

Course Title	:	Organizations and Bureaucracy
Course Code	:	SOC323
Recommended Study Year	:	2 and 3
No. of Credits/ Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture-Tutorial
Class Contact Hours	:	Three hours per week
Category in Major Prog	:	Elective
Discipline	:	Sociology
Prerequisite(s)	:	None
Co-requisite(s)	:	None
Exclusion(s)	:	None
Exemption Requirements(s):	:	None

Brief Course Description

Organizations are a dominant component of contemporary society, and they affect almost every aspect of every day life. Hence, they play a very important role in modern society. In this course, we will cover three major perspectives of organizations -- Rational Systems Perspective, Natural Systems Perspective, and Open Systems Perspective. These perspectives will add in the analysis of concepts and issues in organizations and bureaucracy. Topics such as work, workplace, power, leadership and stress; as well as the flexible forms of coordinated action taking place within, around, and among formal organizations will be discussed.

Aims

This course aims to examine the nature of organizations, and their relationships to society, the community and the individual in the changing organizational environment.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course,

1. students will know how to find reference materials from the library and internet by themselves for the relevant areas in organization;
2. students will know how organizations operate and their influences to individuals and society;
3. students will have a greater understanding of how organizations relate to social change and development;
4. students will critically evaluate what they see and hear about organizations;
5. students will think with systematic logic, thoughtfulness, and an open mind when evaluating the ideas and opinions of other people;
6. if students select to conduct in-depth interviews to collect data for their presentation, they will know how to apply their theoretical knowledge in an organization to understand the practical situation in the formal organizations, and will enrich their ability and skill to handle the work in a formal organization; and
7. students will appreciate the importance of organizations and bureaucracy and find this subject interesting.

Indicative Content

1. The subject is organizations; the verb is organizing
 - a. The importance of organizations
 - b. The elements of organizations
 - c. Are organizations real?
 - d. Types of organization
2. Three perspectives of organizations
 - a. Organizations as Rational Systems
 - b. Organizations as Natural Systems
 - c. Organizations as Open Systems
3. Organizational behaviour and issues
 - a. The meaning and problem of work
 - b. Organizational behaviour and workplace
 - c. Goals, power and control
 - d. Leadership, decision-making, and communication
 - e. Unemployment, stress
4. Changing Organizational Environment
 - a. The dyadic environment of the organization
 - b. Organization of the environment
 - c. Networks in and around organizations
 - d. The Sociology of organizational strategy
 - e. Changing contours of organizations and organization theory

Teaching Method

Lectures are supported by tutorials. Students are required to carry a presentation on a particular issue in organization, or comment on journal articles in particular issue. The use of Hong Kong cases to elaborate will be encouraged. The final product of the presentation will be submitted as a form of group term paper to the instructor concerned at the last lecture of this course.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

1. One group term paper (20%), one group oral presentation in tutorials (10%), performance in tutorials (5%) peer assessment of performance in tutorials (5%), one final examination (60%).
2. Students are free to choose the way of data collection for presentation. They can use in-depth interviews through field trips, conduct research projects, and review journal articles in organization to learn the relevant knowledge. The final product of the presentation is a group term paper.
3. Students' comprehension and synthesis of theoretical and practical knowledge in organization can be assessed in presentation, performance in discussion during tutorials, group term paper and final examination.
4. Students' critical thinking can be assessed by comment on journal articles in particular issues and answer examination questions in the final examination.
5. After students have learned the relevant knowledge from the lectures, tutorial

presentations and discussions, they can compare the similarities and differences of this course with the other courses, they should know the main arguments of different perspectives and new concepts in organization, relate the knowledge learned from this course with the previous courses, think whether the knowledge that they learned from this course support or challenge their values, beliefs and knowledge. How they have learned and performed can be assessed through tutorial presentation and discussion, group term paper and final examination.

6. Graduates who take this course can provide information for us to know to what extent this course helps them to solve the organizational problems in the real world after they get a job in a formal organization. Their feedback can help us to know the strengths and weaknesses of this course, and help us to adjust the content and arrangement to fit their need to prepare their career after graduation.

Good Practices

1. Students have a choice of choosing the topic and the way of data collection for the group presentation, subject to the approval of the instructor concerned. They can choose whether to take a field trip or review journal articles in organizations to prepare their presentations. If students choose a field trip, they need to follow the guidance, and discuss the focus of study in the field before and after their field trip with the instructor concerned. The result of their field trips will be presented in the tutorial to share their findings and analysis of the issues. If students choose to review journal articles, they need to discuss the area of review with the instructor in advance, and contrast and compare the main theories, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and try to compare the theoretical knowledge with the realities in the practical situation.
2. Students are requested to meet the instructor for a discussion and hand in an outline before their tutorial presentations.
3. Each member of the tutorial group will be responsible for the peer-assessment of the performance of all other group members. Their assessments are based on the presenters' effort, contributions, and congeniality. The average of these evaluations will be converted to a 5% point of the final grade.
4. Students are encouraged to provide feedback on teaching and learning to the instructor to improve the quality of the teaching and learning.

Required/ Essential Reading

Scott, W. Richard & Davis, Gerald F., *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural and Open System Perspectives*, New Jersey: Pearson, 2007.

Recommended/ Supplementary Readings

Blau, Peter M. & Scott, W. Richard, *Formal Organizations: A Comparative Approach*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Buchanan, David & Huczynski, Andrzej *Organizational Behaviour: An Introductory Text*, London: Prentice Hall, 1997.

Casey, Catherine. *Work, Self and Society after Industrialism*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Collins, David, *Organizational Change: Sociological Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 1998.

Etzioni, Amitai. *Modern Organizations*, New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India, 1978.

Etzioni, Amitai & Lehman, Edward W. *A Sociological Reader on Complex Organizations*, 3rd ed., New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980.

Garston, Neil. *Bureaucracy: Three Paradigms*, Boston: Kluwer Academic, 1993.

Greenberg, Jerald. *Organizational Behavior: The State of the Science*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1994.

Hall, Richard H., *Organizations: Structures, Processes and Outcomes*, 4th ed., Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1996.

Handel, Michael (ed.), *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2003.

Huff, Anne Sigismund & Huff, James Oran. *When Firms Change Direction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Jaffee, David, *Organization Theory: Tension and Change*, Boston, Mass. : McGraw Hill, 2001.

Perrow, Charles, *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*, 3rd ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993.

Reed, Michael I., *The Sociology of Organizations: Themes, Perspectives and Prospects*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992.

Ritzer, George. *The McDonaldization of Society: An Introduction into the Changing Character of Contemporary Life*, 3rd ed., Calif: Pine Forge Press, 2000.

Robbins, Stephen P., Coulter, Mary, *Management*, 9th ed., New Jersey: Pearson Education International, 2007.

Roberts, Karlene H., *New Challenges to Understandings Organizations*, New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Ronald J. Burke, Cary L. Cooper (eds.), *The Organization in Crisis: Downsizing, Restructuring, and Privatisation*, Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

Scott, W. Richard, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, 5th ed., New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2003.

Tsoukas, Haridimos *New Thinking in Organizational Behaviour: From social engineering to reflective action*, Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1994.

Vecchio, Robert, *Organizational Behavior: Core Concepts*, 4th ed., Fort Worth:

Dryden Pres, 2000.

Wilson, Fiona M., *Organizational Behaviour: A Critical Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Wood, Jack et. al., *Organizational Behaviour: A Global Perspective*, 2nd ed., New York: John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd, 1998.