

PSY 5708: Organizational Psychology
Spring 2022: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 – 2:15pm
N423 Elliott Hall
3 credits

Aaron Schmidt, Ph.D.
N468 Elliot Hall
612-626-9188
aSchmidt@umn.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

DESCRIPTION: This course is a graduate/advanced undergraduate level survey of topics relevant to the fields of organizational psychology (OP) and organizational behavior (OB). The objective of the course is to acquaint you with key concepts, theories, and substantive issues relevant to the study and understanding of OP/OB. Although the primary perspective is psychological in nature – that is, we assume that the basic behaving units are individuals – the course also incorporates a multilevel perspective. Organizations are dynamic systems of interacting entities at the individual, group, and organizational levels. The course has been designed to be research and theory oriented, with an emphasis on developing an integrative perspective for studying substantive phenomena in organizational psychology and behavior.

READINGS: We will be utilizing a variety of review chapters and journal articles in this course. Refer to the course website for more information: <https://goal-lab.psych.umn.edu/orgPsych/>

EVALUATION: Evaluation for the course is divided among the following activities, discussed in more detail below:

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| 1. Participation & Quizzes | 20% |
| 2. Class Rolls | 10% |
| 3. Research/Review Project | 25% (manuscript = 20%, presentation = 5%) |
| 4. Mid-term Examination | 27.5% |
| 5. Final Examination | 27.5% |

COVID ACCOMODATIONS: The ongoing COVID pandemic necessitates flexibility on all our parts to maximize the learning objectives of the course while maintaining a safe environment for all (as best as can be managed). My expectation is that the course will take place largely in-person (N423 Elliott Hall). However, there may be occasional need to temporarily shift towards Zoom-based delivery. When this is the case, I will communicate as early as possible via email (and, when possible, announced during class meetings). If you are uncertain, please contact me to inquire.

Even when meeting in class, we will likely need to accommodate students who are unable to attend due to COVID exposure. As such, in-person class meetings will also be concurrently streamed via Zoom. Students DO NOT need to obtain my prior permission to attend class via Zoom.

As of the beginning of the semester, facemasks are currently a university requirement, and this policy will be strictly enforced during in-person class meetings. High quality facemasks (e.g., N95, KN95, KF94) are *very strongly encouraged!*

Additional details on university COVID policy—developed by the Faculty Senate Consultative Committee (FCC), the Senate Committee on Educational Policy, and the Provost's office—are provided later in the syllabus. COVID-related policies and procedures are subject to change throughout the semester.

PARTICIPATION: In a typical semester, I structure this class to be largely discussion oriented; a guided self-learning experience. The continued uncertainty of the pandemic makes this a little more challenging to execute, and I will be making some adjustments in the structure and expectations to accommodate this reality. Nonetheless, I

remain committed to the goal of fostering regular interaction and participation by all students in the course.

Thus, participation is expected – in fact, 10% of your grade is determined by your participation in class! Consistent active participation in class discussions and activities can (and often does) make the difference between letter grades (A vs B, B vs C, etc.). They are essentially “free” points available to all students. That is, they essentially reflect the choice to invest effort to prepare and engage in discussion – there is no good reason for any student to fail to earn full points for participation, yet every semester many students do not earn the grade they could have because they did not contribute to the discussions.

I have developed a structured set of topics and associated readings. Your task is to critically evaluate the readings, develop a perspective, and be prepared to discuss your observations during our meetings – in other words, this means identifying the theme or main point of each reading, understanding central issues, comprehending core constructs and processes, evaluating the merit of the paper’s position, and developing a point of view on the topic.

Focusing on specific aspects of the paper can be useful, as it can help clarify and/or solidify things you read and also helps establish what I would like for you to take away from the reading. *However, in general it is often more useful to focus on the big picture, such as what the readings mean for theoretical development and practical applications, how the various readings relate to one another (and to other topics not specifically covered in this course), and what should be the next steps in the development/application of these topics.*

Remember, as a graduate/advanced-undergraduate level course this course will be, in part, what you make of it. Lack of participation severely limits what each of you get out of the course and makes for a dull semester for everyone. It may be useful to specifically write several comments/questions about each reading as you prepare for class, then unleash the questions/comments on the class during discussion. Of course, the best discussions are fairly organic in nature so be prepared to go well outside your pre-determined questions/comments during class. However, these initial questions may help get the ball rolling, even if the discussions evolve into something quite distinct from where they started. **As a specific goal, shoot for at least 3 comments per person, per class.** However, please remember that it is *quality*, not just *quantity*, that is important.

