University of La Verne  
Fall 2010  
MGMT 356 – Introduction to Organizational Theory

An Online Course  
CRN 1809 and CRN 2010

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Office hours online Sunday evenings unless exceptions are noted on Blackboard’s “Announcements”; I check email very frequently, every day, except times when I am in class, in meetings, or traveling. I check voice mail seldom.

Email is my preferred way to communicate.

NOTE: This document is a draft as of 7/31/2010. The course may be modified, at faculty discretion, to meet the needs of enrolling students or changing circumstances.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory course intended to examine several major perspectives in organization theory and the impact of applied theory on organizations and management.

The course provides a fundamental knowledge base for students in the specific theory areas of organizational purpose and strategy, the external environment, innovation and change, culture and ethical values, and conflict, power and politics. Together we will explore how organizations function, develop, and modify in response to both external as well as internal environmental dynamics in these specific domains of theory.
OBJECTIVE

The objective of this course is to provide students with a conceptual framework for the study, understanding, and application of organizational theory, and its relevance for managerial practice.

At the conclusion of the course, each student will be able to identify and apply core theoretical concepts to the challenges being experienced by a specific organization of which the student is a member (or an organization to which the student has access); capture in a group project the most significant learning from the course content to create a high quality wiki-based product to share with others; and demonstrate an awareness of the complexities of human dynamics within a temporary organization, with particular attention to the focus points of the course content. The skill of critical and “big picture” thinking will be demonstrated through the creation of three significant questions related to a particular industry.

Special note on July 31st: As I read over this syllabus language, the course doesn’t sound as interesting and actually enjoyable! as students have indicated in previous terms. I hope you also find insight, understanding, and opportunities to grow through our work together this fall. ☺ CHS

LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

The learning methodologies used in this course consist of assigned reading, Blackboard-based discussions, library/Internet research, two interviews with practicing managers captured in short descriptive papers, individual reflective journal postings on Blackboard, and a group project.
Required Textbook

Students are required to purchase a customized textbook of six chapters selected from:


*This customized textbook is available from the University Bookstore, and has the ISBN number* 0-324-83362-8

Assignments Posted on Blackboard

Reminders of upcoming due dates for each assignment will be both posted on Blackboard’s “Announcements” screen and emailed through the University email system (@laverne.edu). The Blackboard discussion board and the Blackboard Journal feature will be utilized during the term; both can be accessed through the Tools screen. Individual papers will be submitted through the Content screen or posted to the discussion board; each assignment description specifies the submission location. Include your name in the title of each posted file, and ALWAYS save files using 2003 Word (.doc). *Any postings using docx format will NOT be credited.* Assignments sent to an incorrect Blackboard location will not be credited.

Timeliness

All assignments must be submitted on time. *No late assignments will receive credit.* Unless otherwise indicated on the detailed schedule and the assignment description, all assignments will be due no later than 11:59 pm Sunday evening of the designated week. See the Detailed Schedule for specific readings and assignment due dates and potential points for each graded assignment. Points identified on the schedule are for A+ work.

All reading should be completed prior to the date listed on the detailed schedule. Keeping current with the reading is important; reading assignments are well spaced for student success.
Assignment Details

Information is posted on Blackboard; faculty will be responsive to email requests for additional information if further clarification is needed. However, the designated discussion board (the first forum) is a place to first post any course or assignment question: if you are seeking clarification, others will be as well! Using the discussion board lets everyone see faculty response. If appropriate, a telephone conversation may be the best means of ensuring mutual understanding of any aspect of the course. While I do not share my home office telephone number, I am glad to telephone students when that need is evident or in response to your request.

EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY

To be prepared each week; to grade student assignments promptly, with appropriate feedback, to be available by appointment to connect with students online (or by telephone or in person, if that is feasible); to be promptly responsive to email messages; to hold high standards for all of us. Faculty and students together are responsible for creating and sustaining a safe environment that facilitates learning, openness, personal growth, and mutual trust and respect. I am committed to the success of each student. If there is an occasion when I cannot be reached, I will alert you through the “Announcements” screen.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students will need to access the Blackboard course site several times each week for information and to post assignments, as well as being attentive to frequent email messages and Blackboard-based announcements from faculty.

Course evaluation is a significant aspect of faculty learning and course development. The University of La Verne provides an opportunity for students to comment and to provide course feedback in the final weeks of each term. Our goal as faculty is to have 100% participation in the end-of-term online evaluation.
Management scholar Henry Mintzberg has commented on the nature of reflection in his book, *Managers Not MBAs*: “Reflecting does not mean musing, and it is not casual. It means wondering, probing, analyzing, synthesizing, connecting—‘to ponder carefully and persistently [the] meaning [of an experience] to the self.’ And not just about what you think happened but ‘why do you think it happened?’ and ‘how is this situation similar to and different from other problems?’ (Daudelin 1996, 41) (2004, 254). Reflection is central to the work of this course; it is expected that student reading and related reflection throughout the term will contribute significantly to learning.

It has been the experience of faculty that students’ academic success is most likely with a number of short assignments; therefore the course includes frequent work, with regular faculty feedback to support growth and skill development.

At the conclusion of the course, students will self-evaluate their progress in terms of individual goals set during the first week of the term. This evaluation will be part of a final individual journal posting addressing each individual student’s own course experience.

**Students’ continued enrollment in this course denotes understanding of and compliance with all elements of this syllabus, with particular attention to academic integrity.**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

As specified in the *University of La Verne Catalog*, “Each student is responsible for performing academic tasks in such a way that honesty is not in question. Unless an exception is specifically defined by an instructor, students are expected to maintain the following standards of integrity:

a. All tests, term papers, oral and written assignments, recitations, and all other academic efforts are to be the work of the student presenting the material.

b. Any use of wording, ideas, or findings of other persons, writers, or researchers requires the explicit citation of the source; use of the exact wording requires a ‘quotation’ format.” (from the 2009-2010 *Catalog* online, n.p.)
Plagiarism is a serious offense, and an illegal act. Failure to meet these standards for academic honesty will lead to course failure, and can result in dismissal from the University. Every assignment must include, when appropriate, cited and referenced notations. See ULV Catalog for further details on academic integrity. See the posted sample paper for academic formatting information.

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The College of Business and Public Management, and all courses and activities in its programs, share commitment to the University of La Verne mission and its emphasis on four major concerns to affirm a positive and rewarding life: reflective attention to values, community in the context of diversity, lifelong learning and community service.