

Instructor: Dr. Linus Huang

Office Hours: Mondays 3:30-5:30 PM, 434 Barrows Hall

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Readers: Benjamin Shestakofsky, Jacob Habinek & Shoonchul Shin

Final Exam: See below.

Course Overview

Organizations are everywhere! We work within them, get an education within them, and buy other goods and services within and from them. Even when we're at home, our apartments/condos/homes are filled with products made by organizations. Also, our apartments/condos/homes are themselves likely constructed by, inspected by, and bought and sold (or rented, or leased) through organizations. But how do organizations behave? What are their objectives? What are the consequences of organizational behavior for people within them, or who procure goods and services from them? How can organizations be changed?

A sociology of organizational behavior does two things. First, it draws our attention to the role that organizations play in society at all, as opposed to approaching society from the perspective of individual consumers (i.e., us) who choose between organizations, leaving the organization itself unexamined. Second, it adopts a *social* perspective that moves beyond an understanding of organizational behavior as a reflection of the behavior of individuals within organizations. The organizational world is vast and cannot be comprehensively surveyed within the course of a semester (or a lifetime). But to make the theoretical perspectives we will consider concrete, we will explore in-depth a select few organizational settings of special concern to us: the fast food industry, social movements, Corporate America, the federal government, and U.C. Berkeley itself.

Required Readings

Readings come from (1) two required texts; and (2) PDFs available on the course **bCourses** site, in the "READINGS" folder under the "Files" section. The two texts are:

- Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of an All-American Meal*. Earlier editions of this text, for those who have them, will be fine.
- Bethany McLean & Peter Elkind, *The Smartest Guys in the Room: The Amazing Rise and Scandalous Fall of Enron*.

Both of these texts are available at the ASUC Bookstore.

Course Format

This is a lecture course and I will indeed do a fair amount of lecturing. However, class participation is expected and will make everyone's experience far, far, more enlightening, not to mention enjoyable.

There are a lot of readings and they will provide a solid foundation for the material you will be responsible for on the exams. However, I will also present a lot of additional material in class. **You will be responsible for this additional material on the exams, as well.** Therefore, class attendance and participation are crucial to success in the course.

Grading

Your course grade will be determined by two (2) midterm exams (30% each) and a final exam (40%). **All exams will be take-home exams.** (See the schedule below for exam dates and times.)

All three exams will be of a short answer variety, where “short answer” roughly means from one to four paragraphs per question. As I will reiterate in class, you should strive for clarity but also succinctness in these short answers. You should feel free to write in a conversational tone and dispense with formal writing conventions such as formal opening and concluding paragraphs.

The grading scale is as follows. All scores are significant to the second digit after the decimal. ‘ [’ means including, and ‘) ’ means excluding, so ‘ [83-87) ’ for example means everything from 83.00 up to but not including 87.00.

	A	[94+	A-	[90-94)	
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)			

I will use the bcourses site to keep a record of your scores, so as midterm scores are released, make sure that what is on bcourses matches what is on your actual returned paper/exam. If there is a problem, report it immediately. Do not wait until the end of the semester to report an issue with either of the midterms.

Note: There are no other discretionary considerations that factor in to the calculation of your course grade. 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 **Wednesday, September 10th**. Electronic copies of these letters are automatically sent to me; I do not require a paper hardcopy of them.

The course will require a modest degree of English writing proficiency during the three examinations. If you are an ESL student for whom this may prove difficult, accommodations can be made provided you get in touch with me at the beginning of the semester.

Resources

Writing for Sociology. Although this course will not be as writing-intensive as others, writing will still be important on the exams. Graduate students and faculty in the sociology department at Berkeley have put together a writing guide specifically geared toward sociology students. It is intended for longer-form writing assignments, but could still be useful for the short-answer (e.g., 1-4 paragraphs) questions that will be on the exams.

The URL for this guide is: <http://sociology.berkeley.edu/undergraduate-writing-resources>.

Student Learning Center. The campus Student Learning Center (SLC) offers various services for both ESL and native-speaking students. See their website at:

<http://slc.berkeley.edu/ucftr/index.htm>

and in particular their writing resources at:

<http://slc.berkeley.edu/writing/index.htm>.

International Students. The Berkeley International Office offers a variety of services, including ESL resources. See their website at:

<http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/>

And note their English Language Resources section, drawn from various online resources throughout the U.S.

http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/english_resources

Academic Honesty and Other Issues

Don't cheat. Part of the University's suggested language for a student honor code is "always to act in such a way that no one would ever imagine that you would even consider cheating". **Copying off another student's test**, and **plagiarism** (copying text or ideas from other sources and passing them off as your own and/or omitting proper attributing) have been the two most common—but not only—forms of cheating I have encountered. **Such transgressions will be penalized with an immediate zero on the assignment in question**, which will for all practical purposes result in failure of the course, *plus* notification to the Office of Student Affairs at my discretion.

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

As indicated above, all readings are available in PDF format on the bCourses site. They are to be completed **prior** to the class meeting by which they are listed.

