

EDUC 5213 CI01: Organizational Theory and School Culture

[Dashboard](#) / [Courses](#) / [EDUC 5213 CI01 Home](#) / [EDUC 5213](#) / [Syllabus](#)

Syllabus

Course Description

Schooling is an all-encompassing experience for many Canadians from ages 5 to 18. Most young people in Canada spend from ten to fifteen years in an organization called school as students. Some people decide on careers in education and spend the next stage of their lives as educators in either the role of teacher, administrator, or in some instances as both. This course will focus on the principles of organizational theory and their application to educational institutions. Anyone who has an interest in playing a leadership role in education also has an obligation to investigate traditional and critical theories that examine what organizations are and how they operate. With respect to a more normative approach educators need to ask: What *should* a school be? And how *should* it be operated? Attention will also be given to the principles of organizational behavior, culture and politics, and their relevance to schools. Any educator, who is also a leader, needs to develop a comprehensive understanding about the various theories of organization to help enhance the school's growth and ultimately... its change.

Instructor

I was born and brought up in the Montreal area where I completed my undergraduate work in history and education at Concordia and McGill Universities respectively. I received a M.Ed. at Acadia in educational administration and a Ph.D. in administration from the University of Alberta.

I have spent most of my life either as a student or a teacher. I have been a teacher and school administrator in Alberta, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. After teaching in a large urban secondary school in Montreal, I taught upper elementary subjects and was a school administrator in a small Inuit settlement in Arctic Quebec for three years. My wife and I moved to Wolfville in 1979 where our son was born in 1983. For many years I taught senior and junior high school English and Social Studies in rural Nova Scotia and later went into administration. I've taught educational administration courses at both the U. of A. and Acadia for the past 30 years. I have also had experience as a local school board member in Kings County.

My personal interests include golf, films, reading, and cooking. I also enjoy the challenge of solving a difficult crossword puzzle. Although education and educational administration have been my life's work, a secret ambition of mine has always been to write a mystery novel that would later be made into a successful movie and thus allow me to retire in Bermuda....



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Course Overview

Modules: 1-10

1. Paradigms and Practice

Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1 - 73)

Primary Objectives:

- To specify and describe the concept of implicit basic assumptions about people, human nature, and relationships between people and their environments.
- Compare and contrast the concept of basic assumptions about people with the beliefs and values that one holds about people.
- Compare and contrast modernism with postmodernism.
- Identify the ways in which structuralism and post structuralism differ.
- Compare and contrast sociological and anthropological approaches to schools as organizations.
- Define and describe theory of practice.
- Identify ways in which theory is useful in the study and practice of organizational behavior.

2. Organizational Theory I

Chapter 3 (pp. 74 - 96)

Primary Objectives:

- Describe the shift in organizational theory from human-machine systems to social systems.
- Describe and discuss the following principles: scientific management, bureaucracy, classical organizational theory etc.
- Identify and describe key organizational characteristics of schools and school districts.

3. Organizational Theory II

Chapter 4 (pp. 97 - 120)

Primary Objectives:

- Identify organizational processes used in bureaucratic organizations.
- Explain how human resources development concepts differ from bureaucratic ones.
- Describe how role theory is related to social systems theory.
- Explain differences between viewing an organization in traditional classical terms and viewing it as an organic system.

4. Motivation

Chapter 5 (pp. 121 - 156)

Primary Objectives:

- Identify and describe patterns of human behavior that indicate motivation.
- Identify, compare, and contrast intrinsic views of motivation with behaviorist views.
- Review the various theoretical approaches to motivation including, Gardner's multiple intelligences, and Carl Jung's personality types.
- Explain motivation as a result of the interaction between the person and the environment.

5. Human Dimension of Organizations

Chapter 6 (pp. 157 - 183)

Primary Objectives:

- Define administration.
- Describe the assumptions about rationality, order, and system that underlie traditional concepts of schools as organizations.
- Discuss the relationship between administrative practice and the concept of human resources.
- Explain why understanding the human and social dimensions of organizations is central to understanding organization itself.

6. Culture and Climate

Chapter 7 (pp. 184 - 212)

Primary Objectives:

- Specify and describe the factors that give rise to the organizational ecology of schools.
- Specify and describe the psychosocial characteristics that give rise to the organizational culture of schools.
- Describe the roles and functions of artifacts, values, and basic assumptions in creating and maintaining the culture of a school.
- Define organizational climate.
- Describe the relationship between organizational climate and the psychosocial dimensions of the school.
- Explain why understanding the human and social dimensions of organizations is central to understanding the organization itself.

7. Leadership

Chapter 9 (pp. 250 - 279)

Primary Objectives:

- Define leadership.
- Describe and discuss the various approaches to leadership from the two-factor theory to transformational leadership.
- Describe and explain the link between leadership and organizational culture.
- Describe the role of vision.

