Organizations in Society
SOCY 27
Spring Quarter 2013  11: MWF 11:15 – 12:20  
X-hour: T 12-12:50 pm

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Office hours:  Mondays 1-3pm

Course Description:
Most of modern life takes place within a wide variety of complex, interconnecting organizations, from multi-national corporations to churches, social service agencies to volunteer organizations. In this course we will learn about the structure, internal processes, and environments of different forms of organization. We will analyze how organizational features affect individual behavior, and vice versa. We will also consider how organizations affect social outcomes, and the basic structure of society. We will look at a wide variety of organizations, including corporations and voluntary organizations, schools and gangs. Our objectives will be to learn the various ways sociologists and others have addressed these questions through theory and research, as well as to conduct our own observations of organizations.

This class is designed as a seminar, so class time is devoted to discussion between and among students and the instructor, as well as lectures. It is essential that seminar participants come to class prepared to discuss the reading material for that day’s class. Participants are expected to not only read, but also reflect upon the assigned readings before coming to class.

You will choose an organization in which you are (or were recently) a member. Throughout the term you will write eight 3-page papers analyzing different aspects about your chosen organization (see attached assignment sheet). In addition to papers there will be three quizzes during the term (10% each).

Grades are determined, based on:  
Organizational analysis papers  70% (see attached assignment sheet)  
3 Quizzes  10% each

Honor Principle and work in this course: (1) Papers. You are encouraged to discuss your papers with other students in the class, but the writing is to be your independent work. You should cite concepts and materials from class appropriately in your papers, though it is possible that some papers will not have any citations.

(2) Quizzes are independent work ONLY. You are encouraged to study with other students from class, but quizzes are completely independent work.
Course Requirements
You should purchase the following materials from Wheelock Books. These books are also on reserve at the library.


Additional required readings are available on the course Blackboard website.

- Students with learning, physical or psychiatric disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible, and by the end of the second week of classes (April 5, 2013). All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Disability Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested. Also, stop by the Academic Skills Center in 301 Collis Center to register for support services.

- For individual peer assistance with papers, students are encouraged to use RWIT, the Student Center for Research, Writing, and Information Technology. Make appointments online at [www.dartmouth.edu/~rwit](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~rwit)
Course Outline
March 25: Introduction to Course

March 27: The Rise of Bureaucracy
What is a formal organization? Where did it come from? What does it do?
Weber’s definitions of bureaucracy and authority

March 29: NO class

Week 2
April 1: Formal Structure
Read: Stinchcombe Formality, chs 2*, 1 (on Blackboard)

XHOUR: April 2: Formal structure
Continue discussing Stinchcombe chs 1 & 2

April 3: Formal structure in real organizations Paper 1 DUE
April 5: Formal structure Network Assignment DUE

Week 3: Informal Structure: Social Networks
April 8: What are social networks? Why do they matter?
Read: Social Networks and Organizations, chapters 1-2

XHOUR: April 9: Networks at Dartmouth Paper 2 DUE

April 10: Informal Networks within Organizations
Read: Social Networks and Organizations, chapters 4-5, 7

April 12: Race & Gender in Social Networks Receive Take home Quiz #1

**Week 4: Organizations and Networks ***
April 15: NO Class

XHOUR: April 16: GUEST Speaker: Prof. Adam Kleinbaum, Tuck School of Business

April 17: NO Class Quiz #1 DUE

April 19: NO Class Paper 3 DUE

Week 5: Organizations and Culture
April 22: Volunteer motivations
Read: Lois Heroic Efforts, chs 1-3
April 24: NO Class

April 26: Social control in voluntary organizations
Read: Lois Heroic Efforts, chs 4, 7-8

Week 6: Organizations and Culture and Control
April 29: Culture and Control

XHOUR: April 30: Formal Structure, Culture and Society
Read Preschool in Three Cultures, chapters 1 – 3

May 1: Formal Structure, Culture and Society
Read Preschool in Three Cultures, chapters 4 – 5

