

**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

**SPRING 2023**

**Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays**

**“*Excellence is a habit*” – Aristotle**

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***OFFICE HOURS***: In person or e-mail, pretty much anytime. Please email to make an appointment in person.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In every aspect of your life, from academic life, to your career life, to your personal life you are constantly interacting with people. While skills in other courses you are taking, such as finance, economics, accounting, marketing are key to your career success, the ability to manage organizations, teams, and people is equally important. Throughout your career, you will depend on other people to accomplish your goals- you will need to work for other people, work with people, and or supervise other people to achieve your goals. An understanding of human behavior and psychology is therefore an essential addition to the technical skills you will be learning from other courses.

Organizational behavior (OB) is the study of humans at work- what people need, desire, how they make decisions, and how they can work together to achieve a greater good.

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts, topics, and theories of OB. The course will focus on four levels. We will start with the individual (decision making, motivation, personality), the interpersonal (giving and taking, negotiation, influence) the team (team effectiveness), and then the organization (culture).

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

The course is designed to increase your knowledge of OB concepts and theories, with the aim of achieving these goals:

* Develop your own managerial and leadership skills.
* Understand and analyze how individuals think.
* Apply OB concepts to real-world cases and challenges managers face.

We will be covering the following topics:

1. Personalities
2. Theories of motivation
3. Decision making and perceptions
4. Giving and taking
5. Giving feedback
6. Creativity
7. Influence
8. Teams
9. Culture

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:**

This course depends heavily on your ability and willingness to participate and discuss topics in class. For example, this course will utilize many case discussions, rather than lectures. The quality of your learning experience depends greatly on your ability to come to class on time, prepared to discuss all topics. Students are expected to lead the class discussion and I (as the instructor) will provide guidance and structure to the discussion.

For you to develop a managerial way of thinking, the focus in this course will be on critical analysis and discussion. This means your **grades will NOT be based** on how well you can **recite** and **memorize** course materials and definitions. Rather, your grades will be based on how well you can **apply** course materials through critical thinking and analysis of different topics. To achieve this goal, we will utilize different learning methods including case discussions, lectures, practical reasoning (integrating course topics to try and solve real problems in real organizations).

**WORKLOAD AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

The course is labor intensive. There are many management principles, that it is impossible to dive deep into all of them. The goal is to expose you to different concepts and ideas.

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| --- | --- |
| **Your Role: Students** | **My Role: Professor** |
| Preparation: Complete readings on time before class starts | Assign valuable readings and assignments |
| Presence: Attend classes and miss no more than 6 classes, and **you cannot miss more than 1 case discussion class** | Lead class room discussions, lectures, and exercise |
| Promptness: Come to class on time, complete all assignments on time | Be accessible to answer any student questions or concerns at a reasonable time |
| Participation: Actively participate in class  Act respectfully towards everyone in the classroom | Provide timely feedback to help students monitor their performance in the class |
| Professionalism: Engage in ethical and professional communication and behavior at all times | Treat each student with professionalism, respect and dignity |
| Adhere to classroom policies outlined below | I will not try to trick you in exams. If you have done the readings and attended class, questions should be straightforward. |
| Foster a climate of respect for other class members and for the professor |  |
| Absolutely no cheating, copying, plagiarism is tolerated in this class |  |

You will be responsible for case preparation, completing assigned readings, various presentation and course deliverables that will be described in this syllabus. Most of all, high performance in this course requires preparation and participation. ***If you do not participate, you will not get higher than a C- grade in this course.***

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

1. We will utilize Harvard Business School cases to apply course material.

***RECOMMENDED TEXT:***

1. *Give and Take. Adam Grant*
2. *Originals. Adam Grant*
3. *Textbook: Organizational Behavior. 17th edition. By Stephen P. Robbins and Timothy A. Judge*

**COURSE COMMUNICATION:**

Throughout the semester, I will be sending you regular emails. Please ensure that your email account is active and that you check it regularly or set your account so that it forwards emails to your regular email account. **This is a very dynamic course, and you are responsible for being aware of the communications and changes as we go through the semester.**

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

In many ways, this course is designed to develop you as managers and employees working in a professional organization. You are required to be managers and leaders and the expectation is for you to participate, present, and engage in a lively discussion with utmost respect and professionalism.

