



**PA 3335-001**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**  
**Spring 2012**

Mondays and Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m.-11:15 a.m. – SOM 2.901

**Contact Information**

Professor: Dr. Meghna Sabharwal  
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**Course Description**

Study of behavior requires inquiry about individuals, groups, and organizations, with attention to their interrelationships and relations with society generally. It draws on several disciplines: management, philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science, history and anthropology. In short, human behavior in public organizations is a challenging, dynamic, applied and an interesting field. This course is designed in part to assist students in development of useful appreciation of the limits and opportunities of being human. The course will facilitate your understanding of people's behaviors in organizational and related contexts and, in turn, help you enhance your performance in varied roles, including personally and as an employee. The course consists of several self-assessments, student-led presentations, writing assignments and group work, all aimed at understanding the complexities that surround human behavior in public and nonprofit organizations.

**What you will learn:**

1. Importance of understanding the behaviors, motivations, and actions of individuals in public service
2. Enhance understanding of your own motivations and behavior as well as that of others
3. To help students build capacity to act effectively and responsibly under the stress, complexity, and uncertainty of the real world.
4. Importance of effective communication within and outside of the organization
5. Using power and politics in a constructive and ethical way
6. Effective decision making
7. Managing stress and conflict in a productive manner
8. Leading and inspiring others
9. Using diversity to enhance organizational performance; managing change

10. Being an effective team member and helping people to become more innovative and creative
11. Creating and securing commitment to shared values

### **Required Texts**

Denhardt, Robert B., Janet V. Denhardt, and Maria P. Aristigueta. 2009. *Managing Human Behavior in Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. 2nd Edition Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

ISBN 978-1-4129-5667-3 (Referred as DDA).

In addition to the texts, short articles or reports are assigned as readings throughout the semester.

### **How to demonstrate what you learn**

#### **Group Training**

Since Organizations rely on the cooperative efforts of their members to accomplish their goals, you will also be expected to work cooperatively to accomplish assignments. Students will self-select into teams of 2-3 students. The instructor will provide a list of topics to sign-up the first week of class (chapters 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11). Week 2 the teams will meet in class and develop a working plan.

#### **Reflection Papers**

During the course of the semester you will write 3 reflection papers that help you step back from an experience, to ponder carefully, it's meaning to the self as it applies to the related concepts. When submitting your self-assessments you should consider the following questions as a summary of your learning experience:

- Are the scores accurate or inaccurate?
- What do I understand better as a result of this learning experience?
- What remains unresolved or contentious about the learning?
- What do I need to do to improve or understand to be more effective?

The details of the reflection papers are posted on eLearning.

#### **Movie Review – Due April 25**

Your team is responsible for finding a movie with an organizational focus or setting and then analyzing the film by applying the ideas and concepts learned during the course. Please submit to me for approval by February 8<sup>th</sup>, the movie your team chooses to analyze. The written report should be no longer than 3-4 double-spaced pages and will not be handed out to the entire class. The presentation should include Power Point or

other visual aides and should be approximately 20-25 minutes in length. If your team decides to show part of the movie to make a particular point, please let me know in advance so that I can make arrangements for the necessary equipment.

**Final Examination** – A take home final exam will be distributed on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. E-mail the instructor a copy by midnight on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Make sure you get an e-mail confirmation from me within 24 hours of your submission.

**Participation:** People learn best when they are active (not passive). Your active participation is essential to this class. Participation is more than just attending class and asking an occasional question. Full participation consists of demonstrating that you are prepared for each class, asking thoughtful questions that help you and your peers learn, responding respectfully to peers, engaging productively in all classes. Note that talking is not the same as participating, since excessive talking without offering useful ideas is disruptive.

Note: **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** except under exceptional documented circumstances at the sole discretion of the instructor. Students who miss class are responsible for all announcements, class discussions, and changes made to the course outline during class meetings. There is no penalty for submitting your assignment prior to the deadline.

