

DYNAMICS OF WORK AND WORK ORGANIZATIONS

Course Number 37:575:308:02

Index #54661

Spring 2011

Class Times: Mondays, 7:15pm – 10:05pm

Class Location: Douglas Campus, Hickman Hall, Room 131

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
School of Management and Labor Relations
Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations

Instructor: **Mohammad A. Ali**

Office: Labor Education Center 156

Phone: 732-529-6161

Email: maali1969@gmail.com

COURSE OVERVIEW

Workplaces have changed in fundamental, and sometimes contradictory, ways over the last few decades. On one hand there has been an enormous growth in teamwork, involvement, communication, and other forms of “empowerment.” On the other hand, there has been an increase in restructuring and layoffs, even among white-collar or unionized employees who had long been secure. This course will examine the “dynamics” of these developments; that is, how they are experienced in daily work. We will focus less on organizational structures (which is at the core of the course *Managing People at Work*), and more on the functioning of teams and on work relations.

The course has two major parts. The first part will deal with the dynamics of traditional “blue-collar” and front-line sales work; the second with managerial and professional work. We will look at a number of cases of work reform, including quality circles, autonomous teams, and total quality management. We will discuss both the large organizational and social implications, and the more immediate questions of how to work most effectively in these environments. We will also examine in detail how to create effective teamwork. Finally, we will also consider how unions have responded to contemporary workplace developments. The class will be conducted as a mix of lecture, in-class group work, and class discussion.

GRADING RUBRIC & COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The final grades will be calculated as such:

CLASS PARTICIPATION:	15%
WEEKLY HOMEWORK MEMOS:	15%
SMALL GROUP CASE ANALYSIS:	20%
MID-TERM EXAM	25%
FINAL EXAM (non-comprehensive):	<u>25%</u>
	100%

Class Participation (15%)

Your class participation grade is a combination of (1) your participation during class and small group discussions, and (2) your regular attendance and observation of classroom policies. The first item,

participation, refers to the level and insightfulness of your in-class and in-group activities. You are fully expected to come to class having carefully read ALL assigned materials. This careful attention to the readings will inform your comments during class, and will help to facilitate insightful class discussions and maximum learning. **Participation during class and small group discussions counts for 10 out of the 15 total percentage points.**

The second item that comprises your overall class participation grade is attendance and observation of classroom policies. Attendance at every meeting is expected; however, things do come up. If you must miss a class session, please **CALL ME OR LEAVE A VOICEMAIL MESSAGE BEFORE CLASS** (an email, or the lack of notification at all, is unacceptable and will not garner an excused absence, except in the case of a documented emergency). For each class session, it is important that you arrive **ON TIME**, prepared to completely participate in the session until the mid-session break. Walking in and out of a session during a lecture, group activity, or class discussion is extremely distracting, and is thereby strongly discouraged. Again, things do come up, but please exercise both courtesy and common sense.

Additionally, cell phones should be turned to vibrate (no audible ringtone), and electronic devices such as mp3 players should be turned off completely and stowed away. Texting on your cell phones during class is prohibited. Laptop use is allowed for note-taking, but should not be used for any other purposes (surfing the web, email, etc) that would distract you or those sitting near you from the lecture and/or class and group discussion. Finally, students are expected to remain in class for the entire session. **Attendance and observation of classroom policies counts for 5 out of the 15 total percentage points.**

Weekly Homework Memos (15%)

For each weekly class session, you will be assigned homework readings. These readings, which will be posted in the “Resources” section of Sakai, will consist primarily of book chapters and journal articles. Each week, I will assign anywhere from 1-4 questions total (not for each reading) based on the readings. You will answer these questions as part of your weekly memo. Each question only requires a brief 2 or 3 sentence response, no more. Therefore, if there are 3 questions assigned for a particular week, your **entire** weekly homework memo should be anywhere from 6-9 sentences long. **Longer responses are strongly discouraged**, and will not garner additional points or extra credit. In fact, if you write too much, your entire response may not be read, and you may actually lose points because the portion that was read did not fully address the question asked.