This class will push you towards critical thinking and analysis and will **require a lot of reading before class**. I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss course material and be prepared for me to teach through **discussing material with you**, do not expect me to lecture throughout the class.

Although assignments and activities are “structured” on the Schedule of Classes, the schedule may change throughout the semester as unexpected resources or speakers become available. However, posted assignments will not be due earlier than the date specified on the Schedule.

**If students fail to come to class prepared having read the class material, I will start giving out daily quizzes on reading material!**

# GRADING

Management is a social science, that means, there are rarely perfectly definitive answers. You are the managers of all assignments. In terms of grading though, I am the manager in the organization. Your role is to be able to effectively convince me through critical thinking and analysis your ability to apply course materials to solve complex problems. Your ability to demonstrate your critical thinking and reasoning is the key to your success in this class. At the end, I have complete discretion over how much I am convinced with your argument.

**Grading Criteria:**

* Class Attendance & Participation: 20%
  + You can miss the case discussion **class once only, no questions asked**. **If you miss another case discussion class you will be deducted 5% from your final grade for each time you miss the case discussion class.**
  + **NO EXCUSES WHATSOVER are accepted for missing more than one class. No exceptions at all.**
  + **You can miss 2 classes, no questions asked**. If you miss a third class you will get a grade of zero (0% participation) for the entire week. If you miss more than 3 classes I will start deducting 5% from your final grade each time you miss the class.
* Quizzes: 20%
* Midterm (Individual Reflection): 20%
* Final exam (Final Group Project + Written Exam): 40%

Grading will be based on performance and effort. The quality (and grade) on the assignments is at the instructor’s discretion. It is a question of how well I understand your arguments, whether they are logically conveyed and, when appropriate, whether you have some evidence to your claims. Some students find this level of ambiguity and uncertainty as frustrating, but it is something you will face as an employee and to a higher degree when working in an organization. Additionally, one of the learning goals of this course is to learn how to accurately convey your thoughts and work to other parties. Many might struggle with having great ideas that no one seems to understand. You will find that managers will evaluate your work and ideas based on their own interpretation, not on what you intended. It is up to you to ensure that your writing and deliverables are clear and unambiguous.

I will provide details as to the elements that I will be looking for with regards to specific assignments. At a minimum, deliverables should address all elements required of an assignment and follow instructions (including professionalism). If something is vague or you do not understand what is required, ask me! Excuses like “I did not understand the instructions,” “I did not understand what you were looking for” “I was not sure what elements we should include” are **NOT** valid excuses. I am generally available anytime to help, if you don’t ask for help before delivering the assignment, I cannot help you with the grade. Meeting these minimum requirements will **NOT** result in a Grade of “A”. Rather, I will use the following scale to grade all assignments.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Score | Evaluation |
| A | 93% and above | Superior Performance |
| A- | 92%-90% |  |
| B+ | 87%-89% |  |
| B | 83% - 86% | Clearly Above Satisfactory Performance |
| B- | 80% - 82% |  |
| C+ | 77%-79% |  |
| C | 73% - 76% | Satisfactory Performance |
| C- | 70% - 72% |  |
| D+ | 67%-69% |  |
| D | 63% - 66% | Very Poor Performance (Marginally passing) |
| D- | 60% - 62% |  |
| F | 59% and below | Failure |

***CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE*:**

The following professional behaviors are expected of students:

* Come to class on time, ready to actively participate. Attendance will be taken as soon as class starts. If you show up to class later than five minutes (e.g., after 12:35 pm) since the start, you will be marked as absent from class.
* Always be professional and respectful towards everyone in class. No talking during class, no sleeping, no working on other assignments.
* Students are **NOT** allowed to use laptops, cellphones, tablets and electronic devices in class. No voice recording or video recording is allowed. Remove headphones and turn off pagers, cell phones, and all other electronic devices during class. **Store all electronics out of sight.** This class is designed to be highly interactive which means you need to pay attention to discussions and participate or it will greatly affect your class participation score. **Use of electronic devices will result in detraction of 1% of the final grade and a grade of zero participation for the day.**
* Please, no eating in class.
* Professional delivery of assignments including proper formatting, organizing, font, grammar, spelling. Professionalism is like a performance appraisal that you will routinely receive throughout your career. Everything you do (or don’t) creates an impression.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:**

**Daily Class Participation.**

Active participation in class discussions, exercises, and engagement with other students’ presentations is required of everyone in the class. Students are expected to contribute to each other’s business ideas and presentations. We will all learn from each other, the more students participate, the better the learning experience of the class. I will take note of daily participation and assign a grade to each student at the end of the class. **To be eligible to get a participation grade, you will need to be present in class.** Once you are eligible for participation, I will evaluate the quality of your participation contribution. To excel on the basis of contributing to a positive learning environment students are expected to be:

* Display a positive attitude in the classroom.
* Displays leadership by raising important issues and helping others.
* An active participant, but not a dominant participant.
* Be a good listening and demonstrate respect for others’ opinion.
* Make thoughtful, insightful comments, not just speak to be heard.
* Build on others’ comments.
* Asks questions, not just give answers.
* Judiciously play the role of the devil’s advocate.
* Be constructive and positive in one’s comments.
* Demonstrate respect and professionalism towards others.
* Is not disruptive.
* Does not leave the class.
* Does not use electronic devices in the class.
* Is candid with the instructor about challenges and issues related to the business project.
* Please note that attendance **DOES NOT** equal participation.

**Class Attendance**

Class attendance is a requirement. If you’re not in class, you can’t participate. **When there are case discussions, class participation (or lack thereof) counts double.** No grade of A will be given if you miss more than one case analysis class. No grade of A will be given if you miss more than three classes in total. Please note that I will not accept any excuses for absences and tardiness. Examples of invalid excuses to miss/be late to class include “I’m leaving town to see friends/family,” “I did not wake up in time” “I have a late flight” “I had a wedding” “I have a lot of work this week” “I have a funeral” “There was a lot of traffic” “I was sick” “I had a flat tire” Again, you will only be given a maximum of two excused absences. Therefore, **you may not miss more than two classes**, excused or otherwise without losing participation grades. End of discussion. If you miss more than three classes I will deduct 5% from your final grade for each missed class.

***ASSIGNMENTS***

***All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date as mentioned in the schedule of classes under “Deliverables”, unless otherwise noted***. All written assignments will be typed, 12 pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1" margins with a title page, student name(s), date, and a table of contents, where appropriate. Failure to follow these instructions will adversely affect your assignment grade.

**Assignments**

* ***Assignment 1 (Individual)- Self-Reflection*** 
  + The theories and concepts taught in this course will only contribute to your professional success if you apply what you have learned in the classroom to your everyday experiences.
  + The objective of this assignment is to give you some practice in looking at your life through an OB lens.
  + For this assignment, you will reflect on an organization problem that you experience. I use the term “organization” broadly, which means that you can write about an experience at a group project, internship, work, sports team, or any situation in which you worked with a group of people to achieve a common goal.
  + Once you have selected an organizational challenge you faced in the past, you should analyze the situation using concepts discussed in the class to: (a) identify the factors that contributed to the situation or challenge, (b) discuss how concepts discussed in class could have helped you and others deal with the situation more effectively.
* ***Assignment 2 (Group Project)-Applying OB in an organization***
  + The goal of this assignment is for you to analyze and apply OB concepts in a real organization.
  + Your group’s task will be to use concepts from this course to: identify, analyze, and provide actionable recommendations to solve a key challenge that an organization is facing.
  + You will have one of two options:
    - Conduct a field study, whereby you work with a local organization (student club, on campus department, local company) to investigate an OB-related issue that the organization is facing (e.g., culture, team, personalities, motivation). You will then make OB related recommendations.
    - Analyze a recent (no longer than 6 months) issue/topic connected to one of the topics in class, and that is of importance (relevant/applicable) to many organizations. The issue can be something in the news, headlines, or your own personal experience. You will need to analyze in detail the nature of the issue, describe 2-3 other companies that faced the same issue. You will then make OB related recommendations to resolve the issue.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

