Dynamics of Work & Work Organization
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Spring 2013

Time: Tuesday 9:15-10:35 a.m.
Room: Food Science 101
Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 p.m.
& by appointment

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Course description

Workplaces have changed in fundamental ways over the last few decades. One of the most significant changes is the enormous growth in teamwork, employee involvement, communication, and other forms of "empowerment." This course will examine the interpersonal dynamics and effects of these developments: how they are experienced in daily work. We will study strategies to create effective teamwork and factors that affect team formation and functioning. To do so, we will read academic and industry writing on these topics, and explore issues through case studies and real-life events.

Because the class is a hybrid, you will be expected to participate in team discussions for at least one hour each week between Wednesday and Friday. Because our objective is to understand team functioning, there will be significant in-class and online team work in addition to lecture. You will also complete a team case analysis and a team research presentation.

Grading will be based on the two team projects, online individual and team assignments, a midterm and final, in-class team workshops, and lecture attendance.

Learning goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate ability to structure team projects and work productively in teams
- Demonstrate competence in diagnosing team performance problems using appropriate theories and models
- Demonstrate understanding of how social status affects team functioning
- Demonstrate understanding of effective groups in simulations and discussions
- Demonstrate understanding of fundamental social science theories, and concepts relating to the dynamics of work teams, including the necessary conditions for effective cooperation and motivation
- Demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communication

Major assumptions of the course

- We are social beings who both shape and are shaped by the social worlds in which we live. We do not have *complete* autonomy and self-determination, but neither are we merely the products of institutions and structures.
- There is nothing natural or inevitable about the institution of work or the arrangements of power in workplace organizations. They were made by people and they can be changed

by people. Therefore, it is worth our while to consider how such work and workplaces are constructed and maintained in order to imagine how they might be different.

Description of requirements

Team projects (30% of grade) Each student will be randomly assigned to a team that will complete a case analysis in the first half of the semester, and then again randomly assigned to a new team that will create a research presentation and report in the second half. Grades will be based on both product (75% assigned by teaching team) and individual effort (25% confidentially assigned by team members). If you cannot connect to your team online, clear your browser cache and cookies. If you have further technical problems, contact Sakai.

Workshop participation and lecture attendance (20% of grade) Everyone is expected to participate in class, which obviously requires being present in class. I believe that students can learn best by actively engaging with material from course rather than simply memorizing names and concepts. This includes asking as many questions as are needed to understand the material, and working through the implications of new ideas. Participation includes asking questions or making comments in class, facilitating small group work, and participating in team activities. If you’re wondering about something, it’s likely there are other students who don’t fully understand either. There are no stupid questions! Discussion is a way to experiment with ideas. Participation can also sometimes mean *not* talking to allow quieter classmates to speak. It means respectfully engaging with ideas that are different from your own, even if you have serious disagreements. Criticism is encouraged, but personal attack will not be tolerated.

Exams (20% of grade) Each unit will be followed by an individual, non-cumulative, in-class exam (midterm and final). Exams consist of a few very short, integrative essays.

Pre-class online homework (15% of grade) Almost every week you will individually answer some questions or complete a short assignment in response to the week’s readings.

Post-class online team discussions (15% of grade) Each week, quickly following (and sometimes also before) the class meeting, you will take part in a team discussion about, or small project based on, readings and classroom concepts.

Both the pre- and post-class online assignments are “low stakes”: they are graded pass (completed fully), conditional pass (completed partially), or fail (not completed by the deadline). You must think and write creatively, but there are no right or wrong answers.

Please note that there will be few options for extra credit. Given the interdependence of team members and the need for ongoing discussion of course material, you cannot pass this class if you slack off during the semester and try to make up for it at the end.

Final grade breakdown

Team projects	30 percent
Exams	20 percent
In-class participation	20 percent
Pre-class online homework	15 percent
Post-class online team discussions	15 percent

Make sure to complete *all* assignments; missing assignments count as a 0, not an F.

Office hours

All students are strongly encouraged to meet with me to discuss questions or concerns, or simply to continue interesting discussions from class. If you have a conflict with office hours, we may be able to find another meeting time. Email can be useful for quick checks to answers you can't get from classmates online, but any discussion of substance must happen in person to be useful.

Course format and policies

You are expected to complete all required readings before class, and come to class prepared to discuss what you do and do not understand.

Diverse ideas and beliefs will come up during the course, and you may find yourself disagreeing with fellow students or me. That's normal and expected, and the discussion of our differences makes for a lively classroom. However while passionate intellectual debate is welcome, personal attacks or insults are not. Please refrain from making faces while someone speaks, using an angry or sarcastic tone in addressing their ideas, or snickering.

