

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO
SW 663
123 Clemens

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Fall 2005
Wednesdays 2:00-4:50 PM

PhD Pro-Seminar: Social Services Organizations

Instructor: Thomas H. Nochajski, PhD
660 Baldy Hall
645-3381 ext 237
thn@BUFFALO.EDU

Course Description

The pro seminar on social services organizations examines the theoretical models for explaining organizational behavior. We will focus on performance as an outcome criterion and how administrative, structural, and external processes impact organizational performance. In this context, we will explore factors within the organizational context and its environment that appear to impact client outcomes. Finally, we will examine controversial issues relevant to the growth and development of organizations.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this seminar, students will be able to:

1. Describe factors relevant to the administration of social welfare organizations, such as leadership, power, norms, goals, and responsibility.
2. Identify how diversity may influence the development of organizational structures.
3. Analyze potential and/or actual problems within organizational settings which impact on the effective delivery of services to clients.
4. Design research based strategies to effect positive change in organizations and to evaluate that change.
5. Analyze factors external to the organization, in the social, political, or economic environments for example, which may impact on the effective delivery of services to clients.
6. Critique research relevant to the factors which influence the design and administration of organizational structures.

Texts:

American Psychological Association. (2001). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author

Brody, R. (2005). Effectively Managing Human Service Organizations (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Chemers, M. M., Oskamp, S., & Costanzo, M. A. (Eds.). (1995). Diversity in organizations: New perspectives for a changing workplace. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hall, R. H. and Tolbert, P. S. (2005). Organizations: Structures, processes, & outcomes (9th ed.). Prentice- Hall: Englewood Cliffs.

Harrison, M. I. (2005). Diagnosing Organizations: Methods, Models, and Processes (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hasenfeld, Y. (Ed.). (1992). Human services as complex organizations, Newbury Park: Sage.

Martin, L. L., & Kettner, P. M. (1996). Measuring the performance of human services programs. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Shafritz, J. M., & Ott, J. S. (2001). Classics of organization theory (5th ed.). Chicago: Dorsey Press.

Class Format and Course Evaluation

The class will operate in a seminar format. Content will be presented through readings, discussions, and class exercises. The class is intended to be a forum for critical thinking and the active exchange of ideas. Consequently, it is expected that all students will come to class having read the assigned materials and prepared to actively participate in classroom activities. You will be evaluated, in part, on the overall quality of your preparation and your contribution to the learning environment.

Throughout the semester, the instructor will solicit informal feedback from the students about the course. In addition, the course will be evaluated anonymously using appropriate forms provided by the School and the University. The instructor will be available throughout the semester to meet individually with students.

Academic Integrity

Please note, the School of Social Work supports the University's policies and procedures relative to academic integrity and detailed in the Faculty/Staff Handbook. "The university community

depends upon shared academic standards. Academic dishonesty in any form by any member of the university community represents a fundamental impairment of these standards. When an instance of suspected or alleged academic dishonesty by a student arises, it shall be resolved according to the procedures set forth herein, unless procedures already exist within the professional school from which the student comes. These procedures assume that many questions of academic dishonesty will be resolved through informal consultation between the student and the instructor. If, however, such informal consultation fails to resolve the question, or the instructor considers formal proceedings warranted, the formal procedures described in Part II must be used" (Preamble, Section III.D. Disciplinary Procedures for Academic Infractions by Students). In accordance with the Handbook, if there is reason to believe an act of academic dishonesty has been committed on an assignment (e.g., inappropriate citation or failing to cite), sanction may include a reduction in grade for the assignment, a failure for the assignment, or a failure for the course.

APA Format

Please note: All assignments are to be word processed and written in APA format [see the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (5th ed.)], with appropriate citations. (Please pay particular attention to the chapters on "Content and Organization of a Manuscript," "Expression of Ideas," and "APA Editorial Style.") Assignments are due at the beginning of the session specified. Late assignments without prior approval by the instructor will result in a reduction in grade.

Assignments

The use of web-based material in your assignments is encouraged. However, because the accuracy, reliability, and validity of web-based material can be uncertain, it will be your responsibility to determine its quality before including it in an assignment. If you decide to include web-based material in your assignments, please include a paragraph under each reference detailing how you determined the quality of the information you used. For example, you might want to include answers to the following questions: How recently was the material updated? What is the source of the material? How reliable and reputable is the source?)

There are four assignments in this course, (1) a literature review on organizational performance, (2) an organization issue analysis and presentation; (3) an "organization and community position paper and presentation," and (4) a "program of research" paper.

1. Literature review on organizational performance paper.

Increasingly, human services organizations are being held accountable for their overall performance. Organizational performance is a multidimensional construct (Martin & Kettner, 1996) that -for our purposes- consists of six factors: (1) productivity; (2) efficiency; (3) service quality; (4) service effectiveness; (5) client satisfaction; and (6) employee satisfaction. You are responsible for a

research paper that examines organizational performance in your field of interest.

