



**Public Administration 9903 / Political Science 4903**  
**Organizational Behaviour in a Local Government Environment**

*May 27-31, 2019*

Instructor: Carol-Lynn Chambers

**Contact:** (519) 466-1406 (text or phone) or e-mail: [cchambe5@uwo.ca](mailto:cchambe5@uwo.ca)  
**Class Location:** Room 4255, Social Science Centre  
**Class Schedule:** 9:00 –12:00 and 1:00 - 4:00 daily (with mid-morning and -afternoon breaks)

**Course Description:**

This course introduces and provides an overview of current theoretical perspectives, research findings, and selected issues in the field of organizational behaviour (OB), as applied to local governments in a changing environment. The diagnosis and management of organizational change is a central theme. Lectures and class activities emphasize the development and application of concepts and tools useful to understanding local government organizations and issues.

**Student Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the main theoretical perspectives and concepts associated with organizational behaviour applicable to local governments in Canada;
- Articulate the practical application of organizational behaviour theories in the context of local government work environments;
- Analyze the ability of local governments to address emerging trends and issues in the public sector workforce;
- Describe how academic researchers analyze and study issues of organizational behaviour in local government;
- Synthesize and assess information on organizational behaviour from a variety of academic and other sources;
- Communicate ideas regarding the nature of organizational behaviour in Canadian local government work environments, using a variety of oral and written media to a diverse set of audiences.

**Course Materials:**

**Textbook:** **Organizational Behaviour: Understanding and Managing Life at Work**, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, Gary Johns, Alan M. Saks, Pearson, 2017.

**Additional Articles:** Source articles listed in the **Required Course Readings** section (pg. 5) using **hyperlinks** where indicated, or as supplied on OWL or in class. Students will be expected to source additional resources pertaining to assignments.

**Course Preparation:** Students are reminded to have all materials above, access to OWL <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal> and Western email active prior to the course. **It is essential to complete the assigned readings and prepare ahead for class lectures and discussions.**

**Course Requirements and Methods of Evaluation:**

**Participation/Contribution in Class (15%)**

- Students are expected to participate actively in contributing to the learning during in-class discussions, by posing questions and offering reflections arising from the assigned readings and personal work experience/examples. Individual perspectives and analysis of readings, as well as sharing of work-related examples and applications, will help create a productive and interesting learning environment.

**Student-Centered Seminars (25%) - Presentations**

- On the first day of class, students will sign up for one of five topics (noted beside topic) listed on the course outline. (Please consider a first and second choice prior to class.)
- Seminar groups will be finalized on the morning of the first day of class.
- Seminar groups will meet to plan, prepare, and organize their roles and presentations on the first/second evening of the course.
- Seminars should be a maximum of 20 minutes for each group, with an additional 5-10 minutes for class questions/discussion, and a paper copy handed in).
- Presentations will be evaluated on both presentation (e.g. participation, clarity, and logic of organization and delivery) and content substance (e.g. accuracy of summary, application of literature on the topic, applicability and helpfulness of “real-world” example for comprehension; range and depth of connections between the course material and examples; convincing assessment based on theoretical, conceptual, and/or empirical grounds).

**Final Exam (30%)**

- Two hours, Thursday afternoon, May 30th in the Social Sciences Computer Lab
- Essay-style. Covers assigned readings and class materials. Students will have a choice of exam questions.

**Reflective Essay (30%) (due by 11:55 pm Sunday, June 16<sup>rd</sup>)**

- To be submitted within two weeks of the class conclusion, by email to cchambe5@uwo.ca
- Instructions: Using at least 5 academic sources (course readings and additional sources that you will research), write a 12-15 page (maximum, not including title page and bibliography) formal essay addressing the following requirements:
  - Identify a specific local government case (organization/issue/circumstance) with which you are familiar.
  - Relate topic(s) covered in this course to analyse the case
  - Submit your essay through OWL under the “Assignments” tab. Paper or emailed submissions are not permitted.

