to approximate ideal ones. Your suggestions should be based whenever possible on general and guiding principles of organizational behavior learned in this course.

In class on Friday, July 6 (Week 2), your team should submit a one page proposal that lists your team members, the organization your are studying, the job title of your contact person, and a brief description of the issue you will study. In week 5, teams will present their projects to the class. The presentation should include all of the major issues and points of the paper. The presentation should be around 15-20 minutes long. All team members are expected to present some component (sorry, wallflowers). After the presentation, team members will respond to questions from the class.

**A final draft of the team project paper is due on Wednesday, July 25.** The paper should be 10-12 typed, double-spaced and numbered pages of text in 12 point font, Times New Roman, with one-inch

margins. Below are the main sections that should be covered in the paper. The number of pages suggested are to give you a general idea of the proportion of space that should be allocated to each section.

#pgs.	Section	Description
	Title page	Title of paper, class, professor, date, authors, section
1	Introduction	Describe the organization you studied: its purpose, location, age, size, industry, structure, etc.
1-2	Issue/problem	Organizational issue you studied: brief history within the organization, why it is relevant to the organization.
1-2	Method	Methods you used to study your organization, your contact person, whether you used interviews and/or surveys (include who you interviewed/surveyed, how many, and the questions you asked), web or library data, organizational charts, etc.
3-4	Results/analysis	Aggregate responses to surveys, interview themes and quotes, conclusions about the issue.
3-4	Solution	Recommended solution(s): What should be done? What can be done better? Who will gain from the plan you suggest? Who will lose from the plan? What are the potential benefits of the plan? Why will it solve the problem or address the issue? What course materials provide evidence that your plan will work? What led to these solutions? What constraints did you have to take into account? <u>In this section it is particularly important to draw specifically and extensively on the course material.</u>
1-2	Limitations	Possible limitations of the study and solutions: What additional information would be nice to have? What other method(s) would you use if you could? How might your contact person have affected your conclusions and recommendations? What constraints might you encounter in implementing the changes? Who might resist your suggestions and why? What alternatives would you propose to address these constraints?
	References	List of books, chapters and/or articles cited in the text. When drawing on OB and other literature, be sure to <u>cite it in the text</u> by listing the authors' last names and the date of publication (e.g. Goncalo & Duguid, 2007).
	Footnotes	Footnotes should be numbered and placed at the end of the text.
	Appendices	Data, charts, figures, interview questions and answer excerpts.

**Note on teamwork.** It is important to cooperate with your team while completing this assignment. Free riding is unacceptable. You will be asked to individually submit a team evaluation form when the assignment is completed. In this form, you will independently evaluate your own and your fellow team members' work on the project. We will review these forms when determining your individual

course grades on the team project. You should be aware, however, that all team members will generally receive the same grade, even though some might have worked harder than others. It is up to you as a team to try to manage your work so that everyone contributes effectively and to sort out any issues that may arise. Nevertheless, there might be exceptions where one team member receives a lower grade than the others because s/he did not pull his/her weight. I would rather know that such problems are occurring while they are happening. So, you should be sure to bring your concerns about your team to my attention well before your team presentation date.

### **C. Class participation (10%)**

Class discussion is designed to engage you in learning about organizational behavior. In the class, you will apply the concepts that have been discussed in class to real world situations, using cases, exercises and experiential activities. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions about the lectures and readings and review for the exams.

Attendance will be taken each day, but to get a good grade, you must also do the required reading for the class in advance and actively engage in the discussions and exercises.

Participation in class will count for 10% of your course grade. If you need to miss a class for good reason, such as a religious holiday or medical situation, you should notify me and you will not be penalized. A doctor's note will be expected in case of illness.

If you miss one class without prior permission, you will not lose participation credit. However, if you miss two classes, you will *lose 5% of your course grade*. If you miss three classes, you will *lose all 10% of your course grade allocated to participation*. During classes in which teams will be presenting their team projects to each other, the penalties for missing classes will be greater: each unexcused absence during these weeks will automatically forfeit 5% of your course grade, whatever your prior attendance record.

During class discussions, the quality as well as the quantity of your participation is important. Fewer thoughtful, integrative comments are more valuable than talking often without saying very much. Valuable comments are those that address the issues under discussion directly, integrate concepts or different perspectives, demonstrate critical thinking, provide relevant examples, or pose insightful questions.

