



**MBA 653–001: Organizational Behavior  
Fall 2014  
Professor David Kravitz**

- Class meets:** Wednesday 6:30 – 10:05pm in 1200 University Hall (Alan and Sally Merten Hall)
- Office:** Enterprise Hall 212
- Office hours:** After class and by appointment
- Contact:** e-mail: [dkravitz@gmu.edu](mailto:dkravitz@gmu.edu)  
Work: 703-993-1781 (voice); 703-993-1870 (fax)  
Cell: 703-424-3703 (urgent only)
- Website:** Log in to Blackboard via [mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu). The User Name is the same as your Mason NetID. The Password is the same as your Mason email account.

***COURSE OBJECTIVE***

To change the way you think about and analyze behavior in organizations so that you become a more thoughtful and effective employee, co-worker, and manager.

***LEARNING GOALS***

- Students should become familiar with the major concepts of organizational behavior.
- Students should understand how the structures of organizational systems affect human behavior.
- Students should become familiar with the kinds of issues managers encounter and with principles, practices and models that help managers deal with these issues.
- Students should examine the relationships among people within organizational systems and see how they influence organizational effectiveness.
- Students should deepen their understanding of their own behavior in organizations and improve their interpersonal and managerial skills and thus their professional success.
- **TEAMING AND LEADING MBA PROGRAM GOAL:** Students will demonstrate the team leadership and interpersonal skills needed to form, lead, and work effectively on diverse organizational teams.
- **COMMUNICATION SKILLS MBA PROGRAM GOAL:** Students will be able to use their new understanding to critique organizational policies and practices and to design superior policies and practices.
- **ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MBA PROGRAM GOAL:** Students will have a sense of professional and social responsibility in the conduct of managerial affairs.

***CLASS FORMAT***

Understanding human behavior in organizations requires a variety of skills. For example, before one can analyze behavior—let alone change it—one must observe it accurately. Likewise, a management or behavioral concept is of little service until one is able to link it to experience and vary behavior accordingly. Finally, understanding and skills improve with practice and feedback. Accordingly, the course design incorporates all these dimensions of learning through the use of cases, exercises, group work, self-reflection, readings, discussion, lectures, written work, and opportunities for feedback. Another reason for the diversity of activities is that different people have different learning styles and thus need different types of learning experiences.

## EVALUATION

Every graded deliverable in this class will be given a letter grade based on your demonstrated level of understanding. The first level is *correct* explanation and application of the concepts (B level work); the second level is correct explanation of the concepts along with a demonstration of somewhat creative thinking OR an exceptionally accurate description of concepts (B+/A- level work); the third level is correct explanation and demonstration that you have thought enough about the concepts and their application to have significantly learned from that thinking and gained *insight* (A level work). Things that are missing or wrong will earn C's or lower. To earn "A" grades in this class, you must not only know the material, but you must also challenge your thinking on the topics, engage the material at a deep level, and be willing to think critically about the implications of what you are studying.

### General Notes on Deliverables

**Writing:** Double-space, use a standard 12-point font, and place 1-inch margins in all assignments. You should include a title page on the PAA and the team case analyses. When you make reference to assigned course materials, use the following format: (Last name of author(s), date). If you use other outside readings, give full bibliographic information at the end of the paper. Because good writing skills are so important in the business world, each of your deliverables should be clearly written and completely free of spelling and grammatical errors. This will affect your grades.

**Delivery:** You must submit all writing assignments through the Assignments tab on the class Blackboard site. The major assignments are submitted to SafeAssign, which checks for plagiarism. For the team paper, all members of the team are equally and jointly responsible for any plagiarism, regardless of which member submitted the offending text.

**Due dates and late penalties:** Except for the Weekly Assignment (details below), deliverables are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the class schedule below. Late assignments will incur a penalty of one letter grade for the first 24 hours and two letter grades thereafter up to one week. Deliverables will not be accepted after one week. I will make exceptions if necessary due to illness or other Mason approved emergencies.

