

Sociology 110 Organizations

UC Berkeley | Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Linus Huang**Office Hours:** Mondays 3:30-5:30 PM, 434 Barrows Hall**E-mail:** lbhuang@berkeley.edu**Readers:** *TBD***Final Exam:** Exam Group 2; Monday, December 14, 2015, 11:30-2:30 PM**Course Overview**

There is a curiosity to organizations in today's society: they are utterly ubiquitous, and yet there is little formal theory about how they operate. We often think about them in terms of cultural tropes like being weighed down by "red tape"—and/or assume that they are merely instruments to be used for good or for ill by individuals.

Part of the general mission of sociology as discipline is to provide an understanding of social action as being driven by more than just individual choice. In keeping with the theme, the subfield of organizational sociology provides a systematic understanding of organizational behavior as being driven by something beyond just the consciousness of individuals inside them.

Grading

Your course grade will be determined by two take-home midterm examinations, weighted at 40% each, and a final, in-class, multiple-choice exam weighted at 20%. The final exam will be administered during the University's officially scheduled exam week timeslot for this course (see above).

The grading scale is as follows. '[' means including, and ')' means excluding, so '[83-87]' for example means everything from 83 up to but not including 87.

A+	[99+)	A	[95-99)	A-	[90-95)
B+	[87-90)	B	[83-87)	B-	[80-83)
C+	[77-80)	C	[73-77)	C-	[70-73)
D+	[67-70)	D	[63-67)	D-	[60-63)
		F	[0-60)		

During the course of the semester, all scores will be recorded to two significant digits after the decimal. When it comes time to compute overall course grades, I will round the final course score (*NOT* each individual exam score) to the nearest whole number to determine the letter grade.

Note: There are no other discretionary considerations that factor in to the calculation of your course grade. I absolutely do not offer extra credit beyond that which I offer to the entire class.

As the course progresses, you can calculate your performance for yourself, given the weightings indicated above, and determine exactly what you need to do on subsequent graded assignments to get X grade.

International Students + Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must have their statuses verified by the DSP office by the end of the third week of the course (including partial weeks). Digital copies of approval letters are automatically sent to me; I do not require a paper hardcopy of them.

The course will require a modest degree of English reading and writing proficiency during the three examinations. If you are an ESL student for whom this may prove difficult, accommodations (limited in nature, I'm afraid, but accommodations nonetheless) can be made provided you get in touch with me at the beginning of the semester.

Academic Honesty, classroom conduct

Violations of academic honesty have unfortunately been on the rise at UC Berkeley over the past few years, prompting among other things the posting of plaques in general classrooms around campus re-emphasizing the code of academic conduct. The general rule of thumb behind the code is: act in such a way that no one could possibly question your conduct.

Plagiarism—copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own—has been the central problem. Copying off either another student or off the readings (whether the readings are on or outside of the syllabus) both constitute plagiarism. All instances of plagiarism will be punished by an immediate **-0-** on the entire assignment in question, *plus* a report to the Office of Academic Affairs at my discretion.

Forming studying groups on your own is highly encouraged, especially since there are no discussion sections to accompany this course. If these groups are used to struggle through ideas or debate topics (both are also good uses of class time, by the way!), then the effort expended can be very rewarding. However, if groups are used simply to memorize a classmate's notes by rote, to subsequently recite on exams, **this is effectively another form of plagiarism** as far as I am concerned. I use this specific example because it recently popped up in one of my courses.

Use of laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. in class. I use my laptop for virtually everything and do not expect students not to utilize the various digital technologies we have at our disposal today. However, if you are texting, Twittering, watching Netflix, or some other such thing in class, you are likely distracting others and I will ask you to leave.

Reading/Exam Schedule

All readings are available in PDF format on the bCourses site, under the READINGS folder of the Files section. Some readings are also available online (but they're in the READINGS folder anyway as well); in these cases I include URLs. Readings are to be completed **prior** to the class meeting by which they are listed.

Readings listed as “optional” are just that; you should be able to do well in the course without reading them. But if you are particularly interested in a topic and/or want to explore something in more depth, the optional readings are there.

