Course Description

This course is designed to expand students’ understanding of organizational development theory and ground them in the methods of organizational consulting through a focus on private sector organizational change initiatives. This course will have a strong experiential component and will also focus on developing critical thinking skills in the context of organizational consulting. The purpose of this course is to help students who will be bringing about change within organizations (either as consultants or as managers) to understand the options and tools available to them. The design of the course is highly interactive. Students will have the opportunity to learn about organizational development and organizational change through class lectures, assigned readings, classroom exercises designed to enhance the learning process, and interaction with corporate change agents and their organizations. In addition, students will be invited to learn about organization development and consulting by, among other things, analyzing and creating organizational case studies (individually and in teams), completing mock consulting assignments, and analyzing data for the purpose of client feedback.

As part of this course, students will:

1. Analyze Organizational Development (OD)’s evolution and its future state.
2. Identify the reasons for organizational change and types of organizational change across industries.
3. Describe the characteristics of a management consultant and the stages of the consulting process.
4. Analyze the major approaches to change.
5. Explain the reasons behind resistance to change.
6. Diagnosis the culture of an organization using a competing values framework.
7. Evaluate leader visions and strategies for communicating change.
8. Apply change management concepts to a business case study where the student will analyze data and recommend an intervention.
9. Explain how to navigate an organization through sustained organizational change.
10. Analyze client interviews from a grounded theory approach and make informed recommendations for change.
Course Materials


Course Requirements

I. Participation 15%
II. Response Papers 15%
III. Structured Interview Analysis 20%
IV. Case Study Paper 20%
V. Final Exam 30%
Total 100%

I. Participation (15%). Participation points will be used to reflect my judgment of your class participation as well as your classmates’ evaluations of your participation in the class. Given that case discussion and interactive exercises comprise a large component of the course, there will be many different opportunities to participate throughout the semester. Several factors affect your participation grade. These factors include but are not limited to: (1) the insight you provide in your answers, questions, and comments during class, (2) the frequency of answers, questions, and comments during class, (3) your commitment to actively engaging with the organizations and change agents who have volunteered their time; and (4) the collegiality and respectfulness of your questions, comments and interactions with other students, the professor, guest speakers, and corporate change agents. Please note that the most important factor in my evaluation of your participation is the quality, not the quantity of your questions and answers.

Participation will be assessed and documented after each class session, thus, my evaluation will be the average of your participation points across the semester. The remainder of your participation grade will come from class nominations. At the end of the semester, I will ask your classmates to nominate students whose in-class participation significantly contributed to their learning.

II. Response Papers (15%). We will devote one week to each course topic, as detailed in the class schedule below. Each week students will complete short response papers on the weekly topics (excluding session 1). These papers should be one to three paragraphs long (no more than 250 words). Responses will be graded on a 1 (extremely weak) to 5 (extremely strong) basis. The normal grade will be “3.” Exceptional papers will receive a “4” or “5” I will assign a grade of “1” or “2” to papers that are late, simply summarize the readings, or do not clearly demonstrate adequate thought about the topic.

Response papers should not simply summarize the readings, because I assume you have read and understood them. Instead, the response paper should go beyond a simple summary. It could extend or critique the arguments given in the readings, illustrate the points with examples drawn from your own experience, draw connections to other concepts covered inside or outside the class, bring in other articles or books you have read, or relate to the week’s topic or assigned readings in other ways. I am open regarding the manner in which the response paper connects to the topic, as long as it involves some thought and is not a simple summary. Do not attempt to address all aspects of all the readings – focus on whatever interests you the most. The goal of the response paper is to get you to think about the week’s topic and thus deepen your understanding of it and improve class discussion.
III. Structured Interview Analysis (20%). For this assignment, you have the opportunity to work individually or in 2-3 person teams. Each individual/team will be responsible for coding and analyzing the transcript of a structured interview using the techniques of grounded theory (a qualitative research method). The interviews represent a sample of interviews drawn from a change management intervention being conducted by Dr. O’Neill. In addition to a written report (details available on Blackboard), all individuals/teams will present their analysis to the class, accompanied by PowerPoint slides.

