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Class Times: Mon/Wed 8:00–9:30 (04665), CBA 4.324
Mon/Wed 2:00–3:30 (04675), CBA 4.324

Office Location: CBA 4.238
Office Hours: Monday, 11:00 – 1:45; Wednesday, 11:00 – 12:15 or by appointment

Course Description

This course is constructed on the presumption that you aspire to be a productive and effective leader within an organizational setting. Organizational leadership requires a deep, and nuanced, understanding of how individuals behave in organizational settings; effective leaders create environments that are consistent with the fundamentals of human behavior in organizations.

You begin this course with a set of beliefs and general assumptions about humans and their behavior, and those assumptions form the foundation for your beliefs about what motivates individuals; about how individuals make decisions; and about the ways in which the organizational context influences individuals’ behavior. As we will find out through this course, though, our assumptions are sometimes wrong; individuals don’t always conform to our instinctual beliefs. And organizations are complex systems that influence the way individuals behave—often in ways that are very difficult to understand.

This course is designed to shape your understanding of human behavior in an organizational setting based on an accumulation of research in psychology, sociology, economics and organizational behavior. We will focus on five key areas: Motivation; Judgment & Decision-Making; Individual Differences; Ethics; and Groups & Culture. A continuous theme throughout this course will be Rationality: we will routinely re-visit the idea that individuals are not always
rational in their behavior, and our examination of the topics over the coming weeks will illuminate many clear examples of irrational behavior in an organizational context.

**Course Readings**

Each week, I have assigned articles from the popular or business press (or occasionally an academic journal article) to read. Many of these are publicly available online; I’ve provided links to those in the syllabus below. If you can’t access particular articles due to subscription restrictions, you can access them via the UT Libraries ([http://www.lib.utexas.edu](http://www.lib.utexas.edu)).

At times, we will learn through examining specific case studies. The required case studies (along with some additional articles) are listed in the schedule below, and can be purchased, together, in a course pack from the UT Coop.

### Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination 1</td>
<td>October 9, 2019</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination 2</td>
<td>November 6, 2019</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Analysis</td>
<td>November 24, 2019</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project</td>
<td>December 10, 2019</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Contribution</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>16%</td>
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### Midterm & Final Examinations

Each examination will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short-answer questions. Your performance as a future organizational leader depends on your ability to think in a complex manner and to apply the evidence-based concepts we discover throughout the semester to real-life situations. To that end, the exams, for the most part, are not designed to test your ability to memorize terms or definitions. Rather, they are a venue in which you must think critically and apply the concepts from the course.

Midterm examination 1 will cover the material from roughly the first half of the semester. Midterm examination 2 will be a take-home, open book/note examination, and will be comprehensive, up to that point in the semester. The final examination will be cumulative. Midterm examination 1, and the final examination, are in-class on the days specified.

### Class Contribution

I believe that active engagement facilitates learning for most of the topics we will cover this semester. Furthermore, each of you brings a distinct set of experiences and perspectives to the course that, when exposed through your contributions and questions in class, can help facilitate learning for those around you—myself included! In truth, this closely approximates the
working world: as you embark on your career, your ability to effectively contribute to groups within your organization—to leverage your experiences and perspectives effectively in service of propelling the broader group forward—will dramatically affect your long-term success. So, your grade will, in part, be based on the quality of your contributions to the class. You must be actively involved, but importantly, your grade here is not a reflection of the volume of comments you make. Rather, this grade reflects the degree to which your contributions provide a novel perspective; build on the comments of your classmates; contribute to others’ learning in the room; and move the discussion and analysis forward.

To facilitate class participation, please:

(a) Attend every class session;
(b) Arrive to class on time;
(c) Turn off and put away all electronic devices (including laptop computers and mobile devices);
(d) Display your BBA student nameplate during all class session;
(e) Prepare for class by reading the assigned material for the class session;

I will track participation on a weekly basis, and will post participation grades monthly. I will drop your lowest two class-meeting participation scores over the course of the semester. If you have questions about participation, please don’t hesitate to discuss with me.

Case Analysis

This course is designed to influence both your thinking and your behavior as current and future leaders. As you move into your professional career, your efficacy as a leader will depend upon your ability to understand organizational situations, and to apply the concepts you learn in this course to those situations to positive effect. To facilitate this process, and to give you an opportunity to apply your learnings to a real organizational challenge, you will be asked to answer, in writing, a question about a case, using course concepts. The case, “Webasto Roof Systems Americas: Leadership Through Change (A)” is included in your course packet, and the case questions will be distributed in class the week before the assignment due date.

The assignment is due by 11:59 PM on Sunday, November 24, 2019.

Team Research Project

Early in the semester, you’ll be randomly assigned to a team of approximately five students. Each team will be acting as a consulting team, applying the insights from our class to solving a real life organizational challenge within the organization on which you’ve decided to focus.

Your team will have relative autonomy in your approach to this project—including the selection of an organization to research, your approach to gathering data, and your strategy for analyzing the challenges and creating a proposal for change within the organization. To be clear, your
team will need to (a) decide on an organization that will be your focus; and (b) approach that organization, seeking their permission to gather data (e.g. through interviews) if appropriate. You may also choose to approach this project as an archival investigation, using publicly available data or information to conduct your analyses and develop your recommendations. But note that the final evaluation of your paper and presentation will be based, in part, on the depth, comprehensiveness, and analysis of whatever data you choose to focus on. Publicly available information is often incomplete or shallow—and is often (especially if presented as news stories) selectively presented in order to fit the narrative of the author. In short, you’ll be rewarded for your work if you find an organization in which you can gather original data and conduct a more thorough analysis.

Note: you may choose any business, non-profit, public-sector organization, or any reasonable size, with the exception of student-run groups within the University.

**Deliverables**

**Team Project Description; due October 16, 2019 at 11:59 PM:** Submit, via canvas, a brief summary of your team project, including the following information:

- Team name
- The organization you’ve selected for your project
- Your primary contact person and their position within the organization
- How you plan to gather data—e.g. interviews, observation, archival data.
- A brief description of the problem/challenge facing the organization. The specific challenge or issue you focus on may evolve as your project progresses, but at this point, you should have some preliminary sense of what you’re walking into.

**Team Presentation, in class and December 2 and 4.**

You’ll have 10 minutes to deliver a presentation to the “board of directors” of the organization. This presentation should provide:

- A succinct introduction and overview of the organization
- An analysis, including a description of diagnosis of the problem drawing on evidence collected in your investigation.
- Recommendations for action, which include a rationale grounded in material covered in the course, and practical implementation/action plans.
- An opportunity for observers in the room to ask questions

Each student will be asked to provide an evaluation of each team’s presentation. Your final presentation grade will be a composite of the instructor’s grade and the grades assigned by student observers.

**Final Proposal; due Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 11:59 PM:** This final proposal may take whatever form best fits your project and purposes. It may be a paper; a video-presentation;
some combination thereof; or whatever creative method you want to use to convey your ideas. You will NOT be graded on the creativity of your delivery method, but you will be graded on how effectively and efficiently you convey your ideas, as well as how convincing your final submission is. Your submission should include:

- A brief overview of the organization
- Description of problems facing the organization
- Description of data collected, and summary of results that support your analysis
- An analysis and diagnosis leveraging insights from the course
- Proposed solution(s) based on insights from the class
- Any pilot data/evidence supporting the efficacy of your proposal.
- A basic conceptual implementation plan, including method of testing the solution
- Results from any testing you’ve conducted to support your proposal

You should think of me, for purposes of this submission, as the decision-maker within the organization. Imagine that you’ve been granted 15 minutes of the key decision-maker’s time, and you need to make your case for change within those 15 minutes.

**Grading**

Your individual grade on the final team project will be assigned based on the following weightings:

- Team Presentation: 30%
- Research Paper: 65%
- Teammate Evaluation: 5%

The Team Presentation component of your individual grade will be an aggregate of my evaluation, and student observers’ evaluations. Additionally, I will ask your teammates to evaluate each of their team members’ contribution to the project over the term. The final 5% of your individual grade will be based on the aggregate of your teammates’ evaluations of you as an individual contributor to the team effort.

**Late Assignments**

I am diligent about posting all assignments in Canvas, and ensuring due dates and times are clearly identified. Please endeavor to submit assignments on time. I will accept late submissions—but you’ll be penalized 5% for each day late you submit an assignment. That is, the maximum number of points you’ll be able to earn will drop by 5% for each day you’re late. Please don’t submit assignments late!
Important Notifications

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

Ethics

This course carries the Ethics flag. Ethics courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time following the absence.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the BBA Program’s Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty at http://my.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBA/Code-of-Ethics. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all faculty responsibilities described there. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described there. If the application of the Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty to this class or its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. 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, the integrity of the University, and the value of our academic brand, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/ to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

Campus Safety

Please note the following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation, provided by the
Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, [https://preparedness.utexas.edu/](https://preparedness.utexas.edu/):

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation should inform the instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050 or [on-line](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency).

In case of emergency, further information will be available at: [http://www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (8/28)</td>
<td>Intro to Organizational Behavior</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>9/4: Motivation: Foundation</td>
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<td>Week 5 (9/23, 9/25)</td>
<td>Decision-making: Choices &amp; Rationality</td>
<td>Carter Racing (Distributed in Class)</td>
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<td>Mid-term exam (10/9)</td>
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<td>The Case of the MBA Hackers (Part A) (CP)</td>
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<td>Vanatin Case (distributed in class)</td>
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| Week 12  (11/11, 11/13) | Organizational Culture & Design  
Zappos Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFyW5s_7ZWc  
Zappos & Holacracy Article: http://www.fastcompany.com/3044352/the-secrets-of-holacracy |
| Week 13  (11/18, 11/20) | Power & Influence (11/18)  
| Week 14  (11/25) | Organizational Change (11/25)  
Case Study: Webasto Roof Systems Americas: Leadership Through Change (B), Harvard Business Publishing case 9-917-016 (CP)—DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS |
| Week 15  (12/2, 12/4) | Team Final Presentations | None |
| Week 16  (12/9) | Final Exam (12/9) | None |