



BUS/PSYC 460 Organizational Behavior: An Evidence-Based Approach

Course Syllabus

Spring Semester 2025

Instructor: John L. Dennis, Ph.D.

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10.45 - 12.15 am

Office Hours:

Course Type: Course with a Service Learning component

Lab/Site-Visits Fee: \$120.00

Working hard and working smart sometimes can be two different things – Byron Dorgan.

Being a professional is doing the things you love to do – even on the days you don't feel like doing it - Julius Erving.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the foundational concepts and topics of Organizational Behavior through an evidence-based approach, focusing on three levels: individual, interpersonal, and group. At the **individual level**, students explore decision-making, motivation, and personality. At the **interpersonal level**, the course examines power, influence, and negotiation strategies. At the **group level**, students investigate leadership and organizational dynamics, with attention to the cultural assumptions and biases about human behavior that individuals often bring to the workplace. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of the first-line supervisor in balancing, coordinating, and integrating both individual and organizational needs. By the end of the course, students are expected to develop a deeper understanding of complex organizations and enhance their ability to evaluate and manage them effectively.

Successfully applying Organizational Behavior concepts involves diagnosing problems, communicating effectively, and making evidence-based decisions, all while leveraging intercultural tools to work proficiently in global organizations. Key skills include analyzing organizational challenges, developing strategic solutions, and implementing them appropriately. The course aims to help students:

1. Become more perceptive and knowledgeable about how organizational systems function—and why they sometimes fail.
2. Develop greater awareness of the consequences of managerial decisions.
3. Build confidence in the skills necessary to succeed in corporate environments.

Additional topics covered include the evolution of management thought, the supervisor's role as a decision-maker, and the processes of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational activities. The course emphasizes the importance of motivating and influencing others to drive organizational change. Students will also develop leadership skills through a structured classroom environment and gain practical, hands-on experience by working directly with local companies.

A key component of the course is a **service-learning project**, which applies Organizational Behavior concepts at individual, interpersonal, and group levels to assist **Aurora Società Cooperativa**, providing students with experiential knowledge and practical application of course material.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measures
Reflect on organizational behavior concepts at the individual, interpersonal, and group levels	Class Discussion, Presentations, Podcast
Develop applicable critical thinking skills regarding organizational behavior concepts	Tickets, Class Discussion
Generate effective leadership skills	Presentations, Service Learning Project
Analyze how organizations and the people within them work	Ticket, Service Learning Project
Gain knowledge of how leadership motivates and influences people regarding organizational change	Service Learning Project, Presentations
Design a project with a community partner that applies organizational behavior concepts as viable solutions for a well-defined issue	Service Learning Project, Podcast
Create and broadcast materials that will help students to start thinking about their future careers	Class Discussion, Podcast, Community Engagement Presentations

Course Materials

Books (selected chapters) - The “mashups”

The Habit Blueprint: Personal and Organizational Transformation

Clear, J. (2018). *Atomic Habits*. Random House.

Duhigg, C. (2012). *The power of habit: Why we do what we do in life and business*. Random House.

From Discipline to Imagination: Bridging Strategic Rigor and Creative Innovation

Collins, J. (2009). *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap and others don't*. Harper.

Reeves, M., & Fuller, J. (2021). *The Imagination Machine: How to Spark New Ideas and Create Your Company's Future*. Harvard Business Press.

Building Trust and Teams: The Foundations of Cohesion and Culture

Coyle, D. (2017). *Culture Code*. Random House.

Lencioni, P. M. (2012). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A Leadership Fable*. John Wiley & Sons.

Safety and Strategy: Navigating Psychological Trust and High-Stakes Negotiations

Edmondson, A.C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. Wiley.

Voss, C., & Raz, T. (2016). *Never split the difference: Negotiating as if your life depended on it*. Random House.

All the required chapters will be available online on the course Google Drive.

Instruction Methods

This course employs a flipped classroom instructional method, in which students acquire foundational knowledge before each session. During class, students actively engage in clarifying and applying their new knowledge through interactive activities, with the professor serving as a facilitator to guide the process.

