

# People, Work, and Organizations

Fall, 2011

Syllabus

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Prof. Charles Heckscher

*pwo@heckscher.us*

Coral Willis

*corallw@eden.rutgers.edu*

*This syllabus is subject to change.*

People, Work, and Organizations will treat the major challenges in the management of people, primarily in for-profit corporations. It will *not* teach detailed management techniques and methods; it will focus instead on understanding the long-term issues facing the field – for example:

- The increased importance of knowledge and its effects on the way people work.
- The shift from internal labor markets to open career systems.

The move towards outsourcing (including the outsourcing of the HR function itself).

- The rise of pay for performance and its often conflicting relation with teamwork.
- The increased use of layoffs and restructuring in business, especially for white-collar employees.
- The globalization of business activity.

All these issues are enormously effected by the current economic crisis; we will also spend some time trying to understand this context.

The course will present a series of current controversies rooted in these economic changes, and explore different perspectives and arguments. The key learning objective is for students to develop informed opinions on these important issues of the day.

The readings and discussions will focus on practical situations, including analysis of cases.

A major skill that will be assessed in the course is your ability to make a convincing argument, through the use of consistent logic and relevant evidence. There are multiple “right” answers to

every problem, but the task is to make your argument convincing to someone who does not already agree with you.

### **Learning objectives:**

- An understanding of major issues involved in the changing nature of work, and an informed perspective on some of the major dilemmas and conflicts concerning the management of employees.
  - the economic & strategic challenges facing businesses, and the organizational changes required to meet them.
  - the consequences of different organizations and work systems for employees.
- The ability to create valid arguments and to assess the validity of others' arguments.
- The ability to work productively in teams as well as on an individual basis.
- An understanding of fundamental social science, historical, and legal perspectives, theories, and concepts relating to the organization of work.
  - the ability to apply general theories of work and organization to the understanding of particular cases and current events.
  - the ability to analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.
- Proficiency in written and oral communication.

### ***Course structure and requirements***

You will be assigned to a group of 5-6 people and will work closely together throughout the semester, including weekly online discussion of the readings and a group paper.

### **Assignments**

- The **weekly assignment** will normally consist of **reading plus a short writing task**.
  - The readings will be about 40-50 pages long, including (typically) two articles and one case study.
    - \* All readings will be posted on Sakai; there is no textbook.
  - Some of the writing tasks will be individual submissions. Others will involve participation with your group in an online forum.
- Your **group** will be required to do an **8-10 page written paper** in which you will present evidence and arguments concerning one of the key questions. The paper will be done in stages: you will define a topic early on, then do an outline, a first draft, and a final draft.

I will ask for peer feedback on contribution by teammates. Everyone in the group will receive the same base grade but there will also be a factor for the peer feedback.

Further details on the paper will be posted in a separate document.

- There will be **three short quizzes** (~15 minutes each).
- There will be a 2-hour, online **final exam** which will include essay questions. We will discuss its structure later in the semester.

### Grades

- Grades will be based 1/3 on your contribution to weekly online group discussions, 1/3 on the group paper (weighted for your individual contribution), and 1/3 on the three quizzes and the final exam.

In addition, your grade may be affected by exceptional (good or bad) in-class participation and attendance. There is no exact weighting for this component, since it is often hard to judge in-class participation; but we will consider it in the final grade.

- More detail on the grading of the paper and weekly discussions is contained in the document “Notes on grading” in Sakai Resources.

### Absences

- This course requires regular attendance: there will be considerable group work and open discussion during class. You are expected to attend all classes.
- The University has a new absence reporting procedure: **if you expect to miss one or two classes, please 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.
- **If you expect to be absent more than twice, you *must* communicate with the professor as soon as possible**, in person or by email. I will try to work out a solution, but only if I know about it in a timely manner.
- We will excuse absences for good cause. We will *not* accept explanations that are not timely.
- More than three unexcused absences will mean an automatic F.

### Lateness

- People who arrive late or leave early are disruptive to the class and their teams. You are expected to arrive on time and to stay until the end.

- If you expect to be late once or twice, let Coral Willis know in advance if possible. If it will be more often (for example, if you have a class that makes it hard to get here on time), talk to the professor.
- Two unexcused late arrivals will be marked as one absence. Students who leave early without excuse will be marked absent for the entire class.

### **Communication with the professor**

- **I encourage you to come see me during my office hours.** They will be on Wednesdays before class, from 2:30 to 3:30, at the Labor Education Center. I would prefer that you email me in advance to let me know you are coming, but you can drop in even if you have not warned me. If that slot does not work, we can arrange another time.
- I want to emphasize that **I am open and available for discussion about any subject that affects your education, in office hours or by appointment.**
- In a largish course there are likely to be logistical breakdowns I don't know about – Sakai may be down, or I may forget to post an assignment or a reminder, or a requirement may be unclear, etc. It is in part your responsibility to let me know when you encounter such problems; I will try to fix them immediately.

