

Human Dynamics in Social Context

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Course Description:

This course explores the intricate dynamics of human interactions within organizational settings and the broader social environment in which they operate. It delves into the complexities of people's relations and perceptions, examining how individual and group behavior is influenced by their environment. This is done by covering the interplay and impact of organizations on humans by focusing on organizational structure, culture, diversity, various mechanisms of motivation, teamwork, and the strategic use of power and politics to achieve both individual and organizational goals. The course will also introduce students to selected institutions in our society and their impact on people.

This would be achieved through a combination of theoretical frameworks, exercises, and activities which would help develop the necessary skills to foster positive and productive relationships. It therefore provides an intersection of sociology, social psychology, and organizational behavior studies.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

The main goal of this course is to enable the student to develop both a sociological and an organizational perspective with respect to course-specific content.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the relationship of individuals in an organizational setting.
- Examine selected institutions and understand the issues and approaches to the changes facing different organizations/institutions in our society.
- Demonstrate an understanding of motivational factors, group dynamics, and work teams in organizations.
- Describe politics and power dynamics and discuss how and why they are used in organizations.
- Understand the principles of intergroup relations, inclusion, and importance of diversity in society.

- Demonstrate an appropriate level of competence in written expression and in library research as demanded by the discipline.

Course Requirements:

Assignments include a Quiz, Mid-term exam, Group Project and a Final Exam. Test format may be a combination of short answer exercise, essay questions covering all readings, lectures, hand-outs and class discussion content. More details regarding all assignments will be discussed in class.

Assignment	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course-Specific Learning Outcomes
Quiz	15%	A written test to check the extent to which key terms and basic concepts are comprehended.
Midterm Exam	25%	A written examination to ascertain the extent to which key terms and basic concepts have been understood.
Group Project	25%	Students will work in small groups to demonstrate their ability to explain the studied topic to peers and identify key issues. Creativity and innovation are encouraged with regard to the facilitation! Handouts, visual aids, posters, slides, etc. are expected to enhance the presentations and benefit the class.
Final exam	20%	A written examination to ascertain the extent to which key terms and basic concepts have been understood
Class Participation	15%	Active and meaningful engagement in the class is expected. In-class activities will be assessed on either an individual basis or group basis and will be marked according to the student's ability to work together as a group and come up with a solution to the problem asked.
TOTAL	100%	

Mandatory Completion Policy

Note that all mandatory assignments and exams must be completed to the best of your ability in order for your final grade to be issued. Failure to complete a mandatory assignment or exam may result in a failing grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	97-100	Excellent Work
A	93-97	Outstanding Work
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Good work
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course

AEP Academic Integrity Policy

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not tolerated. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the development of knowledge and learning is encouraged at many stages of the learning process. While we value technology for educational purposes, we also value originality and the retainment of knowledge, and thus using AI for assignments and examinations, even if rephrased, is strictly prohibited and considered an academic integrity violation, unless the instructor explicitly allows for it in the context of evaluated work

AEP Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy

The AEP program in Prague promotes a diverse learning environment where the dignity, worth, and differences of each individual are valued and respected. Discrimination and harassment, whether based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristics, are repugnant and completely inconsistent with our objectives. Retaliation against individuals for raising good faith claims of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited.

AEP Diversity Policy

AEP is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming community that values diversity in all its forms. We believe that one of the most meaningful lessons of studying abroad is learning to navigate and appreciate differences with curiosity and an open mind. While engaging across differences can sometimes be challenging or uncomfortable, these moments are essential for growth and learning. We recognize that every member of our community, even with the best intentions, may occasionally make missteps. Our commitment is to provide a supportive environment where respectful and honest dialogue helps us learn from these experiences, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive and broaden their perspective.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

CEE Introductory Lecture Series

AEP Introductory Lecture Series

Week 2

Introduction, Social Influences

General overview of the syllabus, Basic Introduction to the discipline, and the course content, Types of prosocial behavior

Reading: Chap. 9 (Baumeister & Bushman); Chap. 4 (West & Woods); Lecture slides

Week 3

Social Influences (Continued)

Compare and contrast kinds of prosocial behavior and analyze different explanations and understanding motives.

Reading: Chap. 9 (Baumeister & Bushman), Lecture slides

Week 4

Perception and Individual decision making

Understanding attitude and perception

Reading: Chap. 7 (Ashleigh & Mansi); Lecture slides

Week 5

Institutions and Organizations in Society, Quiz

Understand and analyze how institutions interact, their functions, and the ways in which they shape and govern our lives

Reading:

- Durkheim, E. 1954. The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. (J. Swain, Trans.) New York: TheFree Press
- Miller, S. 2007. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry: social institutions

Week 6

Foundation of Organizational Structure and Culture

Readings: Chap. 11 & 14 (West & Woods), Lecture slides

Week 7

Midterm Exam

Week 8

Understanding Group and Team behavior

Understand and examine the relationships between teamwork and team member well-being, satisfaction, and organizational performance.

Reading: Chap. 13 (West & Woods); Chap. 9 (Ashleigh & Mansi), Lecture slides

Week 9

Motivational factors

A framework for motivation theories, concepts, and its applications

Reading: Chap. 8 (Ashleigh & Mansi); Chap. 5 (West & Woods); Lecture slides

Week 10

Influence of Power Dynamics and Politics

Reading: Robins and Judge (Chap.13), lecture slides

Week 11

Power Dynamics

Experiential activity

Reading: Robins and Judge (Chap.13), lecture slides

Week 12

Team Project Presentation

Week 13

Final Exam

*Please note: *This syllabus serves as a guide for the course and is subject to change, with student notification. The most current version of the syllabus will always be available on Moodle. *Additional readings and related websites will be assigned throughout the semester*

Teaching methodology

The course will be taught by a series of lectures, experiential activities, class discussions, and other in-class activities and exercises. Conceptual frameworks, case discussions, and skill-oriented activities are blended within each broad topic. Students will read, analyze, and discuss a variety of text-specific visuals to enable them to deal with real-life predicaments. This format aims to develop student's ability to analyze a problem, synthesize an analytic discussion, present, and justify an analysis orally and respond to criticism and queries raised by fellow students and the course instructor.

Readings:

Required Material

- Ashleigh. M & Mansi. A (2012) *The Psychology of People in Organisations*, London: Pearson
- Baumeister. R & Bushman, B (2017) *Social Psychology and Human Nature*, London: Cengage
- West. M & Woods, S (2014) *The Psychology of Work and Organisations*, London: Cengage

Recommended reading

- Fellenz. M & Martin. J (2017) *Organizational Behaviour and Management*, London: Cengage
- Miller, Seumas, 2010, *The Moral Foundations of Social Institutions: A Philosophical Study*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Parsons, Talcott, 1982, *On Institutions and Social Evolution*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Robins, S & Judge. T (2011), *Organizational Behavior*, London: Pearson Publishing
- Scott, Richard, 2001, *Institutions and Organisations*, London: Sage.
- Simmel, Georg, 1971, *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings*, (ed.) D. L. Levine, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Other reading material will be discussed in the class. Additional readings & lecture slides will be uploaded on the Moodle portal. Much of out of class communication will be done using Moodle, including sending articles, case studies, class notes, etc.