"Our society is an organizational society. We are born in organizations, educated by organizations, and most of us spend much of our lives working for organizations. We spend much of our leisure time paying, playing, and praying in organizations. Most of us will die in an organization, and when the time comes for burial, the largest organization of all -- the state -- must grant official permission."

Amitai Etzioni
Modern Organizations (1964, p.1)

Course Objectives

A major goal of this course is to help you acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to apply organizational theories to your field placement experiences, and more generally, to empirical problems in our "organizational society." Through the application of diverse and often conflicting perspectives, the course is designed to help you cultivate an enhanced understanding of how organizational structures and processes affect service delivery. The course tackles both practical issues with and theoretical understandings of the complex factors that shape organizational and worker effectiveness, service delivery patterns, worker motivation, and resource procurement and allocation. The course gives special attention to organizational experiences often dismissed as workplace “politics.” Work force diversity issues are addressed throughout the course by considering the extent to which human service organizations accommodate variations in the needs and experiences of workers as well as clients.

In meeting these goals, the course is designed to address several objectives of the Social Administration Concentration These include: 1) appreciating the ethical, political, and historical roots of contemporary controversies in management practice, and also the usefulness of independent critical thinking and analysis; 2) developing advanced knowledge of the conceptual and professional foundations, and the analytic and technical skills related to, the management and design of human service organizations; 3) developing skills to intervene in organizational processes in ways that advance social and economic justice, 4) analyzing and forging links between policy making and service delivery in human service organizations, and 5) building skills necessary to assume leadership positions in the field of social work.

All required readings are available on-line or included in the course pack available in the production room.
Assignments

**Reading Logs** (15% of final grade)

The reading logs ask you to apply specific concepts presented in the readings to your experiences in field placement. The week before a log is due, I will pass out a guideline that identifies the specific questions you need to address in the log (see Schedule of Assignments). The logs should be about **one single-spaced, typed page**. You will receive a check or check-plus as a grade on these assignments. **You will not receive credit for logs turned in late.** You are required to do a total of **four** (out of six) logs over the course of the quarter.

**Mid-term Exam** (30% of final grade) Due: February 12th

The mid-term exam will be a take-home essay exam, about five-typed pages in length. It will require you to demonstrate an understanding of some of the theoretical concepts and analytic methods covered in class by applying them to your field placement.

**Critical Discussion Participation** (15% of final grade)

Once during the quarter, you will be a member of a team of students responsible for leading discussion on a particular topic. These topics and their related readings are listed on the syllabus. You will be asked to sign up for one of these sessions at the second class session.

**Organizational Assessment Project** (40% of final grade) Due: March 12th

The final paper for this course requires you to assess a particular problem facing the organization where you do your field placement. You can focus your assessment on any of the topics covered in this course. You may work independently or in teams of four or fewer students. For your assessment, briefly describe a particular dilemma your organization faces and then analyze the dilemma according to a particular framework (or two) presented in this course. In your final section, recommend potential directions the organization could take to address this dilemma/challenge. **Depth versus breadth is preferred so limit your analysis to the application of one or two frameworks from the course.**

The paper should not exceed ten typed pages. A one-page proposal of what you (or your group) propose to do is due around February 19th. **Students are to email proposals to me at slambert@uchicago.edu**
## Schedule of Written Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 22(^{nd})</td>
<td>Log 1: Institutional Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29(^{th})</td>
<td>Log 2: Goal Adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 5(^{th})</td>
<td>Log 3: Organizational Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12(^{th})</td>
<td>MIDTERM DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19(^{th})</td>
<td>Log 4: Job Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26(^{th})</td>
<td>Log 5: Participatory Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5(^{th})</td>
<td>Log 6: Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12(^{th})</td>
<td><strong>Final Paper Due</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TOPICS AND REQUIRED READING

WEEK 1

Thursday, January 8th

Introduction to Course
The Special Characteristics of HSOs


Task Environment Analysis: Power-dependence relationships


WEEK 2

Thursday, January 15th

NO CLASS

I am out of town at the SSWR annual conference.
Thursday, January 22\textsuperscript{nd}

\textit{How the Environment Exerts Its Influence: Institutional Theory}


ISSN 00377961


ISSN 00031224
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28197408%2939%3A4%3C475%3APROATS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G

\textbf{Organizational Network Analysis}

Joel A. C. Baum and Christine Oliver. \textbf{Institutional embeddedness and the dynamics of organizational populations} http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199208%2957%3A4%3C540%3AIEATDO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N
Subjects: 06.06.00--ORGANIZATIONAL_PERSPECTIVES--Ecological_Theories
Jeffrey Pfeffer and Anthony Leong.  
**Resource Allocations in United Funds: Examination of Power and Dependence**  
*Social Forces* 55(3):775-790, 1977  
ISSN 00377732  

WEEK 4

**Thursday, January 29th**

*Organizational Goals: Effects on Organizational Functioning and the Political Determinants of Goals*


*Critical Discussion: Staying true to mission in a resource dependent world*


Charles Perrow.  
**Reality Adjustment: A Young Institution Settles for Humane Care**  
ISSN 00377791  
[http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0037-7791%28196602%2914%3A1%3C69%3A%5CRAAY%5CE2.0.CO%3B2-K](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0037-7791%28196602%2914%3A1%3C69%3A%5CRAAY%5CE2.0.CO%3B2-K)
WEEK 5

Thursday, February 5th

Organizational Structure


Critical Discussion: Problems of Organizational Structure


Thursday, February 12th

**Gender and Organizational Power**


**Work-Life Issues**

All students: Pull up the Sloan Work and Family Research Network at [http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/template.php?name=new_to_site](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/template.php?name=new_to_site)

Read ONE entry in either the Encyclopedia or the Effective Workplace Series.

Be prepared to discuss work-life issues in the field of social work and potential steps to improve employer practices or social policy that affect the ability of social workers to combine work with personal responsibilities.

**MIDTERM DUE**
WEEK 7

Thursday, February 19th

Job Redesign


Howard Karger.

Burnout as Alienation


Critical Discussion: The Effects of Organizational and Job Design on Clients

Julia H. Littell and Emiko A. Tajima.

A Multilevel Model of Client Participation in Intensive Family Preservation Services

Soc.Serv.Rev. 74(3):405, 2000

ISSN 00377961


Week 8

Thursday February 26th

Participatory Management


Critical Discussion: Participatory Models of Management

Thursday, March 5th

**Organizational Culture**


**Workforce Diversity**


WEEK 10

Thursday, March 12th

*Internal Labor Markets, Lower-wage Jobs, and Welfare Reform: Challenges for Human Service Organizations*


*The organizational stratification of opportunities for work-life balance*
Community, Work & Family *7(2):179-195, 2004*
*ISSN 1366-8803*

Final papers due at class time.