8. Decision Making

Chapter 10 (pp. 280 - 317)

Primary Objectives:

- Describe how the beliefs and values of those in leadership positions shape the way decisions are made in the school.
- Identify the limits of rationality in decision-making.
- Define and describe the concept of participative decision-making.
- Explain some important differences between participative and democratic decision making.

9. Conflict in Organizations

Chapter 11 (pp. 319 - 340)

Primary Objectives:

- Describe and discuss the concepts of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, interorganizational conflict, and intraorganizational conflict.
- Describe how organizational health is influenced by responses to conflict.
- Explain how conflict in organizations can lead to desirable outcomes.
- Describe and discuss assertiveness and cooperativeness as interrelated dimensions of understanding organizational conflict.

10. Organizational Change and School Reform

Chapter 8 (pp. 213-247)

Chapter 12 (pp. 341 - 395)

Primary Objectives:

- Compare and contrast natural diffusion with planned, managed diffusion in educational change.
- Describe the concept of organizational renewal.
- Describe the theory and practice of standards-based school reform.
- Describe the theory of whole school reform.
- Explain the role of autonomy of the school in school reform.
- Define and describe school site management.

Course Materials

You will require **one** textbook:

Owens, R. G. & Valesky, T. C. (2015). *Organizational behavior in education: Leadership and school reform* (11th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN 13: 978-0133489033.

See the [student handbook](#) for ordering information.

Comment: This text has a decidedly American slant. However, it presents a broad, comprehensive and most importantly a coherent survey of the many components that comprise educational organization. This was originally an "Owens" only text. It has been a seminal text for students of administration and policy studies going back almost forty years. This current tenth edition is contemporary and relevant.

The following is a list of **recommended** texts, it is intended to help fill in the gaps left by the required text. Their purchase and reading is **not** required.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (5th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Morgan, Gareth. (1996). *Images of organization* (2nd ed). London: Sage.

Evaluation

This course will be evaluated as follows:

Component	Weight
Module Assignments	70%
Major Written Assignment	30%
Total	100%

Assignments

There is a written assignment that corresponds to each module. There are a total of 10 assignments. Each assignment is worth 10 marks. They will be totaled and adjusted proportionately to represent 70% of the total grade.

Each of the 10 modules has a required reading from the text, a required reading from the Appendix section, and a written assignment, which is tied to the readings. There is also a brief review of each reading. The primary purpose of the commentary is to highlight and review significant concepts that are presented in the reading.

Some of the modules will have a second section comprised of instructor's notes that will follow the reading commentary. These instructor's notes will provide you with additional background information to the topic discussed in the reading.

Each module will have a written assignment that consists of questions or topics for discussion. These assignments will vary from module to module in terms of number. They are all text-based or responses to the article from the module's Appendix. This means that you do not have to go beyond the specific readings in order to answer them. Questions may be content based or interpretive. The maximum number of Modular assignments based upon Appendix articles should not exceed "4". There are assignment submission instructions at the end of this section.

I will grade each assignment as quickly as possible. You will receive a response from me by e-mail as an attachment. This attachment will be a copy of your original assignment with a commentary. You will receive comments and a grade for each assignment. They are marked out of a total of 10. Should you have difficulty with an answer, you will be able to resubmit a new response with your following module. Please note that this opportunity is not intended as a method for you to raise a grade such as an A- to an A+. It is to prevent the submission of an assignment that was misread or poorly written and subsequently received a grade of B or less.

There is also **one** major written assignment. This assignment can follow three tracks. The first is a formal research paper; the second is the preparation of a case study, and the third is a response to a selection of the *Critical Incidents* which are found at the beginning of each chapter of the text.

The research paper would consist of an essay of approximately 2500 words in length on a topic of your choice. Topics could focus on a range of topics. For example, one of the major theoretical approaches such as role theory or contingency theory would be appropriate. Another example might be an examination of school culture when multiple cultures are present within a single organization. Irrespective of your choice, you must submit a brief proposal to me for approval. The paper must follow APA guidelines for citing and referencing.

As an alternative to a formal research paper you may prepare one case study of organizational behaviour. The case study will have two components: (1) a **description** of the case, the components of which are described in subsections 1 and 2 of "components" below; and (2) an **analysis** of the case, corresponding to subsections 3 and 4 in the same section. As above the length of the case study should be approximately 2500 words.

If possible, the case is to be constructed on actual events that took place in a school, school district, or other organizational setting, although **no real names of persons or places are to be used**.

Each case will include the following: (1) an appropriately detailed description of the circumstances and people involved in the case; (2) a description of the way the case was actually handled; (3) an analysis of alternative, possibly more appropriate, ways in which the case could have been handled; and (4) a clear identification of the organizational principles which informed your analysis in # 3. Each of these is described in greater detail below.