Introduction

Aug	29	Fri	Introduction <i>Reading: none</i>
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Sep	1	Mon	##### LABOR DAY: NO CLASS #####
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	3	Wed	(Introduction cont'd, no readings)
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	5	Fri	(Introduction cont'd, no readings)
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	8	Mon	The population ecology perspective <i>Optional reading: Michael T. Hannan & John Freeman, "The Population Ecology of Organizations"</i>
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	10	Wed	Population ecology, cont'd <i>Reading: Glenn Carroll & Anand Swaminathan, "Why the Microbrewery Movement?"</i>
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	12	Fri	(cont'd, no new readings)
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Sep	15	Mon	The relational perspective <i>Optional reading:</i> Jeffrey Pfeffer & Gerald Salancik, <i>The External Control of Organizations</i> ch 3, 10
	17	Wed	(cont'd, no new readings)
	19	Fri	(cont'd, no new readings)
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	22	Mon	The cultural/cognitive perspective <i>Reading:</i> Paul J. DiMaggio & Walter W. Powell, "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields"
	24	Wed	(cont'd, no new required readings) <i>Optional reading:</i> John Aubrey Douglass, "From Chaos to Order and Back? A Revisionist Reflection on the California Master Plan for Higher Education@50 and Thoughts About Its Future"
	26	Fri	(cont'd, no new readings)
Midterm #1 Take-Home Exam online Fri. Sep. 26, 1:00 PM			
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	29	Mon	The emergence of the fast food industry <i>Reading:</i> Eric Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 1, 2
Oct	1	Wed	(cont'd, no new readings)
Midterm #1 Take-Home Exam due Wed. Oct. 1, 11:00 AM			
	3	Fri	The expansion of the fast food industry <i>Reading:</i> Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 4
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	6	Mon	(cont'd, no new readings)
	8	Wed	Interlude: why do franchisors franchise? <i>Optional reading:</i> James G. Combs, Steven C. Michael & Gary J. Castrogiovanni, "Institutional Influences on the Choice of Organizational Form: The Case of Franchising"
	10	Fri	The reorganization of American agriculture <i>Reading:</i> Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 5,6
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	13	Mon	(cont'd, no new readings)
	15	Wed	Internal organizational design: relational approaches <i>Optional reading:</i> Jeffrey Pfeffer, <i>Power in Organizations</i> ch 4
	17	Fri	Internal organizational design: cultural/cognitive approaches <i>Reading:</i> Neil Fligstein, "The Intraorganizational Power Struggle" pp. 44-50 + 1 st ¶ of p. 51
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	20	Mon	(cont'd, no new readings)

Oct	22	Wed	Social movements as organizations <i>Reading:</i> Kim Voss & Rachel Sherman, “Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy”
	24	Fri	Social movements: what kinds of tactics work? <i>Reading:</i> Fabio Rojas, “Social Movement Tactics, Organizational Change and the Spread of African-American Studies”
	27	Mon	(cont’d, no new readings)
	29	Wed	The rise of the shareholder value corporation <i>Reading:</i> Johan Heilbron, Jochem Verheul & Sander Quak, “The Origins and Early Diffusion of ‘Shareholder Value’ in the United States”
	31	Fri	(cont’d, no new readings)
			Midterm #2 Take-Home online Fri. Oct. 31, 1:00 PM
Nov	3	Mon	The rise of the Enron Corporation <i>Reading:</i> Bethany McLean & Peter Elkind, <i>The Smartest Guys in the Room</i> ch 1-3
	5	Wed	(cont’d, no new readings)
			Midterm #2 Take-Home due Wed. Nov. 5, 11:00 AM
	7	Fri	The Enron model of making money <i>Reading:</i> McLean & Elkind, <i>The Smartest Guys in the Room</i> ch 4-7, 15
	10	Mon	(cont’d, no new readings)
	12	Wed	The flaws in the Enron model <i>Reading:</i> McLean & Elkind, <i>The Smartest Guys in the Room</i> ch 8-11
	14	Fri	(cont’d, no new readings)
	17	Mon	Financialization and inequality since 1980 <i>Reading:</i> Ken-Hou Lin & Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, “Financialization and U.S. Income Inequality, 1970-2008”
	19	Wed	(cont’d, no new readings)
	21	Fri	Financialization at UC Berkeley <i>Reading:</i> Charlie Eaton, Jacob Habinek, Mukul Kumar, Tamera Lee Stover & Alex Roehrkasse, “Swapping Our Future: How Students and Taxpayers are Funding Risky Borrowing and Wall Street Profits”
	24	Mon	(cont’d, no new readings)
	26	Wed	##### INSTRUCTOR CANCELLED #####
	28	Fri	##### THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS #####

Dec	1	Mon	Social networks: organizations embedded within networks <i>Reading:</i> Ronald Burt, “Structural Holes and Good Ideas”
	3	Wed	Social networks: networks embedded within organizations <i>Reading:</i> Mario Small, <i>Unanticipated Gains</i> ch 1, 2
	5	Fri	Wrap-Up and Course Evaluations
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	8	Mon	READING,
	10	Wed	RECITATION, and
	12	Fri	REVIEW
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	14	Mon	Take-Home Final Exam online Mon. Dec. 15 12:00 PM
	18	Thu	Take-Home Final Exam <u>due</u> Fri. Dec. 19 2:30 PM