### Specific Information about Deliverables

**A. Weekly Assignment (WA).** We will devote one week to each topic, as detailed in the class schedule below. The WA has two components: (1) an individual component comprised of one-page papers, and (2) a team component involving a moderated class discussion. These two components are described below.

- 1) Each student will individually complete short papers on six of the nine weekly topics (excluding Week 1). These papers are due 48 hours before class and should be around one page long (approximately 250 words). I will not award extra credit if you complete more than 6 WAs. These individual papers will be graded on a 0/1/2 basis. The normal grade will be "1." Exceptional papers will receive a "2." I will assign a grade of "0" to papers that are late, simply summarize the readings, or do not clearly demonstrate adequate thought about the topic.
- 2) Each student team will sign up for one week. That team is responsible for leading a 20-minute class discussion in which they connect key insights from student WAs to that week's topic. I will compile and send classmates' WA papers to the team shortly after they are due (48 hours before class). Teams will have discretion over how they lead the class discussion. These team presentations will be graded on a 5-point rating scale, with a "4" being a solid grade and "5" limited to truly exceptional performance. Teams will receive a lower rating if they demonstrate lack of preparation, lack of coordination, poor presentation skills, do not clearly demonstrate mastery of the material or do not incorporate classmate's thoughts.

## 3) Additional tips:

- a) WAs should not simply summarize the readings, because I assume you have read and understood them. Instead, the WA 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 WA 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 WA is to get you to think about the week's topic and thus deepen your understanding of it and improve class discussion. The task of the team is to lead a discussion of the topic that makes use of individual student WAs and enriches everyone's understanding of the topic.
- b) For the week on Teams, the WA must be an analysis of your experience in writing the team case analysis.

- B. In-Class Quiz.** A high performing student has mastered the vocabulary and concepts involved in a field of study. Accordingly, you will be expected to learn and correctly use key terms, concepts and constructs important to the field of Organizational Behavior. In Week 4, you will be asked to demonstrate the state of your knowledge of such material on an in-class, closed book quiz. This quiz will include all aspects of Weeks 1 – 3 plus the readings assigned for Week 4. Feedback on this quiz will also provide you with an idea of just how well your approach to the material and your study habits are working.
- C. Personal Application Assignment (PAA):** A central part of the course is helping you master self-referent observational and analytic skills and the ability to apply course concepts to your observations. Mastery of these skills will be assessed with the PAA. The class web site contains more information, including documents that specify the criteria on which the PAA will be graded and hints for writing the PAA (due Week 9).
- D. Final Exam:** This comprehensive exam will test your understanding of the central ideas of the entire course. The core concepts will be emphasized in lecture and will often be explored in cases and exercises. The exam will consist of short essay questions, and will require you to demonstrate your understanding of the key theories and concepts *and* your ability to apply them in work settings. The exam will be administered in class and you will be free to use any written materials when working on it. The date is given at the end of this syllabus. I will provide more information as we approach the end of the semester.
- E. Team Case Analysis:** Your team will be required to write a case analysis, which is due Week 7. More information about this assignment is provided on the course website.
- F. Class Participation:** Fundamental to this course is learning how to diagnose and understand both your own and others' real life experiences and sharing thoughts on the various readings and theories. Your participation is needed to accomplish this goal. Put simply, you learn more and others learn more when you add value through your participation. I will try to make sure that everyone who wants to participate can do so. Your participation grade will be affected both by my own observations and by your classmates' evaluations.

Here is a further description of ways in which you can add value to class:

1. Respond to questions (provide articulate answers, summaries, findings, facts, quotes)
2. Spontaneously offer your perspective (work-based, class-based)
3. Actively promote class discussion (react to others, faculty material, see linkages across articles)

4. Facilitate process (seek elaboration, ask for clarification, leverage points being made, summarize ideas being offered, seek feedback encourage others)
5. Be respectful
6. Be parsimonious (get to the point, stay on point, don't "hog" air time)
7. Serve as a team representative

**G. Ungraded Assignments.** While these assignments will not be graded, the maximum of 10% can be earned by approaching each one in a conscientious manner, turning in each assignment according to the format provided and when it is due. You begin with a grade of A, but can lower that grade by doing the work poorly and/or by turning it in late.