Introduction

Aug	26	Wed	Introduction: why a sociology of organizations? <i>Optional reading:</i> C. Perrow, “A Society of Organizations”
	28	Fri	(cont’d; no new readings)
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	31	Mon	(cont’d; no new readings)
Sep	2	Wed	The population ecology perspective <i>Optional reading:</i> M. Hannan & J. Freeman, “The Population Ecology of Organizations”
	4	Fri	(cont’d; no new readings)
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	7	Mon	##### LABOR DAY: NO CLASS #####
	9	Wed	(cont’d; no new required readings) <i>Optional reading:</i> G. Carroll & A. Swaminathan, “Why the Microbrewery Movement?”
	11	Fri	The relational perspective <i>Optional reading:</i> J. Pfeffer & G. Salancik, <i>The External Control of Organizations</i> ch 3, 10
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	14	Mon	(cont’d; no new readings)
	16	Wed	(cont’d; no new readings)
	18	Fri	The institutionalist perspective <i>Reading:</i> P. DiMaggio & W. Powell, “The Iron Cage Revisited” <i>Optional reading:</i> J. Meyer & B. Rowan, “Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony”
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	21	Mon	(cont’d; no new readings) <i>Optional reading:</i> J. Douglass, “From Chaos to Order and Back”
	23	Wed	Why is organizational reform so difficult to achieve? <i>Optional reading:</i> F. Dobbin, S. Kim & A. Kalev, “You Can’t Always Get What You Need”

25	Fri	Emergence of the fast food industry <i>Reading: E. Schlosser, Fast Food Nation ch 1, 2</i> MIDTERM #1 TAKE-HOME <u>DISTRIBUTED</u> FRI 25 SEP 2015
28	Mon	Expansion of the fast food industry <i>Reading: E. Schlosser, Fast Food Nation ch 4</i>
30	Wed	(cont'd; no new readings) MIDTERM #1 TAKE-HOME <u>DUE</u> WED 30 SEP 2015
Oct 2	Fri	The reorganization of American agriculture <i>Reading: E. Schlosser, Fast Food Nation ch 5, 6</i>
5	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)
7	Wed	The internal design of organizations: rational adaptation + Marxist perspectives <i>No readings.</i>
9	Fri	Internal organizational design: relational perspectives <i>Optional reading: J. Pfeffer, Power in Organizations ch 4</i>
12	Mon	Internal organizational design: institutionalist perspectives <i>Reading: N. Fligstein, "The Intraorganizational Power Struggle" pp. 44-50 + the first four lines of p. 51</i>
14	Wed	(cont'd)
16	Fri	Social movements: organized labor <i>Reading: K. Voss & R. Sherman, "Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy"</i>
19	Mon	(cont'd)
21	Wed	What social movement tactics work? <i>Reading: F. Rojas, "Social Movement Tactics, Organizational Change, and the Spread of African American Studies"</i>
23	Fri	The rise of shareholder value <i>Reading: J. Heilbron, J. Verheul & S. Quak, "The origins and early diffusion of 'shareholder value' in the United States"</i>
26	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)

	28	Wed	(cont'd; no new readings)
	30	Fri	Financialization and income inequality <i>Reading:</i> K. Lin & D. Tomaskovic-Devey, "Financialization and U.S. Income Inequality, 1970-2008" pp. 1284-1295
			MIDTERM #2 TAKE-HOME <u>DISTRIBUTED</u> FRI 30 OCT 2015
Nov	2	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)
	4	Wed	(cont'd; no new readings)
			MIDTERM #2 TAKE-HOME <u>DUE</u> WED 4 NOV 2015
	6	Fri	Financialization at the University of California <i>Reading:</i> C. Eaton, J. Habinek, M. Kumar, T. Stover & A. Roehrkasse, "Swapping Our Future"
	9	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)
	11	Wed	##### VETERAN'S DAY: NO CLASS #####
	13	Fri	The State as a set of organizations <i>Reading:</i> C. Cooper & R. Block, <i>Disaster</i> ch 4, 5
	16	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)
	18	Wed	What is the Department of Homeland Security's mission? <i>Reading:</i> C. Cooper & R. Block, <i>Disaster</i> ch 6, 8
	20	Fri	Social networks: organizations embedded within networks <i>Reading:</i> R. Burt, "Structural Holes and Good Ideas"
	23	Mon	(cont'd; no new readings)
	25	Wed	##### THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS #####
	27	Fri	##### THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS #####
	30	Mon	Social networks: networks embedded within organizations <i>Reading:</i> M. Small, <i>Unanticipated Gains</i> ch 1, 2
Dec	2	Wed	Trends in the organizational world of work <i>Readings:</i> TBA
	4	Fri	Course wrap-up + evaluations

7	Mon	##### READING,
9	Wed	##### RECITATION, and
11	Fri	##### REVIEW week

Dec 14	Mon	FINAL EXAM <u>IN-CLASS</u> 11:30-2:30 PM
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