Assignments and Tools for Collaborative Learning

The following cooperative tools support the flipped classroom approach and ensure active participation:

1. **Tickets:**
Students will write and submit brief reactions (250–500 words) to assigned readings via Google Drive at least 24 hours before class.
 2. **Peer Reviews:**
Students will review and engage with materials submitted by their peers to foster collaborative learning and diverse perspectives.
 3. **Guided Discussions:**
Students will lead portions of classroom discussions through mini-presentations based on readings, exercises, case studies, and individual or team assignments.
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Formatting Guidelines for Written Submissions

- **Font:** 12-point Garamond
- **Spacing:** Single-spaced
- **Alignment:** Justified
- **Header Information:**
Each submitted file must include the following details in the top left corner of the first page:
 - [Specify the required details, e.g., Name, Date, Assignment Title]

First Name Last Name

File type (e.g., Ticket #1, Podcast)

Book section name, article title, or Podcast title

Laptop/Smartphone Policy

Research consistently shows that open laptops and smartphones in the classroom create distractions, both visually and audibly, not only for the users but also for those around them. Additionally, typing notes often leads to less cognitive processing compared to handwriting, as the speed of typing can hinder deeper engagement with the material.

For these reasons, students are asked to refrain from using computers and phones during class and instead take notes using a regular notebook. However, the following exceptions apply:

1. **Accommodations:** If you have a vision impairment or other documented accommodation that requires the use of a device.
2. **Tablets for Note-Taking:** If you are using a tablet specifically for note-taking, provided it is not connected

- to the internet during class.
3. **In-Class Tutorials:** During in-class tutorials focused on online research tools or similar activities.
 4. **Special Permission:** If you discuss your specific need to use a laptop during class with me during office hours and receive approval.

This policy is intended to enhance focus, participation, and learning for all students.

Assessments

Attendance	10%
One-to-One Professor Meetings	5%
Tickets	20%
Presentations	15%
Podcast	15%
Peer Reviews	15%
Service Learning Project	15%
Community Engagement Presentation	5%

Attendance (10%)

Student attendance is mandatory for all courses at the Umbra Institute (see below [Attendance Policy](#)).

One-to-One Professor Meetings (5%)

Students will meet with the professor one-on-one for two 10-minute meetings during the semester. Those meetings can only be in person. You will need to complete 1 before the break. Use the [Calendly link](#) to reserve those meetings.

Tickets (20%)

Students will submit one ticket (250-500 words) per reading. Odd-numbered tickets will be completed in class, while even-numbered tickets will be submitted online to Google Drive at least 24 hours before class. See the [ticket rubric](#) to understand better what is expected of you. For articles and book chapters, tickets must answer the following 4 W's:

1. **What** was the reading's main question in a single sentence?
2. **What** was done/discussed, and what did they find?
3. **How** does the reading relate to other readings, in-class discussions, and/or class projects?
4. **Which** part of the reading did you find useful or are you critical of?

The first two "W's" are designed to help students recall the key points from the reading, while the last two "W's" encourage them to integrate their experiences and thoughts with the material. Remember, you are writing for your future self, so it's crucial to include examples, definitions, and context. Write in a way that allows you to reconstruct the reading and its significance, even if you revisit your ticket five years from now.

After your ticket has been peer-reviewed, you will need to revise it based on feedback and submit it for a final review. Keep in mind that tickets must be between 250–500 words. Rather than summarizing the entire reading, focus on the part you found most engaging or thought-provoking. For additional guidance, refer to the detailed prompt available on Moodle.

Presentations (15%)

Students will lead a portion of the class with a short presentation of their ticket during the semester. Presentations and student-led discussions will typically occupy the first half of the class, while the professor will guide the discussion during the remaining half.

Presentations should include an activity for the class and a discussion of the reading that connects to the reading. Activities for the class might include filling out a questionnaire, doing an improvisation game, breaking into groups to answer specific questions, etc. For activity ideas, it is highly recommended to consult online resources, as we did in the first class. These resources usually provide a good starting point for class activities.

