



**COURSE INFORMATION: Organizational Theory**  
**COURSE NUMBER: COMM 331**  
**SEMESTER: September 2012**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Steven F. Cronshaw  
**E-MAIL:** steven.cronshaw@unbc.ca  
**OFFICE LOCATION:** Teaching and Learning 4506  
**OFFICE HOURS:** by appointment  
**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 960-6785

**CLASS TIME:** Thursday 6:00-8:50 pm  
**CLASS LOCATION:** 5-172

Information regarding the School of Business at UNBC can be found at:  
<http://www.unbc.ca/commerce>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on the structure of the organization, examining such determining factors as the organization's size, environment, technology and strategy. It also examines internal politics, conflict, decision-making, and culture from a macro perspective.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of the course are to (1) familiarize course participants with major theories, issues, and controversies in organization theory; (2) review major topics of current concern in organization theory; and (3) have participants apply course concepts and content to the analysis and understanding of structure, process, and functioning of organizations in Northern British Columbia.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Morgan, Gareth (2006). *Images of organization*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The course outline will be handed out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE WEIGHTING**

Assignment	Due Date	Grade Weight
Individual assignment 1	November 1	20%
Group project 1	Week after presentation	25%
Group project 2	Week after presentation	25%
Discussion write-ups	Week after discussion	20%
Attendance	Weekly	10%
Total		100%

## EXAMINATION/ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

- 1. Group assignments (2 X 20%).** Choose two topics in the area of Organization Theory. As a group, write up and present papers that review current thinking on those topics. Please use and cite relevant references from the academic literature in making your major points. Tie your papers/presentations, where possible, into current issues in the North. In addition to making presentations to the class, please submit short papers summarizing your findings. A single grade is assigned to all the members of the group for these two assignments.
- 2. Individual assignment (1 X 20%).** Choosing a topic from the list below or one of your own choosing, write up and present a paper that reviews current thinking on that topic. Please use and cite relevant references from the academic literature in making your major points. An example of a reference article that addresses topic 4 in the list (How can organizational problems and opportunities be identified?) is given on Blackboard (“Reinstating the Lewinian vision”). This project is done and submitted individually.
- 3. Discussion write-ups (8 X 2.5%).** You will have ten break-out discussions. Summarize and submit the results of your group discussions in short reports. Graded individually.
- 4. Attendance (10%).** One mark is deducted for missing a class without a valid reason. Please sign up on the attendance sheet circulated starting on the second class session.
- 5. Research participation.** Up to 2 additional marks will be added to your final grade if you participate in the department research pool.

### COURSE SCHEDULE:

Schedule of Classes	
<u>DATE</u>	<u>READINGS AND CLASS EXERCISES</u>
Sept. 13	Introduction to metaphor-making in organizations; 1 <sup>st</sup> group discussion
Sept. 20	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 1 and 2 How to conduct a literature review for the current issues papers 2 <sup>nd</sup> group discussion
Sept. 27	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 3 and 4 3 <sup>rd</sup> group discussion
October 4	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 5 and 6 4 <sup>th</sup> group discussion
Oct. 11	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 7 and 8 5 <sup>th</sup> group discussion
Oct. 18	Presentations
Oct. 25	Presentations
November 1	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 9 and 10 6 <sup>th</sup> group discussion
Nov. 8	Morgan, <i>Images of organization</i> , Chapters 11 and 12 7 <sup>th</sup> group discussion

Nov. 15	Presentations
Nov. 22	Presentations
Nov. 29	Wrap-up and synthesis 8 <sup>th</sup> group discussion

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## **Possible Topics for Group Presentations**

1. What are the limits to technology improvements?
  2. How is internal conflict effectively resolved? (individual, group, organizational)
  3. How to foresee (anticipate, plan, deal with) and counter changes in culture and decision making?
  4. How do you instill and develop an organization culture?
  5. How organizational size affect culture, internal environment, strategy and/or technology?
  6. How do you overcome resistance and objections to the introduction of new technology?
  7. How do different international organizations approach operations and culture?
  8. What is the effect of senior managerial decision making on lower level employees?
  9. What is the effect of competencies on organization strategy?
  10. Cost-benefit of developing a learning organization?
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## **Possible Topics for Individual Assignment**

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1. What is organizational culture and how is “it” measured?
2. What impact does culture have on organizational productivity and morale? How can this impact be assessed?
3. What techniques are available for changing organizational culture? How should they be used?
4. How can organizational problems and opportunities be identified?
5. What is participative management? How do participative management practices work?
6. How are bureaucracies structured? What are their strengths and limitations?
7. What is organization strategy? What is its role?
8. What types of strategy are available to senior management?
9. What is the impact of strategy, and choosing the “right” strategy, on organizational productivity?
10. What are the roles of senior management and the Board? How do/should they work together?
11. How are different types of organizational environment classified?
12. What is the impact of organization environment on organization structure and process?
13. What types of technologies do organizations use to produce goods and services?
14. How does technology affect organizational structure, functioning, and effectiveness?
15. What types of organizational alternatives produce the best quality of work life for workers?

