

**BUSINESS 9806B –Winter 2018
Individual & The Organization**

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Tuesdays 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Location: IVEY 2102
(12 Sessions)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to a selection of important topics in Organizational Behavior (OB). Students are expected to gain awareness of the main OB research topics and their recent developments, understand important OB concepts and theories, and learn how to read and evaluate research work. Students are also expected to acquire theoretical, topic-related, and methodological knowledge for conducting OB research. Students entering this course should already have general knowledge about research methods used in organizational science (e.g., theory development, hypothesis testing, etc.).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Introducing students to important Organizational Behavior concepts and theories
2. Developing a critical awareness of some major issues in the literature
3. Learning to think in conceptual terms and build effective conceptual narratives
4. Learning to better read and interpret empirical work

COURSE ACTIVITIES / GRADING / METHODS OF EVALUATION

Overall course grades will be based on quality of in-class participation (40%; including submitted discussion questions, discussion leadership, and general participation), session reflections (10%), paper critique (10%), and the term paper (40%; including proposal presentation, paper presentation, and the final paper).

Pre-class Preparation. Each student is expected to have thoroughly studied and critically evaluated each of the required readings prior to the scheduled class meeting. Read the assigned articles thoroughly and be prepared to participate in a discussion of the topic. Come to class with either a hard or an electronic copy of each of the assigned articles. Articles read in any given week may include review and theoretical articles but will consist mostly of empirical research. To prepare yourself for each class discussion, I recommend that you read the review and/or

theoretical articles first to get an overall view on the area. For most sessions, supplementary articles are provided to mostly provide you more background information about the theories and/or classic work on the topics. The supplementary articles are not required and will not be discussed in class, but I encourage you to read articles that may interest you.

In preparing for class discussion, ask yourself some of the following questions for each article:

- What is the primary research question? Is there a secondary research question(s)?
- What are the main contributions of this study (i.e., what research gaps this study fills, what new theoretical or empirical insights this study offers)?
- How do you evaluate their contributions? (Are they legitimate? Are they significant?)
- How would you describe the conceptual framework in your own words (i.e., if it were your work and someone asked you about it while riding on an elevator)?
- What are the conceptual strengths and weaknesses of the article (Is there a guiding theoretical framework(s)? Do the theory and the hypotheses rationales clearly lead to the hypotheses? Are there alternative and better theories and/or rationales?)
- What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses (Are the hypotheses tested adequately? Is the empirical standard consistent with the best published research in this area? How would you solve the weaknesses?)
- From a review article, what are the prominent research questions in this area of research? What future research would you like to see conducted on this topic?

In-class Participation (40%). As with most doctoral seminars, the quality of the course will be dictated substantially by the preparedness of the participants. The quality of your participation will be evaluated based on the following components:

Discussion Questions (15%). At the very beginning of each class meeting, submit to the instructor a single discussion question relating to each empirical article assigned (supplementary articles excluded). For a review or conceptual article, submit one research question you think may be interesting. Please bring two copies of your discussion questions to class, with one of the copies for you to examine as needed. These questions should be brief and thoughtful based on the readings, and focused upon achieving deeper understandings of the topic, methodological reflection on a study, or extension of what has been read through further investigation. In addition to the list of discussion questions to be handed in to the instructor, be sure to bring other questions or observations that you would like to introduce into the discussion.

Discussion Leadership (15%). One student is assigned to lead the discussion about articles that are assigned each session. The discussion leader is responsible for the overall quality of the conversation about the article. The instructor will help guide the discussion as needed, and provide background or context for a given research area. Some suggestions for leading the discussion include:

1. Have a pre-prepared list of discussion questions, but also be ready to deviate from these if they do not generate useful discussion or a different question(s) appears to be more

useful.

2. First, ensure that everyone is “on the same page” about what the key research question is, basic theoretical framework, and key findings.
3. Try to introduce discussion questions that generate discussion and learning. Like the Discussion Questions every student is to submit before class for each assigned article, these questions should be thoughtful, based on the readings, and focused upon achieving a deeper understanding of the topic.
4. Discussion questions could also be methodological reflections about a study or potential future research on a given topic.
5. Try to prepare questions that are neither too specific (“What does this word on the second page, third paragraph mean?”), too general (“Is culture important to understanding leadership?”), nor the kind that stumps everyone (“Would the findings have been different if this study had been conducted in Brazil rather than Indiana?”).
6. In the course of discussion, ground your thoughts in the research literature rather than personal experience.

Even those who are not assigned to be Discussion Leader are expected to be actively engaged in the discussion. Therefore, I encourage everyone to heed points 3, 4, 5, and 6 above.

