

Fall '22 · Mon. & Wed. 10:15am to 11:30am · Location: Classroom Bldg 240 · Office: 255 Rueben-Cooke

SOCIOLOGY 355

ORGANIZATIONS &

MANAGEMENT

KIERAN HEALY

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WHAT IS THIS COURSE?

This upper-division undergraduate course is about modern organizations and theories about how to manage them. Our focus is on for-profit firms. However we will also look at other organizations (e.g., churches, the state, unions, voluntary associations, social movements, and so on) as we go. We will explore different explanations of how organizations work, why they fail, how experts have said they should be managed, and how they connect with other aspects of social structure and culture. We will also critically examine the origins and development of the theories we read.

The course will give you a grounding in the sociology of organizations and teach you how to put these ideas to work both when trying to understand real organizations and when navigating the vast scholarly and popular literature about them.

WHO TEACHES IT?

- Instructor: [Kieran Healy](#). Email: kieran.healy@duke.edu.
- Teaching Assistant: [Braulio Gomez](#). Email: braulio.gomez@duke.edu.

WHAT MUST I BUY?

Nothing. Most of the the course material will be provided via the [Sakai site](#). We will go through the details in class.

WHAT MUST I DO?

Each week, *keep up* with the reading; *attend* class; *participate* in discussions and tasks; and *write* a weekly brief. Your weekly brief should be between 300 and 500 words long, no less and no more. It should focus on one of the starred readings for that week and do one or more of the following things:

- Connect the content of the starred reading to other readings for that week.
- Raise a clear question about the reading that you want answered.
- Raise a question about how the content of this week's lecture relates to the reading.
- Offer some coherent reflections on the content or the reading, perhaps by providing additional examples or extensions of the content based on your own thinking.

When writing the brief, assume that the person reading it has also read the material. Your goal is not to summarize the reading (that's the job of your private notes) but to reflect on it analytically, raise good questions, and facilitate or extend discussion about it.

HOW WILL I BE GRADED?

You will be assessed by a number of short written assignments done prior to and during class, as well as your attendance and participation during discussion periods. From Week 2 onwards you will upload a brief on one of the starred readings (mainly HBS cases or items from the popular press). Briefs are due by 5pm the Sunday *before* each Monday's class.

There will also be a midterm exam and a final paper. Details on the exam and paper's format, and my expectations for them, will be given in class.

Grades are computed as follows:

- Participation: 40%
- Midterm: 30%
- Final paper: 30%

WHAT ARE THE COURSE POLICIES?

- Notify me of any absence from class due to illness or varsity sports travel *in advance* where possible.
- Over the course of the semester, there will be twelve weeks when briefs can be submitted. You are welcome and encouraged to submit a brief every week. However, you can miss up to *three* of them without penalty and without needing to provide any excuse or further information to me.
- Late work will not be accepted. Note, in particular, that the final paper's due date is set in this syllabus and you know when that date is. Plan accordingly.
- All assignments should be double-spaced and set in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.
- Feel free to study and discuss the material with others in the class. All written work handed in must be your own, however.
- Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean's Office. For more information on Duke University's academic integrity policies, please refer to [university policy](#).

DUKE COMMUNITY STANDARD

Like all classes at the university, this course is conducted under the Duke Community Standard. Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity. To uphold the Duke Community Standard you will not lie, cheat, or steal in academic endeavors; you will conduct yourself honorably in all your endeavors; and you will act if the Standard is compromised.

OTHER RESOURCES

Any student requesting learning accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to [register](#) with the SDA office and provide an accommodation notification, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

See over for the weekly schedule.

SCHEDULE

The schedule is flexible and subject to change.

Week 1: Introduction (Aug 29 / 31)

Reading

- James Coleman, *The Asymmetric Society* (excerpts). [For Wednesday.]
- Uriel Haran, "A Person–Organization Discontinuity in Contract Perception: Why Corporations Can Get Away with Breaking Contracts But Individuals Cannot." [For Wednesday.]

Week 2: Rationality, bureaucracy, and the corporation (Sept 5 / 7)

Reading

- Max Weber, "The Pure Types of Legitimate Authority."
- Max Weber, "Bureaucracy."
- ★ Charles Perrow, "Why bureaucracy?"
- ★ "John D. Rockefeller and the creation of Standard Oil" [HBS Case 807110].

