

Spring 2012

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE/PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION**

COURSE: PA 217, Organization Theory

INSTRUCTOR: Mark Linder

OFFICE HOURS By appointment

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CLASSROOM: Clark 231

MISCELLANEOUS:

Students need to meet SJSU and Department requirements and get instructor's permission. In case of emergency during class, dial 911. If you need accommodations because of a disability or if you wish to provide emergency medical information, please make an appointment soon to see me. You can buy textbooks at Spartan Bookstore in the Student Union or at Roberts on 10th Street. I will bring additional readings to class for distribution.

University drop policy: The University has strict drop and add policies. Please check with the registrar on the dates and specific policies. Final drop day without a W is February 6. After this date drop requires signature of instructor and chairperson. The final add day is February 13.

Computers are available for student use in the computer labs in WSQ 001, DMH 236, and in the library.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Intended for persons working in or preparing for professional careers in government or non-profit organizations, this seminar features critical analysis and practical application of contemporary theories about how to structure and operate public organizations and how people behave in them. The seminar has three sections. The first section examines some of the classic organization theory writings. The second section focuses on government organizations with a specific focus on municipal government organizations. The third section raises the question of where does the public fit in government organization. We will give special attention to your particular organization and how it really works and what can be done to make it most effective.

The course will provide a theoretical foundation through readings and practical application through papers, oral presentations and case studies. Classroom discussion will be critical to understanding the ideas and applications.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) You should be able to identify and evaluate major approaches, theories, and concepts pertaining to the structure and processes of public organizations.
- 2) You should be able to analyze real organizational situations in terms of alternative theories and approaches and develop plans for constructive action.
- 3) You will have a greater understanding of how government organizations work, how you can be most effective in a government organization, and how and why the public has a role in a government organization.
- 4) You will be able to use the principals from the readings and class discussion to analyze your own organization and how you could change it to be even more effective.

METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS

This seminar will use a combination of critical analysis of readings and application of theory to real organizational situations. In addition to readings and class discussion, methods include lectures, videos, case studies, some self-assessments, extensive group work and individual and group papers. On occasion, we'll invite knowledgeable practitioners to participate with us. Class participation is highly valued because members of the class are resource persons for every one of us. I respect experience, and I welcome questioning of what I, and others say. In all assignments – participation, presentations, papers, and exams – the underlying expectation is “careful, thoughtful, engagement.”

There will be one paper and an oral presentation. For the paper and oral presentation you look at your organization through the lens of Morgan's metaphors, analyze its effectiveness and offer a redesign if you feel it is needed. This paper and oral presentation can be an individual or a group project. The oral presentation will describe the organization, its effectiveness, and impact of a redesigned organization. We will discuss this assignment in detail in class.

In addition to the paper and oral presentation you have the following:

- Two essays on metaphors
- Assist me in leading the discussion of one of the Morgan metaphors.
- A weekly 1-2 page journal addressing issues you are confronting, what you are learning about the issues, the people involved and yourself. This is **voluntary**, but I am happy to do it if useful to you.
- A final essay. You will receive the question a week in advance and are expected to integrate your own experiences, what you learned in class and in the readings into your writing.

REQUIRED READING

Morgan, Gareth. 2006. *Images of Organization*. Third Edition. Newbury Park: Sage (Henceforth, "M")

Selected readings from Shafritz, Jay, and Ott, J. Steven. 2004 *Classics of Organization Theory 6th Edition*. Thomsen/Wadsworth (Henceforth, "S&O").

Also required are in-class handouts and articles cited in the reading list, plus a few articles that may be added during the semester. **Please be sure to prepare all reading assignments before the appropriate class session.** We will definitely discuss the reading in class and you may be asked to write about it.

SUGGESTED READING

The following are not required, but you may find them useful in your exploration and application of organization theories we discuss.

Rogers, Mary Beth. 1990 *Cold Anger* University of North Texas Press

Gladwell, Malcolm. 2000 *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Little, Brown and Company.

Kotter, John P. 1996. *Leading Change* Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.

Friedman, Thomas L. 2005. *The World is Flat* New York, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux

GRADING

Grading will be based on the following student work:

Class participation	15%
Metaphor Discussion	15%
Metaphor essays	15%
Paper and Presentation	35%
Final Essay	20%

Standard university criteria will apply. Mediocre performance will be evaluated as average and a C grade will be awarded.

