

*Syllabus Note: this syllabus is not a contract. It is subject to further change or revision, to best realize the educational goals of the course. Revisions will be announced in class or in course materials online with appropriate prior notice.*

**San José State University  
Department of Anthropology**

**ORGS 101 People and Organizations**  
Section 01 (44333), Fall 2020

ONLINE

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor:	Dr. Melissa Beresford
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Office Hours:	Zoom office hours by appointment
Class Days/Time:	N/A: All course material will be posted online (see course format description below)
Prerequisites	Upper-division standing

**SJSU Course Catalog Description:**

Study of complex organizations in which people live their lives. Topics include organizational forms and functions; internal social and cultural dynamics; growth and change in material, social and symbolic environments; and ethical issues of organizational life.

**Detailed Course Description:**

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of complex organizations in which people live their lives. Humans organize to get things done that cannot be done alone. Organizations take a variety of forms and they perform many functions, and it is difficult to imagine social life without them. The organizations of contemporary life are everywhere, and yet we often fail to pay explicit attention to them. This course provides a foundation for that “paying attention” through an interdisciplinary approach to seeing, understanding, and acting in organizations. We will draw upon many of the disciplines of the social sciences. While many contributions to the study of organizations come from management studies, our emphasis in this course will be a social scientific one. One of the major goals of this course is to understand the different ways and perspectives through which social scientists and organizational leaders think about organizations. Topics include organizational forms and functions; internal social and cultural dynamics; organizational growth and change; and ethical issues of organizational life.

### Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize different disciplinary and epistemological approaches to thinking about organizations and understanding organizations
- Understand how social scientists use field methods to collect data and study organization
- Identify the variety of organizations that humans have created to achieve their goals
- Analyze the structures of organizations and how people function within them
- Know how environments affect organizations internally and externally at various scales of society (local, regional, global)
- Grasp how organizations reflect human values
- Articulate how personal experiences working within organizations reflect and differ from theoretical principles of organizational studies
- Comprehend how knowledge of organizational studies can be applied into careers across different sectors such as business, medicine, non-profit work, government, and education

### Course Format:

This will be an asynchronous online course, taught in modular format. This means that there are no designated class meeting times. Rather, all course material will be posted in modular format on the course Canvas site. There are 6 course modules. Each module contains a series of lectures, readings, and activities (reading responses and class discussion via the online discussion boards). In addition to the 6 course modules, there are three written assignments that require students to conduct guided research and analysis. Students are required to complete the course modules and the written assignments by the dates outlined in the course schedule.

### Required Texts/Readings (Required):

- All Readings for this course will be provided to you via our online Canvas platform

### Final Grades (based on percentage of total possible points)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Course Points</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
<i>A</i>	92.5-100	Excellent
<i>A minus</i>	89.5-92.4	Excellent
<i>B plus</i>	87.5-89.4	Good
<i>B</i>	82.5-87.4	Good
<i>B minus</i>	79.5-82.4	Good
<i>C plus</i>	77.5-79.4	Average
<i>C</i>	69.5-77.4	Average
<i>D</i>	59.5-69.4	Passing
<i>F</i>	Less than 59.5	Failure

Note on “rounding” grades: The grades here have already been “rounded up” – meaning, if you earn an 89.5, I round up to give you an A minus (rather than a B plus). Grades will not be rounded up further than what is already stated here.

*For your own protection, you should keep a copy of everything you hand in, and you should keep your graded assignments at least until grades are finalized at the end of the semester, and in the event you wish to contest any grades.*

### **Course Requirements and Assignments:**

<b>Assignment/Exam</b>	<b>Total Pts</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>
Syllabus Quiz	10	<b>3.5%</b>
6 Reading Responses (10 points each)	60	<b>19.3%</b>
6 Discussion Board Posts & Responses (10 points each)	60	<b>19.3%</b>
Writing Assignment #1	60	<b>19.3%</b>
Writing Assignment #2	60	<b>19.3%</b>
Final Writing Assignment #3	60	<b>19.3%</b>
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100%</b>

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week, or 9 hours per week for a 3 credit course) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica.

Final grades for the course will be assigned on the basis of the activities and assignments below. What is written below is a brief overview. ***Please refer to Canvas for due dates (on the course schedule) and detailed instructions for each assignment.*** These are brief descriptions of each assignment. Please refer to Canvas for more detailed instructions.

#### **1. Syllabus Quiz**

Each student is required to read through this syllabus and complete a syllabus quiz (located on Canvas) before proceeding with the course material. You must receive an 80% or higher and you can repeat the quiz until you reach it up until the quiz due date.

#### **1. Reading Responses (60 points total, 20% of final grade)**

Each module will have one reading response (6 total, 10 points each). Reading Response are short-answer quizzes. For each module, you will be given one short prompt. You will write one short paragraph (4-5 sentences). You must show engagement with the readings or lectures (with citations) to get full credit. You will be asked to critically think about materials from the readings and lectures, so you'll need to have thought about the course materials to pass. Reading Responses are graded pass/fail.

