Overview and Objectives

This course is a seminar in theories of organization. In addition to defining types of organizations (profit, non-profit and public) and approaches to the study of formal organizations, we identify, describe and discuss organization structures, behavior and processes in order to understand why and how people organize and for what purposes. In addition, we focus on the fundamental models of organization, in particular, the rational, bounded rational and resource dependence models and variations of these latter two; natural selection and garbage can models. Particular attention is also given to incentive structures, communication networks, decision-making, and organizational performance. We also examine and discuss how organizational perspective (the conceptual framework) gives rise to organizational action—beliefs about how the organization should act.

The purpose of this course is to impart knowledge of organization theory; explain its role in public policy, public administration and governance, and to understand how organizational structure and process constrain effectiveness and efficiency particularly, in public organizations. Students will acquire and demonstrate knowledge of organizations theory by discussing reading assignments, lectures, oral presentations, midterm paper, field research project and a final paper (project report).

Required Texts. Students must purchase textbooks immediately.


Recommended Reading

(Note: This textbook was listed as a required book for this course but was shifted to recommended because of its cost. However, this is a very useful text and it is a must purchase for students seriously interested in organization theory.)
**Student Products**

Oral Presentation (30 minutes duration)
Midterm Paper (Mini Literature Review of Organization Theory, 15 pages)
Final Paper (Project Report, 30 pages)

**Student Responsibilities**

1. This seminar meets once a week. Therefore, students must attend class regularly and read all assignments prior to each class meeting.

2. Beginning January 31st, class sessions will be lead by a 30-minute student presentation that explains the work by one of the scholars listed below. Students are reminded that this course is a seminar and its value to each student is dependent upon each student’s informed participation. Students will earn 40 quality points for the oral presentation.


3. The midterm paper is due on February 21, 2012 submitted electronically and in hard copy at the beginning of class. Students will identify, define, and explain the major contributions by five pre-eminent scholars to the literature in organization theory directly related to the assigned research project, in chronological order, and discuss how those theories build upon or refute each other. This paper should be 10-15 pages and must include a bibliography.

4. Due at noon on Tuesday April 24th, electronic submission of the final paper based on the assigned research project, approximately 30 pages. The final paper builds upon the midterm paper.

The research project assignment is to design and pilot a research study that provides an assessment of the organizational effectiveness and efficiency of the graduate program in your department (e.g., political science, education, journalism, etc.) at Howard University. The research paper must be organized as follows:

1. Introduction to the problem
2. Identify and review the most relevant literature in organizations theory for this task
3. Research design
4. Research methodology
5. Discussion
6. Expected Findings
7. Conclusions

**Grading**

Oral Presentation 40 points @ 15%
Midterm Mini Paper 100 points @ 35%
Final Research Paper 120 points @ 50%
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 101
ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 10  Introduction to course


Feb. 14  Critical theories and new directions in organizations, Pfeffer, Chapters 8 and 9, p. 177-204. (March 1959 and March and Simon 1976).


March 6  Organizational creation, persistence and transformation. Aldrich, Chapters 7-8, p. 161-218.

**March 13**  **Spring Recess**


March 27  **Research Project** – Field Studies (NO CLASS) Interorganizational relations, Aldrich, Chapter 11, p. 266-291.

April 3  **Research Project** – Field Studies (NO CLASS) Managing Interdependence Aldrich Chapter 12, p. 292- 322.

April 10  **Research Project** – Field Studies (NO CLASS)

April 17  Organizational networks and economic power, Aldrich Chapter 13, p. 323-350. Discussion of field research and project reports

April 24  **Due 3:10p.m.** Electronic submission of final project paper.
GUIDELINES FOR THE MIDTERM PAPER

The midterm paper is due on February 21, 2012 submitted electronically and in hard copy at the beginning of class. Students will identify, define, and explain the major contributions by five pre-eminent scholars to the literature in organization theory directly related to the assigned research project, in chronological order, and discuss how those theories build upon or refute each other. The paper also must identify the theory you will use in your final paper to assess organizational effectiveness and explain why this theory was selected. This paper should be 10-15 pages and must include a bibliography.

Academic Code of Student Conduct

Howard University is a community of scholars composed of faculty and students both of whom must hold the pursuit of learning and search for truth in the highest regard. Such regard requires adherence to the goal of unquestionable integrity and honesty in the discharge of teaching and learning responsibilities. Such regard allows no place for academic dishonesty regardless of any seeming advantage or gain that might accrue from such dishonesty. To better assure the realization of his goal any student enrolled for study at the University may be disciplined for the academic infractions defined below.

Definitions of Academic Infractions

1. Academic cheating—any intentional act(s) of dishonesty in the fulfillment of academic course or program requirements. This offense shall include (but is not limited to) utilization of the assistance of any additional individual(s), organization, document or other aid not specifically and expressly authorized by the instructor or department involved. (Note: This infraction assumes that with the exception of authorized group assignments or group take home assignments, all course or program assignments shall be completed by an individual student only without any consultation or collaboration with any other individual, organization, or aid.)

2. Plagiarism—to take and pass off intentionally as one’s own the ideas, writings, etc. of another without attribution (without acknowledging the author.)

All of the following are considered plagiarism:
• turning in someone else's work as your own
• copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
• failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
• giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
• changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
• copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (see our section on "fair use" rules)
Statement of Plagiarism
College of Arts & Sciences, Howard University

Plagiarism is the representation of another person's words and ideas as your own. This misrepresentation is a breach of ethics that seriously compromises a person's reputation. Professional careers have been ruined by revelations of plagiarism. Researchers, therefore, must scrupulously acknowledge sources to give proper credit for borrowed materials. The following rules should be observed to make sure that the distinction between your own words and ideas and those of others is justly maintained. (Of course, submitting a paper that is completely the work of another person is plagiarism in its most extreme form.)

• Words, phrases, and sentences of another person should be enclosed in quotation marks and cited in proper form.
• Paraphrases and summaries of the ideas of others, should be properly cited. These paraphrases and summaries should not represent merely the rearrangement of sentence elements but should be rewritten in your own style.
• Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries should be introduced with the name of the writer being cited.
• Every item cited in this paper (i.e., all sources of others' words and ideas) should appear in the bibliography in proper form.
• Citations should contain all the information required by standard conventions and specially indicate the location of the material cited. Page numbers should be checked for accuracy before a paper is submitted; the reader must be able to find the source of the material quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. Forms for citations and bibliographies should conform to those specified in The Bedford Guide for College Writers.

If you plagiarize all or part of an assignment, you can expect severe penalties, ranging from failure in that assignment to being recommended for a hearing before a judiciary body of the University. In most cases, a letter will be placed in your permanent file.