THE INDIVIDUAL & THE ORGANIZATION
BUSINESS 9806 – Winter 2016

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Thursdays 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Location: IVEY 3102
(12 Sessions)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar focuses on micro theories of organizational behavior. Micro organizational behavior concerns the study of intra-individual level variables such as cognitions, emotions, motives, and attitudes. It also includes the study of individual behavior such as turnover, citizenship, whistle blowing, deviance, and a host of other individual level variables relevant to organizational behavior. The general question in this seminar is how these micro variables relate to organizational structures, processes, and outcomes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand the breadth of theory and research in the field of micro OB, with emphasis on conceptual and quantitative scholarship
2. Identify a substantive conceptual contribution to the OB field worthy of publication in a top-tier journal
3. Evaluate the level of rigor of research methodology in the field of micro OB
4. Develop and plan a research study that will contribute to knowledge in the field of OB that is potentially publishable in a top-tier journal

COURSE ACTIVITIES / GRADING / METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Your grade for this course will be based on four components: your weekly article summaries, the quality of your contribution to seminar discussions, and the conceptual and methodological portions of your research proposal.

Weekly Article Summaries 10%
Contribution to Seminar Discussions 30%
Conceptual Portion of Research Proposal 30%
Methodological Portion of Research Proposal 30%
1. **Weekly Article Summaries (10%)**

Please prepare for each session a summary of key insights from each of the readings, including questions that arose from reading each paper. This is not meant to be an abstract of the readings but your reflections of what the key issues or contributions are. You may also elaborate on the strengths and limitations of the paper. These summaries should be no longer than 3 pages, 12 point font, double spaced. You should e-mail these summaries to me by midnight the night before each seminar meeting.

2. **Contribution to Seminar Discussions (30%)**

The course is organized as a seminar. A key vehicle for learning is discussion of the assigned readings. I expect you to come to each session prepared and ready to contribute to the learning of your peers.

3. **Research Proposal (Conceptual = 30%, Methodological = 30%)**

A research proposal is due at the end of the semester (presentation in class on April 7, paper due at midnight on April 14, 2016), an abstract is due at midnight on Feb. 18, and a first draft of the conceptual portion is due at midnight on March 3. This proposal should:

- carefully define a research question about the individual in an organizational context
- explain the importance of the research question
- review recent literature in the area
- build hypotheses or propositions
- propose a means for empirically testing these hypotheses or propositions
- be written in APA format (I recommend that you buy the sixth edition of the “Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association”)

I expect a solid research proposal will require between 20 and 25 pages (12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced), excluding references, tables and figures. I am very open regarding the exact topic you choose. It should be a topic that interests you, with an obvious link to individuals and organizations. The abstract due on Feb. 18 should state your major research question and briefly describe the state of the research in that area. The conceptual portion of the paper due on March 3 should draw upon multiple theoretical perspectives to create new hypotheses that will contribute to extant knowledge in the field. I will ask you to make an appointment to meet with me one-on-one between March 7 and March 11 to discuss your proposal in detail, including my feedback on your conceptual work and your plan for the methods you will propose to test your research question. You will be asked to present your paper on April 7, and the final paper is due at midnight on April 14, 2016.

**Required Short Readings on Writing:**


EXPECTATIONS / CLASS CONTRIBUTION / ATTENDANCE
Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to be fully prepared to discuss assigned readings in detail. If an emergency arises and you must be late for class or miss a session, please send me an email as soon as possible to let me know. I cannot make up missed sessions for you, nor can I give you positive credit for class contribution during sessions that you miss.

MATERIALS / REQUIRED READING
The materials for this class are available on-line through the library. Please let me know if you have any access problems. A few are on reserve in the business library, but most are available through direct links on this page: http://www.lib.uwo.ca/business/conrad_alison_bus_9806__winter_2016.html

PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

HEALTH AND WELLNESS
As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western’s Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca.