This course requires regular attendance: there will be considerable group work and open discussion during class. You be expected to attend all classes with your teams. If you miss class, get notes from a team member or other classmate, and discuss them with me during office hours if you have further questions. If you expect to miss one or two classes, be sure to use the University absence reporting **website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/** to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

The only excuses for missing a deadline or exam are *legitimate* illness, family emergency, or legal mandate. In the interest of fairness to the whole class, there are no exceptions to this policy. Absences with good cause will be excused, but must be discussed with me in a timely manner. Be sure to contact me *well in advance* of a due date or exam if you foresee difficulties. **More than two unexcused absences will mean an automatic F**.

Office hours are the proper place for questions that require real discussion. This means that questions about assignments or missed classes should be conducted during office hours. If you want advice on a group paper or presentation, bring a copy for me to read and review. *Do not send assignments as attachments by email*. While I will not "pregrade" assignments, I will help you work through your particular questions or difficulties.

Email can be used for answers to smaller questions that cannot be answered by team members in online Team Discussions or other classmates in the online forums. I endeavor to answer all email within 24 hours (not including weekends and holidays).

Pre-class homework must be completed and submitted as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf before the start of class. You are urged to complete them well in advance. Post-class assignments must be completed by Friday at 7 p.m. following class. The teaching team will review and comment on post-class online discussions at least twice during the week.

Team projects must be turned in online before the start of class on the day they are due. Late projects will be docked half a grade per day *beginning from the start of class the day it is due*. That is, a B would become a C+ 15 minutes after the start of class, and a C the next day. Do not miss class to finish a project! Nothing will be accepted a week past its due date.

If you believe you have received a lower grade than you should, you may contest it within two weeks by following these steps. 1) Allow a *24-hour "cooling off" period* so that you will be calm and collected when you ask for reconsideration of your work. 2) *Write out* the reason you think the grade should be changed. Describe *how* your work fulfills the assignment. We all make mistakes but, "I just think I deserve better" doesn't tell me what I missed.

Don't plagiarize. Plagiarism will result in failing grades and/or administrative action. Be sure you know the difference between *citing* a text, *quoting* a text, and *stealing* from a text (whether published, on the internet, or from another student). For more information, see the official policy at **http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml** or use the online tutorial at **http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/cir_tutorial.shtml**. You can also get help at the Rutgers Learning Centers.

Borrowed material should be documented.

Any time you incorporate into your writing ideas, words, key phrases, or pictures that were *not originally created by you*, you must give credit to the original author by citing the source.

You must cite direct quotes.

You must cite paraphrases. Paraphrasing is rewriting a passage in your own words. **If you paraphrase a passage, you must still cite the original source of the idea.**

You must cite ideas given to you in a conversation, in correspondence, or over email.

You must cite sayings or quotations that are not familiar, or facts that are not "common knowledge." However, it is not necessary to cite a source if you are repeating a *well known quote* such as Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you…" or a *familiar proverb* such as "You can't judge a book by its cover." *Common knowledge* is something that is widely known. For example, it is common knowledge that Bill Clinton served two terms as president. It would not be necessary to cite a source for this fact.

Up to half of any missed credit on the exams can be made up *within one week* by a) reviewing the correct answers online, b) writing a critique pinpointing *how* your answer substantively failed to fully address the question, and c) writing a new answer entirely in your own words. The most important part of this is (b), the critique of the original answer. No extra credit will be given without this critique.

I will do what is in my power to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities, but you must let me know what accommodations are needed. Contact the Office of Disability Services for Students at 151 College Ave, Suite 123, Mon-Thurs, 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. and Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for examples of services and accommodations available on campus. (732) 932-2848 or **http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/**

Laptops and cellphones can be a great resource for bringing course readings and other pertinent information into the classroom, but can also be a huge temptation to text, email, use social media, or otherwise focus on non-course matters. Know yourself and turn off the electronic devices if they are too tempting. Use of electronic devices for non-course matters is distracting to other students as well as you, and is therefore not permitted. Such use of electronic devices will have a *strong negative effect on your participation grade*.

Course readings

All course materials will be available for download from the online class site. There will typically be 20-40 pages of reading each week.

Week by week

All readings and assignments for each week can be found on the class Sakai page in the "Week by Week" section. Every week before class, students must complete individual (and sometimes group) work in addition to a confidential journal describing the week's interactions with the team. Every week immediately following class (up until Friday evening), student teams must complete discussions and/or short projects related to the readings and/or in-class material. Failure to fully engage with the weekly assignments in a timely manner will result in partial or complete loss of credit for the week.

