



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

**ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY:
STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

EMBA-706

Fall, 2008

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course begins with the Business Strategy Game (BSG). In the game, you will be given control of a global footwear manufacturer. You will need to implement a strategy for your organization by controlling a myriad of decisions ranging from pricing to distribution to financing. Think of it as the business equivalent of a flight simulator.

Later in the course, you will be introduced to several concepts in Organization theory (OT). OT is an offshoot of sociology that considers how social structures constrain the ability of managers to act as free agents. Much of the management literature assumes that managers have a free hand in guiding organizations in any way they choose. OT questions this assumption in a variety of ways and stands in stark contrast to the BSG, which assumes that all decisions are made at the top of the organization and are implemented without question.

We will then take a brief detour into organization design, which is the study of how to structure (or restructure) an organization to meet strategic objectives. We then complete the course with a series of classes on Change Management. Change management is concerned with how to change strategic direction while minimizing resistance from people within the organization. Our personal philosophy regarding free agency also affects our approach to change management. You will be exposed to several theories in change management and given the chance to reflect on the underlying assumptions from an OT perspective.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- DVDs “Paths of Glory” and “Disclosure”
- Morgan, G. “Images of Organization, The Executive Edition”, Sage Publications, 1998
- Primis Custom Book
- Business Strategy Game Manual

SCHEDULED MEETINGS:

Date	Topic	Readings	Cases
10/11	Intro to Business Strategy Game	BSG Manual	Two practice rounds
10/24	Organization Theory 1: Machines, Organisms, Brains, Cultures	Morgan, Chapters 1-5	Paths of Glory (DVD)
10/25	Organization Theory 2: Power, Domination, Prisons, Flux	Morgan, Chapters 6-9	Disclosure (DVD)
11/7	Organization Design		AHA
11/8	Change Management 1: Diagnosis, Resistance, Development	Palmer, Chs 2,5,6,7	Donna Dubinsky (+DVD)
11/21	Change Management 2: Process, Vision, Communication	Palmer, Chs 8,10,11,12	Peter Browning (+DVD)
11/22	Role Play		Merger Plan Simulation

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

2 x Case Presentations	40%
Movies review	20%
Simulation Game	20%
Participation	20%

ASSESSMENT DETAILS:

Class Participation (20%)

The goal of the course is to use the concepts in the readings and cases to understand, describe, and analyze real world organizations. The course will be conducted with a collaborative learning style, where we will learn from each other, from the issues and problems we identify, and how we solve them. I believe the instructor's role in executive education is that of a coach and mentor, guiding the learning experience. Thus, the ultimate responsibility for learning resides with you, the student.

As such, a significant proportion of the grade in this class will come from participation. Your participation grade will depend heavily on your salience in my mind when I assign grades for participation. Things that will contribute to your salience include: attendance at class, making relevant comments about the theoretical concepts or practice-related implications of such, pointing out links between the theory and practice, and highlighting weaknesses or gaps in the theory and/ common practice on a given issue.

Simulation Game (20%)

During the semester, we will be playing a strategy simulation called *The Business Strategy Game* (<http://www.bsg-online.com/>) in teams of two. Decisions will be due at 11:59pm on the day preceding each class but the first (six decisions rounds in total). You will be awarded a grade based on how well you perform against other teams in the class (20%). There will be some practice rounds before the actual game starts so you can learn to avoid some common pitfalls that might ruin your chances.

Movie Reviews (20%)

You are required to write two pages (single-spaced Times Roman 10-12 point) on how Organization Theory enhances and contributes to our understanding of the organizational issues in the two movies. The paper will be graded according to the following rubric:

A	Superior analysis - identifies all major themes and reflects deeply on the relationship between theory and events in the films.
B	Standard Analysis - identifies major themes and provides reasonable reflection on the relationship between theory and events.
C	Inferior analysis – misses major themes and has limited reflection.

Case Presentations (2 x 20%)

In groups of four, you will be assigned two cases to solve during the course. For each case:

- Analyze the key issues in the case (using analytical frameworks and concepts from the course where applicable). For instance, each group member might wish to analyze the case from a different metaphor.

- Outline a set of recommendations to address the issues identified. If your case refers to a change strategy that has already been substantially implemented then discuss what you would have done differently and your recommendations for future efforts.
- Present an implementation plan incorporating a time line, milestones, budget (if applicable), contingencies, and roles and responsibilities for key personnel.
- You will be required to listen to a critique of your presentation and given time to formulate a response.

The presentation should last for about 20 minutes. Try not regurgitating information that everyone in the class already knows – stick to analysis and recommendations. You will be competing against another team – the best team will receive an A and the other team less than an A. (Note that the final case is a role-play where you will be required to implement your recommendations – see instructor for details).

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Misconduct – “Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.”

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: “Using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources.” See the “Student Academic Misconduct Policy” (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <http://studentlife.unlv.edu/judicial/misconductPolicy.html>.

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Disability Resource Center (DRC) It is important to know that over two-thirds of the students in the DRC reported that the syllabus statement, often read aloud by the faculty during class, directed them to the DRC office.

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Faculty should not provide students accommodations without being in receipt of this plan.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: Voice (702) 895-0866, TTY (702) 895-0652, fax (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/>.

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance.

Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>