Memos are to be submitted via the “Assignments” section of Sakai **no later than the start of class**. Submissions are automatically time-stamped by Sakai, and late submissions will be penalized.

Small Group Case Analysis (20%)

At the beginning of the semester, students will be clustered into small groups of 4-5 students each, which will form the basis of weekly in-class group discussions, as well as the Small Group Case Analysis. For the Small Group Case Analysis, each group will be assigned a case that deals with a topic of relevance to the course. Teams will be responsible for ONE case during the course of the semester. On the assigned topic, groups will write a 2-3 page analysis, applying the concepts and ideas of the course **to make an argument** about what should be done to improve the situation, if anything at all. In addition to the 2-3 page analysis paper, each group will present their arguments to the rest of the class in the form of a 10-minute PowerPoint Presentation.

Case analysis papers should be 2-3 pages, typed, and double-spaced. Page margins should be standard MS Word margins (top and bottom 1 inch; left and right 1.25 inches) and font should be Times New Roman 12 point.

Each small group member is expected to contribute to their group's project, and **5% out of a total of 20% of the group grade will be based on a peer review by your teammates.**

Midterm and Final Examination (25% each, for a total of 50%)

A 1.5 hour, in-class Midterm and Final Examination (non-comprehensive) will be administered. The Midterm will be scheduled near the middle of the course. The Final will be on the last day of the course. These short exams are designed to help you retain, integrate, and deepen your understanding of the ideas we will be exploring throughout the semester. The exams will consist of short answer responses (2-3 sentences for each response) that demonstrate mastery of the significant events, terms, and concepts covered in the course. Make-up examinations are only allowed in the case of documented family, work, and medical emergencies.

In general, when students study, they do quite well on these exams. They are not terribly tough, and rarely do students need the entire 1.5 hour to finish. The most prepared students finish in 15-20 minutes tops. However, to do well on them, they will require you to have a command of ALL of the materials in the course. We will prepare for each exam together in class the week before the test, and I will provide a handout of all possible questions/topics that may show up on each test.

COURSE READING MATERIALS & SAKAI

There is NO text book for this course. All readings will be available for download on the course Sakai website. **Reading for each week must be completed BEFORE class.** The lecture, class discussion, and in-class group activities will rely heavily on the concepts covered in the readings.

The Sakai course management system will be used heavily for the administration of this course. As mentioned above, memos and group case analysis papers must be submitted via Sakai, and grades will be returned via Sakai.

Sakai also has excellent discussion board functionality, and students are encouraged to create discussion threads when they have questions/comments about weekly readings, topics, and concepts.

I will rely on Sakai to make general class announcements and to send emails to students as necessary. Sakai is linked to your rutgers.edu email account. Therefore, **it is absolutely imperative that you monitor your rutgers.edu email account**, or set it up to forward messages to your personal email account. I will not be responsible for announcements and email messages sent via Sakai that you miss as a result of your not regularly monitoring your rutgers.edu email account.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Violations of academic integrity are not tolerated in this course or in any course that you take at Rutgers (or any institution of higher learning). Academic dishonesty, committed intentionally or unintentionally, has serious consequences. Please visit Rutgers University's Academic Integrity website at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> to learn how you can steer clear of academic integrity violations. The Resources for Students link on the left menu of the homepage is an especially-useful tool for current students.

COURSE OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Class 1: January 24

Introduction to the course
The history of work systems and the changing world of work

Readings: none

TRADITIONAL WORK SYSTEMS

Class 2: January 31

The division of labor
Taylorism and Scientific Management

Readings: Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, chapter 1.
Felix Frei et al., Work Design for the Competent Organization (pp. 39-48 only).
Edwin A. Locke, "The Ideas of Frederick W. Taylor: An Evaluation,"
Academy of Management Review, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1982), pp. 14-24.

Class 2 Homework Memo Due. See "Assignments" section of Sakai for details.