- a. **Team Charter:** You will be assigned to learning teams. To promote effective team-based learning, you will be asked to work with your new team mates to create a "charter," essentially a document that will help you work as a team. Details on the team charter assignment will be provided in class.
- b. **Classroom Contributions Survey & Teaming Skills Survey:** You will be asked to rate the contributions of all your classmates on two occasions and of your teammates on one occasion. The ratings you receive will affect your class participation grade. Whether you provide these ratings will affect your grade on the "ungraded assignments" part of the class.

### **A Note on Team Grades and Free Ridership**

All team members will get the same grade on the team assignment unless at least two people in the team decide to change to a **peer performance appraisal** system. Under such a system, members will rate one another's contribution for each of the team assignments that your team chooses to invoke the peer appraisals on, and individual grades will be adjusted downward based on these ratings. If you decide to go with the peer performance appraisal system, prepare a document to that effect signed by at least two members of your team to be submitted with each team assignment for which you wish to do this, and I will contact you for your evaluation of your fellow team members' contributions. You cannot decide to do peer performance appraisal after you receive your grade. You must tell me and hand in the document with signatures of the majority of the team when the assignment is due.

### **Summary**

Semester grades will depend on an average of the letter grades you get throughout the semester following this breakdown:

In-Class Quiz	5%
Weekly Assignments (individual papers)	12%
Weekly Assignments (team presentation)	5%
Personal Application Assignment	20%
Team Case Analysis	20%
Final Exam	23%
Class Participation	10%
Ungraded Assignments	5%

### ***BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS***

**Honor code:** The honor code applies to all work required for this class. You are free to confer with other people when working on your assignments (except for the quiz and final exam), but the final decisions about the papers and the writing should be your own. Furthermore, because I may re-use some questions, you may not share or discuss the quiz or examination with anyone. More information about the GMU honor code is given at: <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>. If you have a question regarding the honor code that remains unresolved after you have read the above, please talk to me about it.

**Standards of behavior:** The mission of the School of Management at George Mason University is to create and deliver high quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the SOM community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following standards of behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. SOM can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the SOM. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

Cell phone and beepers are distracting and their use during class (except for emergencies) is insulting. Please turn off all audible signals before class. Along the same lines, PCs and PDAs are to be used for class work only.

### ***OTHER***

**E-mail:** I will occasionally send e-mail messages to the entire class. I will use the GMU mailing list associated with this class. Thus, be sure you set up your GMU e-mail account and either use it or arrange for mail sent to that account to be forwarded to whatever e-mail account you normally use. You are fully responsible for taking these steps, for checking your e-mail regularly, and for any information communicated to the class via e-mail. You should always feel free to communicate with me via e-mail. I recommend that you keep all my e-mail messages to you and all your messages to me just in case you want to check on something I said or prove that you sent me a message or attachment. I try to keep all relevant messages, but am not perfect.

**Disability:** If you have a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. Please take care of this during the first two weeks of the semester. More information about ODS is available at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc>

**Religion:** Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of their anticipated absences as soon as possible.

**Counseling center:** George Mason University has a counseling center that can provide assistance if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or the like. More information is available at <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/>

**Writing center:** George Mason University has a writing center that can help you improve your English writing skills. More information is available at 703-993-1824 and <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

**Inclement weather & campus emergencies:** Information regarding weather related changes in the University's schedule (e.g., closing or late opening) will be provided on GMU-TV, on the University's information line (703-993-1000), and will be given to all local media outlets. I plan to hold class unless the campus is officially closed. If class is cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency, activities scheduled for that class will be moved to the next class. We will discuss further changes when we meet.

**READINGS**

Readings are available on the web (links given below), through the class Blackboard site, from Harvard Business Publishing, or through Mason's library.

**Harvard Business Publishing**

To get the course materials from the Harvard Business Publishing web site, you need to register on the site to create a user name, assuming you do not already have one. The course materials are PDF documents and you can open them with Adobe Reader. You will have access to the course materials for 6 months.