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/module.html. This module is 30 minutes in length and provides participants with a basic understanding of mental health issues and of available campus and community resources. Topics include stress, anxiety, depression, suicide and eating disorders. After successful completion of the module, participants receive a certificate confirming their participation.
### DETAILED SESSION SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 7   Evaluating OB Research</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 14  Personality and the Person-Situation Debate</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 21  Values, Attitudes &amp; Beliefs</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan 28  Affect at Work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feb 18  Due at Midnight</td>
<td>Abstract of Research Proposal</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 25  Work Motivation</td>
<td>Conceptual Portion, Proposal</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mar 3   Cognition at Work</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 10  Leadership, Power &amp; Influence in Organizations</td>
<td>Meet w/Alison this week</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 17  Fairness &amp; Justice in Organizations</td>
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<td>Mar 24  Trust &amp; Betrayal in Organizations</td>
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<td>Mar 31  Diversity in Organizations</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 7   Strategic HRM</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 7   Class will run long for project presentations</td>
<td>Final Research Proposal</td>
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<td>Apr 14  Due at Midnight</td>
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SESSION 1 – Evaluating OB Research (Jan. 7, 2016)

**Required Readings:**

**Required Short Readings on Writing:**

*Please come to class prepared to discuss these readings – no need to write a thought paper prior to the first day of class. To prepare, read Sutton and Staw (1995), then Johns (2006), then Locke & Golden-Biddle, (1997). Then read the required readings on writing. As you read each of these articles, create notes for yourself identifying the main points of each article – bullet format can work well. Next, read Kraimer et al. (2011) and use the principles from the other readings as well as your knowledge of research methods and philosophy of knowledge to evaluate that piece of research. Specific questions to consider:

1) JAP is a top-tier journal in the field of OB. Why do you think this article merited publication in JAP? Provide both conceptual and methodological reasons.

2) The authors test a set of hypotheses. Using boxes and arrows, draw a figure that reflects this set of hypotheses. Label each box with the construct it represents and label each arrow with the hypothesis it represents. Which hypotheses were supported and which were not?

3) What major theories provide the underlying logic that explains why each hypothesized relationship is predicted to occur? What contributions have the authors made to the development of those theories?

4) What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses of this piece of research? What evidence do the authors provide to justify the reliability and validity of their measures? Why were both employees and supervisors surveyed? What was the value of getting supplemental information from the director of training and development? To what extent are the findings of this piece of research generalizable to other organizations and employees (and what evidence supports your view on this question)?

5) Constructs and theories tend to proliferate in OB. Some might argue that we OB scholars spend our time adding yet another set of boxes and arrows to models that are overly complex already. What do you think of the construct of OSD? Why does the field of OB need OSD as a new construct – or does it?
SESSION 2 – Personality and the Person-Situation Debate (Jan. 14, 2016)

SESSION 3 - Values, Attitudes & Beliefs (Jan. 21, 2016)

SESSION 4 – Affect at Work (Jan. 28, 2016)


SESSION 5 – Work Motivation (Feb. 25, 2016)
SESSION 6 – Identity and Identification (March 3, 2016)
Kreiner, G., Hollensbe, E. & Sheep, M. (2006) Where is the "me" among "we"? Identity work and the search for optimal balance, *Academy of Management Journal, 49*(5), 1031-1057. [Received OB Division’s Best Publication Award]

SESSION 7 – Leadership, Power & Influence in Organizations (March 10, 2016)

SESSION 8 – Fairness & Justice in Organizations (March 17, 2016)

SESSION 9 – Trust & Betrayal in Organizations (March 24, 2016)

SESSION 10 – Diversity in Organizations (March 31, 2016)
Harrison, D. & Klein, K. (2007). What’s the difference: Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations, *Academy of Management Review, 32*, 1199-1228, READ pages 1199-1210 ONLY.


**SESSION 11 – Strategic HRM (April 7, 2016)**


http://jom.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/07/29/0149206314544746.abstract


**SESSION 12 – Research Proposal Presentations (April 7, 2016 class will run long)**