**Written Assignments - Format:**

For all written assignments, apply the formatting (double-spaced, etc.) and citation style (Harvard, in-text) of the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. All in-text citations must include page numbers for all materials quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. Source the guidelines at [https://www.cpsa-](https://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/documents/pdfs/Editorial%20Style%20Guidelines%202008.pdf)

- [acsp.ca/documents/pdfs/Editorial%20Style%20Guidelines%202008.pdf](https://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/documents/pdfs/Editorial%20Style%20Guidelines%202008.pdf) or in a hard copy of the journal (2005 or later edition only).

**Class Reading Schedule:**

Prior to arriving for class, please read the assigned materials, with the following questions in mind. These questions are most likely the ones that will guide class discussions:

- What is the main issue/argument of each reading?
- What examples will you offer, based on your experience, to apply and contextualize this information?
- Do you agree or disagree with the findings of the reading?
- What are the implications of this information toward the effectiveness of local government management and leadership in the context of effectively addressing current and future organizational issues and challenges?

**TIP:** You will be best prepared for success in class by (a) reading all of the materials in the weeks prior to the week of this class, (b) reviewing the highlights just prior to each day of class, and (c) considering examples from your experience for application of concepts

**Class Participation:**

Each day, students are expected to participate in class discussion relevant to the course topics and materials. There is no grade for attendance. Effective participation requires careful preparation (reading and thinking critically about the readings) and actively contribution to class activities, for example, by responding substantively and respectfully to the conversations generated by the instructor and classmates.

Participation will be evaluated according to the degree to which individual students:

- Demonstrate that you have read, understood, and thought critically about the course materials and concepts;
- Participate in discussions in a civil, respectful, and thoughtful manner, avoiding personal attacks and inappropriate language, references.
- Show a willingness to take decisive positions on issues in a way that fosters intelligent and intellectual dialogue.
- Demonstrate self-reflection and an openness to changing opinions as a result of debate and discussion.

**COURSE OVERVIEW/SCHEDULE\***

**DAY 1: Introductions**

Please arrive at class prepared to introduce yourself and to discuss the following: *why this course is relevant given your current role, how you believe this course will benefit your skill set in effectively fulfilling your responsibilities, and which topics in this course are of most interest based on your current organizational context (current issues, challenges, successes, etc.).* We will capture these on a Post-It Board for reflection throughout the course and a review on the last day of class.

**Review of Course Outline, Expectations, and Deliverables**

**Lectures and Discussion Topics**

- A Framework for Organizational Analysis (Rainey, Chapter 1, pp.11-12). Posted on OWL
- Organizational Behaviour and Management (Chapter 1)
- Leadership Theories (Chapter 9)

**Introduction to Group Project Assignments/Group Meetings (continue after class)**

**DAY 2: Interactive Lectures and Discussion**

- Organizational Goals and Effectiveness (portion of Chapter 4)
- Organization of Work – Individuals, Groups, Teamwork (Chapter 7)
- Social Influence and Socialization (introduction) (portion of Chapter 8)
- Strategic Communications (Chapter 10 and Garnett)

**DAY 3: Student Group Project Presentations<sup>1</sup> and Lecture/Discussion**

- Values, Attitudes and Behaviours (Chapter 4) (GROUP 1)
- Motivation, Performance, and Recognition (Chapter 5) (GROUP 2)
- Organizational Culture (Chapter 8) (GROUP 3)
- Power, Politics, and Ethics (Chapter 12) (GROUP 4)
- Conflict and Stress (Chapter 13) (GROUP 5)

**DAY 4: Lecture and Discussion**

Resistance to Change (Agocs)  
Case Studies, Examples, and Discussion

**Exam**

EXAM (2:00 pm – Social Science Computer Lab) 2hours

**DAY 5: Leveraging Organizational Behaviour Concepts to Navigate Change**

Issues in Practice: Managing Organizational Change and Development (Chapter 15)  
Final Assignment instructions (takeaway)  
Further Reading and Closing  
*Individual consultation available after class, upon request*

*\*Please note that there may be a guest speaker during the week. To be confirmed on Day 1 of class and timetable adjusted as required.*

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<sup>1</sup> The class will be divided into suitable-sized working groups for this project on the first day of class.

## REQUIRED COURSE READINGS

### 1. Textbook.

Johns, Gary and Saks, Alan M., Organizational Behaviour: Understanding and Managing Life at Work, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson Canada, 2017.