In # 1 above, the extent to which you describe the circumstances and people in the case should be informed by the following questions: (a) what does the reader need to know about the situation as it unfolded, and (b) what does the reader need to know about the organization in general and people or groups involved? For example, if the case were examining the experience of site-based management in a specific school, a history of governance in the district, a background of school/community relations, and a description of stakeholders would be essential.

In # 2 above, you should take care to not only describe the way the case played itself out, but your sense of why it transpired as it did.

In # 3 you may adopt one of two approaches. If you feel the case was handled properly, provide a rationale for why you feel as you do. If, on the other hand, you feel the situation was dealt with poorly, describe how it might better have been handled and why. For example, you may describe a situation in which significant change was implemented in a school district by edict from the central office, but there may be an argument that a more democratic, cooperative approach would have had better or more lasting results.

In # 4 you should clearly identify the basic organizational principles that informed your judgment in # 3, regardless of whether you agreed with the way the case was handled or not. For example, one basic principle of conflict management is that avoidance and appeasement are in reality the non-management of conflict.

This case study should provide an example of organizational dynamics on a relatively large scale. It is not intended as an assignment where you focus, for example, on classroom management problems (unless they are very substantial), or small-scale locally contained incidents where someone has simply enforced or abided by established policies/procedures.

The **third** option consists of the analysis of 5 of the case studies that are presented as *Critical Incidents* at the beginning of each chapter in the text. Select 5 Critical Incidents and respond to the questions that are provided. Each analysis should be clearly identified by title and the answers to the questions numbered to correspond with the questions. Each individual analysis should not exceed 500 words (5 x 500 = 2500).

Submission Instructions

I live in the US for six months of the year, so **please email all assignments directly to my email address** (mhphillips@ns.sympatico.ca) rather than posting them on the website. If you wish to also post your assignments on the website for your own personal record keeping, please feel free to do so.

Depending upon my marking load, I can usually respond to submissions within a week. I do have another open entry course and at certain times of the year the submission rate is quite high. I generally respond on a first come-first served basis for all my courses, although I do try to answer first assignments as quickly as possible.

Sometimes assignments just disappear out there, so if you do not hear from me after 10 days, please contact me to see if I have indeed received your assignment.

Please send all assignments as you complete them. Do **not** save all your assignments and then send them all at once.

If you have a specific completion deadline for the purpose of accreditation, funding, or graduation, do not wait until the last moment to tell me.

Please remember to put your name, student number, course number, and assignment number on all assignments and keep a copy in the event the original is lost.

The files must be readable by Microsoft Word or iWorks.

Course Schedule

Click to download the suggested schedule for this course: [EDUC 5213 - Suggested Schedule](#)

Print out this schedule and fill in your start date to use the recommended timeline to plan out when you will do readings and assignments. This is a tool to help you plan and time manage this course. If you get off-track, make sure to revisit your schedule and re-evaluate the dates you've set for yourself.

You have 6 months to complete this course. You may set your own schedule, but if you intend to complete the course in less than 3 months, you should let me know so that we can arrange a schedule.

Please do not leave all of your course work until a few weeks before your completion date. Although I will make every effort to accommodate your schedule within reason, I need time to grade assignments from this course and other courses.

Recommended Schedule

Week 1: Reading assignment

Week 2: Written assignment

This schedule will allow you to complete the 10 modules in 5 months at a leisurely pace. You will have a month remaining in which to complete your major assignment. This recommended schedule is only a guideline. You should establish a routine that accommodates your particular situation.

Student Handbook

You are responsible for becoming familiar with the contents of the Student Handbook. It contains important information about scheduling examinations (if applicable), applying for extensions, withdrawing from your course, ordering books, and computer and library services available to you. If you have questions about the policies outlined in the handbook (<https://courseware.acadiau.ca/openacadia/studenthandbook.html>), contact:

Open Acadia

- 21 University Avenue (Rhodes Hall)
- Wolfville, NS B4P 2R6
- Phone: 1-800-565-6568
- Fax: 1-902-585-1068
- Email: openacadia@acadiau.ca

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity demands responsible use of the work of other scholars. It is compromised by academic dishonesty such as cheating and plagiarism. A student who is uncertain whether or not a course of action might constitute cheating or plagiarism should seek in advance the advice of the instructor involved.

- Cheating is copying or the use of unauthorized aids or the intentional falsification or invention of information in any academic exercise

- Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas or words of another as one's own. Students are required to acknowledge and document the sources of ideas that they use in their written work.
- Self plagiarism is also a form of plagiarism. It is the presentation of the same work in more than one course without the permission of the instructors involved.
- A student who knowingly helps another to commit an act of academic dishonesty is equally guilty.
- Penalties are levied in relation to the degree of the relevant infraction. They range from requiring the student to re-do the piece of work, through failure on that piece of work, to failure in the course, and to dismissal from the university.

[Click here to return to the Module](#)

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Jump to...

[EDUC 5213 Suggested Schedule ►](#)

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EDUC 5213 CI01 Home

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