Course link: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/import/ptos/28083513>

After you register, you can get to the coursepack at any time by doing the following:

1. Visit [hbsp.harvard.edu](http://hbsp.harvard.edu) and log in.
2. Click My Coursepacks, and then click Organizational Behavior Fall 2014

For technical assistance, please contact the Harvard Business Publishing Tech Help line at (800) 810-8858 (outside the U.S. and Canada, call 617-783-7700); or email [techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu](mailto:techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu). Their business hours are 8 am - 8 pm ET, Monday-Thursday, and 8 am - 7 pm ET on Friday.

**Mason Library**

Most non-HBP readings should be available on Blackboard. I will post one or two readings directly in the class website noted with "[B]" at the end of the reading as listed below. Assigned chapters and most journal articles will be available through Mason's electronic reserve (also noted with "[B]"). You will find a link to e-Reserves in the left hand menu of the class Blackboard site. Remaining journal articles can be downloaded directly from the library by using the E-journal finder (noted with "[L]"). Instructions about how to do that are available at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/lrb?p=787342>.

**Study the readings**

I would encourage you to not only read the assigned papers but to analyze them carefully. Think about each reading from both a conceptual and a practical perspective. As you read the papers, ask yourself:

- What are the key concepts and principles?
- What are the key points being made by the paper?
- So what? Why does this matter for the organization?
- What are the implications for my professional behavior and success?
- How can I critique the arguments being made?

You should come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

You can access some readings via the provided links. You can access the other readings as indicated in [brackets] at the end of the citation, as follows:

B: Blackboard course website

L: Library website – E-Journal finder

H: Harvard Business Publishing website

<b>Week: Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
Week 1: August 20	Introduction to Organizational Behavior	<p>Vermeulen, F. (2013). Beware the sirens of management pseudo-science. HBR Blog Network. <a href="http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2013/08/beware_the_sirens_of_managemen.html">http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2013/08/beware_the_sirens_of_managemen.html</a></p> <p>Denrell, J. (2005). Selection bias and the perils of benchmarking, <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Pfeffer, J., &amp; Sutton, R. I. (2006). Evidence-based management. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Pfeffer, J., &amp; Veiga, J. F. (1999). Putting people first for organizational success. <i>Academy of Management Executive</i>, 13(2), 37-48. [B or L]</p>	
Week 2: August 27	Perception & Attribution	<p>Munzo, E. (2011, January 26). The ladder of inference creates bad judgment. <i>YouTube</i>. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9nFhs5W8o8">websitehttp://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9nFhs5W8o8website</a></p> <p>Livingston, J. S. (2003). Pygmalion in management. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Bertrand, M. (2005). Racial bias in hiring: Are Emily and Brendan more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? <i>Capital Ideas: Research Highlights from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business</i>. <a href="http://www.chicagobooth.edu/capideas/feb05/racialbias.html">http://www.chicagobooth.edu/capideas/feb05/racialbias.html</a> [L?]</p> <p>Tannen, D.A. (1995). The power of talk: Who gets heard and why? <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p>	<p>WA</p> <p>Team Charter</p> <p>Individual Preparation</p>
Week 3: September 3	Decision Making	<p>Garvin, D. A., &amp; Roberto, M. A. (2001). What you don't know about making decisions. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Hammond, J. S., Keeney, R. L., &amp; Raiffa, H. (1998). The hidden traps in decision making. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Ariely, Dan. (2009, May). Are we in control of our own decisions? <i>TED talk</i>. <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_asks_are_we_in_control_of_our_own_decisions.html">websitehttp://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_asks_are_we_in_control_of_our_own_decisions.htmlwebsite</a></p>	<p>WA</p> <p>Team Charter</p>