### **D. Assignments (10%)**

Throughout the semester, you will have several short assignments. These assignments are created to help you consider the course material, experience some of the material firsthand, and apply some of the concepts to your life. These assignments will typically ask you to complete some type of activity outside the class and report your experiences to the class. In general, a short write-up (approximately 1-2 pages) of your experiences and how you can apply the course concepts to those experiences will be required.

### **Office Hours:**

I will have regularly scheduled office hours, Monday & Wednesday from 1:00-2:30. You may also schedule an appointment with me via email [lcv4@cornell.edu](mailto:lcv4@cornell.edu).

### **Course Policies:**

- **Class expectations.** Attending and participating in class is required and you are expected to be well prepared for class, with all of the assigned readings for that session completed before the class or section. Please help everyone to get the most out of the course by being courteous to others. If you arrive late or must leave early, sit in the back to minimize disruption to the class.
- **Cell phones.** Cell phones must be turned off in the classroom (i.e. no phones call or texting), and conversations during the lectures should be minimized, as they are distracting for others around you. Students using their cell-phones may lose their participation credit for that class.
- **Laptops.** Laptops will be allowed on a provisional basis. If laptops are being used to enhance your note-taking ability, laptops are fine. If they are being used to detract from your focus on the class, you will be asked to put away the computer. Students using their laptops for non-class purposes may lose their participation credit for that class.
- **Make-up exams.** These will only be available to students with university approved absences or by prior permission of the professor. The make-up exams will be *all essay questions*. An unexcused absence from an exam will result in a grade of zero.
- **Extra Credit Opportunities.** There may be several extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. These opportunities will ask you to participate in research studies conducted by members of the ILR School or the Psychology Department. In general, participation in these studies will require approximately 30 minutes of your time. You can participate in up to 4 studies for course credit. You will receive .5 point toward your final grade in the class for each study in which you participate for a maximum total of 2 points. Eligible studies will be announced in class.
- **Grading challenges.** If you have a question or complaint about a grade, you may submit this in writing to me within 2 days after the exam or paper has been returned. It is not sufficient, however, to simply request a re-grade. Instead, you will be required to consult the grading criteria for the exam and closely examine the sample answers on the course website. You must then make a case in writing for why you believe your grade is incorrect, providing a detailed account of how your answer meets the criteria for a better grade. If you decide to challenge your grade, your entire exam will be re-graded and you should be aware that your grade may go either up *or down*.
- **Special needs.** Any students who require special arrangements to be made for their exams must have an official letter from student disability services or student health services. They must submit this letter together with their request for special arrangements to the professor as early in the semester as possible and at least two weeks

before the exam is scheduled to take place. Student Disability Services is located in 420 CCC. Staff can be reached by calling 607-254-4545.

- **Academic integrity.** All students are expected to abide by Cornell University's Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others, available at <http://www.cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. As defined by the university policy, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: collaborating with students on individual assignments, copying another student's exam answers or bringing unauthorized outside materials into an exam, and aiding another student in any of the above activities.

### **Course Outline:**

- Course Introduction
  - Personality
  - Emotions and Moods
  - Job attitudes
  - Motivation
  - Job design
  - Individual Decision Making
  - Group Decision Making
  - Groups in Organizations
  - Diversity in Organizations
  - Power and Leadership
  - Conflict and Negotiations
  - Organizational Theory and Structure
  - Organizational Culture
  - Organizational Change
  - Creativity in Organizations
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- **JUNE 25: INTRODUCTION**
    - Lecture: Course overview and the importance of OB
    - Reading: Robbins & Judge Chapter 1
    - Assignment: Online Self Assessment
  - **JUNE 26: PERSONALITY**
    - Lecture: The role of personality in organizations
    - Reading: Robbins & Judge Chapter 4
  - **JUNE 27: PERSONALITY**
    - Lecture: Person perception and the limitations of personality