### **Academic integrity**

- Academic integrity is always essential. The sharing of knowledge depends on people's confidence that credit will be given where it is due.

**There are just two key rules:**

- **Give credit for others' ideas and work.**
- **Indicate direct quotations with quotation marks.**

**This applies to online discussions as well as papers.**

- You do not need to use any particular format for citations – just give enough information so your teammates or I can figure out where the information came from.
- A brief summary of the main guidelines for academic work is attached to this syllabus. If you have any questions, please ask me.

### **Miscellaneous**

- My email address for this course is [pwo@heckscher.us](mailto:pwo@heckscher.us). **If your issue needs immediate attention, please put "URGENT" in the subject line** (otherwise I will read the emails only a day or two before class).
- **You must use the Rutgers email address recorded in the system.** Using other addresses causes major confusion.

- ▶ If you prefer to use another email account, set up your Rutgers email to forward automatically to it. You can do this by opening your Rutgers webmail account and going to “Webtools”, then “forward.”
- All written homework should be submitted on Sakai.
- Cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class.
- Emailing, texting, and web surfing are prohibited during class, except when they are part of a class exercise.
- For all administrative issues, you should talk to my secretary, LauraAnn Walkoviac, in the Labor Education Center. Her phone number is (732)-932-9503; her email address is [lawalkoviac@work.rutgers.edu](mailto:lawalkoviac@work.rutgers.edu)

## **CLASSES:**

The first five classes will provide background information about major trends in business and economic development. After that, each class will focus on one difficult and currently controversial problem, such as downsizing, outsourcing, etc. Readings will include both pro and con perspectives. The goal is for you to develop for each of these issues a well-informed, well-argued point of view.

I have not included details of the readings below because I change them from time to time. You should always use the readings on Sakai. If you want to read further ahead than what has been posted, let me know.

### **Part 1: The changing business environment**

- 1. Introduction: business in the industrial era*
- 2. The social and economic context: post-industrial society*
- 3. The evolution of corporate strategy: from products to solutions*
- 4. The changing business firm: from bureaucracy to collaboration*
- 5. The current crisis and business responses*

### **Part 2: key debates and choices in the management of firms**

- 6. Lifetime employment and internal labor markets*  
*Should firms promise job security to their employees in exchange for loyalty?*
- 7. Outsourcing*  
*Is outsourcing necessary? Should it be limited?*
- 8. The War for Talent*  
*Should employers focus heavily on retention and hiring of stars?*
- 9. Incentive pay:*  
*How much should individual performance be rewarded?*

#### **Outlines of papers due**

- 10. Corporate social responsibility*  
*Should companies take responsibility for social issues, beyond making a profit?*
- 11. Unions and employee representation:*  
*Are unions necessary in the emerging knowledge economy?*

#### **First draft of papers due**

- 12. Integrative case*  
*Did Fiorina save Hewlett-Packard, or harm it?*

### **Part 3: Global capitalism and its future**

- 13. European models*  
*Do European alternatives show us the future, or just the past?*
- 14. Close: The future of capitalism*

#### **Final draft of papers due**

**ON PROPER CITATION  
(AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM)**

Charles Heckscher

In all your writing, especially papers and quizzes, **you must be careful to cite all material that is drawn from others, including other students** as well as published sources.

Studying together is encouraged; but **if answers from different students are the same or nearly the same it will be considered cheating**. You should discuss the issues but not discuss detailed answers with each other.

All exams and quizzes will be submitted to Turnitin.com for comparison with others in this course, as well as with past exams from this course and with paper-writing services, other publications, and web sources.

**The basic rules of citation:**

- **Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks.**
- **You must always cite ideas or evidence you have drawn from others.**

I am ***not*** very concerned with the exact form of your citation, as long as you make clear where a quote or passage came from.

- **In a paper**, a good way is to put an author or source and date in parentheses, and the full citation at the end.
  - **It is not sufficient to include a list of sources at the end.** You must indicate in the text where ideas and facts come from.
- **In online discussion**, you can simply say “In today’s New York Times” or “in the article by Callaway” if these should be obvious to the other readers.

## PLAGIARISM

On occasion, students accused of plagiarism have claimed that their plagiarism has occurred without their knowledge or intent. Since ignorance of convention is not a reasonable defense, it is best to become thoroughly acquainted both with the various ways in which plagiarism is construed, and with the conventions of source attribution and proper documentation. Some students seem to believe that there are different degrees of plagiarism, some not as bad as others. No distinctions are made between any of the following acts. You will be charged with plagiarism if you:

- **Copy from published sources without adequate documentation.**
- **Purchase a pre-written paper (either by mail or electronically).**
- **Let someone else write a paper for you.**
- **Pay someone else to write a paper for you.**
- **Submit as your own someone else's unpublished work, either with or without permission.**

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## DOCUMENTING SOURCES

### **Borrowed material should be documented.**

Any time you incorporate into your writing ideas, words, key

**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.** For detailed examples and a discussion, see [Appropriate Uses of Sources](#).

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

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 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.

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