

*Class Meetings*

TR 9:35AM - 10:50AM

Room: 100B Hobbs Building

Dr. James Fraser, Office 102B Mayborn → Office Hours: 11AM-2PM Tuesdays → Email: [james.c.fraser@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:james.c.fraser@vanderbilt.edu)**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Organizations are heterogeneous social creations that take on a wide variety of forms and perform many different functions. They can include things like corporations, government agencies, humanitarian groups, labor unions, churches, terrorist networks, social movements, social-networking sites, and much more. We are all embedded within a complex network of organizations that shapes our lives in profound ways, determining—for instance—what our jobs are like, whether our neighborhoods are polluted, how we access public services, or whether we can communicate meaningfully with friends.

Rather than being isolated units, organizations are nested within larger social systems and operate as political entities. All organizations are imbued with *ideologies*, or hidden belief systems, that provide a script for decision-making and action. These ideologies also bleed into wider society, influencing what people value and what they see as possible. *This course will take a social-science approach to understanding organizations in their larger social and cultural contexts.* The emphasis will be on analyzing the ideologies, cultures, interdependencies, and roles of organizations in society. Additionally, we will explore alternative organizational forms that strive to challenge dominant belief systems and achieve social justice outcomes.

**READINGS**

- Lune, Howard. 2010. *Understanding organizations*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press.
- Electronic readings linked in OAK.

**ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING***1. Online Journal:*

Starting in Week 2, online journal entries of approximately 750 words are due every Saturday by noon. The goal of these entries is to allow critical reflection and synthesis of the readings in the course. Journal entries should be based primarily on the reading for the week. You must show that you did the reading and listened attentively to class discussion, but not, for example, by listing your reactions in a series of unconnected paragraphs; you must write a short essay that develops them as a whole.

I suggest, therefore, that you jot down ideas for your essays as you read for class or participate in the discussions, and afterwards step back for a moment to reflect on your overall reaction, that is, the theme for your essay. It is best to take a critical perspective for your theme. A critical perspective does not require that you be against the ideas expressed in the reading or lectures. It means simply that you have asked the material (and yourself) some hard questions. How do the readings for the week complement or challenge each other? What is your interpretation of them? Which arguments and insights do you find to be persuasive? Which do find to be less persuasive? Why? Be sure to back up your interpretations by analyzing specific examples and quotes from the readings.

Journal essays will be due in weeks 2-6, 8, and 10-12. There will be a total of 9 essays in the course.

*Mechanics:* Post your entries to our course page on OAK under the proper week heading (e.g. “Week 2”) in the “discussion board” section. If you compose the entry in a word processing program, please cut-and-paste the text into OAK rather than attaching a file. These assignments will be graded on a pass / fail basis. If you make a sincere effort, you will pass. As with everything else, feel free to check with the professor or TA at any time throughout the semester if you are concerned about your progress with journal entries.

## 2. *Mid-term Paper:*

Ideology can be understood as a belief system that makes dominant political structures and institutions appear natural, oftentimes giving rise to and justifying relationships of inequality. Drawing upon the readings and themes covered so far in the course, write an essay about an organizational structure of your choosing that explores the following questions: How does ideology manifest in organizational forms, practices, and relationships? How does ideology influence the way people are treated (e.g., how workers are trained and managed, how organizations view their responsibilities to communities, how collective bargaining is conducted, or how organizations interact with clients or customers)? What are some of the ways that organizational ideologies shape cultural values on the societal level? To write a successful essay on such broad questions, it will be necessary for you to focus on a specific organizational form (e.g., Fordist), practice (e.g., training flexible workers), or relationship (e.g., between industry and the environment). This paper will be due on February 21 and should be 9-10 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins, please).

## 3. *Final Team Project:*

According to the HOD mission statement, we seek to advance “societies built on democratic participation, justice, and equality.” The final project in this course will push you to take that mission seriously. You will work in teams to identify a social problem, analyze it on the organizational level, and propose a detailed plan for solving that problem in a way that advances diversity, social justice, social participation, and empowerment. There are many possible approaches to this project. You could, for instance, propose the founding of a social entrepreneurial company, identify a novel way of assisting a non-profit organization, or propose changes that a corporation or government agency could make to achieve social-justice outcomes.