Week 3: Scientific management (Sept 12 / 14)

Reading

- Frederick W. Taylor, "Principles of scientific management."
- Harry Braverman, "The degradation of work in the twentieth century."
- ★ Treadway Tire Company: Job dissatisfaction and high turnover at the Lima plant [HBS Case 2189].
- ★ Michael Lewis, "The science of winning an unfair game".

Week 4: Human relations and the informal work group (Sept 19 / 21)

Reading

- George Homans, "The Hawthorne Studies."
- Michael Burawoy, "The labor process as a game."
- Calvin Morrill, "Conflict management, honor, and organizational change."
- ★ Ross Bernstein, *The code: the unwritten rules of fighting and retaliation in the NHL* (excerpts).

Week 5: Organizational culture (Sept 26 / 28)

- Gideon Kunda. *Engineering culture: control & commitment in a high-tech corporation* (excerpts).

- Ed Catmull. *Creativity, Inc.* (excerpts).
- ★ *The New York Times*, "Scenes from a marriage."
- ★ Kieran Healy. "A Sociology of Steve Jobs."

Week 6: Midterm Review and Exam (Oct 3 / 5)

Take-home Midterm Exam Due 5pm Wednesday October 5th

Week 7: Cognition and organization (Oct 12)

Reading

- Edwin Hutchins, *Cognition in the Wild* (excerpts)
- ★ David Mindell, *Digital Apollo: Human and Machine in Spaceflight*

Week 8: Organizational disasters (Oct 17 and 19)

Reading

- Charles Perrow, *Normal accidents* (excerpts).
- Diane Vaughan, *The Challenger launch decision* (excerpts).
- Kieran Healy, "Organizations and Obligations."
- ★ *New York Times*, "The C.D.C. Waited 'Its Entire Existence for This Moment.' What Went Wrong?"

Week 9: Technology and resource environments (Oct 24 and 26)

Reading

- Alvin Gouldner, *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy* (excerpts)
- Joan Woodward, "Technology and organization."
- Glenn Carroll and Anand Swaminathan, "Why the microbrewery movement? Organizational dynamics of resource partitioning in the U.S. brewing industry."
- ★ *The New York Times*, "Is it last call for craft beer?"
- ★ *Washington Post*, "Maryland's small colleges saw the future, and it was bleak. Now, they're selling liberal arts with a twist."

Week 10: The institutional environment (Oct 31 and Nov 2)

Reading

- Michael Cohen, James March, and Johan Olsen, "A garbage can model of organizational choice."
- Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell, "The Iron Cage revisited."
- Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev, "Why diversity programs fail."
- ★ "Alliant Health System: A vision of total quality" (HBS Case 192003).
- ★ *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "The Cautionary Tale of a Short-Lived College."

Week 11: Organized fraud (Nov 7 and 9)

Reading

- Dan Davies, *Lying for Money* (excerpts).
- Rakesh Khurana, *Searching for a corporate savior* (excerpts).
- ★ "The Enron collapse" (HBS Case IMD164).

Week 12: Social movements, consumers, and the corporation (Nov 14 and 16)

Reading

- Marshall Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins* (excerpts).
- Hayagreeva Rao, *Market rebels* (excerpts).
- Brayden King, "When markets become contentious".
- ★ "Hitting the wall: Nike and international labor practices" (HBS Case 700047).

Week 13: After bureaucracy? (Nov 21)

Reading

- Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (excerpts).
- Yochai Benkler, *The wealth of networks* (excerpts).
- Catherine Turco, *The conversational firm* (excerpts).
- ★ "Eden McCallum: A network-based consulting firm" (HBS Case 410056).

Week 14: Organizations and categorical inequality (Nov 28 and 30)

Reading

- Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and women of the corporation* (excerpts).

- ★ Lauren Rivera, *Pedigree: how elite students get elite jobs* (excerpts).
- Emilio Castilla, "Gender, race, and meritocracy in organizational careers".
- ★ Ofer Sharone, *Flawed system, flawed self* (excerpts).

Week 15: Organization, careers, and control (Dec 5 and 7)

Reading

- Stephen Barley and Gideon Kunda, *Gurus, hired guns, and warm bodies: itinerant experts in a knowledge economy* (excerpts).
- Erin Kelly and Phyllis Moen, *Overload* (excerpts).
- ★ Sarah Brayne, *Predict and surveil: data, discretion, and the future of policing* (excerpts).

Final Paper Due: Tuesday December 13th at 5pm.