May 3: Quiz #2

Week 7: Organizational Membership and Decision-making
May 6: Organizational Membership
Read: Islands in the Street, chapters Intro – 3

XHOUR: May 7: Organization and Community
Read: Islands in the Street, chapter 4

May 8: Organization and Community
Read: Islands in the Street, chapters 5 – 6

May 10: Organizations and Power
Read: Islands in the Street, chapters 7 – 9

Week 8: Organizational Environments
May 13: Organizations and Institutions
Read: Challenging Operations, chapters 1-4

XHOUR: May 14: Theories of organizational environments

May 15: Organizational Change
Read: Challenging Operations, chapters 5-6

May 17: Organizational Change
Read: Challenging Operations, chapters 7-8

Week 9: Organizations and Power
May 20: The History of Corporate Organizations
XHOUR: May 21: Power of Organizations

May 22: Power of Organizations

May 24: The Legacy of Organizational Power in US

Week 10: Organizations in Society
May 27: Quiz #3

XHOUR: May 28: FILM: The Corporation  Paper 8 DUE

May 29: Last Day

Policy on Late Papers

Papers handed in any time after the date and time at which they are due will receive a full letter grade reduction. (Basically this means the highest possible grade you can get on a late paper is a B). I will deduct an additional half a letter grade for each additional class period your paper is late. Any paper more than two weeks late will not be accepted.

Extensions may be given for extreme individual circumstances. If you are having problems completing an assignment, for whatever reason, it is best to talk with me as soon as possible. Talk to me after class, come to see me in my office, or email me. I may be able to help you get the paper done on time, and I will be more sympathetic than if I hear of your problem the day before or day (!) the assignment is due. Please note that talking with me will not necessarily lead to an extension.

Also Note Well: Computer failure is never considered a justifiable excuse for a paper extension. Devices sometimes freeze or breakdown; power outages happen. The way to deal with these possibilities is to SAVE YOUR WORK in whatever way (e.g., cloud server, backup drive) works best for you.
Organizational Analysis Case Study Papers
The purpose of these assignments is to analyze a specific organization in depth, making use of the theories and concepts from the course. Each paper should be 3 pages, double-spaced and stapled. You may use a pseudonym for your organization.

**Paper 1: Overview** (DUE 4/3) Describe your organization. What is its official mission (why does it say it exists)? Who are its members/workers? 5%

**Paper 2: Formal Structure** (DUE 4/9) Describe the formal structure of your organization. Examine the extent of specialization, formalization and centralization. Do the rules help to accomplish the “work” of your organization (i.e., are they effective) or are they “myth and ceremony”? 10%

**Paper 3: Informal Structure** (DUE 4/19) What are the informal networks in your organization? Describe how the formal and informal structures interact (e.g., what is the relationship between formal positions and social networks? How does interaction of formal and informal affect the organization’s goals/activities?) Give examples. 10%

**Paper 4: Culture I** (DUE 4/29) Discuss the culture of your organization. What are some of the norms? How are they enforced? What happens to those who do not follow them? Are different members rewarded/punished differently for following/breaking norms - why? 10%

**Paper 5: Culture II** (DUE 5/7) Describe a ritual of the organization. What does the ritual accomplish for members? Give an example of jargon. How does jargon distinguish members from outsiders? Give an illustration of this process. 10%

**Paper 6: Decision-Making** (DUE 5/14) What is the process of decision-making in your organization? Are there conflicts between actors with authority and actors with power? Has there ever been a power-struggle in your organization? Was it over the content of output (what organization does/produces) or over distribution of output (who gets what)? 10%

**Paper 7: Environment** (DUE 5/21) What are the most critical elements of the environment of your organization and how do they affect your organization? 10%

**Paper 8: Power** (DUE 5/28) Has your organization sought to change an aspect of its environment? How? Has it had an effect on its environment (i.e., power in Perrow’s view)? Describe in detail. 5%