Week: Date	Topic	Readings	Deliverables
Week 4: September 10	Relationships	<p>Dutton, J. (2003). Fostering high-quality connections. <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>, Winter, 54-57. <a href="http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/fostering_high_quality_connections">http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/fostering_high_quality_connections</a></p> <p>Hoffman, R., Casnocha, B., &amp; Yeh, C. (2013). Tours of duty: The new employer-employee compact. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>DeLong, T. J., &amp; Vijayaraghavan, V. (2003). Let's hear it for B players. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Gabarro, J. J., &amp; Kotter, J. P. (2005). Managing your boss. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p>	WA In-Class Quiz
Week 5: September 17	Social Influence	<p>Cuddy, A. J. C., Kohut, M., &amp; Neffinger, J. (2013). Connect, then lead. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Cialdini, R. B., &amp; Cliffe, S. (2013). The uses (and abuses) of influence. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Cohen, A. R. &amp; Bradford, D. L. (1989). Influence without authority: The use of alliances, reciprocity, and exchange to accomplish work. <i>Organizational Dynamics</i>, 17(3), 4-17. [B or L]</p>	WA Classmate Contributions Survey
Week 6: September 24	Conflict & Negotiation	<p>Fisher, R., &amp; Shapiro, D. (2005). Emotions are powerful, always present, and hard to handle. In <i>Beyond reason: Using emotions as you negotiate</i> (Chapter 1, pp. 3-14). New York: The Penguin Group. [L]</p> <p>Fisher, R., &amp; Shapiro, D. (2005). Address the concern, not the emotion. In <i>Beyond reason: Using emotions as you negotiate</i> (Chapter 2, pp. 15-24). New York: The Penguin Group. [L]</p> <p>Eisenhardt, K. M., Kahwajy, J. L., &amp; Bourgeois, L. J., III. (1997). How management teams can have a good fight. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Babcock, L., Laschever, S., Gelfand, M., &amp; Small, D. (2003). Nice girls don't ask. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p>	WA
Week 7: October 1	Teams	<p>Hackman, J. R., &amp; Cortu, D. (2014). Why teams don't work. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Brett, J. M., Behfar, K., &amp; Kern, M. C. (2006). Managing multicultural teams. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Cramton, C. (2002). Finding common ground in dispersed collaboration. <i>Organizational Dynamics</i>, 30(4), 356-367. [B or L]</p>	WA - Note topic requirement Team Case Analysis - Kathryn McNeil



Week: Date	Topic	Readings	Deliverables
Week 8: October 8	Motivation	<p>Thomas, K. W. (2000). Intrinsic motivation and how it works. <i>Training</i>, 37(10), 130-135. [B or L]</p> <p>Pink, D. (2011). The puzzle of motivation. <i>TED talk</i>.  <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation">http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation</a>.</p> <p>Kerr, S. (1995). On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B. <i>Academy of Management Executive</i>, 9(1), 7-14. [B or L]</p> <p>Case, J. (2001). When salaries aren't secret. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p>	WA Teaming Skills Survey
Week 9: October 15	Leadership	<p>Kotter, J. P. (1990). What leaders really do. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>O'Toole, J., &amp; Bennis, W. (2009). What's needed next: A culture of candor. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Treviño, L. K., Hartman, L. P., &amp; Brown, M. (2000). Moral person and moral manager: How executives develop a reputation for ethical leadership. <i>CMR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Kravitz. (2007). <i>Datatel case: Fulfill or rescind the contract?</i> Unpublished case. [B]</p>	WA Personal Application Assignment
Week 10: October 22	Organizational Culture & Change	<p>Kotter, J. P. (1995). Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail. <i>HBR</i>. [H]</p> <p>Schein, E. (2010). The concept of organizational culture: Why bother? In <i>Organizational culture and leadership</i> (4<sup>th</sup> ed., Chapter 1, pp. 7-22). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. [L]</p> <p>Schein, E. (2010). The three levels of culture. In <i>Organizational culture and leadership</i> (4<sup>th</sup> ed., Chapter 2, pp. 23-34). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. [L]</p> <p>Chatman, J. A., &amp; Cha, S. E. (2003). Leading by leveraging culture. <i>CMR</i>. [H]</p>	WA Classmate Contributions Survey

**Final Exam – Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> (afternoon)**