Do not rely solely on Google Slide presentations. The presentation should include a summary of the reading—enough that anyone who has not done the reading can follow what you are talking about. Presenters should be able to answer the four questions for the tickets, and then focus on the part of the reading they find most interesting.

All presentations will have two co-presenters. Please see the [Presentation Rubric](#) on Moodle to assist you as you construct your presentations. Please see Moodle for a detailed prompt.

Podcast (15%)

Students will work in groups of 3-4 to submit one podcast entry (about 7 minutes) to Google Drive based on classroom experiences during the semester. We will periodically use class time to create a Podcast notes page, then divide the class into groups and work during class time to develop podcasts according to our Podcast schedule, which will be shared with you at the beginning of the semester.

Podcasts will follow the [Podcast hourglass structure](#), which includes:

1. A narrative story that creates conflict.
2. Core concepts from the readings.
3. Implications of those concepts.
4. A narrative story that helps resolve the conflict for listeners.

Podcasts will always include concepts from the readings, but the narrative story can be based on the Service Learning Project, interviews with other MPP professors, other students, Italian UNIPG students, or any other exercise, discussion, etc., that occurs inside and outside the classroom. Once the Podcast has been reviewed and approved, it will be submitted for publication on the Umbra Institute podcast channel. Please see Moodle for a detailed prompt.

Peer Reviews (15%)

Student pairs will review Presentations, Tickets submitted by fellow students, and Podcast entries. Reviews should consist of helpful and constructive comments, providing "additive feedback" by making suggestions about what the writer might add or develop further.

Students are responsible for completing one Ticket peer review per class. Podcast reviews and presentation reviews will be assigned during the semester. For presentation reviews, two randomly assigned students will review presentations to help improve them. A signup sheet for all peer reviews will be shared on Google Drive.

Reviews are due within 48 hours of when the document you are reviewing has been submitted to Google Drive or completed in class. Please use the [peer review guidelines and rubric](#). For detailed prompts, please see Moodle.

Service Learning Project (15%)

For this project, students will work collaboratively as a team with **Aurora Soc. Cooperativa**, utilizing interviews, observations, and/or surveys to address the following questions:

1. **Identify the Problem:** What is the nature of the area in need of improvement?
2. **Analyze Causes:** What are the underlying causes of the issue?
3. **Apply Concepts:** How can organizational behavior principles be applied and extended to address the problem?
4. **Action Steps:** What specific actions should the organization take to resolve the issue?
5. **Implement Changes:** What changes should be implemented to achieve improvement?
6. **Anticipate Challenges:** What barriers, obstacles, or challenges might arise?
7. **Evaluate Risks:** What are the risks, costs, and potential unintended consequences of your

- recommendations?
8. **Communicate Findings:** How will you present your findings to the organization and address potential resistance?
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Guidelines for Participation and Grading

- **Ongoing Engagement:** Grading for the Service Learning Project is based on regular, active participation throughout the semester.
- **Collaboration Tools:** It is highly recommended to use Notes pages within Google Drive to document and organize information gathered for the project.
 - Notes can include article summaries, links to videos, images, interviews, and other relevant materials.
- **Class Discussions:** Teams will regularly engage with the above questions during class to refine their insights and recommendations.

For further details, please refer to the detailed prompt available on Moodle.

End of Semester Community Engagement Presentations (5%)

During **Special Academic Events Week**, the class will deliver a 15-minute presentation summarizing the project experience to the Umbra community. This will take place during the **Community Engagement Presentations on Thursday, April 24th**.

Guidelines and the presentation order will be provided after the mid-semester break. **Participation in this event is mandatory** and constitutes an essential component of the community engagement grade.

Please see the [End of Semester Community Engagement Presentations Guidelines and Rubric](#). Please see Moodle for a detailed prompt.

Additional Notes

Feedback and Questions

This course is designed to be a valuable learning experience for all students. Feedback is welcome at any time during the semester. The professor can be reached most easily via email or in person before or after class. Students may also schedule an appointment if needed.

Email Policy

The professor responds to emails between *12:30 PM and 6:30 PM, Monday to Thursday*. Please plan your correspondence accordingly.

