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Spring 2-1-2006

PSC 504.01: Organization Theory

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Political Science 504
Organization Theory
Spring 2006

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Office Hours: Anytime when not in class.

Course Description

This seminar provides a comprehensive overview of organization theory, particularly as it relates to public management and organizational effectiveness.

Course Objectives

1. To develop skill in theory-building
2. To increase conceptual and theoretical knowledge

Required Texts

1. Shafritz, Ott, and Jang, Classics of Organization Theory (Wadsworth, 2004).
2. Jonathan Tompkins, Organization Theory and Public Management (Wadsworth, 2005).
3. Bob Stone, Confessions of a Civil Servant (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

There are also a few articles on electronic and hard copy reserve in the library.

Course Requirements

Students are required to read all reading assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class. Students are also required to write five 3-4 page writing assignments and one take-home final exam (100 points each). The exam questions are provided on this syllabus.

A = 558-600 points

A- = 540-557

B+ = 522-539

B = 498-521

B- = 480-497

C+ = 462-479

Reading Assignments

Jan. 31 Organization Theory and Public Management
Read Tompkins chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Feb. 7 Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy
Read Tompkins chapter 4 and Max Weber's "Bureaucracy" in Shafritz et al.

- Feb. 14 Scientific Management Theory
 Read Tompkins chapter 5 and Frederick Taylor's "The Principles of Scientific Management" in Shafritz et al.
- **Assignment #1 due Tuesday, Feb. 21****
- Feb. 21 Administrative Management Theory
 Read Tompkins chapter 6, and Henri Fayol's "General Principles of Management" and Luther Gulick's "Notes on the Theory of Organization," in Shafritz et al.
- Feb. 28 Pre-Human Relations Theory
 Read Tompkins chapter 7, and Mary Parker Follett's "The Giving of Orders" in Shafritz et al.
- March 7 Human Relations Theory
 Read Tompkins chapter 8, and Fritz Roethlisberger's "The Hawthorne Experiments" in Shafritz et al.
- ** Assignment #2 due Monday March 13****
- March 14 The Open Systems Perspective
 Read Tompkins Chapter 11, and Burns and Stalker's "Mechanistic and Organic Systems" and James D. Thompson's "Organizations in Action" in Shafritz et al.
- March 21 Participative Management Theory
 Read Tompkins Chapter 12.
- March 28 **Spring Break**
- April 4 Human Resources Theory
 Read Tompkins Chapter 13, Douglas McGregor's "The Human Side of Enterprise" in Shafritz et al., and Frederick Herzberg, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?" (on reserve in the library).
- **Assignment #3 is due Monday, April 10****
- April 11 Total Quality Management Theory
 Read Tompkins Chapter 14, Mary Walton's "Parable of the Red Beads" and Joseph Sensenbrenner's "Quality Comes to City Hall, both on reserve in the library.
- **Assignment #4 is due Monday, April 17****

- April 18 The Organizational Culture Perspective
Read Tompkins Chapter 15, and William Ouchi's "The Z Organization" in Shafritz et al.
- April 25 Symbolic Management and Leadership Theory
Read Peters and Austin's "Attention, Symbols, Drama, Vision – and Love" on reserve in the library, Al Gore's "Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less" in Shafritz et al., and Bob Stone chapters 1-6.

- May 2 Leadership as a Moral Obligation
Read Tompkins chapter 16 and the rest of Bob Stone's book.

****Assignment #5 Due Monday, May 8****

****Final Exam Due Thursday, May 11****

Writing Assignments

The following writing assignments are to be 3-4 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced. They require you to choose a small organization or organizational unit in a large organization with which you are familiar and which has a relatively clear and distinct mission (e.g., a school, nonprofit agency, government agency or bureau) and to apply your analysis to this organization. Some advice:

1. Your goal is to pack as much analysis as possible into relatively few pages. This requires you to walk a fine line between succinctness on the one hand and depth of analysis on the other.
2. Write a brief introduction that introduces the literature, the relevant theory of excellence, and the purpose of the paper. Introduce the theory under study as follows: Theory such-and-such holds that organizational excellence is achieved by [doing] x, y, and z.
3. Create subheadings and subsections for each core concept in the relevant theory of excellence. Begin each subsection by defining the core concept at issue.
4. Make sure the body of the paper provides no analysis of your organization. Just describe how your organization would look and operate under that particular theory of excellence.
5. Where appropriate make specific references to the readings so that the professor can tell that you have read and understood them (no footnotes required).
Example: "Taylor believed, for example, that . . ."

Note: Rewrites will be allowed only on assignment #1.

Writing Assignment #1 – Scientific Management Theory

Write an essay analyzing scientific management as a theory of organizational effectiveness by identifying its core concepts and describing what your organization would look like (how it would be structured, managed and/or operated) if it were organized strictly in accordance with scientific management theory. As you will say in your introduction, the purpose of your paper is to explore the relevance of scientific management theory to your organization as it continues its pursuit of excellence.

Close with an assessment of the relevance of this theory to your organization, assuming you are committed to the pursuit of excellence (i.e., what elements of this theory are relevant to your organization and which would you incorporate into your theory for achieving organizational excellence?) Your final subheading might be “Relevance for Organization X”.

Writing Assignment #2 – Human Relations Theory

Repeat Assignment #1, but this time utilizing human relations theory (Mayo/Roethlisberger).

Writing Assignment #3 – Human Resources Theory

Repeat Assignment #1, but this time utilizing human resources theory (Likert/McGregor/Argyris).

Writing Assignment #4 – Total Quality Management Theory

Repeat Assignment #1, but this time utilizing total quality management theory (Deming/Juran).

Writing Assignment #5 – Symbolic Management and Leadership Theory

Repeat Assignment #1, but this time utilizing symbolic management and leadership theory (Ouchi/Peters/Stone).

Final Exam Question

Write on the following question, using proper essay style and providing enough explanation and analysis to demonstrate that you have mastered course content well (3-4 typed, double-spaced pages each)

Outlining your theory of organizational excellence as drawn from the schools of thought studied this semester (not necessarily all of them). Introduce the core concepts that comprise your theory in the introduction, and then explain how each core concept contributes to organizational excellence as part of an integrated theory. (Do not apply your theory to a specific organization as you did in earlier assignments).