

**MAN336: Organizational Behavior**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2011**  
**McCombs School of Business**

**Professor Ethan Burris**

**Office:** CBA 4.210  
**Phone:** (512) 471-4803  
**E-mail:** ethan.burris@mcombs.utexas.edu (most reliable contact method)  
**Office Hours:** Mon/Wed 12:30-2:00 pm or contact via e-mail to schedule an appointment  
**Mailbox:** Faculty mailbox outside CBA 4.202

**Course Description**

This is an advanced survey course in organizational behavior designed to give you exposure to essential theories and concepts for analyzing, understanding, and managing human behavior in organizations. In this course we will tie concrete organizational situations (as reflected in cases) to essential theories and effective management practices. In this course, we will investigate:

- Individual behavior in organizations, including personality, decision-making, personal networks, and ethics
- Interpersonal behavior, including teamwork, conflict, leadership, and power and influence
- Organizational factors affecting behavior, including reward systems, culture, and organizational design

Although this course covers many topics listed above, we will take a decidedly “teams-oriented” approach. Virtually all employees must work within a team context and learn how to manage their own performance and careers by working with and through other people. In this class, working with teams will let you practice and evaluate your effectiveness at problem solving, managing, and working with others towards specific goals outlined in the course.

**Specific Course Objectives**

My goals for this course are to help you

- Manage individuals for high performance by developing your understanding of individual and interpersonal behavior, including your own
- Manage groups for high performance by exposing you to theoretical and practical knowledge of group dynamics and effective team building
- Understand the challenges of leading during change
- Apply critical reasoning techniques to analyze organizational structure and functions, to capitalize on organizational competencies and to address weaknesses

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND WEIGHTING

Class Contribution	15%
Two In-Class Exams (15% each)	30%
Individual Reflection Papers (10% each)	20%
Final Team Project & Presentation	35%

Grading is based strictly on mastery of course material. No “curves” will be used. Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A	93.33 – 100
A-	90 – 93.32
B+	86.67 – 89.99
B	83.33 – 86.66
B-	80 – 83.32
C+	76.67 – 79.99
C	73.33 – 76.66
C-	70 – 73.32
D+	66.67 – 69.99
D	63.33 – 66.66
D-	60 – 63.32
F	Below 60

Your assignments consist of three types of individual tasks (quizzes; class participation, and essays), and one group task.

**Class Contribution (15%).** In a discussion-based class it is your responsibility to be thoroughly prepared to discuss each case. A critical component of the course is spirited, informed discussion. Many people are intimidated by the “obligation” of speaking up in class. Don’t be. Your anxiety will be reduced only through practice. Here’s the secret to cutting your stress level: BE PREPARED. If you have familiarized yourself with the case and readings, you will succeed if you speak up. Please keep in mind that the only measurable output of your preparation is your class contribution – but airtime is a scarce resource, so please use it wisely. Comments based solely on “gut reaction” generally do not add much value. Participation that does not add any value is treated the same as not participating, unless it becomes a pattern. Frequent non-quality participation are not rewarded and in some cases may be penalized.

**Most days have additional text and supplemental readings to accompany the case or exercise. Excellent contribution incorporates the lessons from these readings into the case or exercise. Additional readings will normally not be reviewed separately – you are assumed to have read and understood them.**

Since this is a discussion-based course, I consider attendance in every class to be very important. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what material was covered and what handouts you may have missed. Some of the behaviors that contribute to effective class contribution are captured in the questions that follow:

- a) Attendance. Name cards must be consistently displayed during class, as this is how I track attendance and participation. Multiple absences will result in a reduction of your grade.
- b) Are the points that are made relevant to the discussion? Are they linked to the comments of others?
- c) Do the comments add to our understanding of the situation?
- d) Do the comments show evidence of analysis of the case?
- e) Does the participant distinguish among different kinds of data (that is, facts, opinions, beliefs, concepts, etc.)?
- f) Is there a willingness to share?
- g) Is there a willingness to test new ideas, or are all comments "safe"? (For example, repetition of case facts without analysis and conclusions or a comment already made by a colleague.)
- h) Is the participant willing to interact with other class members during discussion?
- i) Do comments clarify and highlight the important aspects of earlier comments and lead to a clearer statement of the concepts being covered?
- j) Does the student ask questions rather than limit participation to responding to others' questions?
- k) Professionalism. You will be expected to treat this class like you would any other business situation. Please see the administrative policies section for more details on the definition of professionalism.