In response to the shift to online class meetings and the challenges it can pose for frequent and seamless discussion, particularly with a relatively large group such as this, I have made some adjustments to the course with relevance to participation. First, most class meetings will include a traditional slide-based presentation in lieu of a semi-structured and more free-flowing discussion. Second, I have reduced the expectations regarding the frequency of participation per-student, and have reduced the magnitude of participation’s contribution to the final grade. Nonetheless, I remain committed to student participation—each lecture will have numerous opportunities for participation built in. Third, when I find participation to be lagging, I intend to call on members of the class to contribute (e.g., answer a question, provide an example, etc.) on the spot. Thus, by choosing to participate, you will have considerable control over when and on what you are contributing; by choosing not to contribute, you leave it to my discretion to determine when and on what you may be asked to contribute (and without notice).

Because adequate preparation is essential to a participative class such as this, there may be occasional unannounced quizzes or other activities on the assigned readings for the day. They are intended to identify and reward those who have prepared for the class discussion, and to serve to discourage “free riding.”

Class Roles: While all students are expected to participate in each and every class discussion, students will be assigned to various roles throughout the semester to help facilitate the discussion. These roles are described below:

1. **DISCUSSION FACILITATION.** Many weeks, members of the class will facilitate part of the class discussion. Student facilitation will occur in **teams of two or three**. Each undergraduate student will be assigned to a single team, and thus will co-facilitate a single topic. Each graduate student will be assigned to two such teams, thus co-facilitating two topics across the semester. The topics will be assigned on the second week of class. On the day that each topic is covered, the facilitator will lead approximately 20 - 30 minutes of the discussion for that day.

The discussion can take a number of different directions, depending on the facilitators' preferences. The typical approach is to develop a set of questions that can guide the discussion, such that it covers the central ideas. The idea isn't to lecture the class, but to steer the conversation in the intended direction. The facilitators may wish to use an activity of one sort or another to illustrate the concepts or serve as stimulus for the discussion. *Be creative!* Also, remember that you will be performing the facilitation as a team, not just two individuals who happen to be facilitating the same week, so each member individually facilitating one article is not really what I'm looking for.

Facilitators must run their general game plan, including key questions, by me ***at least 3 days prior to the date of their facilitation***. This doesn't have to be a step-by-step plan/script, but should be enough detail for me to ensure that the facilitation will cover the desired issues. The facilitators should plan to utilize *approximately 30 minutes* of class time for their facilitation. Facilitators are also encouraged to provide the class with some sort of advanced organizer—though this isn't strictly required, it is often helpful.

2. *Expansion*: This role consists of finding one additional reading relevant to the day's topic. Copies of the reading should be provided to the class on or before the class meeting in question, although the class will NOT be required to read the additional reading and it will NOT be on the exam. The person in this role will provide the class with a electronic summary and/or outline of the reading, focusing in particular on the relevant key constructs, theory/model, findings, and implications (i.e. it doesn't have to capture all details, just hit the high points relevant to the class). Be sure to emphasize what this reading adds, above and beyond the assigned readings. The person in this role will provide an approximately 5-10 minute presentation/facilitation of this article during class.
3. *Application*: This role consists of explicitly considering the applied/real-world implications of the day's readings. This could include discussing existing interventions that incorporate the relevant topics and proposing new interventions (these don't necessarily need to be fully fleshed out, but just general ideas and possibilities). The person in this role may discuss the applications where relevant during the natural course of the class discussions, but may also be specifically called upon to do so (ex., end of discussion).

EXAMS: There will be two exams during the course of the semester: an in-class mid-term and a take-home final. Both exams will be essay-style, focusing on your understanding of key concepts, your ability to integrate concepts across topics, and your application of these concepts to research topics and/or practitioner issues in I/O psychology. The mid-term exam is currently scheduled for **Thursday, March 3rd** during the normal class meeting time. The final exam will be distributed and due during finals week (details will be provided in class and by email).

