

Sociology 290: Organizational Sociology

Winter 2010, UC-San Diego
Th, 2-4:50pm

Prof. Tom Medvetz

Office hours: Tues, 12:30-1:30pm; Thurs, 5-6pm; and by appointment

Office: 485 Social Sciences Building

Email: tmedvetz@ucsd.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Formal organizations shape nearly every aspect of our lives, from work and politics to religion, education, and civic life. This class will offer a general introduction to organizational theory. We will begin with some classical approaches, then move to a pair of important contemporary overviews. We will conclude by surveying some of the main topics in the field, including the organization of work, the relationships between organizations and their environments, and institutional theory. My hope is that you will leave this class with a better understanding of how knowledge about organizations can improve our theories of politics, markets, and culture.

BOOKS

There are five required books for this class:

Burawoy, Michael. 1982. *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process Under Monopoly Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chandler, Jr., Alfred D. 1977. *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*

Perrow, Charles S. 1972. *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Scott, W. Richard. 2003. *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems, 5th edition*. Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Vaughan, Diane. 1997. *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

ASSIGNMENTS

Our classroom meetings will be organized around discussions of the week's reading. Your grade will have two components. The first 50% will be based on class participation. You should come to class each week prepared with some remarks: questions, comparisons, and points of connection to previous readings, etc. Aside from classroom discussion, the main expectation is that you send around a reading note, or a short reaction paper, to the entire group by email for 4 weeks out of the quarter. Here are some notes on the format for these memos: first, please open each note with a representative or revealing quote from the text. Then explain briefly why you chose that quote and what relation it bears to the text as a whole and to the themes of the class. You may open the

main part of your note with some purely exegetical remarks, but devote the rest of your focus to more analytical aims, such as exposing gaps and tensions in the texts, posing new questions (including reflexive queries about the history, strengths, and limits of the concepts used in the texts), finding important connections among texts, and identifying areas for future research (including and especially your own). It might also be handy to approach the memos as preparatory work for field exams. All memos should be circulated by midnight on the night before each class.

The second major course requirement is a term paper (50% of your grade). There is some flexibility with the format so that you can align your final paper with planned or ongoing projects. You have several options: (i) write a research proposal for some future project (dissertation or otherwise); (ii) produce a critical review of the literature (going beyond the required course texts) that synthesizes its major themes, questions, and findings (in preparation for field exams); or (iii) begin an actual research paper by carrying out a pilot study. Please limit your final papers to 15-20 pages.

MEETING SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Introduction

Thursday, 7 January

No reading

WEEK 2: Classical theories of bureaucracy and administration

Thursday, 14 January

Michels, Robert. 2003 [1915]. "Organizations and Oligarchy." Pp. 211-223 in Michael J. Handel, ed. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Taylor, Frederick W. 2003 [1911] "The Principles of Scientific Management." Pp. 24-31 in Michael J. Handel, ed. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Weber, Max. 1946. "Bureaucracy." Pp. 196-244 in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. *From Max Weber*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weber, Max. 2003 [1924]. "The Types of Legitimate Domination." Pp. 17-21 in Michael J. Handel, ed. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Recommended

Émile Durkheim. 1997 [1893]. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Trans. George Simpson. New York: Free Press.

Smith, Adam. 1776 [1977]. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.

WEEK 3: Contemporary overviews I

Thursday, 21 January

Perrow, Charles S. 1972. *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

WEEK 4: Contemporary overviews II

Thursday, 28 January

Scott, W. Richard. 2003. *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems, 5th edition*. Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Recommended

Braudel, Fernand. 1977. *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Guillén, Mauro F. 1994. *Models of Management: Work, Authority, and Organization in a Comparative Perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zald, Mayer N. and Patricia Denton. 1963. "From Evangelism to General Service: The Transformation of the YMCA." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 8:214-234.

WEEK 5: Organizational environments I – institutions

Thursday, 4 February

DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter W. Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." *American Sociological Review* 48: 147-160.

Hall, Peter A. and Rosemary C. R. Taylor. 1996. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies* 44(5): 936-957.

Meyer, John W. and Brian Rowan. 1977. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." *American Journal of Sociology* 83: 340-363.

Stinchcombe, Arthur L. 1997. "On the Virtues of the Old Institutionalism." *Annual Review of Sociology* 23: 1-18.

Recommended

Bendix, Reinhard. 1974 [1956]. *Work and Authority in Industry*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Blau, Peter M. 1955. *Dynamics of Bureaucracy: A Study of Interpersonal Relations in Two Government Agencies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gouldner, Alvin. 1954. *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy*. New York: Free Press.

Kelly, Erin and Frank Dobbin. 1999. "Civil Rights Law at Work: Sex Discrimination and the Rise of Maternity Leave Policies." *American Journal of Sociology* 105: 455-492.