Participation

Active participation is essential for this course, which revolves around reading, interpreting, and collectively discussing the assigned materials. Success in participation is measured using the following rubric, with a maximum score of 5 points per class (1 point for each criterion):

1. **Being Present:** Attendance is crucial, as your insights and contributions enrich the class. Absences will negatively impact your participation grade. If you are absent, coordinate with a classmate to obtain notes, assignments, and handouts.
2. **Being Punctual:** Arriving on time demonstrates respect for your peers and the learning environment. If you

anticipate being late, notify the professor at least 24 hours in advance.

3. **Being Prepared:** Ensure you have thoroughly completed all assigned work (readings, tickets, cases, exercises) before class. If you are unclear about upcoming assignments, ask in advance.
4. **Being Brave:** Contribute fully to discussions and activities, share your views, and ask questions. While speaking up can be intimidating, it enriches the discussion and benefits the entire class.
5. **Being Courteous:** Listen attentively to classmates and respond thoughtfully to their ideas. Disagreements should be expressed kindly and constructively, as they often spark meaningful dialogue.

Note: If participating in large group discussions is challenging for you, speak with the professor early in the semester. Together, you can develop strategies to build confidence and ensure meaningful participation. For questions about your participation grade, schedule an appointment during office hours before the semester ends.

Broadcasting

Over the semester, students will refine their work to a professional level, honing their skills to produce materials that are “so good they can’t be ignored” (*So Good They Can’t Ignore You* by Cal Newport). Exceptional projects—such as documents, videos, or photos—may be featured online, including on platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, or Slideshare.

The goal of this broadcasting initiative is to encourage students to create career-focused materials and adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, as outlined in *The Start-Up of You* by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha. These activities aim to help students think strategically about their career development and personal branding.

Peer-Reviewed Research-Based Article

This course includes a unique opportunity for students to contribute to a project that may result in the submission of a peer-reviewed article after the semester concludes. Participation requires a commitment of approximately one hour per week and includes bi-weekly Zoom meetings (or as needed) at a mutually convenient time.

- **Authorship:** Students who contribute will be listed as first authors, in line with the professor’s practice.
- **Skills Development:** You will learn to read and summarize original research articles, as well as organize the Service Learning project following APA guidelines.
- **Opportunities:** Students may submit their work for institutional recognition, such as an honors thesis, and potentially present at international conferences. The professor will provide guidance on applying for funding to support these opportunities.

For more information, refer to the detailed guidelines on Moodle.

Important Policies: Exams, Assignments, and Grading

- **Responsibility for Deadlines:** Students are responsible for keeping track of exam dates and assignment deadlines.
- **No Alternative Exam Dates:** Exams will only be held on the scheduled dates, and no alternative dates will be offered.
- **Late Work Policy:** Professors are not obligated to provide partial credit for late submissions. The Institute’s default policy is to award a zero for any work submitted past the deadline, though individual professors may offer extensions at their discretion.
- **Travel Conflicts:** Students who book travel during an exam or assessment must adjust their plans or accept a zero for the missed work.

Grading Scale

Letter grades for all student work will be determined using the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Grading Policies

Rounding Policy

Numerical grades will be rounded as follows: decimal values **1-4 are rounded down**, while **5-9 are rounded up**. For example:

- A grade of **89.4** will be rounded to **89.0**.
- A grade of **89.5** will be rounded to **90.0**.

Extensions and Late Work

- **Late Submissions:** Any work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of **zero**. Partial credit will not be given.
- **Extension Policy:** Each student is allowed **one 24-hour extension** during the semester, which may be used for any assignment **except the final project**. To use this extension, students must email the instructor **before the deadline**.
- **Late Work Beyond Extension:** Work submitted after the 24-hour extension period will also receive a grade of zero.
- **Exceptions:** Extensions or accommodations for late work may be granted by the Director for medical emergencies, special accommodations, or other legitimate reasons.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is **mandatory** for all classes and co-curricular activities.