| **Week/ Session** | **Week** | **Readings/ Deliverables** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 1.1: | **Introduction/What is OB** |  |
| Week 1.2: | **Personalities** |  |
| Week 1.3: | **Personalities** | *Assignment 1: Personalities, Self-Assessment* |
| Week 2.1: | **Personalities: Hiring** | *Assignment 2: Personalities Personal Reflection* |
| Week 2.2: | **Case Discussion: Elon Musk** | *Quiz#1 on Case:*  *Elon Musk* |
| Week 2.3: | **No classes** |  |
| Week 3.1: | **Originals** |  |
| Week 3.2: | **Originals** |  |
| Week 3.3: | **Originals** | *In class-exercise* |
| Week 4.1: | **Motivation** |  |
| Week 4.2: | **Motivation** |  |
| Week 4.3: | **Motivation** | *In-class exercise* |
| Week 5.1: | **Perceptions, Decision Making & Heuristics** |  |
| Week 5.2: | **Perceptions, Decision Making & Heuristics** |  |
| Week 5.3: | **Perceptions, Decision Making & Heuristics** |  |
| Week 6.1: | **Decision Making & Heuristics** |  |
| Week 6.2: | **Case Discussion: Zero Wage Increase** | *Quiz #2 on Case: Zero Wage Increase* |
| Week 6.3: | **Case Discussion: Zero Wage Increase** |  |
| Week 7.1: | **Give & Take** |  |
| Week 7.2: | **Give & Take** |  |
| Week 7.3: | **Case Discussion: Grace, Managing Up** | *Quiz #3 on Case: Grace, Managing Up* |
| Week 8.1: | **Feedback** |  |
| Week 8.2: | **Case Discussion: Thomas Green, Office Politics** | *Quiz #4 on Case: Thomas Green, Office Politics* |
| Week 8.3: | **Case Discussion: Thomas Green, Office Politics** |  |
| Week 9.1: | **Negotiation** | *In class-exercise* |
| Week 9.2: | **Midterm** |  |
| Week 9.3: | **Midterm** |  |
| Week 10.1: | **Teams** |  |
| Week 10.2: | **Case Discussion: Apple’s Core** | *Quiz #5 on Case: Apple’s Core* |
| Week 10.3: | **Case Discussion: Apple’s Core** |  |
| Week 11.1: | **Teams** |  |
| Week 11.2: | **Case Discussion: Kodak** | *Quiz #6 on case: Kodak* |
| Week 11.3: | **Case Discussion: Kodak** |  |
| Week 12.1: | **Leaders & Culture** |  |
| Week 12.2: | **Case: Uber** | *Quiz #7 on case: Uber* |
| Week 12.3: | **Case: Uber** |  |
| Week 13.1: | **Wrap-Up** |  |
| Week 13.2: | **Final Projects** | *Final Projects* |
| Week 13.3: | **Final Projects** | *Final Projects* |

The code of academic integrity applies to all courses at Kuwait University. All students are expected to maintain the highest level of academic integrity throughout the course of the semester. Please note that acts of academic dishonesty during the course will be prosecuted and harsh penalties may be sought for such acts. Students are responsible for knowing what acts constitute academic dishonesty.