

Course Title	:	Work and Organization
Course Code	:	HRM358
No. of Credits/Semester	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Sectional Approach
Teaching Hours	:	3 hours per week
Category in Major Prog.	:	Elective – Human Resource Management Stream
Prerequisite	:	BUS202 Organizational Behaviour; or SOC102/GEC302 Exploring Psychology in Western and Chinese Cultures; or SOC103 Introduction to Behavioural Science; or SOC205 Social Psychology

Brief Course Description

When entering the realm of work and organization, people often hope to be given instant recipes for personal and organizational success, and quickly become disillusioned when simple and specific answers and advice are not forthcoming. This course focuses on two perspectives – the nature of work in organizational contexts, and the social and systemic characteristics of organizations. Students will become familiar with the nature of work within two major job categories – blue-collar work (e.g. manual labour) and white-collar work (e.g. managerial/administrative, marketing/sales) – and with experiences of workers in different occupations. It aims at providing an understanding of organizations through in-depth analysis of topics such as knowledge work and knowledge management, roles and identities, gender and work, control and resistance, emotions in organizations, and relating to authority.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic concepts and nature of work in various job categories, and in the social context of various organizations.
2. Comprehend the social and systemic characteristics of organizations,
3. Be better informed about what the career possibilities open to them,
4. Apply library skills in referencing organizational documents and in collecting statistics and qualitative materials to the study of work, and

5. Consider the implications of work and organizational contexts for HR practitioners and managers.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Class activities, such as group discussions and presentations of group study projects in various industries will assess students' understanding of the social nature of work in various jobs in relation to socio-cultural and institutional contexts and constraints.
2. Through role playing, observation and case analysis activities, students' skills in responding to real world situations in organizations will be assessed.
3. Students' library skills in referencing organizational documents, and collecting statistics and qualitative materials will be assessed through field study project work.
4. Field study reports and short essays will assess comprehension of, and ability to explain, analyze and apply concepts of work and social characteristics of organizations.

Indicative Content

Typologies of work

Types of blue collar work (e.g. manual labour) and of white-collar work (e.g. managerial/administrative, marketing/sales). Varieties of working experiences in different occupations.

Knowledge Work and Knowledge Management

What is knowledge management? Intellectual capital, knowledge management processes, knowledge acquisition through grafting, knowledge sharing through communities of practice, organizational memory.

Roles and Identities

What are roles and identities? Perception of roles and identities, role ambivalence and irony, role ambiguity, role conflict.

Gender and Work

The 'glass ceiling', gender and leadership style, gender roles, law and gender in management, career of women managers, work and life balance.

Control and Resistance

Various forms of organization control through formal and informal devices such as structure and culture. How do organizational members resist the various kinds of controls?

Emotions in Organizations

What is emotional competence? How to manage emotions at work, emotional labour and conditions requiring emotional labour, emotional dissonance, emotional intelligence.

Relating to Authority

Dealing with more senior people. Building good relationships with superiors and senior colleagues. Selling ideas to more senior people. Handling reprimands.

Working in International Organizations

Dealing with cultural differences and with complex organizational structures.

Teaching Method

Theoretical inputs, research results, and applications will be introduced during class. Practitioners will be invited to share their views of, and prospective on the nature and concepts of work, and on the social and systemic characteristics of organizations. Opportunities will be provided for group discussion on central ideas in the literature and for case presentations and analyses.

Assessment

Continuous assessment – 100%

The continuous assessment will have the following components:

Quizzes – 15%

Classroom activities – 15%

Individual short essay assignments – 20%

Group field study project – 30%

Team teaching – 20%

Required Texts

National Research Council (1999) *The Changing Nature of Work: Implications for Occupational Analysis*, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Selected chapters from McShane, S. and Von Glinow, A. (2005) *Organizational Behavior*, 3rd Edition, Irwin: McGraw-Hill:

Chapter 4 Workplace emotions and attitudes; Chapter 8 Decision making and creativity; Chapter 15 Organizational structure and design; and Chapter 17 Organizational change.

Supplementary Readings

Dawson, Sandra (1996) *Analysing Organizations*, London: MacMillan Press.

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