General Participation (10%). As noted above, students are expected to come to class fully prepared, having read and reflected on all the assigned readings and to actively participate in the class discussion of each article. Strive for pithy comments that drive the discussion forward. Participation can also be in the form of questions, but remember the quality and relevance matters for a question to be considered as participation. Your general participation constitutes the remainder of the class participation assignment that is not already outlined above. In-class contributions should demonstrate your knowledge and integration of the assigned readings, building on responses of others, and offering critical, but respectful, analysis of others’ comments. Quality participation does not simply reflect the frequency of one’s class contributions, but also: (1) their quality (ability to “speak from the research literature”; ability to advance or sharpen in-class discussion; use of logic, precision, and evidence in making arguments; and going beyond the “I feel” or “I liked it” level of introspection); and (2) the professionalism of your conduct (attendance, punctuality, preparedness, respecting class members and their contributions, and refraining from conduct that is distracting).

Session Reflection (10%). For any **two** out of the total 11 sessions in this course, you will write a 1-2 page (single-space) reflection. The deadline for your reflection is at noon of the following Tuesday (i.e., one week after the session for which you choose to write the reflection). No need to inform me of your chosen topics ahead of time; you can email me your session reflection by the deadline. This assignment is to help you develop creative research questions. Below are the

questions you should address in your session reflection.

- What are a few take-ways you have gained from reading about this topic?
- What are the one most novel research idea you have about this topic?
 - What are the theory or theories behind your research ideas?
 - What are the intended contributions of your research idea?

Paper Review (10%). You will be asked to write a review for a (un)published article on Week 4 and Week 11. You will provide a 2-3 page (no longer than 3 pages, single space, 12 font) review of the assigned article. This assignment is to help you develop your competence as a professional reviewer and to understand what makes a better research article. The deadline for your paper review is due at noon on Sunday (i.e., Feb 2 for Review #1 and Mar 30 for Review #2). You can refer to the “Manuscript Review Guide” I post on Learn as well as the AMJ Reviewer Resources (<https://aom.org/Publications/AMJ/AMJ-Reviewer-Resources.aspx>).

Term Paper (40%). You are assigned to write a paper that develops a new and original set of hypotheses concerning organizational behavior topics that are touched on in the assigned class readings.

Final Paper (30%). The paper should have the following sections and attributes:

1. abstract
2. introduction to the topic and your specific research question—Why are both important, and what do you seek to contribute to the literature?
3. focused review of related literature that helps frame your research question and provides a foundation for your theoretical development
4. theoretical development- develop (using clear and logical arguments) the specific hypotheses that relate to your research question
5. hypotheses- make sure they are testable as stated- Ideally, you will have more than one hypothesis, but if you have more than four, consider whether you might better focus your arguments.
6. A very brief (say, one page) “Method” section in which you describe the sample you would like to use to test your hypotheses, and generally how you would measure the variables.
7. references
8. figures (if necessary)

Length: As a guideline, think 15-18 pages, double-spaced (12 pitch font). References and figures are not counted toward the 18-page limit. Use the APA format.

This paper is due no later than noon on April 12. Email your paper to me as a Word attachment so I can write comments on it and return it to you by email.

Proposal Presentation (5%). To get you feedback from others (including me) on your potential

term paper idea, you will present a research proposal which outlines your research idea(s) and why you believe it is a potential contribution to the literature. You will have 10 minutes to present your idea(s) at Week 9 (Mar 12). It is expected that this proposal will be developed further to become your final class paper.

Paper Presentation (5%). You are to present your paper in the last class session (Week 12). You will have 15 minutes to present your ideas to the class. You should also be prepared to answer any questions from others (including me).

EXPECTATIONS / CLASS CONTRIBUTION / ATTENDANCE

Each class will consist of discussion on assigned readings. You are required to read the assigned articles before each class. You are also expected to complete and turn in your assignment (discussion questions or paper critic) by time. During the class discussion, you are expected to contribute to the learning of the group by offering valuable ideas, knowledge, and perspectives.

MATERIALS / REQUIRED READING

Recommended textbooks: N/A.

Other Readings and Resources:

We will cover 6-8 readings each week. The list of the readings will be posted on Learn at least one week prior to our class. Although we will not discuss the Supplementary readings, feel free to read those that may interest you.

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

Session	Date	Topic	Assignments/Activities
1	Jan 8	Introduction/Organizational Entry	
2	Jan 15	Work Motivation	
3	Jan 22	Employee Turnover	
4	Jan 29	Job & Organizational Attitudes	Review #1
5	Feb 5	Emotions	Discussion of Review #1
6	Feb 12	Work Stress and Health	
		Spring break	
7	Feb 26	Leadership – traditional	
8	Mar 5	Leadership – emerging	
9	Mar 12	Citizenship Behavior & Voice	Proposal Presentation
10	Mar 19	Deviance/Aggressive behavior	
11	Mar 26	Climate, Culture, & Norms	Review #2
12	Apr 2	Individual project presentation	Discussion of Review #2 Paper Presentation
	April 12		Final Paper Due