**In-Class Exams (15% each, 30% total).** There will be two in-class exams. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions that ask you to apply course concepts to a situation. **Most of the exam material will come from the readings and cases.** The first exam will cover material up through and including week 7. The second exam will cover material from week 8 through the end of the course (not cumulative).

**Individual Reflection Papers (20%).** You will be responsible for two short essays during the semester. These are opportunities for you to apply class concepts to your own work-related experiences. In the first paper, due **September 26**, you will evaluate an experience or decision you made in a work environment in light of the material we cover (up to that point) on individual behavior. In the second paper, due **November 2**, you will analyze an aspect of your teamwork on the group case analysis assignment, applying concepts from the class sessions on teams, decision-making, leadership, communication, influence, etc. Reflection papers must be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and 12-point type. Papers are limited to 3-4 pages. I will provide additional formatting instructions and grading criteria as the first due date nears.

**Final Team Project (35%).** You will join a team for the group project. Please choose a team of 3-5 people.

**Purpose.** This project is the largest collaborative learning activity for the course. Class members will work in teams of three to five people to work with or study a real organization (public, private or non-profit). Please note that student-run groups on campus are not permitted for this project. You may select an organization in which one or more of the team members has worked or been a member. I advise you to be selective in choosing an issue or problem within an organization, as a lack of depth in the issue itself will not be an acceptable excuse for lack of

depth in the analysis. The UT Volunteer and Service Learning Center <http://www.volunteersolutions.org/ut/volunteer/> maintains a list of non-profit organizations that would benefit from student volunteers, and the career services office keeps a list of organizations that interview McCombs students.

The project requires you to examine a problem or issue of concern in a real organization. The purpose of the project is to give your team an opportunity to apply what has been learned in the course (through course lectures, readings, and discussions) to problems in an organization of your team's choice. There are two broad options for what you do with the organization:

1. Your team can act as a short-term consulting team. Your team will focus on an issue or problem that the organization is facing and is relevant to the content of this course. It make take more than one conversation with your key contact person at the organization to identify a problem or issue that can be clearly defined, is manageable in scope, and is relevant to the course. I advise you to be selective in choosing an issue or problem to study, as a lack of depth in the issue itself will not be an acceptable excuse for lack of depth in the analysis.
2. Your team can work with an organizational sponsor to select a project that will contribute positively to the mission of that organization. Thus, with this option, your team will perform a specific task for the organization. This task should be one that can be completed during the semester and take no more than 10 hours of each team member's time. Some examples of this type of project would be to do some community service project for a social service agency, or you may conduct some financial or marketing analysis for an organization. Performing this task is what will provide your team access to the organization and its members, and this will allow you to identify a problem or issue for your team to assess for this course project.

Irrespective of what option you choose, your team is to gather information from people in an organization through direct contact. You may supplement this information with data from the media, the organization's literature, and other secondary sources. **You should identify a relatively recent problem to analyze (i.e., this should not be an historical account of a problem and the company's solution). You should focus your analysis by applying the concepts from the course.** While it is acceptable to incorporate several concepts from the course, please aim for depth rather than breadth regarding the use of course concepts.

### **Deliverables:**

1. **The project proposal e-mail is due on Oct 3 at 5 pm.** It should include:
  - a) the names of your group members
  - b) your team name
  - c) the name of the organization
  - d) the level of your contact person
  - e) the method you will use to gain access to the organization
  - f) a brief description (one paragraph) of the problem facing the organization.

2. **The one page (1" margins, 12 point font, double spaced) executive summary is due on October 26 at 5 pm. In addition to handing in the hard copy of the executive summary, your group should post an electronic version on the class Blackboard for others to read.** Please include:
  - a) The names of your group members
  - b) your team name
  - c) a brief summary of the problem
  - d) a brief summary of your proposed solution
  
3. **Your written project is due December 2 at 5 pm.** It should contain a maximum of 15 double spaced pages (1 inch margins, 12 point font). You will be penalized significantly for exceeding this limit. The limit does not include appendices, which you are free to use to provide charts, figures, or other background material not necessary in the main body of your analysis. However, appendices that are not directly referenced in the main text will not be read. **LATE PROJECT WRITE-UPS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
  
4. **The oral presentations** will be in class on Nov. 16 and 21. I will provide information later in the course on how long the presentation should be. Your team will be responsible for managing your time. Presentations will be arranged by random draw in class on Nov 2. You should feel free to distribute any printed material that will assist with the presentation. Your team should assume you are presenting to the management of the firm, along with some board members who do not know about the problem you are analyzing.