Please attend to the following! While the team projects grades are allocated similarly to all team members, I am very aware of the “social loafing” behavior of some students. Hence – for student who decide to work as a team— I will be providing a team performance evaluation system that each team member must complete on all of his/her team members. This evaluation is confidential. Your constructive feedback is crucial for the personal and professional development of your classmates, thus, it is imperative that your ratings reflect your honest opinions. Negative evaluations from the majority of your team members will count against your individual grade.

IV. Case Study Project (20%). This assignment consists of writing a case study in the style of Harvard Business School Cases. As part of the assignment, you will be expected to engage in critical analysis of a current organization from an OD/ change management perspective. For this exercise, you are the consultant and will be expected to use your knowledge and insight to critically examine the organization and issues in question. In addition to case-relevant company information, you are expected to discuss what “academic” points are being used in the case and the underlying rationale behind the change management process the company is undergoing.

Students have two options for gathering the case material:

Option 1: This option depends on your ability to participate in a site visit outside of class to an organization in the DC metro area whose top leadership has demonstrated an awareness and commitment to sustained change management, either through the work conducted by the organization or through the vision of its leaders, or both (details available on Blackboard). Site visits will be scheduled at different times and on different days throughout the semester. A significant aspect in my evaluation of your case is that you conducted original research through naturalistic observations of the organizational environment, informal discussions with employees, semi-structured interviews with employees, and analysis of archival data. This research must then by analyzed and explicitly tied the information you obtain to concepts from the readings and textbook.

Option 2: This option involves outside research on a prominent organization that is currently undergoing or that recently underwent change management. The key factor in choosing an organization is that it is a company that has generated a lot of academic and/or popular press analysis. Research sources may include, but are not limited to, business books and business magazine articles available online from the GMU library. A significant aspect in my evaluation of your case is the quality of the outside research and how you tied it to textbook concepts. Simply regurgitating facts about the organization will not be sufficient for obtaining a top grade.

You must let me know in writing by 10/1/15 which option you are going to undertake and what company you are going to research. There is no switching of options after this point. Final papers are due by 9am on 12/14/15.

A hard copy of the final paper must be submitted on Blackboard in double-spaced format with 1 inch margins all the way around. Length should be no more than 10 pages of text (not including references,
tables, and appendices). Please use Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Do not include cover pages. Clip art is strictly prohibited anywhere throughout the document.

V. Final Exam (30%). The final exam will consist of objective test questions (e.g., multiple-choice, true/false) and short-answer/short-essay questions. The exams will cover the material discussed in class, the readings, and the exercises that occur during class sessions. Some essays may utilize OD/consulting data (qualitative or quantitative). Data will be made available one week before the exam. Students are required to bring green SCANTRON forms (available in the bookstore), #2 pencils, and a laptop with Word and Excel (or open-source program alternatives) to the exams. I will conduct an exam review session during the class meeting immediately prior to each exam.

GRADING. Final course grades in this course will be assigned strictly in accordance with the following cut-offs:

- A+  97-100%
- A   94-96%
- A-  90-93%
- B+  87-89%
- B   84-86%
- B-  80-83%
- C   70-80%
- F   less than 70%

APPOINTMENTS AND E-MAIL
I strongly urge you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, or obtain additional help. It is best to contact me via email to ask a question or to set up a phone or in-person appointment (ooneill@gmu.edu).

CLASS ETIQUETTE
MGMT 413 is a “safe space”, which means we commit to: (1) Making our class a welcoming, open space for everyone; (2) Being aware of our prejudices and insecurities and how our words affect others; (3) Providing room for each of us to explore our own identities; (4) Allowing others to define their own identities and to speak for themselves; (5) Respecting the privacy of others by maintaining confidentiality.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES
Cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. must remain on silence and be stowed away from your desk during the class. Use of electronic devices is disrespectful to the professor and to your classmates. It also inhibits your learning (see research article “The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking” published in Psychological Science, April 2014). Use of them during lecture or class exercises will negatively impact your participation points. Students who choose to use electronic devices may be asked to leave the class at the professor’s discretion. An exception to this policy will be occasional situations in which computers are necessary for class exercises or urgent calls (preferable, notified in advance).

ABSENCES, LATENESS, AND ASSIGNMENTS / EXAMS

Attendance: While attendance itself is not evaluated, you cannot earn credit for participation if you are not in class. Therefore, it is clearly in your best interest to attend class. In addition, examination questions will be based on content discussed and exercises conducted in class sessions. If you are not in class you will not have the necessary information to perform well on the examinations.
Lateness: Lateness is disruptive and disrespectful to both me and to your fellow students, and habitual lateness will negatively impact your participation grade. Every effort should be made to be in class on time and ready for the topic(s) of the day. Please allow time for traffic or parking problems, as these are frequent occurrences in our area and our school. In addition, I would prefer that the desks nearest the door be left open for late students so that they may easily find a seat with minimum disruption to the class.

Absences: If you miss a class, I strongly suggest that you also ask a classmate for his/her notes, as it is likely that key points will be brought up in class discussion and may not be captured on the slides. For excused absences (e.g., job interviews, weddings, funerals), you may also consult with me in advance to make alternate arrangements.

Make-up Exams: Make-up final examinations will not be given unless a student has a university-validated excuse that the instructor is notified of at least 48 hours in advance of the examination. Approval of absence must be obtained from the Assistant Dean of Academic and Career Services before a make-up exam will be arranged.

Late Assignments: Writing assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. If you do not turn in your assignment according to the time and format it is due, one letter grade will be deducted immediately. An additional letter grade will be deducted for each 24 hour period of lateness. No writing assignments will be accepted after 1 week from the time the assignment was due. If you will not be in attendance on the day a writing assignment is due, you may email me your assignment, but I must receive your emailed assignment before the beginning of class. As noted below, late weekly response papers will not be graded.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
In the event of inclement weather, please consult Mason’s website or call the main information line (703.993.1000). If the University is officially closed, our class will not meet. If the University remains open during an inclement weather event, our class will meet as scheduled, unless you receive an email from me to the contrary.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): CAPS is available for same-day walk-in and pre-scheduled appointments with trained counselors. Short-term counseling is FREE for all students. CAPS located in Student Union room 3129. Same-day consultations are made available beginning first thing each morning on a limited basis; call 703-993-2380 at 8:30am in the morning to find out the times available and to schedule on that day. Services are confidential and use of these services does not become part of the student’s academic record.

Learning Services: Learning Services is available with workshops and individual study skills designed to improve academic skills, as well as to assist and support with learning differences such as attention deficit disorder or learning disabilities. The Certificate in Academic Skills Program provides an individualized program of study to develop academic skills. Call 703-993-2999 or visit Student Union room 3129 to schedule an appointment.

The Writing Center: The writing center is available for help with all aspects of the writing process through face-to-face appointment with tutors, style guides, workshops (in-person and face-to-face), and ESL guidance. http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/. For general questions and comments please contact them at wcenter@gmu.edu, call 703-993-1200, or stop by 114A Robinson Hall.
**ACCOMODATION FOR DISABILITIES**
If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: (1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office for Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and (2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

**Honor Code**: GMU has an [Honor Code (http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/)](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/) with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Understanding the Honor Code is your responsibility. However, if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

**Plagiarism**: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me and/or see the Office for Academic Integrity.

**Violations**: Academic integrity is taken very seriously in this class. Violators will be immediately referred to the Office for Academic Integrity for administrative review.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please note that the schedule and assigned readings are subject to change. Adjustments will be discussed throughout the semester.

**September 2 – Session 1**
*Topic*: Introduction to Organizational Development and Organizational Change  
*Required reading*:  
- [http://www.fastcompany.com/52717/change-or-die](http://www.fastcompany.com/52717/change-or-die)

**September 9 – Session 2**
*Topic*: The OD Consultant  
*Recommended reading*:  
- OD (Burke) Textbook Chapter 5 (“Defining the Client”) and Chapter 10 (“The OD Consultant”)

**September 16 – Session 3**
*Topic*: Whistleblowers and organizational change in the accounting industry  
*Preparation*:  
- “The Lessons of Enron: The Importance of Ethical Corporate Leadership”, a lecture by Sherron Watkins, Enron Whistleblower, Former Vice President, Enron Corporation; 6pm on Tuesday, 9/15 in George’s (Johnson Center) (RSVP at business.gmu.edu/dss, registration code: bbstudent)  
*Required reading*:  
- Textbook Chapter 3 (“Why Organizations Change”) and Chapter 4 (“What Changes in Organizations”)

**September 23 – Session 4**
*Topic*: Diagnosing Culture  
*Required reading*:  
- Textbook Chapter 5 (“Diagnosis for Change”)
• Chapter 1 (“An Introduction to Changing Organizational Culture”) of Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture by Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn (Jossey-Bass, 2011) – Blackboard

September 30 – Session 5  
**Topic:** Conducting Structured Interviews Analyzing Qualitative Data  
**In-class exercise:** Conduct a structured interview  
**Required reading:**  
• Basics of Qualitative Research by Anselm Strauss & Juliet Corbin, Chapter 1 (“Basic Considerations”) and Chapter 4 (“Practical Considerations”) – Blackboard

October 7 – Session 6  
**Topic:** Resistance to Change  
**In-class exercise:** The Seat Change Game  
**Guest speaker (video):**  
• Scott Sonenshein, Professor of Organizational Behavior, Rice University  
  (http://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/videos/resourceful-change/).  
**Preparation:**  
• Required reading: Chapter 6 (textbook)

October 14 – Session 7  
**Topic:** Culture, space and design  
**Exercise:** Field trip to Refraction in Reston  
**Guest Speaker:**  
• Rachael Stott, Chief Culture Officer at Refraction  
**Required reading:**  
• Selected readings from Make Space: How to Set the Stage for Creative Collaboration (John Wiley, 2012) by Scott Doroley and Scott Witthoft (Blackboard)  

October 21 – Session 8  
**Topic:** Well-being at school and work (point/counterpoint)  
**Guest speaker (video):**  
• Nance Lucas video lecture on the Well-Being University (http://wellbeing.gmu.edu/our-programs/wbu-initiative)  
**Required reading:**  
• Textbook Chapter 7 (“Implementing Change: OD, Appreciative Inquiry, POS...”)

October 28 – Session 9  
**Topic:** Change in the higher education industry  
**Guest speaker:**  
• Peter Stearns, former Provost and University Professor of History  
**Required reading:**  
• Chapter 1 (“Crisis and Opportunity”) and Chapter 2 (“Universities on Trial”) from Guiding the American University by Peter Stearns (Routledge, 2016) – Blackboard  
• “The Coddling of the American Mind”  
November 4 – Session 10
Topic: Planned change in the semiconductor industry
Guest speaker (Skype):
  • Carlos Gutierrez, VP of R&D, Lattice Semiconductor
Required reading:
  • Textbook Chapter 8 (“Implementing Change: Change Management...”)
  • OD (Burke) Textbook Chapter 8 (“Planning and Managing Change”)

November 11 – Session 11
Topic: Creating a Vision and Communicating Change
Guest speaker:
  • Paul Lee (’14), Associate Director of International Programs, Hamilton Advisors and a contractor at the International Development Bank, Washington DC
Background reading:
  • Textbook Chapter 9 (“Linking Vision and Change”), Chapter 10 (“Strategies for Communicating Change”), and Chapter 11 (“Skills for Communicating Change”)

November 18 – Session 12
Topic: Structured Interview Analysis Presentations
DELIVERABLE DUE (by start of class 11/18):
  • Structured Interview Analysis

November 25 – No Class (Thanksgiving recess)

December 2 – Session 13
Topic: Changing Expectations of “The Ideal Worker” in U.S. Corporations
Required reading:

December 9 - Session 14
Topic: Wrap-up and Exam Review

Monday, December 14 – Final Paper Due (must be uploaded to Blackboard no later than 9am)

Wednesday, December 16 (7:30pm-10:15pm)–Final Exam