

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Issues in Private and
Public Management
Course No. MGMT 860W
Instructor: Carl P. Stover

Winter 1992
Orland Park,
Mondays, 6:30-9:20pm

MGMT 860A
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GSU ARCHIVES

Course Information

Description: Issues in Private and Public Management covers advanced topics in the art of management. For Winter '92, the theme of the course is "coping with change"; specifically, the restructuring and downsizing of organizations which is taking place in America in the 1990s. Coping with this change has two dimensions: Understanding it intellectually, and adjusting to it psychologically. Accordingly, this course will (1) explore and apply models of organizational decisionmaking (2) investigate the effects of the 1980s and 90s on the psychology of individuals and groups, in particular the so-called "Baby Boomers."

It is certain that most human beings adapt to their environments. They structure their behavior to survive. A large but somewhat controversial body of social science literature asserts that they also structure or restructure their personalities. For many decades the working environment of most Americans has been the large organization. It was asserted in the 1950s that a personality type evolved to fit this environment: "The Organization Man." As America approaches the end of the century, organizations are changing. This course will explore the possibility that as the workplace changes, a new personality is evolving which both feeds and reacts to these changes.

Rationale: "There are three kinds of people: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and those who wonder what happened to them." The intent of this course is to keep students out of the third group. Although organizations' decisions often come as a surprise or even shock to their members, decisions are seldom random. Rather they are the resultant of rules and patterns which guide managers' thinking. By learning these rules and patterns you can understand, and often, anticipate management's decisions. "Forewarned is forearmed."

You can also learn to recognize when you yourself are falling into one of these patterns, and break it, so as to engage in more creative, more productive thought and action.

Competencies:

- 1) Understand basic premise of The Organization Man. Form a reasoned opinion fo its validity.
- 2) Understand The New Individualist. Form a reasoned opinion of its validity.
- 3) (a) Describe how their demographic and economic situation has affected the "life chances" of Baby Boomers.
(b) Discuss how child-rearing and educational practices, and the economic and career experience of their fathers, may have produced a modal personality type among children born to middle-class families in the 1950s and early 1960s.
(c) Discuss how this generation is adapting to the 1980s and 90s.
- 4) Demonstrate ability to apply Whyte, Leinberger and Tucker's perspectives by conducting and analyzing the results of interviews with at least two managers or former managers.
- 5) Discuss Leinburger and Tucker's speculations on the future of organizations. Comment in particular on their hypothesis that a new psychology of employees will force organizations to adopt new, more flexible terms and conditions of employment.
- 6) Understand the concepts and models of organizational behavior expositied by Richard Cyert, James G. March, and Herbert Simon in their books: Organizations and A Behavioral Theory of the Firm. Demonstrate ability to apply a selection of these concepts in case studies.
- 7) Choose one or at most two of said models, or select from the readings your own logically - related set of concepts.
 - (a) defend your selection
 - (b) apply the model(s) or set of concepts by explaining in some detail major change - or refusal to change - in a large organization.

To meet this objective, each student will (either as an individual or as members of a group):

- (1) write a case
- (2) analyze a case written by another author (or group of authors)

Case Studies

Assignment in a nutshell:

Each student will (perhaps as part of a group of students)

1. Write two cases
2. Analyze two cases written by others

Explanation and elaboration:

A major theme of this course is that organizations, even business firms, do not in fact behave "rationally" as economists conceive that term. That is, they do not "optimize,"; neither do they "maximize" profits.

This is not to say that they are insane, but rather that the economists' idea of "rationality" is not functional, and is seldom used, in real life.

In addition, sociological research reveals that decisions and rules which appear rational and functional from an abstract point of view often produce dysfunctional consequences when applied, because employees, being human, are more complex than the old but still dominant conceptions of management and organizations imagine.

The literature we will review identifies three states of organizations, and patterns of behavior which are typical of each.

1. routine, and at least moderately successful
2. routine, but with problems, particularly problems of morale, which management often unintentionally worsens as it attempts to ameliorate them.

3. Crisis

Each student (or group) will write two cases: One of an organization in state 2 and one of an organization in state 3.

Students (or groups) will exchange papers, and then each student or group will analyze a case written by another student (or group). We will do this twice, once for organizations in condition 2 and once for organizations in condition 3.

Condition 2 cases must be written by Feb. 24 and will be analyzed between Feb. 25 and March 9.

Condition 3 cases must be written by March 23 and will be analyzed over the period from March 24 through April 13th.

The two cases may both be about the same organization at different times. This may in fact be the most useful approach; since it will show how the same organization engages in different behaviors when its condition changes. Ideally the organization should be a real one with which the students are personally familiar. Pseudonyms may be used to protect confidentiality.

In the alternative, students may construct a hypothetical organization. This should be as realistic as possible. It could be a composite or "historical novel" based upon real experiences but not portraying them exactly as they were.

Each student (or group) will be expected to submit his two cases and his two analyses in writing, and to be prepared to present them orally as well.

(As time permits, either every group, or a random selection, will actually make presentations).

Schedule

Subject to change

Note: Parts of The New Individualist are very difficult reading, and the book makes more sense when considered as a whole than chapter by chapter. Students may wish to read ahead, perhaps reading the whole book through quickly early in the course, and then go back to consider chapters one or a few at a time.

Abbreviations: TNI = The New Individualists

Org = Organizations

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	
1.	Jan 13	Orientation - Film: "What You Are Is Where You Were When"
2.	Jan 20	TNI - Intro .. Chapt. 1 and 2. In chapter 2, focus on Dave Harrison <u>Org's</u> Chapt 4: "The Decision to Participate" Recommended: Theodore Whyte, <u>The Organization Man</u> especially Part I (Ch.'s 1-5) and conclusion
3.	Jan 27	Is demography destiny? TNI Chapt 3 and 5
4.	Feb 3	Retrospective on the "Organization Man" generation: Did they get what they bargained for?

Assignment: Confirm or disconfirm the basic hypotheses of The Organization Man and The New Individualists by interviewing in some depth two managers or ex-managers who worked for large organizations during the 1950s. To what extent were they "Organization Men?" How did they perceive the basic (although typically unwritten) contract into which they entered by accepting employment with a large firm or government or non-profit agency? Did the organization live up to its side of the bargain? What do these people think of organizational life in the 80s and 90s? Is there as they see it, a new deal? Is it better or worse?

5. Feb 10 Understanding Organizations: The Rational model and its'drawbacks.
Org Chpts 2,7
6. Feb 17 Understanding Organizations; cont.:
Org Chapt 3 TNT Chapt 4
7. Feb 24 Understanding Organizations; cont.
Org Chapt 3 TNI Chpts 4,6,7
Case studies/presentations to be assigned
8. March 2 Understanding Organizations, cont.; "The Behavioral Theory" of the Firm

Readings: Org Chpts 5,7

Additional required readings to be assigned. Recommended: R. Cyert and J.G. March, The Behavioral Theory of the Firm Graham Allison, Essence of Decision
9. March 9 Continued
10. March 16 Applications
Cases/Presentations to be assigned
11. March 23 A Changing Psychology of Employees?
TNI Chpts 6,7,8
12. and
13. { March 30 Individual/Small group research and case-writing and case-analysis

Note: [Instructor will be out of the country on military duty during these two weeks.]

April 6
14. April 13 Presentations of case analyses
15. April 20 Will Organizations accomodate a new worrkforce? TNI Chpts 9,10,11. Guest speaker(s) personnel director(s) of local firms.