**Group questions during other team presentation:** Each group will be assigned to evaluate another group's presentation. The presenting group's grade will not be affected by the evaluation conducted by the other group; the evaluation is for feedback purposes only. Giving feedback will be a large part of your job after graduating.

6. **Group Structure and Rewards:** At the end of the semester each group member will provide me with a confidential evaluation of the other members of the group – participation in team events, sharing of workload, quality of work, and contribution to team process (e.g., constructive handling of conflict, good communication skills). Your individual grade on the team project will be based on your team grade, weighted by your peers' evaluations.

## **Grading:**

The overall objectives of this project are to answer the following questions:

- a) What are the issues or problems facing the organization?
- b) What course concepts can be applied to understand why this problem is occurring?
- c) What recommendations, based on these course concepts, can you offer to help improve organizational functioning and address the problem you identified?

## **Your group project will be evaluated on the following criteria:**

- a) Problem definition: how well (i.e., thoroughly and concisely) do you describe the organizational context, the relevant parties, and the factors that are important to the problem?
- b) Accurate and thorough use of course concepts.
- c) Integration of course concepts with information about the company and problem, i.e., how well do you integrate course concepts with information about the problem to illuminate the problem in a way that leads to solutions?
- d) Extent to which recommendations are consistent with analysis.
- e) Quality of written analysis.
- f) Quality of oral presentation.

### **Weighting of Final Team Project:**

Executive Summary:	5%
Oral Presentation	25%
Written Paper	65%
Teammate Evaluation	5%

## **General Words about Teamwork**

The issue of equity is a concern that some students have about working in teams and about team grades. If you work harder and do better work than your peers, why should your grade be dependent on them? This view is generally a function of coming from educational environments that only ask for and measure individual performance. Your output for many of the assignments in this school will be a team product, such as a team case presentation. Team tasks should be given team rewards. This means that you not only must make a direct contribution to the development of the in-class presentation, but that you also have an obligation to make your team work effectively.

An infrequent problem associated with group projects is a team member who does not do his/her share of the job. You are urged not to let problems develop to the point where they become serious. Beware of excuses like: "I am too busy with urgent work - health - social - problems right now but I'll make it up later." It is surprising how many people who have one problem have a series of other problems. Be reasonable, but don't be a doormat. Everyone in this class is expected to carry an equal share of the teamwork load.

I will not supervise the process any more closely than would most managers in similar circumstances. Rather, you are expected to get the work done and to manage each other. You are on your honor that you will do your fair share. Teams often ignore problems wishing that they would go away. More often they don't; they only get worse. Try to solve the problem among yourselves. If you can't, bring it to me. If I am convinced that someone has not carried his/her fair share - for any reason - I will reduce that person's grade as low as to 0 if I believe it is warranted.

## **Administrative Policies**

**Policy on McCombs Classroom Professionalism.** The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the undergraduate program experience hinges on this. Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects. The classroom experience is enhanced when:

- **Students arrive on time.** On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- **Students display their name cards.** This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
- **Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks.** The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
- **Students are fully prepared for each class.** Much of the learning in the undergraduate program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
- **Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues.** Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- **Laptops are closed and put away.** When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of laptops in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate to use them. In such cases, professional behavior is exhibited when misuse does not take place.
- **Phones and wireless devices are turned off.** We've all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

Remember, you are competing for the best faculty McCombs has to offer. Your professionalism and activity in class contributes to your success in attracting the best faculty to this program.

**Policy Regarding Re-reads of all graded coursework:** In the event that you feel something was missed in the grading of your work (be it mathematical error or other), please write a brief summary of what you feel needs further attention and submit this re-read request with your original work with my comments within 1 week of receiving your grade. If you request a re-read, I will read the work again from scratch and your grade may go up or down. Each grade component is considered final one week after given to the class and will no longer be open for re-reading or discussion. I do not accept personal lobbying efforts on behalf of grades other than in writing.

**Policy on Academic Accommodations:** Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is housed in the Office of the Dean of Students, located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. Information on how to register, downloadable forms, including guidelines for documentation, accommodation request letters, and releases of information are available online at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/index.php>. Please do not hesitate to contact SSD at (512) 471-6259, VP: (512) 232-2937 or via e-mail if you have any questions.