16. What is business process reengineering? Does it work?
17. Is there a senior executive “personality”? What personal traits work best in senior management positions? How would these traits be measured?

**Grading System: Grading System (see Academic Calendar)**

<u>Excellent</u>	A+	=	90-100
	A	=	85-89.9
	A-	=	80-84.9
<u>Good</u>	B+	=	77-79.9
	B	=	73-76.9
	B-	=	70-72.9
<u>Satisfactory</u>	C+	=	67-69.9
	C	=	63-66.9
<u>Marginal</u>	C-	=	60-62.9
	D+	=	57-59.9
	D	=	53-56.9
	D-	=	50-52.9
<u>Failure:</u>	F	=	0-49.9

<b><u>Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct</u></b>
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It is the student's responsibility to be aware of UNBC's Academic regulations, policies and procedures as described in the University calendar.

A definition of academic misconduct includes:

Cheating (using unauthorized material, information, or study aids in academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement, assisting others in any act, submission of the same work for grades in two courses without permission of the instructor or attempts to engage in such acts.

The regulations on plagiarism apply to all material submitted for a grade: essays, exams, assignments, cases, presentations, quizzes, and practice sets. Any case of suspected academic misconduct will be reported to the campus registrar. If the student is found guilty of academic misconduct there are both grade penalties and disciplinary penalties. Before there is any intention (on your part) or suspicion (on the part of your instructor or your peers) of wrongdoing, please see the instructor to discuss any problems of this nature. If your paper closely resembles a paper from this class or any other class (either written by you or another student, in this semester or any other), this will be considered an infraction of the academic misconduct code.

## Respect

Please demonstrate respect to your fellow students who express their thoughts and explore new ideas in the course.

## Ethical Standards

The following behaviors are considered unethical:

- Telling the instructor that you "need" a certain grade
- Asking for extra assignments for the purpose of raising a grade
- Asking that the grade be raised because it is very close to the next higher grade
- Asking that the grade be raised because you did very well on one part of the course or grading scheme
- Asking for a higher grade because you don't like the grading scheme
- Asking to be allowed to turn in an assignment late - even a few minutes late - because of computer or printer problems or any other reason
- Asking to be treated better than other students by making an exception to the rules
- Asking for any other unfair advantage in grading.

## Missed Quizzes/Midterms

If you have missed a quiz or midterm, the student should contact the instructor immediately to ask permission to make up the missed quiz/midterm. If permitted by the instructor, all makeup test sessions will be held on a Saturday morning at 8:30 am. Please make arrangements with your instructor.

## FINAL Exams

In addition to the above comments on examinations, please see the calendar regarding details on UNBC expectations.

## Access Resource Centre

If there are students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for special academic accommodations, please feel free to meet with the instructor to review your specific needs or contact the Access Resources Centre located in the Teaching and Learning Centre, Main Floor West Block Room 10-1048 Tel 250-960-5682 or via email [arc@unbc.ca](mailto:arc@unbc.ca) For more information, please visit their website [www.unbc.ca/arc](http://www.unbc.ca/arc)

## Academic Advising

For academic advising please contact the Recruitment and Advising Centre Room 7-714, by email: [advising@unbc.ca](mailto:advising@unbc.ca) or via phone at 250-960-6494.

## Access Success Centre

For tutoring online or in person; download handouts on writing, math, and referencing; receive study assistance; and much more, please see the Academic Success Centre. Their website is [www.unbc.ca/asc](http://www.unbc.ca/asc)

The Academic Success Centre is committed to supporting and enhancing student learning and to providing the skills students will need to become life-long learners. Through collaborative partnerships, we offer services and resources that empower students to take responsibility for their own learning. Our students' success is our ultimate measure of accomplishment.

This site provides you with access to:

- Free online tutoring
- Downloadable handouts for writing, study skills, math, and presentation skills
- Access to self assessment sites for learning styles, grammar, math, etc.
- Information about face-to-face tutoring and how to book an appointment
- Special programs and workshops offered through the Centre

For more information, please contact the Academic Success Centre located in the Teaching and Learning Building, Room 10-2584 or via Tel 250-960-6367 Fax 250-960-5425 or via email [asc@unbc.ca](mailto:asc@unbc.ca). Their website is [www.unbc.ca/asc](http://www.unbc.ca/asc)