

SOC 345 Sociology of Organizations [ONLINE]

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Instructor Information

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Course Description

What are organizations? From the sociological perspective, they are enduring formal structures that direct human action, shape decision-making, channel wealth, concentrate power, and institutionalize the ways in which people act in all spheres of society.

Organizations are ubiquitous parts of contemporary life in economics and business, politics, law, science, education, entertainment, media, leisure, and more. Most people on the planet today live embedded in organizations. But beyond being “formal structures”, what are organizations? Where do they come from? How do they work? Why are they so important in contemporary life?

This class is organized around nine analytic frameworks that will help us understand these questions. Through the course readings, you will be introduced to the theories that have shaped our sociological understanding of organizations.

Course Outcomes

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

1. Understand the various sociological perspectives on organizations
2. Be aware of the host of resources the sociology of organizations offers practitioners

Prerequisites

Sociology 101 (Introduction to Sociology) is highly recommended.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by discussing accommodations with me at the beginning of the course. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students who have a documented disability. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommason Center 154 or 406-243-2243.

Required Texts

The following required text is available in the UM Bookstore or online: ***Morgan, Gareth (Updated Edition). 2007. Images of Organizations Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.***

QCOs (15 - 10 points each week):

Each week you will have assigned readings from Morgan's *Images of Organizations*, as well as occasional supplemental articles that will be posted to Moodle. Once you have completed each week's readings, you will upload to the course Moodle a Word document containing:

- (1) a **QUESTION** you now have after the reading;
- (2) a **COMMENT** you have about the reading that demonstrates an engaged interaction with the reading ; and,
- (3) a **QUOTATION** from the reading that you found interesting (please include a brief explanation as to why you chose your particular quote).

QCQs are due by 11:55pm on the FRIDAY of the given week. Use your QCQ to demonstrate that you read and engaged with the text, yet do not write a novel each week.

GRADING:

Your grade will be calculated on a straight percentage basis (100% base of 150 points possible). I will not give final letter grades with pluses or minuses: A (90%+); B (80%-89%); C (70%-79%); D (60%-69%); F (59% - below).

Late Assignments

Please turn in assignments on time. Extensions will be considered if reasonably requested.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic & Assignments
<i>Week 1</i>	Course overview & introduction <i>QCQ: Morgan INTRODUCTION (p. 3-8); Bibliographic Notes 1 (p. 367).</i>
<i>Week 2</i>	Organizations as machines: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 2 (p.11-26); Bibliographic Notes 2 (p. 369)</i>
<i>Week 3</i>	A dissenting view of Scientific Management: <i>QCQ: Meiksins (1984) – article available on Moodle</i>
<i>Week 4</i>	Organizations as organisms: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 3; Bibliographic Notes 3</i>
<i>Week 5</i>	Organizations as brains: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 4; Bibliographic Notes 4</i>
<i>Week 6</i>	Organizations as culture: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 5; Bibliographic Notes 5</i>
<i>Week 7</i>	Organizations as political systems: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 6; Bibliographic Notes 6</i>
<i>Week 8</i>	Organizations as psychic prisons: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 7; Bibliographic Notes 7</i>
<i>Week 9</i>	Organizations as flux and transformation: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 8; Bibliographic Notes 8</i>
<i>Week 10</i>	Organizations as instruments of domination: <i>QCQ: Morgan Ch 9; Bibliographic Notes 9</i>
<i>Week 11</i>	Weber's theory of domination and post-communist capitalism. <i>QCQ: Szelenyi (2016)</i>

Date	Topic & Assignments
Week 12	Analyzing organizations: QCQ: <i>Morgan Chs 10, 11 & 12</i> ; <i>Bibliographic Notes 10, 11 & 12</i>
Week 13	THANKSGIVING (no class)
Week 14	Critical perspectives: QCQ: <i>Acker, "Gendering Organizational Theory"</i> ; and, <i>Janis, "Groupthink: The Desperate Drive for Consensus at Any Cost"</i>
Week 15	Explaining Organizational Failure: QCQ: <i>Clarke and Perrow, "Prosaic Organizational Failure"</i>
Week 16	NO FINAL! ENJOY THE WINTER BREAK