#### **2. Discussion Posts (60 points total, 20% of final grade)**

In response to each module's prompt (6 total), students will make one Discussion Post (50-100 words). Each student's post should have an interesting or provocative title so that others will want to read and respond to the post. Each post is worth 6 points. Posts are graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass, posts must (1) be at least 50-100 words, (2) have an interesting or provocative title, and (3) be relevant to the discussion topic.

Within 24 hours of the post deadline, students must post a response to two other classmates' initial post that are no more than 50 words and engage in critical or substantive ways with the initial post (e.g., exemplar, critique, question). Each response is worth 2 points (4 points total). These responses are graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass and earn full points responses must (1) adhere to the word limit and (2) engage critically or substantively with the initial post it is responding to.

### **3. Writing Assignments (60% of final grade)**

There will be three writing assignments that will require you to reflect and do research on the organizations of which you are a part of in your own life. Each writing assignment will have two different prompts. You will choose ONE of the prompts to address. This paper should analyze your personal experiences/observations according to our class readings, lectures, and discussion on the assigned topic. There are multiple ways you could approach this type of analytical writing – e.g., comparing and contrasting your experience working in or being part of an organization against how organizational theorists understand organizations; using different organizational theories or perspectives presented in our readings to discern how your organization works; noting that your experiences exemplify one type of organizational theory, but arguing that a different organizational theory/approach might be better suited for your organization.

Below is a brief outline of each writing assignment. Please refer to the course Canvas site for detailed directions.

#### **Assignment #1: Organizational Mission & Goals OR Organizational Structure**

*Option 1:* What is the mission and purpose of your organization? What goals is your organization trying to achieve? How does your organization fit into society - i.e., what role or service does it play in larger society (you can think in terms of San Jose, Silicon Valley, California, the U.S., or globally)?

*Option 2:* How is your organization structured? In describing the structure, pay specific attention to the complexity, formalization, and centralization of the structure. Contrast the formal structure with the informal structure as you observe it.

#### **Assignment #2: Organizational Leadership OR Organizational Culture**

*Option 1:* What is the style or approach of the leadership at your organization? How would you describe the different motivations of the various members of your organization (e.g., management, support staff, volunteers, clients, etc.) to adhere to the leadership and perform the work they do? How are tasks performed by employees and volunteers structured and accounted for by management? What are the attitudes of employees and volunteers toward this structuring and accounting? How does the fulfillment (or lack thereof) affect their work and the effectiveness of the organization?

*Option 2:* What are the cultural norms and values of your organizations? Are these norms and values formally or informally recognized (or both)? What are some processes, activities, or events that serve to ensure and support these norms and values? How do these norms and values align or support the mission and goals of your organization?

### **Final Assignment #3: Organizational Power OR Organizational Ethics**

*Option 1:* Describe who exercises power and authority at your organization. Do different people have different kinds and degrees of power and authority? What kind of authority do they exercise? Are there other types of power exercised at your organization? How and by whom? Do different people exercise different kinds of power?

*Option 2:* Does your organization have a code of ethics for the work it performs? How does it ensure that that code of ethics is upheld? How do these ethics align with the mission and goals of your organization?

### **Extra Credit**

There will be no extra credit opportunities assigned for this course.

### **Incompletes**

A mark of "I" (incomplete) is given by the instructor when you have completed most of the course (at least 80% of coursework) and are otherwise doing acceptable work (have a passing grade) but are unable to complete the course because of illness or other conditions/circumstances beyond your control. You are required to arrange with the instructor for the completion of the course requirements.

### **Late Assignments**

Students are responsible for knowing the course due dates (listed on course schedule located on Canvas), and for turning work in on time.

- If you need an accommodation/extension on course assignments for religious practices, please follow the [university procedure](#) to request an accommodation.
- If you have a personal or medical reason for requesting an extension on an activity or assignment, you must obtain written consent from the instructor in advance of the assignment due date. Requests for excuses must be written as an email to the instructor and approval must be obtained by an email reply. If you have a personal or medical emergency that precludes you from contacting the instructor in advance of the assignment due date, contact the instructor to discuss your situation as soon as you are able to.
- Discussion posts and Reading responses that are submitted late without instructor approval will not be accepted.
- Written assignments will be accepted up to 5 days late (including weekends) and will be docked 10% points (i.e. one letter grade) for each day that they are late on top of assigned grade. Students can request an extension without penalty only in cases of medical or personal emergencies/circumstances approved by the instructor.

*Please note:* If there is a system-wide outage when an assignment is due you will not be punished for not turning it in on time, but will be required to turn it in by the newly stated day and time.

