Course Description

This course reviews the evolution of administration and management theories, starting in the early part of the twentieth century, to understand how and why our views of work, workers, managers, and organizations have changed or stayed the same. We examine how the various schools of thought view each other and how contemporary perspectives synthesize the classics. The goal of the course is to understand how these perspectives on complex organization stand in relation to each other and how we assess their limits, advantages, and usefulness.

Course Method

“In seminar, there is no “bad” idea, no “dumb” question or expression of opinion. Your idea or question may not be logical, that is well connected to the object of inquiry, it may not stand the test of reason, it may not be well grounded in the facts. Therefore it may not be correct, that is it may not be in accord with logic or reality. But none of this means that the person holding the idea or asking the question is somehow stupid and should not have asked the question or expressed the idea or opinion.

Your idea may be wrong. It may even be foolish. If either or both, it will be replaced by a better idea as the discussion proceeds, as the seminar attempts to discover the truth underlying the conversation about a particular reading or policy issue, which we are considering at the moment. You may not know where your idea will take you. You may wish to test it, to ask questions without knowing their full import, to entertain an idea or an opinion without fully believing it.

Each member of this seminar must take responsibility for making it work as an important learning experience. Each of you must participate by careful reading of the material, by joining your colleagues in the small group exercises and by giving the question or reading under discussion your best thinking. Together we will build an edifice of learning that will take us, I hope, to a new plateau of understanding” (Professor Jerome Ziegler 1996).
Requirements

As explained above, this course will be conducted as a seminar. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and critique the readings. Every student will serve as discussion leader at least once. The discussion leader(s) will prepare a summary outline of the material which he/she/they will hand out to the class. The leader(s) will also prepare a cover sheet with 5-10 critical questions designed to probe the material and generate inquiry. There will be four short papers. These papers will critically examine the limits and advantages of the theoretical schools under discussion. The goal is to identify the key assumptions in the models and to assess the utility of those assumptions for enhancing our understanding of organizations.

Short Papers (each) 20% x 4  
Participation and Seminar Leadership 20%  

Readings

Natemeyer and Hersey (N/H), *Classics of Organizational Behavior* 4rd edition  
Packet (P)

Schedule

8/28  Introduction: A Short and Glorious History of OBT  
Assumptions Exercises

9/4  Where We Are Today: FADS & Fashions in OBT  
Reading: Lawler, *High-Involvement Management*, Ch. 11, (P)  
Harry and Schroeder, "Why Six Sigma" (P)

9/11  Modeling Our Progress  
Reading: Guillen, *Models of Management*, Ch. 1 (P)  
Barley and Kunda, “Design and Devotion: Rational and Normative Ideologies of Control in Managerial Discourse” (ASQ 1992) (P)  
Guillen, *Models of Management*, Chs. 6 & 7 (P)

9/18  Scientific Management & its Children  
Readings: Taylor, “*Scientific Management*”, (P)  
Natemeyer/Hersey (N/H) pp. 19-28, 530-542  
Assignment: Discuss the limits and advantages of scientific management as an
approach to management from Lawler’s point of view. What assumptions does Lawler share or not share with Taylor? Assume Lawler’s voice when discussing this earlier school of thought. 3 pages. Typed. Double spaced. Due in class.

9/25 All Classes Suspended

10/2 The Structuralists: Weber, Bureaucracy, and Networks

Pugh, “Measurement of Organization Structures” (P)
Granovetter, “Economic Action and Social Structure” (P)
Krackhardt, “Assessing the Political Landscape” (P)

10/9 The Cognitivists: How to Win a Nobel Prize in OBT

Readings: March and Simon “Decision Making Theory” (P)
March and Olson “Organizational Choice Under Ambiguity” (P)
Tversky and Kahneman “Judgment Under Uncertainty” (P)
Weick “Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking” (P)

10/16 Human Relations I

Reading: Fritz Roethlisberger, “The Hawthorne Experiments” (N/H)
Roethlisberger and Dixon, “Human Relations” (P)
Barnard, “Cooperation” (P)

Assignment: Discuss the limits and advantages of the perspective developed in the reading, which you may refer to collectively as Human Relations, from the point of view of Weber or Taylor. What assumptions do Weber or Taylor share or not share with Roethlisberger, Dixon and Barnard? Assume Weber or Taylor’s voice. (Assume you are one of them assessing Human Relations). Be sure to distinguish between description and prescription. Three pages. Typed. Double spaced. Due in class.

10/23 Human Relations II: Individual Behavior

Readings: N/H pp. 76-93, 102-116, 128133, 150-161
Maslow, Herzberg, Campbell, et.al and Latham and Locke

10/30 Human Relations III: Group Behavior

Readings: N/H pp 186-229, 280-287
Cartwright and Zander, Schein, Janis, and Tuckman and Jensen
11/6  Human Relations IV: Leadership

Readings:  N/H pp 323-348, 378-392
Tannenbaum and Schmidt, Vroom and Jago, Hersey, and Bennis and Thomas,
Caro, Lyndon Johnson pp 556-598, 604-612 (P)

Assignment: Use one or more of the leadership theories in Natemeyer and Hersey to examine Lyndon Johnson's style of leadership. What do the models explain well, i.e. what are their strengths? What do the models fail to explain, i.e. what are their weaknesses? What does your analysis suggest about leadership in organizations? Three pages. Double-spaced. Due in class.

New Threads

11/13  Institutions and their Environment

Readings:  Hatch, Ch. 3, (P)
DiMaggio and Powell "Iron Cage Revisited" (P)
Baron, et. al “War and Peace : The Evolution of Modern Personnel” (P)
Selznick, TVA pp 150-166,262-266, (P)

Assignment: Use one or more of the perspectives developed in Hatch’s chapter or DiMaggio and Powell to describe the environment of TVA. Be prepared to discuss your analysis in class. One page. Double-spaced.

11/20  Organizational Learning

Readings:  Argyris and Schon “What is an Organization That It May Learn?” (P)
Crossan, Lane and White “An Organization Learning Framework” (P)
Argote, Gruenfeld, and Naquin “Group Learning in Organizations” (P)
Mahler, “Organizational Learning at NASA” (P)

Assignment: Use one or more of the readings above to analyze the learning failure at NASA. Identify four learning failures and their causes. Be prepared to discuss you analysis in class.

11/27 Thanksgiving Break

12/4  Wrap-up & Integration

Reading: “Young Men and Fire,” pp. 39-109 (P)
Assignment: Use the conceptual tools provided by one or two of the perspectives developed in this course to analyze the material on the smokejumpers unit in “Young Men and Fire.” How does this perspective help to explain the organizational failure in Mann Gulch? Three pages. Double spaced. Due in class.