A Excellent Performance	D Poor Performance
B Very Good Performance	F Failing Performance
C Average Performance	

READING LIST AND CLASS SCHEDULE

- 1) Jan. 25 **INTRODUCTION**
Overview of class, introductions, paper work
Jim Collins video – “On Good to Great”
The tale of two organization charts – the formal and the real
In class reading and discussion – Frances Hesselbein, “Managing in a World that is Round”
Sign up for class discussion leader

- 2) Feb.1 **FUNDAMENTALS OF ORGANIZATION THEORY AND INTRODUCTION TO MORGAN’S METAPHORS**
S&O - Taylor, Roethlisberger, Jacques
M – Preface, Chapters 1-3, chapters 10-11
Other – Adam Lashinsky, “Chaos by Design”
Chaplin’s “Modern Times” Video
Discussion of the classic readings and Morgan and how it compares to your reality

- 3) Feb. 8 **METAPHORS OF ORGANIZATIONS**
M, chapters 4 and 5

S&O - Simon

Tim Dickinson, "The Machinery of Hope"

Etienne Wenger and William Snyder, "Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier"

Continued discussion of Morgan's writings, classic articles and its relation to your reality.

Guest Speaker: TBD

4) Feb. 15 **METAPHORS OF ORGANIZATIONS**

M - Chapters 6 and 7

S&O – Pfeffer, Janis, Kanter

Plato, "The New Republic, Book VII"

Continued discussion of classic writings, Morgan and its relation to your reality.

Turn in group/individual topics

Turn in essay analyzing your organization through the lens of one of the first group of metaphors

Guest Speaker: Kelly Spivey

5) Feb. 22 **METAPHORS OF ORGANIZATIONS**

M – Chapters 8 and 9

Quick, T, "Autopoiesis"

Uchitelle, Louis "Introduction", *Layoffs and Their Consequences*

Cortes, Ernesto, "Justice at the Gates of the City: A Model for Shared Prosperity

Continued discussion of the readings and its relation to your reality

Guest Speaker: Minh Ngo, Executive Director Cupertino Education Endowment Foundation

6) Feb. 29 **METAPHORS OF ORGANIZATION**

M – Chapter 12

Case Study presentation

Continued discussion of readings and its relation to your reality

Guest Speaker: Erik Larsen, SEIU

Turn in essay analyzing your organization through the lens of one of the last group of metaphors.

7) Mar. 7 **PRESENTATIONS**

8) Mar. 14 **PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATION THEORY II**

The challenges for today's public sector organization

The elected official-staff partnership

John Nalbandian, "The Context for Local Government", 2002

John Nalbandian, "The Council-Staff Partnership", 1999

Guest Speaker: TBD,

- 9) Mar. 21 **WHERE DOES THE PUBLIC FIT IN**
Discussion of how organization theory fits in a local democracy.
Reading: Bill Barnes and Bonnie Mann “Making Local Democracy Work”
Bonnie Mann and Stephanie Rozse, “Local Practices in Public Engagement”
Valerie A. Lemmie, “Democracy Beyond the Ballot Box: A new role for Elected Officials, City Managers, and Citizens
Guest speakers: Joaquin Sanchez (not finally confirmed)
- 10) March 28 No Class
- 11) April 4 **WHERE DOES THE PUBLIC FIT IN - II**
Further discussion on where and how the public fits into organization decision making
Reading: Ernesto Cortes, Jr. “Reweaving the Social Fabric”
Guest Speaker – TBD
- 12) April 11 **PRESENTATIONS**
- 13) April 18 **SECTOR ORGANIZATION THEORY AND PRACTICE**
Managing change in a public organization
Light, Jane “Change Management and Service Quality”
Guest speaker: Jane Light
- 14) April 25 **PRESENTATIONS**
- 15) May 2 **PRESENTATIONS**
- 16) May 9 **STAYING ALIVE**
Discussion of how you handle organization change and challenges
Reading: Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, “Leading with an Open Heart”, Fall 2002
Final paper due
Final Essay handed out.
- 17) May 16 **FINAL ESSAY AND EVALUATION OF CLASS**