PROJECT: Students will submit a research project by choosing an area of organizational psychology based on their own interests. ***Students will work in groups of 2 or 3 (of their own choosing) for the project.*** The topic need not be one that a student facilitated, though doing so may benefit some students. The project consists of two parts, described below: (1) the research proposal (manuscript); and (2) an in-class presentation of your project.

(1) Research Proposal. The proposal will critically (but briefly) review the current literature on a topic of your choice (subject to my approval), identify an issue for investigation, and propose a study to address the problem. The form of the typical APA journal article (particularly from *Journal of Applied Psychology*) will provide you with an outline for the usual structure of an article (which your proposal will follow), except that the data analysis/results and discussion sections will be modified. The following describes the essential requirements for this project.

(1a) Introduction, Literature Review, and Hypotheses. The proposal should start with a brief description of the topic and area of investigation. What is the nature of the intended contribution? Why should anyone care? It should then provide a focused, critical review of relevant research. The issues you identify in the review (prior limitations and method flaws; and/or conceptual synthesis and integration) should lead to the development of a model of the phenomenon of interest, an explication of your theoretical rationale, and the statement of formal hypotheses.

(1b) Method and Analysis Plan. The methodology you would use to address these hypotheses should be mapped out. For purposes of the exercise, assume you have access to whatever sample characteristics you require (please try to be realistic, however). You should also describe how you would operationalize your constructs. Indicate how you would analyze the data to support or refute the hypotheses. In short, your design, measurement, data analyses, and the expected results should be clearly specified.

(1c) Discussion. Assume that your hypotheses are supported. Address the implications of these hypothetical results on theory and research in the area you have selected. Identify the major limitations you see in your research and indicate their effects on your interpretation. Suggest directions that ought to guide additional work in the area.

Treat the proposal as if it is an article that you are preparing for publication. The central criterion for evaluation will be the coherence of the linkages among the review/critique, rationale/hypotheses, method/analyses, and results/discussion that you provide. Throughout the semester you are required to update me on the progress of your paper. By **February 8th** you should have emailed me a description of the topic you have chosen (it doesn't need to be terribly detailed at this stage). By **March 17th** you should email me a detailed outline of your paper. The final draft of your paper is due by end-of-day **May 5th** (though earlier is ***strongly*** encouraged – **due to grade submission deadlines, no extensions beyond May 12th will be permitted**). There is no definitive length requirement, but I would expect most papers to be about 15-20 pages. Papers should be written in the format specified by the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

(2) Presentation. ***Prior to their completion***, projects will be presented to the class. Presentations are currently scheduled for **April 19th and 21st**. The aim of the presentation is (1) to give you experience presenting scientific research, and (2) provide you with additional feedback to incorporate into your final papers.

Presenters will have approximately 15 minutes to provide the class with a summary of their project (exact time limits to be determined later, once the number of presentations is known). Anticipate approximately 10 to 12 minutes for presentation and 3 to 5 minutes for questions. You should prepare PowerPoint overheads or whatever materials are needed for the presentation in advance. A computer projector will be made available for use during the presentations.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY COVID POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The information below was developed by the members of the Faculty Senate Consultative Committee (FCC) and the Senate Committee on Educational Policy and the Provost's office and it reflects current University policy as of 1/12/2022 and updated 01/14/2022:

COVID-19, Face-Covering Requirement, Symptoms, Vaccination, and Boosters

The University requires all students and employees to be vaccinated or have a valid exemption; more information is at [safe-campus website](#). On January 5, 2022 President Gabel announced an update on COVID-19 and campus operations which strongly encourages all community members to get a booster as soon as they are eligible. For information about getting a booster and how to schedule an appointment, please refer to [the University's Get the Vax 2.0 initiative](#).

Stay at home if you experience any signs of illness or have a positive COVID-19 test result, and consult with your healthcare provider about an appropriate course of action. Absences related to illness, including COVID-19 symptoms, for yourself or your dependents, are [excused absences](#) and I will work with you to find the best course of action for missed work and course content. I will follow these same protocols and will let you know if the delivery of this course has to be temporarily changed as the result of my own circumstances.

