

MN01706: Organisational Behaviour

Session: Semester 1, 2021/22

Instructors:	A/P Lim Ghee Soon (Coordinator) Dr Anjier Chen Ms Usa Skulkerewathana Ms Violet Lim Dr Wu Pei Chuan	Offices: BIZ1-08-57 BIZ1-08-56 BIZ1-08-35 BIZ2-02-16 BIZ1-08-40
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Course Description

People are the core of any business. People bring their values, personalities and cultural backgrounds to work. They have different motivations for working, and different emotional responses to what happens at work. Often, people work in groups and teams. Many work challenges are people-related. How can we draw the best out of every individual and group?

This module prepares you for the world of work by addressing key questions about how and why people behave the way they do at work. We will also explore how organisations exert influence on people's behaviour.

This module is designed around a trio of inter-related questions.

1. *Who goes to work? Why go to work?*

Topics:

- a) Personality and Individual differences
- b) Attitudes & Values
- c) Motivation
- d) Groups & Teams

We start by understanding **who** goes to work. People take their personalities, values and other individual characteristics to work. Work can influence how they feel and their level of satisfaction. We also examine **why** people go to work. We shall identify what motivates people, how they are motivated and then apply this understanding to work-related practices.

People do not just work alone but also in groups, so we shall examine how groups work and what can be done to improve team processes at work.

2. *What is the workplace like?*

Topics:

- a) Culture
- b) Diversity
- c) Power & Politics

There are many ways to characterize workplaces.

First, we shall take the perspective of Culture, or the assumed way of life in organisations.

Closely related to Culture is Diversity, which is a key feature of many workplaces. What are some of the challenges that arise from diversity, and how can organisations harness the advantages of a diverse workforce?

Third, it is nearly impossible to discuss organisational life without examining power and politics. We round off this segment with the classic debate about macro vs. micro influences on the way people behave in organisations.

3. What if you were in charge?

Topics:

- a) Leadership
- b) Managing change

Every business graduate will, at some point, lead people and experience organisational change. How can one lead effectively in organisations, create engagement at work and facilitate change at work? We shall apply knowledge from the research on leadership and change to help us understand what to do when we are in a position of leadership or experiencing change.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, you should:

- Understand the influences on the way people behave in organisations
- Recognize and know the effects of group and organisational processes at work
- Be able to suggest how such knowledge can be applied by organisational leaders and employees.

Modes of learning

Classes will be conducted in a seminar format.

The course will be learner-centred. We shall adopt norms of openness, participation and preparedness because much of the learning in this course will be through peer- and self-learning.

You will also learn from a variety of readings and resources that we will examine throughout the course. Learning activities include analyses of cases (local/regional and foreign), debates, critiques of papers, simulation and talks by invited speakers.

Learners' responsibilities

Everyone in this class is responsible for creating a positive and supportive learning environment. You are encouraged to ask questions, comment and be intellectually critical, while displaying courtesy, consideration and openness to others.

Before each class, you will be given a set of readings to complete, videos to watch and questions to think about. To gain the most from each class, you should:

- Be prepared for all classes, having completed the readings and assignments. This is especially important given learning mode that we will be adopting.
- Be responsible for participating actively in class
- Be willing to question, think critically and learn from others.

We will be using group exercises as part of the learning process. You have a responsibility to your group to be prepared for the exercises and play your part.

At some point in the semester you will (working in groups) be put in charge of part of a class session. Please make sure you are well prepared to lead the discussion for that session.

Outside of classes, my main mode of communication with the class will be via LUMINUS and e-mail. It will be your responsibility to check your NUS mailbox regularly, and to read the announcements, updates and other materials uploaded to the LUMINUS.

Learning resources

To gain different perspectives, you will read journal articles, book chapters and published cases. The purpose of the readings is to introduce you to ways of thinking about organisational behaviour, provide illustrative cases and promote reflection. The articles will be available on e-reserve in LUMINUS. There will also be a set of multimedia which you can also access via LUMINUS.

Textbook: Lim, GS., Chia, A., Wu, PC., Griffin, RW., Phillips, JM., & Gully, SM. 2019. Organizational Behaviour: An Asian Perspective. Cengage.

Academic Honesty; No Plagiarism

Please acknowledge all references and sources that you use in your work. This is not just good manners but also academic honesty. Please note the NUS Business School policy below:

“Academic integrity and honesty are essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to always uphold academic integrity & honesty. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is ‘the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own’ (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.”

Additional guidance is available at:

<https://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

Online Module on Plagiarism:

<https://libguides.nus.edu.sg/new2nus/plagiarism>

Assessment

Subject Pool (this is administered by the Department of Management & Organisation, and <i>not</i> by the instructors of this module)	10%
Participation	15%
Individual Paper	30%
Topical Discussion (Group)	20%
Group Project	25%

Schedule

Below is an **indicative** schedule.

The class schedule may be amended when necessary, e.g., to take advantage of other opportunities for learning.

Class session	Topic
1	Introduction to the module What is Organisational Behaviour?
2	Who goes to work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individuals: Unique?• Personality & Individual differences
3	Who goes to work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values & Attitudes• Ethics
4	Why go to work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What makes people tick? Understanding Motivation• Applications from motivation research and theory
5	Working with others <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Groups• Team processes• Getting the best from teams
6	Characterizing the workplace: Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culture• Effects of culture
7	Characterizing the workplace: Diversity in Organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facets of diversity• Managing and gaining from diversity
8	Being in charge <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership: What makes a leader?• Power & Politics in organisations
9	Special topic
10	Managing Change <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theories of change• Why do people resist change?• Leading Change effectively
11	Integration & Project presentations
12	Integration & Project presentations
13	Test (to be conducted on the same day for all classes in the module. The date and venue will be announced later in the semester).