The final project will be a **team research paper** of 20 pages due at the beginning of the class period on Thursday, April 18. This document should take the form of a proposal to a diverse panel of stakeholders. Depending on the nature and location of your proposed activities, the stakeholders might include community members, organization representatives, policymakers, government funding agencies, venture capitalists, or others. You should envision your task as convincing this panel to support your recommendations and assist you in executing them. Ample attention will have to be given to existing conditions, contexts, and constraints, so teams will have to conduct additional research to make a compelling case. The course readings and concepts should be mobilized to assist with your framing and analysis.

There will be three components to this project: the written proposal, an in-class presentation, and a short group-evaluation paper. In total, the project will be worth 35% of your grade (20% for the group paper, 10% for the presentation you give in class during the last week, and 5% for a group-evaluation paper.) Experimentation is highly encouraged for this project, just be sure to discuss your plans with the professor before initiating your research. Be creative and have some fun!

I reserve the right to distribute unannounced quizzes on the reading or lecture material. Any missed points on these quizzes will be deducted from your participation grade. Quizzes may not be made-up if you are absent. Additionally, no late or emailed writing assignments will be accepted.

### **Academic Honesty**

In order to avoid plagiarism, your assignments must provide full citations for all references: direct quotes, summaries, or ideas. While you are encouraged to develop your thinking with your peers, you cannot use their material without citing

it. Work from other courses will not be accepted in this course. Allowing your writing to be copied by another student is also considered cheating. Please review the Honor Code for complete guidelines on academic honesty:

<http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/HonorCouncil/>.

### **Gender-Fair Language**

Language structures thought and action. Biases in language can (and do) naturalize inequalities. Imprecise language also signifies un-interrogated values and sloppy thinking. For all of these reasons, the use of gender-fair language is expected in this course. For example, do not use words like “mankind” or “men” when referring to people in general; alternate between “she” and “he” instead of always using “he,” or construct sentences in the plural instead of the singular so you can use “they” or “them” and avoid the problem altogether.

### **ESL/LD Students**

Course requirements can be adjusted to serve the needs and capabilities of ESL and LD students. Please speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class to make arrangements. Students may be advised to attend additional sessions during the professor’s office hours so they can draw comparable value from the course.

### **Grading**

Online Journal	25%
Mid-term Paper	25%
Final Project	35%
Participation	15%

[Grading Scale: A =95-100, A- =90-94, B+ =87-89, B =84-86, B- =80-83, C+ =77-79, C =74-76, C- =70-73, D+ =67-69, D =64-66, D- =60-63]

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**Attendance:** This class will be conducted with a focus on in-class discussions and activities. Because of this format, you are expected to attend all classes for the full scheduled time. Excessive tardiness will be counted as an absence. You can miss up to two classes throughout the semester without penalty, but you must turn in assignments ahead of time and arrange to get notes from a colleague. Your final grade will go down by 5 points (out of 100) for each additional class missed. Finally, if you fail to show up for a scheduled meeting with the professor or TA without canceling 24 hours in advance, your final grade will be docked by 5 points.

**Reading:** Complete all readings (and other assignments) **prior** to the class meeting for which they are scheduled. You must bring your book or copies of the readings to each class. See the course outline below for details on weekly readings.

**Participation:** Through communication, ideas are formed, revised, borrowed, and developed. It is through argument, description, explanation, and improvisation – within a community – that individual learning flourishes. This course requires full participation (including active listening, facilitating, note-taking, and question-asking) to create an environment of open and shared learning. An effective participant is not someone who simply talks frequently, but someone who reliably offers thoughtful insights that help others to learn.

**Technology:** Laptop computers and other portable technologies should be used in class only as learning-facilitation tools. During class, it is not acceptable to play games, answer email, surf the web, answer cell phones, text message, or engage in other non-class-related activities. Your participation grade will be penalized if you break this rule. Why? Not only do these practices negatively affect your learning and participation, but they also distract others and create an environment of disrespect.