Class 3: February 7

Bureaucracy and the notion of rationality

Readings: Max Weber, Legitimate Authority and Bureaucracy (pp. 3-15).
Henri Fayol, General Principles of Management (pp. 181-202).

Class 3 Homework Memo Due. See "Assignments" section of Sakai for details.

NEW WORK SYSTEMS *on the SHOP FLOOR*

Class 4: February 14

Post-Taylorism job designs

Readings: Felix Frei et al., Work Design for the Competent Organization (pp. 48-53 only).
Elton Mayo, Hawthorne and Western Electric Company.
Douglas McGregor, Theory X and Theory Y.

Class 4 Homework Memo Due. See "Assignments" section of Sakai for details.

Class 5: February 21

Job designs (continued)
Analyzing your workplaces

J. Richard Hackman et al., A New Strategy for Job Enrichment.
Case: Hausser Food Products

Class 5 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

Class 6: February 28

***** MIDTERM**

Class 7: March 7

Teams - Part 1: Group dynamics, process, and motivation

Readings: Harvard Business School article A Note on Team Process (do not read the text areas highlighted in red).

Irving Janis, Groupthink.

Harvard Business School case: The Army Crew Team.

Class 6 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

***** Group 1 Case Analysis Due. Group will also do PowerPoint presentation in class.**

Class 8: March 21

Teams - Part 2: Team designs and production teams

Readings: Maryanne Kelly, A Tale of Two Plants: NUMMI Teamwork Versus GM Bureaucracy.

Edward Lawler III, The New Plant Revolution Revisited (read the first two paragraphs, and the following sections: Job Design, Organization Structure, Spread of the New Plant Model, and Team Effectiveness).

Harvard Business School case: Transformation of Pratt & Whitney North Haven (Abridged).

Class 7 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

***** Group 2 Case Analysis Due. Group will also do PowerPoint presentation in class.**

Class 9: March 28

Dynamics of work in the sales and service sector

Readings: Schlesinger & Heskitt, The Service-Driven Service Company (pp. 1-11 only).

Douglas Shuit, People Problems on Every Aisle.

Harvard Business School case: Nordstrom: Dissension in the Ranks.

Class 8 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

***** Group 3 Case Analysis Due. Group will also do PowerPoint presentation in class.**

Class 9: April 4

Union responses to workplace developments

Readings: Laura Unger speech for Workplace of the Future Forum.

Parker and Slaughter, What the Union Can Do.

Bruce Nissen, What are Scholars Telling the U.S. Labor Movement to Do?

Class 9 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL WORK SYSTEMS

Class 10: April 11

Dynamics of managerial and professional work

Loyalty and Culture

Readings: Rosabeth Kanter, Men and Women of the Corporation, chapter 3.

Paul Osterman, New Realities: The Shifting Context of Middle Management.

Class 10 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

***** Group 4 Case Analysis Due. Group will also do PowerPoint presentation in class.**

Class 11: April 18

Talent management and the war for talent

Readings: Elizabeth Chambers et al., The War for Talent.

Malcolm Gladwell, The Talent Myth.

Harvard Business School case Karen Leary (A).

Jeffrey Pfeffer, Fighting the War for Talent is Hazardous to Your Organization's Health.

Class 11 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

***** Group 5 Case Analysis Due. Group will also do PowerPoint presentation in class.**

Class 12: April 25

Cross-functional, virtual, and global teams in a professional context

Organizations as process enterprises

Readings: Howard Guttman, Are Your Global Team Members Miles Apart?

Hammer and Stanton, How Process Enterprises Really Work.

Rosabeth Kanter, The New Managerial Work.

Class 12 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

Class 13: May 2

Downsizing, layoffs, and restructuring

Readings: Karen Mishra et al., Preserving Employee Morale during Downsizing.

de Vries et al., The Downside of Downsizing. (abridged)
Harvard Business Review case: Case of the Downsizing Decision.

Class 13 Homework Memo Due. See “Assignments” section of Sakai for details.

NOTE: I will also conduct a final exam review during the last part of this class session.

Class 14:

In-class final exam (1.5 hours)

Congrats on a job well done!