Part I Personal and Interpersonal Team Skills

Week 1: Introductions

- **Reading**: The syllabus

Week 2: Personality Types and Group Roles
Reading:

- Hollister, Pam. 1997. "The Effect of Personality Type on Team Performance.
- Myers, Isabel Briggs. 1980. Introduction to Type (abridged).
- Student Learning Style Inventory 48A

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 2 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 2 folder

Week 3: Emotional Intelligence
Reading:

- Bradbury, Travis and Jean Graves. 2009. "What Emotional Intelligence Looks Like: Understanding the Four Skills"
- Greiner, Larry E. and Elizabeth Collins. 2008. "A Day in the Life of Alex Sanger: Driving in the Fast Lane at Landon Care Products."
- Polzer, Jeffrey F. 2003. "Identity Issues in Teams."

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 3 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 3 folder

Week 4: Addressing Assumption & Inference
Reading:

- Hill, Linda A. and Jaan Elias. 1996. "Karen Leary."
- Ross, Rick and Charlotte Roberts. 1994. "Balancing Inquiry and Advocacy."
- Schwartz, Roger. 2002. "Ground Rules for Effective Groups."
- "Mac's Two-Column Case."
  http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~kbrown/F2250%20Webpages/mac%27s_case.html

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 4 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 4 folder

Week 5: Negotiation
Reading:
- Janis, Irving L. 1971. "Groupthink."
- Wheeler, Michael. 2005. "Negotiation Advice: A Synopsis."

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 5 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 5 folder

Week 6: Double-Loop Learning
Reading:
- Argyris, Chris. 1991. "Teaching Smart People How to Learn."
- Hackley, Susan. 2004. "When Life Gives You Lemons: How to Deal with Difficult People."

Pre-class work: Watch video clip & complete pre-class assignment in Week 6 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 6 folder

Week 7: MIDTERM
Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 7 folder; check answers with team; bring unanswered questions to class
Post-class work: Complete team project DUE FRIDAY 3/8 BY 10 A.M.

Part II Facing Team Challenges & Achieving Team Goals

Week 8: In-Person and Virtual Team Norms and Productivity
Reading:
- Gersick, Connie J.G. 1990. "The Students."
- Powell, Gary N. 2004. "The Virtual Team" (adapted).

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 8 folder.
NOTE: This week your pre-class work includes an online negotiation with your new team! Don't wait until the last minute to do this work.
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 8 folder

Week 9: SPRING BREAK
No class, no homework, no post-class discussion

Week 10: Team Norms and Inequality
Reading:
- Chatman, Jennifer A. 2010. "Norms in Mixed Sex and Mixed Race Work Groups."
- Lewis, Jennifer. 2004. "Rebecca Collier."

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 9 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 9 folder

Week 11: Difference and Inclusion
Reading:
- Kalev, Alexandra. 2009. "Cracking the Glass Cages? Restructuring and Ascriptive Inequality at Work."
- Ollilainen, Marjukka and Toni Calasanti. 2007. "Metaphors at Work: Maintaining the Salience of Gender in Self-Managing Teams."

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 10 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 10 folder; identify and describe target audience of team project

Week 12: Leadership
Reading:
- Ancona, Deborah and Elaine Backman. n.d. "Distributed Leadership: Initial Framing."
- Schwartz, Roger. 2006. "Using the Facilitative Leader Approach to Create a Culture of Collaboration."

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 11 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 11 folder

Week 13: Group Problem Solving
Reading:
- Hart, Christopher W.L., Dan Maher, and Michael Montelongo. 1988. "Florida Power Light Quality Improvement Story Exercise."
- Rebori, Marlene K. 1997. "Effective Problem Solving Techniques for Groups."
- Mindtools: http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TMC.htm and particularly:
  □ Cause & Effect Analysis (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_03.htm)
  □ PDCA (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_89.htm)
  □ 5 Whys (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_5W.htm)
  □ Root Cause Analysis (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_80.htm)

Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 13 folder
Post-class work: Complete post-class assignment in Week 13 folder; provide list of local data

Week 14: Wrap-Up and Team Presentation Workshop
Pre-class work: Assemble and bring to class all materials for team project
Post-class work: Work on team project

Week 15: Final Exam
Pre-class work: Complete pre-class assignment in Week 15 folder
Post-class work: Complete team assignment DUE FRIDAY 5/4 BY 10 A.M.