This is a survey course designed to provide an overview of the development of the modern organization and of organizational analysis as a field of study. While primary focus will be on for-profit firms, we will also look at complex organizations in other sectors. The goal of this course is to provide students with a theoretical “toolkit” to help them understand different perspectives on how organizations work, how they fail, how they should be managed under rapidly changing conditions and how they connect to other aspects of the social and cultural world.

Drawing on case studies and contemporary and classical organizational theory, students will learn to think critically about the many organizations in the world around them, as well as learn practical skills for engaging with them. Furthermore, because teams are a critical component of most modern organizations, students will be assigned to work on a team throughout the course of the semester, and will work together to produce a final paper and presentation. In addition to providing a practical context in which to apply course concepts in a team setting, the team experience is also intended to enrich class discussion, because students will be able to draw from their own team experience as it connects to concepts covered in class.

**Required Reading Materials:**


2. Harvard Business School Coursepack: I have set up a coursepack of Harvard Business School articles and cases that we will be using in class, so that you will get a discounted rate (normally, each case is $8.95 but if you purchase through the coursepack link they will each be $3.95). To access and purchase the coursepack, use this link (or paste this URL into your browser):

   [https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/38241297](https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/38241297)

**Note that you will be prompted to register with the website to establish your student status before you can access the coursepack. Just follow the instructions on the site!
3. All other readings will be available on the Sakai site for the class. Posted reading material is subject to the fair use clause: it is to be used for class activities only and not to be distributed or used in any other way.

Class Information:
- Syllabus, reading material (additional to the required book and coursepack), announcements, and assignments are all listed on Sakai.
- Lecture slides will be posted on Sakai immediately after class (copies provided in class).

Course Requirements:
Each class session will involve a combination of lecture and discussion. A number of classes will also include some experiential exercises or activities.
- Attendance and participation in class sessions are required. See grade instructions for further specifications of related requirements.
- Students should prepare for each session by reading all articles. Reading material, except for case studies and the required book, will be available on Sakai.
- To assist in this preparation, students should submit short weekly commentaries, based on the reading material. Details below.
- Students will write three individual cases analyses. Details below.
- As a team (teams will be assigned during Class 2), choose a particular organization to follow through the semester.
- A final team project, including a paper and a presentation. Details below.
- Submitted work will be graded. Any late submission will result in grade penalty.

Grading:
Final grades in this course will be calculated based on the following components:
- 20% Attendance and participation in class discussions and exercises
- 15% Weekly Reading Commentaries
- 30% Individual Case Analyses
- 35% Final Team Project

Each component of the course grade is described in more detail below:

Attendance and Class Participation (20% of final grade):
Attendance and participation in class sessions are required. In case one has to miss a class session, the student must make an arrangement with the instructor in advance. Any excused absence requires a submission of an additional reading commentary.

Courses are not only about your individual learning but also about how you contribute to the learning of your classmates. For you to benefit most from the class material and discussion, it is important that you prepare for each class session. Reading the cases and text prior to class allows you to better learn from the comments of other students in class, as well as to actively participate in discussions yourself. Participation grades will reflect your contribution to the overall class; this means you have attended class regularly, completed the assigned readings prior to each class, and actively participated in class discussion in a professional, value-added manner.
I want to stress that in our class discussions, I am not looking for “right” answers, but comments that demonstrate thoughtful consideration of the material and its implications for leadership effectiveness.

**Weekly Reading Commentaries (15% of final grade):**
To assist with preparation for each class discussion, students should submit short reading commentaries, based on the reading material, at the beginning of each class\(^1\). Each commentary should include 2 *distinct* questions related to the reading material, thus revealing your commentary on the issues discussed. The questions should reflect remarks, interpretations, opinions, or views on issues arising from the reading material. Questions should be of the sort that raise a discussion as an answer, rather than “closed” (yes/no) questions or questions whose answer is evident in the text. Commentaries will be evaluated based on the thoughtfulness, clarity and boldness of the argument and on the quality of the composition. Each commentary will be graded pass/fail (thus giving full-, or no, credit for the work). **Commentaries must be submitted in person at the beginning of each class.**

**Three Individual Case Analyses (30% of final grade):**
While we will use several Harvard Business Case Studies throughout the term, you will be required to conduct written analyses of three of them. Each case analysis should be about 800 words, and should answer the specific questions provided in each assignment (to be posted on Sakai). **Case analyses should be submitted on Sakai by 4:00pm on each due date:**

- **#1:** Virginia Mason Medical Center. Due by 4:00pm on September 10\(^{th}\)
- **#2:** Leading Change at Simmons. Due by 4:00pm on October 22\(^{nd}\)
- **#3:** Hitting the Wall: Nike and International Labor Practices. Due by 4:00pm on November 12\(^{th}\)

**Final Team Project (35% of final grade):**
During the first few weeks of class, your team will choose an organization that you think is interesting enough to follow throughout the semester. Any kind of organization will do — large or small, startup or well-established, for-profit or otherwise — as long as you are not already too familiar with it, and information about it is available in the news, the business press, or similar sources. **Plan to say a few words about your organization in class on September 24\(^{th}\).** You should also expect to make use of what you learn about your chosen organization in class discussion and in written assignments.