- **Excused Absences:** Students may take up to **two sick days** per course without providing medical documentation. Beyond these two days, additional excused absences due to illness require documentation from a local physician or an Institute-approved doctor.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Each unexcused absence reduces the final course grade by **2% per absence**, up to a

maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action.

Student Responsibilities for Absences:

- Students are responsible for obtaining class notes and materials from peers and meeting with the professor during office hours if needed.
- **Make-Up Work:** Work missed due to excused absences may be made up within one week of returning to class. Tests and quizzes missed due to excused absences must be made up outside class time and will differ slightly from the original version.

Field Trips:

Attendance on mandatory field trips is critical. Missing a mandatory field trip without a serious and timely reason communicated to Umbra staff will result in the **final grade being lowered by half a letter grade** (e.g., from a B+ to a B).

Legitimate Reasons for Excused Absences or Tardiness:

- Death in the immediate family
- Religious observances
- Illness or injury
- Local inclement weather
- Unavoidable medical appointments

Religious Observances:

Students wishing to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Director within **one week after the add/drop period**. Requests made after this deadline will not be accepted.

Tests and Graded Assignments:

- Scheduled times and dates for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and other graded assignments cannot be changed.
 - Students may only take exams during the scheduled times for their enrolled section, even if multiple sections of the same class are offered.
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Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to arrive on time for all classes.

- **Tardiness:** Arriving up to **15 minutes late** or leaving up to **15 minutes early** will result in a **0.5% deduction from the final grade** for each occurrence.
 - **Excessive Tardiness:** Arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes early will be recorded as an unexcused absence.
 - **Remaining in Class:** Students are expected to remain present for the duration of the session, except for reasonable restroom breaks. Leaving class and not returning will result in an unexcused absence or a late penalty.
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Academic Integrity

All forms of academic dishonesty, including:

- **Cheating:** Using unauthorized notes or copying from another student during exams.
- **Plagiarism:** Presenting another person's ideas or words as one's own without proper citation.

- **AI Use:** Submitting content generated by ChatGPT or other AI tools as part of an assignment constitutes plagiarism. Students found using such platforms will face the same consequences as other plagiarism cases, per the Institute's Academic Policy and Conduct Guidelines.
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Classroom Policy

Students are expected to adhere to Institute policies and respect the historical premises of the school.

- **Cell Phones:** Must be set to silent mode before class begins.
- **Electronics:** Computers and electronic devices are only permitted for note-taking or specific academic purposes approved in advance. Unauthorized use during lectures or discussions is prohibited. Earbuds cannot be used during class time.

These policies are designed to maintain a productive learning environment and uphold academic integrity. For additional details, please refer to the Institute's Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

DAY 1 *Introduction and Course Overview*

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Habits and Behavior Change: Atomic Habits, Clear, The Fundamentals, Chapters 1-2

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 1 - In class

Podcast:
Concepts discussed and initial notes due on GoogleDrive

WEEK 2

DAY 1 *Service Learning Project & Community Partner Introduction:*
In-class SLP & CP Intro presentation by Manuel Barbato & Margherita Garilli
Start notes page

Presentation & Peer Review:
Leadership and Strategy: Good to Great, Collins, Chapter 1 & 2

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 2 - GoogleDrive

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Team Dynamics and Culture: Culture Code Coyle, Chapters 1, 2, & 3

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 3 - In class

Podcast:
Updated notes due on GoogleDrive

WEEK 3

DAY 1 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Safety and Communication: Fearless Organization, Edmondson, Chapters 1 & 2

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 4 - GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:
Work through the project.

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Habits and Behavior Change: The Power of Habit, Duhigg, Chapters 1 & 3

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 5 - In class

Service Learning Project:
In-class presentation with the Community Partner Representative

WEEK 4

DAY 1

Presentation & Peer Review:

Leadership and Strategy: The Imagination Machine, Reeves, Chapters 1 & 3

Tickets & Peer Review:

Ticket 6 - GoogleDrive

Podcast:

Updated notes due on GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:

Prepare for the Field Trip

DAY 2

Presentation & Peer Review:

Team Dynamics and Culture: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, Lencioni, Lighting the Fire

Tickets & Peer Review:

Ticket 7 - In class

Service Learning Project:

Prepare for the Field Trip

DAY 3

Friday, February 14: Field trip to Castiglione del Lago, Cooperativa Aurora Headquarters. A detailed itinerary will be sent early this week.

