

Sociology 419 (Focus: DS, WI) (Fall 2010)
Analysis in Formal Organizations
Prof. Seio Nakajima
T 12:00-2:30 pm, KUY310

Office hours: TBA
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Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to sociological analyses of organizations. We will examine how organizations are both enabled and constrained by social relations and social institutions including politics and culture. The course has two major goals: (1) To familiarize students with several key theories and concepts developed in the subfield of “sociology of organizations” (e.g., organizational strategies and structure, organizational culture, organizational change). This goal will be achieved by a close reading of the textbook and the extension of it in lectures and class discussions. (2) To prepare students with necessary skills to apply these theories and concepts to real-world organizational phenomena. This goal will be realized by watching films related to the topics discussed in this course as well as additional readings of articles published in popular media (e.g., newspapers, magazines, the Internet). In order to concretely understand that organizational phenomena not only entail strategic choices, but also social, cultural, and political processes, we will try to go back and forth between the conceptual discussions and detailed empirical case studies of different types of organizations in the United States and abroad.

Note: Although the official title of the course is Analysis in Formal Organizations, that is, organizations that have clear, “formal” rules, membership criteria, bureaucratic structure, etc. (e.g., large business corporations, universities, hospitals), this class covers broader range of organizations including relatively “informal” organizations like small family businesses, small non-profit organizations, and even student organizations. In sum, the class is a comprehensive survey of the “sociology of organizations” rather than exclusive analysis in formal organizations.

Required Text:

- Howard E. Aldrich and Martin Ruef. 2006. *Organizations Evolving*, Second Edition. London: Sage Publications.

Additional Readings:

- To be handed out in class by the professor.

Course Requirements and Grades:

Final grades will be based on performance on the following five items:

- (1) 12 quizzes on the readings in the textbook (on Ch. 1-11 and Appendix) **(20%)**.
 - Closed-book, but very basic, short, 5-10 minutes, in-class quizzes.
 - I will announce when we'll be having a quiz at least one class session in advance so you can prepare well.
 - Only the highest 10 grades will be counted toward your final grade. I will drop the lowest two

grades (including absences) ($2\% \times 10 = 20\%$).

- Because you can miss up to two quizzes without penalty, no make-up quizzes will be allowed.
- (2) 4 short “Study Questions” papers (**40%**).
- Submit 4 short papers based on the “Study Questions” at the end of each chapter in the textbook.
 - For each paper, choose one question from the list of “Study Questions” and write 3-page (double-space) answer.
 - There are 11 topics/groups of “Study Questions” you can choose from, listed at the end of Ch. 1-11. You only need to select 4 “Study Questions” that you want to write your papers on. You cannot write more than two papers on the same topic/group of “Study Questions.”
 - Each paper is worth 10% of the final grade ($10\% \times 4$ papers = 40%).
 - **The short papers are due at Laulima “drop box” by 12 noon on Tuesday following the week we finish discussing the topic in class.**
 - Papers turned in after the due date/time will be lowered 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late.
- (3) A final research paper (**30%**).
- Approximately 8-10 pages long.
 - The final research paper will be on a topic chosen by you in consultation with the professor.
 - The paper must address a question raised by the lecture, readings, and class discussions, and must make use of primary source materials.
 - **Potential research topic due at Laulima “drop box” on or before Tuesday, October 19 by 12 noon.**
 - **Final Paper Due: Tuesday, December 7 by 12 noon at Laulima “drop box.”**
 - Papers turned in after the due date/time will be lowered 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late.
- (4) Class attendance and participation (**10%**).
- Class attendance and active participation in class is mandatory and will make up 10% of the final grade. This could include in-class assignments as well as participation in discussions.
- (5) Extra credit (**up to 5-10%**).
- Details TBA.

* Grade percentage in sum: quizzes (20%), 4 short “Study Questions” papers (40%), final research paper (30%), attendance and participation (10%), extra credit (up to 5-10%).

Note:

For all of the course requirements, other than externally verified emergencies (i.e., medical emergencies explained with a doctor’s note), there will be no exceptions.

Summary of Important Dates:

- Tuesday, October 19: Potential research topic due at Laulima “drop box” by 12 noon.
- Tuesday, December 7: Final research paper due at Laulima “drop box” by 12 noon.

Week One: Brief Introduction to the Class

Tuesday, August 24

No assigned readings.

Week Two: Introduction and Themes

Tuesday, August 31

Read by this class:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 1, entire (pp. 1-15).

Week Three: The Evolutionary Approach I

Tuesday, September 7

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 2, pp. 16-27 (before “Research Illustration 2.1”).

Week Four: The Evolutionary Approach II

Tuesday, September 14

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 2, pp. 27-33.

Week Five: How the Evolutionary Approach Relates to Other Approaches I

Tuesday, September 21

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 3, pp. 34-50 (before “The resource dependence approach”).

Week Six: How the Evolutionary Approach Relates to Other Approaches II

Tuesday, September 28

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 3, pp. 50-60.

Week Seven: Entrepreneurs and the Emergence of New Organizations

Tuesday, October 5

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 4, entire (pp. 61-91).

Week Eight: Organizational Boundaries

Tuesday, October 12

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 5, entire (pp. 92-113).

Week Nine: Organizational Forms

Tuesday, October 19: **POTENTIAL RESEARCH TOPIC DUE AT LAULIMA “DROP BOX” BY 12 NOON.**

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 6, entire (pp. 114-131).

Week Ten: Organizational Transformation

Tuesday, October 26

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 7, entire (pp. 132-158).

Week Eleven: No Class

Tuesday, November 2: Election Day: **HOLIDAY-NO CLASS**

Week Twelve: Organizations and Social Change

Tuesday, November 9

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 8, entire (pp. 159-178).

Week Thirteen: Emergence of New Populations of Organizations

Tuesday, November 16

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 9, entire (pp. 179-207).

Week Fourteen: Reproducing Populations: Foundings and Disbandings

Tuesday, November 23

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 10, entire (pp. 208-239).

Week Fifteen: Community Evolution

Tuesday, November 30

Read:
Aldrich and Ruef, Chapter 11, entire (pp. 240-266).

Week Sixteen: Research Design and Evolutionary Analysis/Conclusions

Tuesday, December 7: **FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE AT LAULIMA “DROP BOX” BY 12 NOON**

Read:

Aldrich and Ruef, Appendix, entire (pp. 267-270).

Academic Honesty: “Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- b. Furnishing false information to any UH official, faculty member, or office.
- c. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any UH document, record, or form of identification.

The term ‘cheating’ includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the UH faculty, staff or student (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.

The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

[E7.208 UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEMWIDE STUDENT CONDUCT CODE, July 2009]

Kokua Statement: “Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.”

eCAFE: “The Department of Sociology is committed to a continual improvement of the quality of its course offerings. To allow for this to occur, your help, as the consumers of these courses is needed. You are there and only you can tell us about your educational experience in your classes. Towards the end of the semester, you will be informed that the eCAFE system is available to you to complete your course evaluation. We encourage you to login to <http://www.hawaii.edu/ecafe/> to submit your evaluations.”