## Course Schedule (subject to revision)

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### Week One: Introduction to Course

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Tuesday, January 8:

**Readings:**

- Review syllabus

Thursday, January 10:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.1 (pp.1-17)

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### Week Two: Managerial Visions

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Tuesday, January 15:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.3 (pp.40-60)
- Taylor, Frederick Winslow. 1911. *The Principles of Scientific Management*. (8-page excerpt)
- Ford, Henry. 1929. *My Life and Work*. (5-page excerpt)

Thursday, January 17:

**Readings:**

- Resource: Bolman, Lee G. and Terrence E. Deal. 2008. *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. ("Four frames" overview, 9 pages)

Saturday, January 19:

- **First online journal essay due by 12pm** (and every Saturday hereafter unless otherwise noted).

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### Week Three: Culture

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Tuesday, January 22:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.4 (pp.61-84)
- Foucault, Michel. 2002. The Eye of Power. In *CTRL [Space]*, edited by T. Y. Levin, U. Frohne and P. Weibel. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 94-102.

Thursday, January 24:

**Readings:**

- Martin, Emily. 1994. Educating and Training at Work. In *Flexible Bodies: The role of Immunity in American Culture from the Days of Polio to the Age of AIDS*. Boston: Beacon Press, 207-225.
- Kunda, Gideon. 2006. *Engineering Culture: Control and commitment in a high-tech corporation*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. (19-page excerpt)

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## Week Four: Dysfunctions

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Tuesday, January 29:

**Readings:**

- [Understanding Organizations](#) Cht.5 (pp.85-104).
- Dowie, Mark. 1977. Pinto Madness. *Mother Jones*, Sept/Oct issue (20 pages).

Thursday, January 31:

**Readings:**

- Ford, Richard Thompson. 2007. Bad Think: The Supreme Court mixes up intending to screw over your employee and actually doing it. *Slate*, May 30 (2 pages).
- Epstein, Richard A. 2009. Democratic death wish on labor relations. *Forbes*, January 13 (2 pages).
- Lips, Hilary M. 2009. Blaming Women's Choices for the Gender Pay Gap. *Women's Media*, September 7 (5 pages).
- Friedman, Ann. 2010. The New Workplace Sexism. *The American Prospect*, July 30 (2 pages).

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## Week Five: Contexts

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Tuesday, February 5:

**Readings:**

- [Understanding Organizations](#) Cht.6 (pp.105-131).
- 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. (9-page excerpt)

Thursday, February 7:

**Readings:**

- Saxenian, AnnaLee. 1994. Introduction: Local Industrial Systems. In *Regional advantage: Culture and competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1-10.
- Pellow, David N., and Lisa Sun-Hee Park. 2002. The Core: Work and the Struggle to Make a Living without Dying. In *The Silicon Valley of dreams: Environmental injustice, immigrant workers, and the high-tech global economy*. New York: New York University Press, 112-136.

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## Week Six: Post-Fordism and Globalization

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Tuesday, February 12:

**Readings:**

- Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2000. Postmodernization, or the Informatization of Production. In *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 280-303.

Thursday, February 14:

**Readings:**

- Arabandi, Bhavani. 2011. Globalization, Flexibility and New Workplace Culture in the United States and India. *Sociology Compass* 5 (7): 525-539.
- Schwarz, Heinrich. 2003. Mobile Workplacng: Office Design, Space and Technology. In *New Technologies at Work*, 91-115.

- Ault, Amber and Eve Sandberg. 2006. Our Policies, Their Consequences: Zambian Women's Lives under Structural Adjustment. In *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World*, edited by I. Grewal and C. Kaplan. New York: McGraw-Hill, 469-473.

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### Week Seven: Social Movements

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Tuesday, February 19:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.8 (pp.154-172).
- Castells, Manuel. 1997. The Other Face of the Earth. In *The Power of Identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 68-83.

Thursday, February 21:

**Readings:**

- Engelhardt, Tom. 2011. How the Occupied Became the Occupiers. *Mother Jones*, December 19 (12 pages).
- Review some stories at [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org).
- In-class film clip: *The Yes Men*.
- **Mid-term paper due.**
- **No journal essay due this week.**

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### Week Eight: NPOs and Social Entrepreneurialism

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Tuesday, February 26:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.7 (pp.132-153).
- Carey, Christopher. 2009. An Auto-Ethnographic Exploration of Stability and Change: The Curious Case of an Activist Scholar. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the NCA 95th Annual Convention (30 pages).

Thursday, February 28:

**Readings:**

- Ashoka. 2011. What is a social entrepreneur? [www.ashoka.org/social\\_entrepreneur](http://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur) (1 page)
- Unite for Sight. 2011. Unite For Sight's Philosophy of International Eye Care. <http://www.uniteforsight.org/what-we-do/best-practices> [read page and watch video]
- Corals for Conservation. 2011. <http://www.coralsforconservation.com/> [read page and watch video]
- Ashoka. 2011. Changemakers. <http://www.changemakers.com/allcompetitionentries?winners=1&finalists=1> [review 3 other projects listed here and come prepared to talk about them]
- Wolman, David. 2010. The Poverty App. *Mother Jones*, August 19 (6 pages).

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### Week Nine: Spring Break

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No Classes or readings. No journal essay due this week.

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## Week Ten: Online Worlds

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Tuesday, March 12:

**Readings:**

- No readings for today. We will have an in-class, group-forming activity, so attendance is essential.

Thursday, March 14:

**Readings:**

- Jenkins, Henry. 2004. The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7 (1):33-43
- Fletcher, Dan. 2010. How Facebook Is Redefining Privacy. *Time*, May 20. (9 pages)

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## Week Eleven: Cellular Organizations

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Tuesday, March 19:

**Readings:**

- Mayntz, Renate. 2004. Organizational Forms of Terrorism: Hierarchy, Network, or a Type sui generis? Cologne: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, May (22 pages).
- Sharrock, Justine. 2011. From WikiLeaks to SB 1070—The Rise of the New Global Hacktivists. *New America Media*, June 28 (4 pages).

Thursday, March 21:

**Readings:**

- Miles, Raymond E., Charles C. Snow, John A. Mathews, Grant Miles, and Jr. Coleman, Henry J. 1997. Organizing in the Knowledge Age: Anticipating the Cellular Form. *The Academy of Management Executive* 11 (4):7-24.
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1992. Postscript on the Societies of Control. *October* 59:3-7. Available from <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/archiv/netzkritik/societyofcontrol.html>

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## Week Twelve: Military and Security Configurations

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Tuesday, March 26:

**Readings:**

- Alberts, David S. 2007. Agility, Focus, and Convergence: The Future of Command and Control. *The International C2 Journal* 1 (1): 1-30.
- Haggerty, Kevin D. 2006. Visible War: Surveillance, Speed, and Information War. In *The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility*, edited by K. D. Haggerty and R. V. Ericson. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 250-268.

Thursday, March 28:

**Readings:**

- Monahan, Torin, and Priscilla M. Regan. Forthcoming. Centers of Concatenation: Fusing Data in Post-9/11 Security Organizations. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*. Available from [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1913470](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1913470) (26 pages).
- Scahill, Jeremy. 2008. Blackwater's Private Spies. *The Nation*, June 5 (6 pages).

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### **Week Thirteen: The Future of Organizations**

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Tuesday, April 2:

**Readings:**

- Understanding Organizations Cht.9 (pp.173-192)

Thursday, April 4:

**Readings:**

- No readings; work on your final projects in class.
- **No journal essay due this week.**

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### **Week Fourteen: Group Research**

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Tuesday, April 9:

**Readings:**

- No readings; work on your final projects in class.

Thursday, April 11:

**Readings:**

- No readings; work on your final projects in class.
- **No journal essay due this week.**

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### **Week Fifteen: Final Project Presentations**

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Tuesday, April 16: Final project presentations

Thursday, April 18: Final project presentations

- **No journal essay due this week.**
- **Final project due.**