**Attendance:** Attendance is an ingredient when class participation is considered. Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Students are expected to schedule their personal and professional obligations so as to maintain continuous participation in the course. Rare circumstances, however, may present difficulties. For a pre-planned absence (which should be kept to a minimum), make arrangements in advance for participation and submission of assignments. For an emergency absence (severe health or weather problems), notify the instructor as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

**Extra credit assignments will not be available in this course.** Your final grade is based on the number of points you earn throughout the semester. See the Grading Structure section for an explanation of how points accumulate.

### **Grading**

Group Training Presentation: 20%  
Reflection Paper: 30% (3x10 points each)  
Movie Review and Presentation: 20%  
Take Home Final Examination: 25%  
Class Participation: 5%

## **Grading Scale**

Grades are awarded to reflect students' performance on assignments/exams/case presentation and students' useful contributions to class. Students earning 90 points or above on the graded assignments will earn an A+/A/A-; grades of 80-89 represent a B-/B/B+; grades of 70-79 represent a C-/C/C+ .

## **UTD Policy on Cheating**

Policy on Cheating: Students are expected to be above reproach in all scholastic activities. Students who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the university. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22.

A very useful statement on plagiarism (with good definitions, etc.) is available at <http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm>

## **Classroom Behavior**

- All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the highest behavioral standards.
- Students are expected to arrive on time for class.
- Electronic devices during the class meeting should be turned off. In the event that a student legitimately needs to carry cell phone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required.
- **You are allowed to use a laptop solely for note taking purposes.** If I find you browsing the internet or using the computer for non-class related work, I will ask you to leave my classroom.
- Discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class.
- Classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct class or (b) the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is unacceptable. Examples include routinely leaving the classroom early, using cellular phones, reading non-class related material, repeated talking in class without being recognized, talking while others are speaking, or arguing in any way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line." If the instructor feels that a behavior is disruptive, the student will be asked to leave the classroom for the day. If classroom behavior is determined to be inappropriate and cannot be resolved between the instructor and the student, the behavior may be referred for academic or disciplinary review.

## **ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY DISCLAIMERS**

<http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>

## **Detailed Course Schedule**

### **Week 1: January 18**

Introductions  
Syllabus

### **Week 2: January 23 and 25**

Introduction to Organizational Behavior

#### Readings

- Chapter 1 DDA
- Sign-up for group presentation (Jan 23)
- Group meeting (Jan25)

### **Week 3: January 30 and February 1**

Knowing and Managing Yourself

#### Readings

- Chapter 2 DDA
- Reflection Essay Due (February 1)

### **Week 4: February 6 and 8**

Fostering Creativity

#### Readings

- Chapter 3 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (Feb 8)

### **Week 5: February 13 and 15**

Managing Stress

#### Readings

- Chapter 4 DDA

### **Week 6: February 20 and 22**

## Decision Making

### Readings

- Chapter 5 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (Feb 22)

### **Week 7: February 27 and 29**

## Motivating Yourself and Others

- Chapter 6 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (Feb 29)

*No class March 5<sup>th</sup> – ASPA Conference*

### **Week 8: March 7 and 19**

## Leadership in Public Organizations

### Readings

- Chapter 7 DDA
- Assignment Leadership Due (March 19)

Spring Break: March 11-17

### **Week 9: March 21 and 26**

## Power and Organizational Politics

### Readings

- Chapter 8 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (March 26)

### **Week 10: March 28 and April 2**

## Communicating Effectively With Others

### Readings

- Chapter 9 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (April 2)

**Week 11: April 4 and 9**

Working in Groups and Teams

Readings

- Chapter 10 DDA

**Week 12: April 11 and 16**

Managing Conflict

Readings

- Chapter 11 DDA
- Group Training Presentation (April 16)

**Week 13: April 18 and 23**

Organizational Change

Readings

- Chapter 12 DDA
- Movie Presentations

**Week 14: April 25 and 30**

Representing the Organization “On the Outside”

- Chapter 13 DDA
- Movie Presentations

**Week 15: May 2**

Managing Behavior in the Public Interest

- Chapter 14 DDA
- Wrap-up
- Reflection Paper on Groups and Teams due

Finals examination distributed. E-mail the instructor a copy of your responses by May 9<sup>th</sup> no later than midnight.

**NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus**