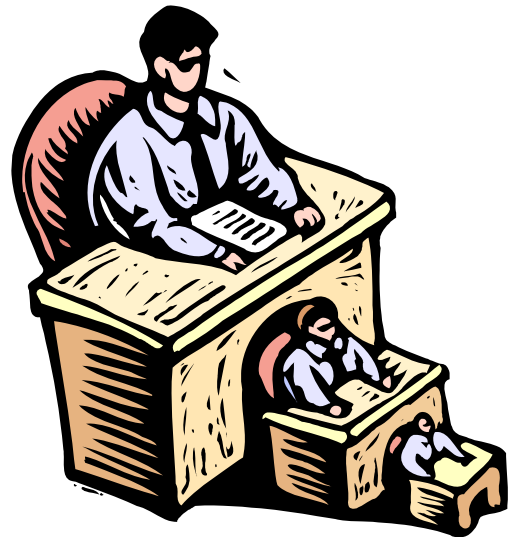


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T-Th 11:15-12:30
room 117 SOM

MGT 331 **Administrative Theory**

Organizing people and organizing work tasks, and maintaining the sense of ‘organization’, are major components in the process of management. For decades management theorists have debated how work and organizations should be organized and what forms or structures should be used to coordinate human effort. The debates are by no means settled. Should efficiency be the primary aim when designing an organization, or flexibility, or learning, or the growth and development of its members? What are the consequences of different approaches to organization design? But ‘the problem’ of organizing is not simply a matter of determining the ‘best’ structure once and for all. Inevitably there are tensions, conflicts, and new conditions, often leading to a need for change and for *re*-organizing.



This course in administrative theory is designed to give you tools for understanding and analyzing the problems of organizing and *re*-organizing. In addition to the focus on organizational structural forms, the course will present frameworks for understanding organizational conflict and organizational change.

Objectives

- To help you learn the language of organizational design
- To help you understand different organizational structural forms – their strengths/weaknesses
- To help you analyze organizational forms and situations of organizational conflict and change as they connect to the ‘problem’ of organizing through three different frameworks

Text: Images of Organization (2006 third edition) by Gareth Morgan, Sage Publications. Available at the textbook annex, used copies are available too. You may also use the second edition (1996). A copy of the book will be on reserve in the SOM Reading Room on the first floor. The text is the primary resource for the theoretical grounding you’ll need in this class. There will be additional required readings and case material handed out and/or posted/linked to the course website. If you miss class you are responsible for obtaining all additional materials including class handouts.

- **Course website:** <http://intra.som.umass.edu/smircich/mgt331>
Check site everyday for course schedule/assignments and important communication.
- **Grading:** 40% tests (4)
50% integrative application assignments (2)
10% class participation/contribution & attendance

Tests are closed book, closed notes, based on the reading and in-class work, focusing on assessing your understanding of the concepts and frameworks. They will consist of short answer / brief essay type questions. Study guides will be posted on the website. If for some reason you miss a test there will be make ups scheduled only during the final exam period.

The two integrative application assignments (one at approx. midterm, one as the final) are designed for you to apply the theory and frameworks to specific organizational situations. You will have in-class time for doing this assignment. The work will be done in small groups and there will be peer assessments.

Classroom attendance is important and expected. Participation requires that you come to class having read the material assigned for that day and are ready to discuss and work with the ideas. Material not covered in the text will be presented in class. Both the text and notes from class will be used in making up the tests.

If for some reason you must miss a class I'd appreciate hearing from you ahead of time via email: smircich@mgmt.umass.edu.

- **Overview of course:**

The first part of the course develops the framework of "Organizations as Strategic Designs." It encompasses the 'machine' 'organism' and 'brain' approaches to designing and managing organizational forms and organizational change. We'll learn about organizational forms from bureaucracies to networks.

The second part of the course develops the framework of Organizations as Political Systems and Organizations as Cultures. These two perspectives offer differing ways for understanding organizational design, conflict, and change and offer different approaches to managing them.

Class schedule: see website for details.