### **Discussions**

This course will rely heavily upon your thoughts and insights as we complete discussions via the online discussion boards

- Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. When you disagree, challenge or critique the idea, not the person.
- Listen/read carefully to what others are saying/writing even when you disagree. Comments that you make (asking for clarification, sharing critiques, expanding on a point, etc.) should reflect that you have paid attention to the person's comments.
- Support your statements. Use evidence and provide a rationale for your points.
- Recognize that we are all still learning. Be willing to change your perspective, and make space for others to do the same.

### **University Policies Applicable to All SJSU Courses**

Please go to <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> to review university policies, procedures, and resources that are applicable to all SJSU courses. These include the following:

- General expectations, rights, and responsibilities of students
- Workload and credit hour requirements
- Attendance and participation policies
- Expectations for timely feedback class assignments
- Accommodations to students' religious holidays
- Dropping and adding courses
- Consent for recording of class and public sharing of instructor material
- Academic integrity
- Campus policy in compliance with the American Disabilities Act
- Student technology resources
- SJSU Peer Connections (tutoring services)
- SJSU Writing Center
- SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

The Course Schedule of dialing assignments, readings, activities, and due date can be found on the Course Canvas site. This schedule is subject to change in order to meet the goals of the course. Students should regularly check the course Canvas site and their SJSU email accounts for updates.

## ORGS 101: People & Organizations

Week	Course Module	Readings	Activities	Due Date (submit on Canvas; all assignments and activities due at 11:59 pm on the due date)
0 8/19-8/21	<b>Course Introduction</b> Read the syllabus, check out the course platform	None	Familiarize yourself with the course requirements and platform	
<b>MODULE 1: FOUNDATIONS</b>				
1 8/25	What are Organizations?	Tolbert & Hall, Ch. 1  Taylor: "The Principles of scientific management"	Module 1 Discussion post  Module 1 Discussion Response	<b>Thu. Sept 3</b>  <b>Fri. Sept 4</b>
2 8/31	How can we study organizations?	McGregor: "The Human Side of Enterprise"	Module 1 Reading Response	<b>Fri. Sept 4</b>
<b>MODULE 2: SOCIOLOGY</b>				
3 9/7	How are organizations structured?	Tolbert & Hall, Ch. 3: Organizational structure	Module 2 Discussion post  Module 2 Discussion Response	<b>Thu. Sept 17</b>  <b>Fri. Sept 18</b>
4 9/14	How are organizations shaped by their environment?	Tolbert & Hall Ch. 8: Conceptions of Environment	Module 2 Reading Response	<b>Fri. Sept 18</b>
5 9/21	<b><u>Writing Assignment #1:</u></b>			<b>Fri. Sept 25</b>
<b>MODULE 3: PSYCHOLOGY</b>				
6 9/28	How are humans motivated to behave in organizations?	Tolbert & Hall Ch. 6: Decision-making  Maslow: The Theory of Human Motivation	Module 3 Discussion post  Module 3 Discussion Response	<b>Thu. Oct 8</b>  <b>Fri. Oct 9</b>
7 10/5	How are organizations led?	Tolbert & Hall Ch. 5: Leadership	Module 3 Reading Response	<b>Fri. Oct 9</b>
<b>MODULE 4: CULTURE</b>				
8 10/12	How does culture affect organizations?	Sackman: "Uncovering Culture in Organizations"	Module 4 Discussion post  Module 4 Discussion Response	<b>Thu. Oct 22</b>  <b>Fri. Oct 23</b>
9 10/19	How do people's norms and values affect organizations?	Weissner "Leveling the Hunter: Constraints on the Status Quest in Foraging Societies"	Module 4 Reading Response	<b>Fri. Oct 23</b>

10 10/26	<b><u>Writing Assignment # 2</u></b>			<b>Fri. Oct 30</b>
<b>MODULE 5: POWER</b>				
11 11/2	What are the bases of power in organizations?	Tolbert and Hall Ch. 4: Power and Power Outcomes	Module 5 Discussion post Module 5 Discussion Response	<b>Thu. Nov 12</b> <b>Fri. Nov 13</b>
12 11/9	How do people exercise authority in organizations?	Salancik and Pfeffer: "Who Gets Power – And How They Hold Onto It"	Module 5 Reading Response	<b>Fri. Nov 13</b>
<b>MODULE 6: INTERACTIONS</b>				
13 11/16	How do people communicate in organizations?	Tolbert and Hall Ch. 7: Communication	Module 6 Discussion post Module 6 Discussion Response	<b>Tue. Dec 1</b> <b>Wed. Dec 2</b>
14 11/23	What are organizational ethics?	Simms: "The Institutionalization of Organizational Ethics"	Module 6 Reading Response	<b>Wed. Dec 2</b>
15 11/30				
<b>FINAL ASSIGNMENT</b>				
16 12/2-12/9	<b><u>Writing Assignment #3</u></b>			<b>Wed. Dec 9</b>