The purpose of this paper is to develop an empirically based profile of how specific organizational context and variables (e.g., hierarchy, structure, environments, leadership, power, decision making, organizational change, and diversity) relate to service outcomes in your area of research. You are asked to select, define, and operationalize one or more service outcomes relevant to organizational research in your field, and prepare an analysis of the empirical, conceptual, or theoretical literature that examines the relationship between organizational context and variables and the service outcome(s) of interest.

Your paper should focus on the quality and quantity of the research, the major practice and policy implications of the studies, and your recommendations for future research that would strengthen and enhance our understanding of the organizational conditions necessary to enhance service outcomes.

In developing your paper, please pay attention to the following guidelines:

- Although the final number of articles, chapters, or books may vary, please include a minimum of 15 studies in your analysis. The greater the number, the increased confidence you can have in your analyses and recommendations.
- If your topic, the content, and the quantity of research literature are sufficiently developed, you may be able to focus on a single dimension related to a single service outcome, such as staff burnout in child welfare (worker satisfaction) or group treatment for clients experiencing PTSD trauma related symptoms (efficiency).
- Of particular importance in such analyses is the quality of the research in the field. As a result, it is necessary to pay particular attention to- and critically evaluate- the quality of the studies chosen, including the specificity of the independent and dependent variables, the adequacy of the sampling procedures, the appropriateness of the designs, the conceptualization of the measures, the use of statistical processes and procedures, the discussion of the results, and the conclusions drawn. (A table comparing and contrasting the studies on each of these dimensions can be very explanatory and is frequently used in support of the narrative in academic writing.)
- Your review should be written in a similar manner as reviews published in the academic literature. The purpose of the paper is not to summarize each study, but to examine the major consistencies and inconsistencies in their findings, identify the strengths and limitations of their research designs and methods, and highlight the major policy and/or practice implications of the results. The introduction should discuss the importance of the problem and provide a rationale for selection of the outcome measure or measures. Please describe and discuss the method you used during your literature search, the criteria developed for final

selection of the articles, books, and/or chapters, and your strategy for analyses of the material. The material should be analyzed thematically rather than piece by piece. The paper should conclude with what you have concluded from the literature and your recommendations for future research.

- Your paper should be a minimum of 12 - 15 pages excluding the title page, abstract, references, and tables/figures.

This assignment is due on October 26 and is worth 20% of your final grade.

2. Organization Issue Analysis and Presentation

1. The President has developed a new department, Human Services Organizations, and wants your team to testify related to an organizational issue in front of the Senate at confirmation hearings for the new secretary of this department. The members of the Senate have asked that you provide them with an analysis and synthesis of the empirical, theoretical, and/or conceptual literature in the field concerning this organizational issue, to provide an assessment of the critical research questions facing the field, and to make recommendations to help guide legislation and social policy related to human services organizations.
2. Your team will be expected to select an issue from the following for critical analysis and presentation: (1) Organizational structure and hierarchy; (2) Organizational Processes, including leadership styles, decision making, and power; (3) Organizational environments and interorganizational relationships; (4) Organizational effectiveness; (5) Client-Organizational Relationships. You will have approximately 30 minutes to present the issue to the Senators, and a similar time to respond to questions or/and to lead the committee in a discussion of your recommendations.
3. In addition, you are responsible for writing a research/issue analysis paper of approximately 12 pages, excluding the title page, abstract, and references, that details your findings and recommendations. Please distribute this paper through e-mail to the Senators (your colleagues) and present a hard copy to the Vice President (me) no later than one week prior to your scheduled presentation.

Please Note: It is advisable that you practice your presentation beforehand and that you not read your paper verbatim. Please assume that the members of the Senators have read the material in the text and that they are familiar with the positions they have articulated. Although it might be helpful to briefly summarize the material from the text, a summary alone will not be considered sufficient for satisfactory completion of the assignment. The organization issue analysis paper and presentation is worth 20% of your final grade. **The presentations will be given the week of November 16.**

3. Organization and Community Position Paper and Presentation

Your team will be expected to select an issue from the list below (Austin & Lowe, 1995) and present background information on both sides of the issue. Please allow at least 20 minutes for your presentation and 30 minutes for classroom discussion of the topic. The presentation should include at least two additional references, one for each side of the topic. These references should be empirical whenever possible. You are responsible for writing a brief outline and summary of your presentation, not to exceed 5 typewritten pages, that highlights the major points. (Please do not read your outline and summary to the class.) The first two pages of your outline and summary should review the pros and cons of the issue and the remainder should present your perspective on the topic.

1. Will privatization destroy the traditional nonprofit human services sector?
2. Is coordinating social service organizations to improve client services a waste of effort?
3. Should marketing techniques replace traditional planning and coordinating methods in the design and development of programs?
4. Should targeted services organized by women be integrated into mainstream human service organizations?
5. Should health and human services be decentralized into neighborhood social health centers managed by the community?
6. Is community organizing dead and is the future organizational practice?
7. Is state licensing an obstacle to social work students selection of macro practice?
8. Should charismatic leaders be recruited by grassroots organizations to promote social change?
9. Should social work administrators function as managers as well as client-oriented social workers?
10. Should only African-American community organizers work in African-American communities?
11. Should only gay and lesbian community organizers work in gay and lesbian communities?
12. Should clients have control over the policies of the agency?
13. Will the quality of work life in public human service organizations be significantly improved by using quality management techniques?
14. Should today's community organizer use the tactics handed down from earlier generations?
15. Can administrative controls and pressure for efficiency and effectiveness be balanced with the staff's demand for decentralization and participation?