**Policy on Blackboard:** Password-protected class sites will be available for all accredited courses taught at The University. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging e-mail, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1. For information on restricting directory information see: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi02-03/app/appc09.html>.

**Policy on Academic Integrity:** The details of the Honor System are described on <http://mba.mcombs.utexas.edu/students/academics/honor/index.asp> and below. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all of the faculty responsibilities described in that document. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all of the student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of that Policy Statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. **Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/> or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

**Honor Code Purpose:** Academic honor, trust and integrity are fundamental to The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business community. They contribute directly to the



quality of your education and reach far beyond the campus to your overall standing within the business community. The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Honor System promotes academic honor, trust and integrity throughout the Graduate School of Business. The Honor System relies upon The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct (Chapter 11 of the Institutional Rules on Student Service and Activities) for enforcement, but promotes ideals that are higher than merely enforceable standards. Every student is responsible for understanding and abiding by the provisions of the Honor System and the University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct. The University expects all students to obey the law, show respect for other members of the university community, perform contractual obligations, maintain absolute integrity and the highest standard of individual honor in scholastic work, and observe the highest standards of conduct. Ignorance of the Honor System or The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct is not an acceptable excuse for violations under any circumstances.

The effectiveness of the Honor System results solely from the wholehearted and uncompromising support of each member of the Graduate School of Business community. Each member must abide by the Honor System and must be intolerant of any violations. The system is only as effective as you make it.

**Faculty Involvement in the Honor System:** The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Faculty's commitment to the Honor System is critical to its success. It is imperative that faculty make their expectations clear to all students. They must also respond to accusations of cheating or other misconduct by students in a timely, discrete and fair manner. We urge faculty members to promote awareness of the importance of integrity through in-class discussions and assignments throughout the semester.

### **Expectations Under the Honor System**

**Standards:** If a student is uncertain about the standards of conduct in a particular setting, he or she should ask the relevant faculty member for clarification to ensure his or her conduct falls within the expected scope of honor, trust and integrity as promoted by the Honor System. This applies to all tests, papers and group and individual work. Questions about appropriate behavior during the job search should be addressed to a professional member of the Career Services Office. Below are some of the specific examples of violations of the Honor System.

**Lying:** Lying is any deliberate attempt to deceive another by stating an untruth, or by any direct form of communication to include the telling of a partial truth. Lying includes the use or omission of any information with the intent to deceive or mislead. Examples of lying include, but are not limited to, providing a false excuse for why a test was missed or presenting false information to a recruiter.

**Stealing:** Stealing is wrongfully taking, obtaining, withholding, defacing or destroying any person's money, personal property, article or service, under any circumstances. Examples of stealing include, but are not limited to, removing course material from the library or hiding it from others, removing material from another person's mail folder, securing for one's self unattended items such as calculators, books, book bags or other personal property. Another form of stealing is the duplication of copyrighted material beyond the reasonable bounds of "fair use."

Defacing (e.g., "marking up" or highlighting) library books is also considered stealing, because, through a willful act, the value of another's property is decreased. (See the appendix for a detailed explanation of "fair use.")

**Cheating:** Cheating is wrongfully and unfairly acting out of self-interest for personal gain by seeking or accepting an unauthorized advantage over one's peers. Examples include, but are not limited to, obtaining questions or answers to tests or quizzes, and getting assistance on case write-ups or other projects beyond what is authorized by the assigning instructor. It is also cheating to accept the benefit(s) of another person's theft(s) even if not actively sought. For instance, if one continues to be attentive to an overhead conversation about a test or case write-up even if initial exposure to such information was accidental and beyond the control of the student in question, one is also cheating. If a student overhears a conversation or any information that any faculty member might reasonably wish to withhold from the student, the student should inform the faculty member(s) of the information and circumstance under which it was overheard.

**Actions Required for Responding to Suspected and Known Violations:** As stated, everyone must abide by the Honor System and be intolerant of violations. If you suspect a violation has occurred, you should first speak to the suspected violator in an attempt to determine if an infraction has taken place. If, after doing so, you still believe that a violation has occurred, you must tell the suspected violator that he or she must report himself or herself to the course professor or Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Business. If the individual fails to report himself or herself within 48 hours, it then becomes your obligation to report the infraction to the course professor or the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Business. Remember that although you are not required by regulation to take any action, our Honor System is only as effective as you make it. If you remain silent when you suspect or know of a violation, you are approving of such dishonorable conduct as the community standard. You are thereby precipitating a repetition of such violations.