WEEK 5

DAY 1

Service Learning Project

Debriefing from Field Trip.

Presentation & Peer Review:

Safety and Communication: Never Split the Difference, Voss, Chapters 1 & 3

Tickets & Peer Review:

Ticket 8 - GoogleDrive

DAY 2

Podcasts:

Concepts discussed and 1st draft due on GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project

Work through the project.

WEEK 6

DAY 1

Presentation & Peer Review:

Habits and Behavior Change: Atomic Habits, Clear, Chapters 4 & 9

Tickets & Peer Review:

Ticket 9 - In class

DAY 2

Service Learning Project

Work through the project.

One-to-One Professor Meetings:

First meeting must be completed before the break.

SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 7

DAY 1 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Leadership and Strategy: Good to Great, Collins, Chapters 4-5

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 10 – GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:
Work through the project.

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Team Dynamics and Culture: Culture Code, Coyle, Chapters 5 & 7

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 11 - In class

Podcast:
Concepts discussed and 2nd draft due on GoogleDrive

WEEK 8

DAY 1 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Safety and Communication: Fearless Organization, Edmondson, Chapters 4-5

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 12 - In class

DAY 2

Podcasts:
Group work on podcasts

WEEK 9

DAY 1 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Habits and Behavior Change: The Power of Habit, Duhigg, Chapters 4-5

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 13 - GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:
Work through the project.

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Leadership and Strategy: The Imagination Machine, Reeves, Chapters 4 & 6

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 14 - GoogleDrive

Podcasts:
Concepts discussed and 3rd draft due on GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:
Conversation with partner - Midterm check-in

WEEK 10

DAY 1 *Presentation & Review:*
Team Dynamics and Culture: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, Lencioni, The Model

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 15 - In class

Podcast:
Start recordings.

DAY 2 *Presentation & Peer Review:*
Safety and Communication: Never Split the Difference, Voss, Chapters 2 & 4

Tickets & Peer Review:
Ticket 16 - GoogleDrive

Service Learning Project:
Work through the project.

WEEK 11

DAY 1 *Service Learning Project:*
Work on the presentation for the partner

DAY 2 *Service Learning Project:*
Work on the presentation for Community Engagement Presentations.

One-to-One Professor Meetings:
Second meeting must be completed before the end of week 11.

WEEK 12

DAY 1 *Service Learning Project:*
Work on the presentation for Community Engagement Presentations.

Podcast:
Final versions are due.

DAY 2 *Service Learning Project:*
Presentation with partner.
Practice Community Engagement Presentation

Ticket:
Final versions with all revisions due.

WEEK 13

Final Classes, Final Exams, & Special Academic Events Week

Thursday, April 24.

Service Learning Project:
Community Engagement Presentations. The full Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester.



BUS/PSYC 460 - Organizational Behavior: An Evidence-Based Approach: SLP Appendix

Service Learning Project Overview

Service learning is an experiential education approach integrated into this course, where students:

1. **Engage in a Community Project:** Participate in an organized activity designed to address a community need, identified in collaboration with a community partner.
2. **Critically Reflect:** Analyze the connection between their community experience, course content, and learning objectives.
3. **Participate in Reciprocal Learning:** Create a mutually beneficial experience for both students and the community partner.

Successful service learning requires students to be **flexible, creative, and self-motivated**. Clear organization and open communication with the professor and team members are essential for achieving success.

Community Partner Description

Aurora Soc. Cooperativa ("Aurora" Social Cooperative), established in 1975 as the first cooperative of its kind in Umbria, specializes in hospitality and catering services. Social cooperatives prioritize social goals over profit maximization, operating for the benefit of their members and the broader community by focusing on social impact and addressing community needs.

With approximately 30 members, Aurora manages four restaurants in the region, a boutique hotel in the historic center of Castiglione del Lago, and a wine bar. Committed to quality, the cooperative builds trust with its customers by selecting the finest local products and services each year and collaborating with numerous local suppliers.