See below for additional details:

People who are not vaccinated are at high risk for getting and spreading SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. New variants such as Omicron spread more easily and quickly which may lead to more cases of COVID-19 among college students this semester. Increases in the number of COVID-19 cases are straining healthcare resources.

The best defenses against contracting COVID-19 and spreading it to others are vaccination, masking, and taking measures to isolate when symptomatic or COVID-19 positive.

When indoors on campus, students, faculty, staff and guests are currently [required to wear a face covering \(mask\)](#). You must wear your mask so that it covers both your nose and mouth. This will help protect all members of the community, and especially those who are immunocompromised and/or who are caretakers of others (e.g., young children) who are not yet vaccinated. Even though vaccinations are highly protective and required for all students and employees, breakthrough infections do occur; therefore, indoor masking continues to be one of our most important tools for ensuring sustained in-person learning. With the high transmissibility of the recent variants it is strongly recommended that you use an enhanced mask— a surgical mask either alone or in combination with a cloth mask, or an N95, KN95, AirPop or similar mask. Surgical masks are widely available throughout campus, and you can get free high-quality masks by following the instructions at <https://www.uhs.umn.edu/university-health-and-safety-mask-support-program>.

Both the Center for Disease Control ([CDC](#)) and Minnesota Department of Health ([MDH](#)) recommend that we stay home and get tested if we are experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#), even if we're already fully vaccinated. I commit to doing my part to keep you and your peers safe by doing this, and I expect that you will too. If you experience [COVID-19 symptoms](#) or symptoms of any potentially infectious respiratory or other illness, you should stay home or in your residence hall room and not come to class or to campus. Consult your healthcare provider about an appropriate course of action, and refer to the [M-test program](#) for COVID-19 testing resources. If you test positive for COVID-19 here are the guidelines for [what to do](#).

The above policies and guidelines are subject to change because the University regularly updates [pandemic guidelines](#) in response to guidance from health professionals and in relation to the prevalence of the virus and its variants in our community. Any changes in COVID-19 policy will be indicated in email messages from the Administration and these syllabus details will be modified as needed.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Research Proposal Benchmarks
1	Tue	18-Jan	Course Introduction	
	Thr	20-Jan	History & Perspectives	
2	Tue	25-Jan	History & Perspectives; Research Methods	
	Thr	27-Jan	Systems, Levels, & Methods	
3	Tue	1-Feb	Productive & Counterproductive Behavior	
	Thr	3-Feb	Productive & Counterproductive Behavior	
4	Tue	8-Feb	Organizational Entry (Fit, Mentoring, & Socialization)	Initial topic selection
	Thr	10-Feb	Organizational Entry (Fit, Mentoring, &	
5	Tue	15-Feb	Motivation: Theories and Applications	
	Thr	17-Feb	Motivation: Theories and Applications	
6	Tue	22-Feb	Judgment & Decision Making	
	Thr	24-Feb	Job Attitudes & Affect	
7	Tue	1-Mar	Job Attitudes & Affect	
	Thr	3-Mar	Mid-Term Exam	
8	Tue	8-Mar	Spring Break -- no class!	
	Thr	10-Mar		
9	Tue	15-Mar	Organizational Justice	
	Thr	17-Mar	Work-Life Balance	
10	Tue	22-Mar	Leadership and Influence Processes	
	Thr	24-Mar	Leadership and Influence Processes	
11	Tue	29-Mar	Work groups and teams	
	Thr	31-Mar	Work groups and teams	
12	Tue	5-Apr	Organizational Climate and Culture	
	Thr	7-Apr	Organizational Climate and Culture	
13	Tue	12-Apr	Occupational Health & Safety	
	Thr	14-Apr	Organizational Change and Development	
14	Tue	19-Apr	<i>student presentations</i>	Presentations
	Thr	21-Apr	<i>student presentations</i>	
15	Tue	26-Apr	<i>TBD</i>	
	Thr	28-Apr	<i>SIOP Conference -- no class!</i>	
16	Fri	3-May	Final Exam Due	Final Proposal
	Wed	5-May	Final Research Proposal due	