Meyer, John, W. Richard Scott, David Strang. 1987. "Centralization, Fragmentation, and School District Complexity." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 32: 186-201.

Ruef, Martin and W. Richard Scott. 1998. "A Multidimensional Model of Organizational Legitimacy: Hospital Survival in Changing Institutional Environments." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 43: 877-904.

Selznick, Philip. 1949. *TVA and the Grass Roots: A Study in the Sociology of Formal Organization*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Zucker, Lynne G. 1987. "Institutional Theories of Organization." *Annual Review of Sociology* 13: 443-464.

WEEK 6: Organizational environments II – population ecology

Thursday, 11 February

Carroll, Glenn R. and Anand Swaminathan. 2000. "Why the Microbrewery Movement? Organizational Dynamics of Resource Partitioning in the American Brewing Industry." *American Journal of Sociology* 106: 715-65.

Carroll, Glenn R. and Hannan, Michael T. 2003 [2000]. "Density-Dependent Processes." Pp. 254-261 in Michael J. Handel, ed. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hannan, Michael and John H. Freeman. 1977. "The Population Ecology of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology* 82(4): 929-964.

Hannan, Michael and John H. Freeman. 1984. "Structural Inertia and Organizational Change." *American Sociological Review* 49(2): 149-164.

Recommended

Baum, Joel. 1996. "Organizational Ecology." Pp. 77-114 in Stewart Clegg, Cynthia Hardy and Walter Nord, eds. *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage Publications.

Carroll, Glenn R. 1985. "Concentration and Specialization: Dynamics of Niche Width in Populations of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology* 90(6): 1262-1283.

Carroll, Glenn R. and Michael T. Hannan. 2000. *The Demography of Corporations and Industries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Carroll, Glenn R. and James Wade. 1991. "Density Dependence in the Organizational Evolution of the American Brewing Industry Across Different Levels of Analysis." *Social Science Research* 20: 271-302.

Galunic, D. Charles and John R. Weeks. 2002. "Intraorganizational Ecology." Pp. 75-97 in Joel A.C. Baum, ed. *Companion to Organizations*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Hannan, Michael T. and John H. Freeman. 1988. "The Ecology of Organizational Mortality: American Labor Unions, 1836-1985." *American Journal of Sociology* 94(1): 25-51.

Hannan, Michael T. and John H. Freeman. 1989. *Organizational Ecology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hannan, Michael T., Laszlo Polos, and Glenn R. Carroll. 2007. *Logics of Organization Theory: Audiences, Code, and Ecologies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sorensen, Jesper B. and Toby E. Stuart. 2000. "Aging, Obsolescence, and Organizational Innovation." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 45(1): 81-112.

WEEK 7: Organizational environments III – markets

Thursday, 18 February

Chandler, Jr., Alfred D. 1977. *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Recommended

Fligstein, Neil. 1990. *The Transformation of Corporate Control*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fligstein, Neil. 1985. "The Spread of the Multidivisional Form Among Large Firms, 1919-1979." *American Sociological Review* 50: 377-391.

Williamson, Oliver. 1981. "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach." *American Journal of Sociology* 87: 548-577.

WEEK 8: Work – informal structures and control

Thursday, 25 February

Braverman, Harry. 2003 [1974]. "The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century." Pp. 32-37 in Michael J. Handel, ed. *The Sociology of Organizations: Classic, Contemporary, and Critical Readings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Burawoy, Michael. 1982. *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process Under Monopoly Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Recommended

Collins, Sharon. 1997. "Black Mobility in White Corporations: Up the Corporate Ladder But Out on a Limb." *Social Problems* 44(1): 55-67.

Edwards, Richard. 1979. *Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Basic Books.

Homans, George C. 1941. "The Western Electric Researches." Pp. 56-107 in *Fatigue of Workers: Its Relation to Industrial Production, by Committee on Work in Industry of the National Research Council*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation.

Jackall, Robert. 1988. *Moral Mazes: The World of Corporate Managers*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1977. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

Kidder, Tracy. 2000 [1981]. *The Soul of a New Machine*. Boston: Back Bay Books.

Walton, Richard E. 1985. "From Control to Commitment in the Workplace." *Harvard Business Review* 64(2): 76-84.

Kunda, Gideon. 1992. *Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment in a High-Tech Corporation*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Bramel, Dana and Ronald Friend. 1981. "Hawthorne, the Myth of the Docile Worker and Class Bias in Psychology." *American Psychologist* 36(8): 867-878.

WEEK 9: Decision-making processes
Thursday, 4 March

Vaughan, Diane. 1997. *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Recommended

Allison, Graham T. 1969. "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *American Political Science Review* 63(3): 689-718.

Khurana, Rakesh. 2002. *Searching for a Corporate Savior: The Irrational Quest for Charismatic CEOs*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

WEEK 10: Presentations and closing discussion

Thursday, 11 March