Public Administration 7170 – Organizational Theory and Behavior  
Spring Session, 2014  
Online Course

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I. Course Description

Organizations in the public sector at the federal, state and local level have grown manifold over the years and currently provide employment to millions in this country. Since organizations are part of the society, they are influenced by societal norms, values, assumptions and politics. Therefore, as a field of study, organizational theory and behavior encompasses a wide range of topics such as formal structures of organizations, relationship between individuals and organizations, leadership, motivation, power, politics, influence, and organization development. The course will introduce students to the major theories of public organizations, management in the public sector, including analysis of individual behavior in an organizational context. Particular emphasis will be given to the politicized environment within which organizations have to function.

It is expected that upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how public organizations function and the ways in which they affect our lives.
- Demonstrate an understanding of public organizations through systematic analysis of major theories of public organizations, and human behavior in organizational context.
- Students will be able to identify effective ways in which public organizations can become more effective and responsive.
- Students will be able to integrate theory and practice and appreciate the empirical strengths and weaknesses of various organization theories.

II. Required Texts/Readings

- Additional readings will be posted on BlazeVIEW (see schedule).
III. OFFICE HOURS/COMMUNICATIONS
Monday & Wednesday: 11 A.M-12 Noon or by appointment

IV. E-Mail Protocol: Most of the communications in this course will be via e-mail. Generally, e-mails to the instructor will be answered within two working days. All e-mail communication must:

- Be through the BlazeVIEW system and not personal e-mail accounts;
- Be properly addressed and follow appropriate Netiquette;
- Include the student’s name and section number for the class; in addition any attachment sent to the instructor must include the sender’s name, course number, and project title as part of the file name, e.g., Smith_PADM_7170Assign1.doc.

V. Submitting Assignments: To submit an assignment, enter the “Assignments” tool on BlazeView. Select “Add Attachments,” select your document, and finally select “Submit” at the bottom of the page. BlazeView will prompt you with a box which asks “Are you sure you want to submit this assignment?” Select “Okay,” and the following screen will appear:

Confirmation
Your Name:
You have submitted your assignment (Your Name).
Submitted Time: March 13, 2013 10:47 AM

This confirmation only appears when you submit your assignment properly. If you do not receive this confirmation message on BlazeView, then you have not successfully attached your assignment and you will need to try again until you reach this screen. If you experience any technical difficulties, then you will need to contact the BlazeView help desk available through D2L. Any student who does not follow this procedure will have his/her assignment counted as “late” in accordance with the policy mentioned below. You can double check to make sure you have completed the process successfully by selecting the “submitted” icon in the “assignments” tool, and confirm the submission date, shown on the right side of the screen. Also, if you click on your submitted assignment, BlazeView will take you into the assignment screen and show you the status of your assignment with the time and date of the submission being posted.

VI. ADA: VSU complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you believe you are covered under this law and if you have a need for special arrangements to allow you to meet the requirements of this course, contact the VSU Access Office at 229.245.2498; fax: 229.245.3873; or e-mail: access@valdosta.edu. Also discuss this in person or via e-mail with the instructor.

VII. Cheating and Plagiarism: Don’t. This class has zero-tolerance for academic misconduct. Sustained violations will result in a grade of “F” for the class as well as any other action permitted by the University. Review the Student Handbook at http://www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/ if you need further clarification. In addition, by taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual
similarity review to SafeAssign, a tool within BlazeVIEW. For more information on the use of SafeAssign at VSU see SafeAssign for Students at http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml.

VIII. Changes to the Syllabus
Your instructor reserves the privilege of making changes to the syllabus – including changes to the reading schedule, assignment expectations, and even grading structure. Students will be given fair warning of any changes.

IX. Other Things You Need to Know:
- Assignments must be submitted by 11h59 P.M. on the date due unless other prior arrangements have been made; late assignments will be reduced by one letter grade for each 24-hour period after the assignment is due;
- Papers are to be submitted in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format;
- There is no “make-up” work and the only bonus points available are those for completing the SOI;
- Students need to have access to a working computer and access to the Internet; and
- Students seeking the D.P.A. have a requirement for a portfolio. If you create materials in this class that you want to include in the portfolio, it is wise to save them on your personal computer, since BlazeVIEW materials may not be accessible in the future. Establishing a portfolio now will save you time later.

X. Assessment Measures/Grading: Students will be graded on the basis of their performance on an essay, participation in threaded discussions, midterm exam, and a final exam. Details on expectations, grading rubric will be posted on BlazeVIEW.

- The Caves of Steel Paper: 25%
- Midterm: 25%
- Final Exam: 25%
- Threaded Discussions: 25%

From this total, letter grades will be assigned on the following basis:
- 90-100% A
- 80-89% B
- 70-79% C
- 60-69% D
- 59% and lower F

Grading Rubric –Discussions

All discussion is to occur during the dates listed for the unit on the syllabus. Discussions submitted outside of the unit dates will not be graded. The discussion grade is based on three components: 1) the initial response is worth 70-80 points; 2) the quality of the response is worth up to an additional 10 points. The quality of the response can be aided by citing other sources
beyond the textbook; and 3) I expect each student to respond to a minimum of two other posts for up to 10 additional points. I do not consider "Good post" or I agree with you" and similar statements to be responses. The discussion itself is graded on a 100 point basis and will account for 25% of your grade.

XI. Reading Schedule:

Part One: Foundations of Public Organization Theory

Unit 1: January 13-24: The Study of Organizational Behavior: An Overview

Reading (s):
- Denhardt: Chapters 1 & 2
- Ott: Introduction
- Asimov (read the novel early, so you can begin to apply the course material to it)


Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter. 3

Unit 3: February 3-7: Political Foundations of Public Organizations

Reading (s):

Unit 4: February 10-21: The Rational Model of Organization

Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 4 (pp:71-81)
- Denhardt, Chapter 7 (pp: 157-163)

Unit 5: February 24-28: Decision Theory and Policy Formulation

Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 4 (pp:81-90)

March 3-7: Midterm Exam:
- March 1: Exam paper will be posted on Blazeview
- March 7: Midterm exam submissions will be due

Part Two: From Organizational Theory to Organizational Behavior

Unit 6: March 10-14: The Humanist Approach to Organizational Theory

Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 5
- Ott, Chapters 1 & 2

Unit 7: March 17-21: Organizational Dynamics: The Interplay of Groups and Structure

Reading (s):
- Ott, Chapters 3 & 4

Unit 7: March 24-28: Organizational Politics

Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 6
- Ott, Chapter 5

Part Three: Critiquing the Fields of Organization Theory and Behavior

Unit 8: March 31-April 11: Rational Action and Organizational Change
Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 7
- Ott, Chapter 6
- Asimov, complete novella

April 14-18: Work on finishing the Caves of Steel paper
- Paper Submission Deadline: Caves of Steel paper due April 21st

Unit 9: April 21-24: Critiquing Organizational Behavior: Postmodernism & Caves
Reading (s):
- Denhardt, Chapter 8

April 25-May 1: Final Exam
- April 25: Exam paper will be posted on Blazevew
- May 1: Final exam submissions will be due