Based in the Lake Trasimeno area, Aurora embodies values such as understanding customer needs, highlighting the region's unique characteristics, and fostering effective internal communication. The organization also emphasizes workplace collaboration, supports professional growth, and employs self-monitoring systems to enhance services and drive innovation."

Website: <https://auroragroup.it/>

Project Description and Goals

This course introduces fundamental concepts in organizational behavior, focusing on three key levels: **individual, interpersonal, and group dynamics**.

- **Individual Level:** Students will analyze the decision-making practices within the Aurora Social Cooperative to understand board members' motivations and define their roles within the cooperative.
- **Interpersonal Level:** Students will examine power dynamics, influence, and negotiation involved in

organizing the cooperative's events and divisions.

- **Group Level:** Students will evaluate board members Aurora Societal Cooperative's leadership and organizational skills, identifying areas for improvement and potential interventions.

Students will visit Aurora's headquarters and restaurant locations, conduct online research, and administer a Qualtrix questionnaire to managers and employees. This multifaceted approach will help them develop targeted recommendations to improve internal communication strategies and decision-making processes, fostering a positive work environment and supporting sustainable company growth. The research will also explore Aurora's cooperative values, offering insights into how cooperative models can stay relevant and competitive in the business landscape of 2025.

Methodology

Students will collaborate as a team, using the following methods to address critical organizational challenges:

- Best practices research.
- Interviews, observations, and surveys.

Key Questions to Address:

1. What is the nature of the area needing improvement?
 2. What are the root causes of the issue?
 3. How can organizational behavior concepts be applied to resolve it?
 4. What specific steps should the organization take to improve the identified area?
 5. What changes should be implemented?
 6. What potential barriers, obstacles, and challenges might arise?
 7. What are the risks, costs, and possible unintended consequences of the recommendations?
 8. How will findings be communicated, and how will potential resistance be managed?
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Organization, Expectations, and Roles

- **Team Formation:** Students will self-select into teams.
 - **Class Time:** Significant class time will be dedicated to project progress, but teams must also meet outside of class for approximately **1–2 hours per week for four weeks**.
 - **Task Management:** Teams are responsible for dividing tasks to ensure equal contributions from all members throughout the project.
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Group Presentation

Each team will create and deliver a detailed final presentation using PowerPoint. The presentation will:

- **Length:** Be 10 minutes long.
- **Content:** Clearly explain findings and recommendations.
- **Collaboration:** Require contributions from all team members in preparation and delivery.
- **Rehearsal:** Teams must rehearse to ensure smooth transitions, adherence to time limits, and polished delivery.

Feedback and Engagement:

Students will complete a **Presentation Feedback Form** and participate in Q&A sessions for other teams to foster a supportive learning environment.

End-of-Semester Community Engagement Presentation

During **Special Academic Events Day** the class will present a **15-minute summary** of the project experience to the Umbra community during the **Community Engagement Presentations** on **Thursday, April 24**.

Structure:

1. **Overview of the Course:** Provide an overview of the Organizational Behavior course (i.e., what was the course about?)
2. **Introduce the Community Partner:** Provide context about the partner organization.
3. **Describe the Project:** Summarize the project's goals and methods.
4. **Share Takeaways and Challenges:** Reflect on the experience and lessons learned.
5. **Optional Activity:** Include a meaningful activity related to course topics (not exceeding five minutes).

Participation: Attendance and participation are mandatory, as this presentation is a critical component of the community engagement grade.

Grading Rubric

The service learning project accounts for **20% of the final course grade**, divided into three equal categories, each worth **8.33%**:

1. **Construction of the Learning Project:** Quality and organization of the initial planning and research.
2. **Execution of the Learning Project:** Effectiveness of implementing and managing the project.
3. **End-of-Semester Community Engagement Presentation:** Clarity, professionalism, and engagement during the final presentation.

This project is an opportunity to apply course concepts in a real-world setting, develop collaborative skills, and contribute meaningfully to the community.