- Reading: Davis-Blake, A. & Pfeffer, J. (1989). Just a mirage: The search for dispositional effects in organizational behavior research. *Academy of Management Review*. 14, 385-400.
- Discussion: What is your personality?
- **JUNE 28: EMOTIONS AND MOODS IN THE WORKPLACE**
  - Lecture: Emotions, Individuals, and Organizations
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 3
- **JUNE 29: ATTITUDES AND JOB SATISFACTION**
  - Lecture: Job attitudes
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 2
  - Teams will be assigned.
- **JULY 2: MOTIVATION IN THE WORKPLACE**
  - Lecture: Work Motivation
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 6
- **JULY 3: JOB DESIGN IN THE WORKPLACE**
  - Lecture: Job Design
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 7; Grant, A. 2011. How customers can rally your troops. *Harvard Business Review*.
- **JULY 4: TEAM MEETINGS**
  - No lecture. Enjoy the holiday. Contact your team members to work on your team projects.
- **JULY 5: DECISION MAKING BY INDIVIDUALS- PART 1**
  - Lecture: Decision-making biases: Some of the reasons why people make bad decisions
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 5; Kruger and Dunning. "Unskilled and Unaware of It." (14 pp.)
- **JULY 6: DECISION MAKING BY INDIVIDUALS- PART 2**
  - Lecture: Decision-making biases: Some of the reasons why people make bad decisions
  - Discussion: Judgment and decision making: Some of the reasons why groups make bad decisions
  - Assignment due: Group Project Proposal
- **JULY 9: DECISION MAKING BY GROUPS**
  - Lecture: Groupthink and the downside of team work.
  - Reading: Janis, I.L. (1971) Groupthink. *Psychology Today*.
- **JULY 10: GROUPS IN ORGANIZATIONS**
  - Lecture: Roles, norms, and status in groups

- Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 8; Zimbardo, P.G., Maslach, C., & Haney, C. (2000). Reflections on the Stanford Prison Experiment: Genesis, transformations, consequences.
- Assignment: Breaching Social Norms
  
- **JULY 11: GROUPS IN ORGANIZATIONS**
  - Lecture: Creating effective work teams
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 9
  - Discussion: Murder Mystery
  
- **JULY 12: EXAM REVIEW**
  - Lecture: Review for Preliminary Exam
  
- **JULY 13: PRELIMINARY EXAM**
  
- **JULY 16: DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS**
  - Lecture: Diversity as a double-edged sword
  - Reading: Mannix, E.A. & Neale, M.A. (2005). What differences make a difference? The promise and reality of diverse teams in organizations. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 6 (2), pp. 31-55.
  
- **JULY 17: DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS**
  - Lecture: Fat or Horizontally Challenged? The Ongoing Debate over Political Correctness
  - Reading: Ely, R. J., Meyerson, D. E., & Davidson, M. N. (2006). Rethinking political correctness. *Harvard Business Review*, 84, 78-87.
  
- **JULY 18: POWER AND LEADERSHIP**
  - Lecture: Leadership and types of leadership in organizations.
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 11
  
- **JULY 19: POWER AND LEADERSHIP**
  - Lecture: Types of power in organizations
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 12
  
- **JULY 20: CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATIONS**
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 13
  - Discussion: Fruit Negotiation
  
- **JULY 23: ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY AND STRUCTURE**
  - Guest Lecturer: Joon Woo Sohn
  - Lecture: Institutional Theory
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 14
  
- **JULY 24: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

- Guest Lecturer: Rohini Jalan
- Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 15
- **JULY 25: ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND ORGANIZATIONAL ECOLOGY**
  - Lecture: Structural inertia, resistance to change, overcoming resistance to change
  - Reading: Robbins & Judge, Chapter 16; Baron, J.N., & Hannan, M.T. 2002. Blueprints for success in high-tech start-ups: Lessons from the Stanford project on emerging companies. *California Management Review*, 44(3): 8-36.
  - Assignment due: Group Project Paper
- **JULY 26: SOCIAL NETWORKS**
  - Guest Lecturer: Shinwon Noh
- **JULY 27: CREATIVITY IN ORGANIZATIONS**
  - Lecture: Creativity in Organizations- What is it, do we want it, and how can we get it?
  - Reading: Amabile, T.M. (1997). Motivating creativity in organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do. *California Management Review*, 40(1): 39-58; Hargadon, A., & Sutton, R. I. (2000). Building an innovation factory. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(3): 157-166.
- **JULY 30: TEAM PRESENTATIONS**
- **JULY 31: TEAM PRESENTATIONS**
- **AUGUST 1: REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM**
- **AUGUST 2: FINAL EXAM**