**The Honor Pledge:** The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business requires each enrolled student to adopt the Honor System. The Honor Pledge best describes the conduct promoted by the Honor System. It is as follows:

"I affirm that I belong to the honorable community of The University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Business. I will not lie, cheat or steal, nor will I tolerate those who do."

"I pledge my full support to the Honor System. I agree to be bound at all times by the Honor System and understand that any violation may result in my dismissal from the Graduate School of Business."

## Required Reading

Textbook (OB): McShane and Von Glinow (2012). *M: Organizational Behavior*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Course Packet (CP): MAN336 course packet that is bundled with the textbook. Available at the University Co-op.

\*\* I reserve the right to make changes to the readings and/or topics as needed

Date	Assigned Reading Due
------	----------------------

---

### Week 1 What Is Organizational Behavior?

Wed, Aug 24      Required:      *OB* Chapter 1 (skim)

---

### Week 2 Individual Differences

Mon, Aug 29      Required:      *OB* Chapter 2 – pages 24-44  
Guidelines for case analysis MAN 336 (CP)

Wed, Aug 31      Required:      *OB* Chapter 3 – pages 49-63  
Wolfgang Keller (CP)

---

### Week 3 Motivation & Rewards

Mon, Sept 5      Labor Day      No Class

Wed, Sept 7      Required:      *OB* Chapter 5  
Lincoln Electric (CP)

---

### Week 4 Motivation & Rewards

Mon, Sept 12      Required:      *OB* Chapter 3 – pages 63-67  
On the Folly of Rewarding for “A” While Hoping for  
“B” (CP)

Wed, Sept 14      Required:      How to Kill Creativity (CP)  
Six Dangerous Myths About Pay (CP)

---

---

**Week 5 Intro to Decision-Making & Ethics**

Mon, Sept 19 Required: *OB* Chapter 6

Wed, Sept 21 Required: The Case of the MBA Hackers (CP)  
Values in Tension: Ethics Away From Home (CP)

---

**Week 6 Ethics & Conflict**

Mon, Sept 26 Required: *OB* Chapter 2 – pages 45-47  
Vanatin Case (distributed in class)

**Due:** **Reflection Paper #1**

Wed, Sept 28 Required: *OB* Chapter 10  
How management teams can have a good fight (CP)

---

**Week 7 Negotiations & Exam 1**

Mon, Oct 3 Required: *Negotiation Roles Distributed in Class*

**Due:** **Team Project - Description of Final Project**

Wed, Oct 5 EXAM #1

---

**Week 8 Managing Teams**

Mon, Oct 10 Required: *Murder Mystery Role Distributed in Class*

Wed, Oct 12 Required: *OB* Chapter 7

---

**Week 9 Power, Persuasion, and Influence**

Mon, Oct 17 Required: *OB* Chapter 9  
The Necessary Art of Persuasion (CP)

Wed, Oct 19 Required: Managing Xerox's Multinational Development Center (CP)

---

---

**Week 10 Power, Persuasion, and Influence**

Mon, Oct 24 Required: Harnessing the Science of Persuasion (CP)

Wed, Oct 26 No Assigned Reading

**Due: Team Project - 1 page Executive Summary**

---

**Week 11 Leadership & Organizational Culture**

Mon, Oct 31 Required *OB* Chapter 11  
Leadership that gets results (CP)

Wed, Nov 2 Required: *OB* Chapter 13  
How Leaders Create Organizational Cultures (CP)

**Due: Reflection Paper #2**

---

**Week 12 Organizational Culture and Socialization**

Mon, Nov 7 Required: The Smile Factory: Work at Disneyland (CP)

Wed, Nov 9 Required: *OB* Chapter 12

---

**Week 13 Team Presentations**

Mon, Nov 14 Guest Speaker Jenni Oaks, Accenture, Senior Manager of Operations  
for North America

Wed, Nov 16 **Due: Team Presentations**

---

**Week 14 Team Presentations & Thanksgiving**

Mon, Nov 21 **Due: Team Presentations**

Wed, Nov 23 Thanksgiving

---

**Week 15 Conclusion**

Mon, Nov 28 Wrap-up

Wed, Nov 30 EXAM #2