This assignment is due the week of November 30th and is worth 10% of your grade.

4. Program of Research Paper

Using the organizational performance criteria discussed in class, you are responsible for writing a final paper of approximately 15-20 pages that analyzes the state of the “art” and develops a “program of research” in your field. For purposes of this assignment, a program of research means a series of research questions and research projects that you might develop- in the near term and in the future- to advance the state of knowledge in your chosen field.

The first part of the paper should identify major gaps and inconsistencies in the research, address what is known about organizational performance in the field, what remains to be explored, and describes the “cutting edge” issues, questions, and developments.

The second part of the paper should propose a hypothetical study to examine some or all of the research questions you have identified. In your paper, please discuss your methodological approach (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental, ethnographic), describe how data will be collected and the measures you will use, present a possible analysis plan, and identify problems that might be encountered (e.g., sampling, human subjects protection, access to data sources, measurement, data collection analysis, or interpretation of the findings). The paper is due December 9 and is worth 40% of your grade. We will have presentations on December 7th of your ideas.

Grading:

Assignment 1	20%	20 points
Assignment 2	20%	20 points
Assignment 3	10%	10 points
Assignment 4	40%	40 points
Class Participation	10%	10 points

Grades:	A+	95-100 points
	A	90-94.99 points
	A-	88-89.99 points
	B+	85-87.99 points
	B	80-84.99 points

Course Outline and Activities

August 31

Theme: Why study organizations?

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 1
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 1

September 7 and 14

Theme: The changing nature of human services organizations
Theme: Theoretical perspectives on human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 10
Hasenfeld, Chapters 1 and 2
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 1

Also see Shafritz and Ott for excerpts from classical works in organizational theory.
(Numbers 7 (Weber), 10 (Merton), 12 (Selznick), 13 (Cyert and March),
20 (Burns and Stalker), 25 (Scott), all of Chapter VI

September 21

Theme: Structure and technology of human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapters 2 & 3
Hasenfeld, Chapters 6 & 9
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 3

Also see Shafritz and Ott for excerpts from classical works in organizational theory.
(Numbers 21 (Blau & Scott), 22 (Walker & Lorsch), 23 (Mintzberg), 24 (Jaques),
45 (Bergquist), 46 (Hammer & Champy), 47 (Fulk & DeSanctis), 48 (Barton & Obel),
and 49 (Stohr & Viswanathan)).

September 28

Theme: Organizational performance and effectiveness

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 11
 Hasenfeld, Chapter 16 & 17
 Martin & Kettner, 1996
 Brody, Chapter 7

Also see Shafritz and Ott for excerpts from classical works in organizational theory. (Numbers 14 (Parker & Follett), 15 (Roethlisberger), 16 (Maslow), 17 (McGregor), 18 (Janis), 19 (Victor & Stephens).

October 5

Theme: Environmental impact on human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapters 11 & 12
 Hasenfeld, Chapters 3
 Brody, Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 & 20

October 12

Theme: Leadership in human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapters 7
 Hasenfeld, Chapters 5
 Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 6
 Brody, Chapters 8 & 10

October 19

Theme: Power and Culture in human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapters 5 & 6
 Hasenfeld, Chapter 10, 12, 14, & 15
 Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 4
 Brody, Chapter 9

Also see Shafritz and Ott for excerpts from classical works in organizational theory. (Numbers 36 (Schein), 37 (Louis), 38 (Acker), 39 (Cook & Yanow), 40 (Trice & Beyer), 41 (Ouchi), 42 (Peters & Waterman), 43 (Senge), and 44 (Gore)).

October 26

Theme: Decision making in humans services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 8
Hasenfeld, Chapters 11
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 5

November 2

Theme: Communications in human services organizations

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 9
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapter 7
Brody, Chapters 17, 18 & 19

November 9

Theme: Organizational change

Readings: Hall and Tolbert, Chapter 10
Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, Chapters 8 & 9
Brody, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Harrison, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

November 16

Theme: "Annual Research Forum"

November 30

Theme: "Annual Research Forum"

December 7

Theme: "Annual Research Forum"

Selected Journals with Community, Management, or Organizational Content

Academy of Management Journal
Administration in Social Work
Administrative Science Quarterly
American Sociological Review
American Journal of Sociology
Culture and Organization
Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal
Gender, Work and Organization
Journal of Community Practice
Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology
Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community
Journal of Social Service Research
Leadership and Organization Development Journal
Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly
Organizational Dynamics
Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes
Organization Science
Organization Studies
Psychological Bulletin
Public Welfare
Social Service Review
Social Service Organizations
Sociological Quarterly