**Team Charter** (see Sakai for details). **Due in class on September 17\(^{th}\).**

**Team Project Brief** (see Sakai for details). **Due in class on October 15\(^{th}\).**

**Team Paper** (About 4,000 words). As a team, you will analyze a major issue being faced currently by your chosen organization using two of the four frames discussed in class. More details will be provided in a separate document on Sakai. **Due via email by 5pm on Friday December 11.**

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\(^1\) You do not need to submit a weekly commentary on the first day of class (8/27), on days when an individual case analyses is due (9/10, 10/22, and 11/12), or on the final day of class (12/3)
**Team Presentation** (10 minutes). All teams will present their papers in class on December 3rd. More details will be provided in a separate document on Sakai.

**Individual Personal Reflection** (see Sakai for details). Due on Sakai by 5pm on Monday December 13th.

**Computer Use in Class:**
To encourage engagement in lectures, discussions and group activities laptops, tablets, and phones may not be used in class. As wonderful as computers are, we know from research that they tend to be a distraction in classrooms, even to students who are not using them but sitting close to them.

More details on the class schedule and readings are provided on the following pages:

### CLASS SCHEDULE

**Class 1: August 27th**
Course Overview and Introduction

Read (before class)
Syllabus
Bolman & Deal Chapter 1: The Power of Reframing
Bolman & Deal Chapter 2: Simple Ideas, Complex Organizations

DUE
Nothing additional (no reading commentary due this week)!

**PART I: INSIDE THE ORGANIZATION**

**Class 2: September 3rd**
Team Formation, Processes, and Decision-Making

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 5: Organizing Groups and Teams
Bolman & Deal Ch 8: Interpersonal and Group Dynamics
Hill, Linda & Farkas, Maria. 2001. A Note on Team Process (Coursepack)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary
Frame 1: Structural Frame

Class 3: September 10th
Organizational Structure

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 3: Structural Form
Bolman & Deal Ch 4: Structuring and Restructuring
Spear, Steven, & Bowen, H. Kent. 1999. “Decoding the DNA of the Toyota Production System (Coursepack)
Case Study: Virginia Mason Medical Center (Coursepack)

DUE (by 4:00pm on Sakai)
Case Analysis #1: Virginia Mason Medical Center (see Sakai for Assignment Details)

Frame 2: Cultural/Symbolic Frame

Class 4: September 17th
Organizational Culture

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 12: Organizational Symbols and Cultures
Bolman & Deal Ch 14: Organization as Theatre
Schein, Edgar. “Defining Organizational Culture.” Excerpt (Sakai)
Martin, Joanne. “Organizational Culture: Pieces of the Puzzle.” Excerpt (Sakai)
Case Study: Keeping Google “Googley” (Coursepack)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary
Team Charter (see Sakai for details)

Frame 3: Human Resources Frame

Class 5: September 24th
Motivation

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 6: People and Organizations
Bolman & Deal Ch 7: Improving Human Resource Management
Kerr, Steven. 1975. “On the Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B” (Sakai)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary
Each team should also be prepared to say a few words about your chosen organization in class
Class 6: October 1st
Decision-Making

Read (before class)
Bazerman, Max & Moore, Don. 2009. Judgment in Managerial Decision Making, Chapters 1 & 2 (Sakai)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary

Frame 4: Political Frame

Class 7: October 8th
Power & Influence

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 9: Power, Conflict, and Coalition
Bolman & Deal Ch 10: The Manager as Politician
Jackall, Robert. “Moral Mazes: The World of Corporate Managers.” Excerpt (Sakai)
Case Study: “Thomas Green: Power, Office Politics, and a Career in Crisis” (Coursepack)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary

Class 8: October 15th
Social Networks and the Informal Organization

Read (before class)
Krackhardt, David, & Hanson, Jeffery. 1993. “Informal Networks: The Company Behind the Chart” (Sakai)
Cross, Robert, Martin, Robert, & Weiss, Leigh. 2006. “Mapping the Value of Employee Collaboration” (Sakai)
Burt, Ronald. “Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition.” Excerpt (Sakai)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary
Team Project Brief
Class 9: October 22nd
Leadership & Organizational Change

Read (before class)
Bolman & Deal Ch 17: Reframing Leadership
Bolman & Deal Ch 20: Bringing it all Together: Change and Leadership in Action
Khurana, Rakesh “Searching for a Corporate Savior: The Irrational Quest for Charismatic CEOs” Excerpt (Sakai)
Case Study: Leading Change at Simmons (Coursepack)

Due (by 4:00pm on Sakai)
Case Analysis #2: Leading Change at Simmons (see Sakai for Assignment Details)

PART II: LOCATING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WIDER WORLD

Class 10: October 29th
Organizations and Environments

Read (before class)
Davis, Gerald & Powell, Walter. “Organization – Environment Relations” (Sakai)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary

Class 11: November 5th
Diversity & Discrimination

Read (before class)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary
Class 12: November 12th
Organizations and Society (Social Movements & CSR)

Read (before class)
Rao, Hayagreeva. “Market Rebels: How Activists Make or Break Radical Innovations.” Excerpt (Sakai)
Soule, Sarah. “Contention and Corporate Social Responsibility.” Excerpt (Sakai)
Case Study: “Hitting the Wall: Nike and International Labor Practices” (Coursepack)

Due (by 4:00pm on Sakai)
Case Analysis #3: Hitting the Wall: Nike and International Labor Practices (See Sakai for Assignment Details)

Class 13: November 19th
Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Read (before class)
Shane, Scott and S. Venkataraman. “The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research.” (Sakai)
Case Study: IDEO Product Development (Coursepack)

DUE (in class)
Weekly Reading Commentary

Class 14: December 3rd
Team Presentations