### 2. Required Readings (Download or on OWL as indicated).

Agocs, Carol, “*Institutional Resistance to Organizational Change: Denial, Inaction and Repression*”, Journal of Business Ethics 16: pp.917-931, 1997. [Source on OWL]

Casciaro, T., Lobo, M.S., “*Competent jerks, lovable fools, and the formation of social networks.*” Harvard Business Review, 2005.  
[http://vilans6.vilans.nl/docs/ivz/bijeenkomsten/29236%20Casciaro\\_Lobo\\_Jerks\\_Fools.pdf](http://vilans6.vilans.nl/docs/ivz/bijeenkomsten/29236%20Casciaro_Lobo_Jerks_Fools.pdf)

Garnett, James L., “*Applying a Strategic Model to Government Communications*”, in Communicating for results in government: a strategic approach for public managers, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992, pp. 34-67. [Source on OWL]

Rainey, Hal G., Understanding and Managing Public Organizations, Fifth Edition: Jossey-Bass, 2014, pp.11-12. [Source on OWL]

**3. Additional Articles and Reference Material.** Referenced journal articles and additional materials in support of lectures will be made available on OWL or distributed in class as required. For Seminar Groups, students are encouraged to research and apply other scholarly reference material as applicable, as well as examples from local government.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **Electronic Devices:**

Research shows that levels of student performance and participation are lower when computers, tablets, smartphones, and other devices are present in the classroom. In order to create a pleasant environment conducive to everyone's learning and free from distractions, please refrain from using phones for texting or any other purposes during classes. The use of laptops and tablets is allowed for course-related activities and note-taking only (not permitted in examinations).

### **E-mail Policy:**

All Western University students are required to have an @**uwo.ca** e-mail account. Please indicate "PA9903" in the subject line.

### **Course Format:**

The course will consist of a combination of lectures, student groupwork, and class discussions.

### **Course Reading Requirements:**

Students should obtain their own copy of the course textbook, which is available in the university bookstore: All other assigned readings will be available through Western Libraries or the course's OWL site. **Assigned reading should be completed before the class in which it is to be discussed.**

### **Other Requirements:**

**Class Participation.** Two items make up the class participation grade - attendance and participation/contributions. It is important to attend all classes, keep up with the readings, and participate during discussions. If you are unable to attend a particular class, you should advise the instructor in advance.

### **In-class Group Assignment:**

To be completed during the week of class. Further instructions will be provided in class.

### **Final Paper (Reflective Essay):**

Students must submit a 3,000-word essay, using one of the course topics as their central thesis to a real-life case study. Students are expected to draw from the assigned readings as well as consult outside sources. Students will be expected to apply the course concepts and learning to an example from local government. *Note: Overdue submissions will be penalized two percentage points for each day (including weekends) that the paper is late. Extensions will be granted only in the event that written confirmation of any extenuating circumstances is provided.*

### **Evaluation:**

Class Participation/Contributions: 15%  
Group Seminar Project and Presentation: 25%  
Exam: 30%  
Reflective Essay: 30%

### **Academic integrity, offences, and plagiarism:**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf) Written assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism.

### **Late Assignments:**

The penalty for late assignments is **two percentage points per day** (including weekend days). A grade of 80% on an assignment therefore becomes 72% in four days. Assignments more than 10 days late will not be accepted. Extensions

due to illness require a medical certificate. If you foresee problems meeting submission deadlines, please consult the instructor early; accommodations can always be made with adequate advance notice.

**Accommodation:**

Note for students with disabilities: Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

**Accommodations on medical grounds:**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please refer to the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> and download a Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/> under the Medical Documentation heading.

**Accommodations on religious grounds:**

Every effort has been made to avoid scheduling assignment due dates on religious holidays. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the course if you will be unable to attend class for reason of religious observance.

**Help with writing:**

Learning to express ideas clearly is a central goal of the university experience. If academic writing does not come easily to you, you are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Support Centre: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>.

**Mental Health Support:**

Students who are experiencing emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Other Assistance:**

If you are having trouble with the course material or are falling behind in your work, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. We can only help you if the lines of communication are open.