

PBJ 301: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND COMMUNICATION
Spring 2008 Professor Nickels

Professor Nickels**Office Hours:** MWF 12:00—1:00 p.m., Mahar 458**Office Phone:** 315-312-3471**Email:** nickels@oswego.edu**Meeting times:**

Sect. 800: MWF 1:50—2:45 p.m.

Sect. 810: MWF 3:00—3:55 p.m.

Room: Mahar 102**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The purpose of this course is to bridge your introductory coursework to the practicum you will be undertaking in PBJ 397. To accomplish this, our time together this semester will be devoted to three interrelated objectives.

First and foremost, the aim of this course is theoretic. The semester is primarily devoted to building your conceptual understanding of the nature and operation of the institutions comprising the public justice system. Through our readings and classroom discussions, you will gain an introduction to the multidisciplinary field of organizational theory and research, specifically as it bears on academic justice studies. In essence, this literature pursues explanation (and thereby greater control) of organizational behavior through the study of key dimensions of structure and process in social collectivities. This semester, we will consider the organizational context of public justice in such dimensions as individuals' motivation to work; the distribution of information and communicative networks; the dynamics of group decision-making, conflict and cooperation; styles of leadership and methods of management; and sources of social power.

Our second objective then pertains to empirical method. Through this course, you will learn about the use of qualitative research methods in the study of justice organizations. More so, you will be expected to conduct a small-scale participant observation at a work site of your choosing somewhere within the public justice system. You will then need to relate your research findings back to the theoretic literature we will be exploring in order to provide an explanatory account of your observations and—from this—insight into the nature of that particular work environment. This project will culminate in a formal research report, similar (albeit in reduced form) to what will be expected in PBJ 397.

Third and lastly, in addition to a background in theory and method, this course is also intended to provide you practical preparation for the PBJ 397 fieldwork (and beyond). You will have the opportunity to explicitly formulate the plans for your practicum, in light of your academic and career goals, and to develop the tools necessary to establish professional contacts in your chosen field. Over the semester, you will put together a portfolio comprised of an assortment of documents intended to facilitate your transition from the classroom to the field.

Prerequisites: Upper division standing, declared Public Justice major or double major, completion of PBJ 101 (or equivalent), and PBJ 201 with a grade of C- or better.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Gordon, Gary R., McBride, Bruce R., & Hage, Hedy (2001). *Criminal Justice Internships: Theory into Practice*, 5th Ed. Cincinnati: Anderson Publishers

Stojkovic, Stan, Kalinich, David and Klofas, John (1998). *Criminal Justice Organizations: Administration and Management*, 4th Ed. Pacific Grove, California: Thompson/Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Public Justice Department: Research Paper Guidelines. Available online at:

http://www.oswego.edu/academics/colleges_and_departments/departments/public_justice/resources/writing.html

REQUIREMENTS:

The nature of course requires your regular attendance and participation. Work must be submitted in person, in class, and on time. Late work is not acceptable except in the case of a documented emergency (narrowly defined) or a school-related obligation (with prior notification and permission). Be aware of all that will be required of you this semester and make sure that you will have the resources necessary (in terms of time, energy, and focus) to successfully complete the course. Your final grade will be based upon evaluations of the following components in the proportions identified:

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Portfolio	20%
Theory & Practice Paper	20%
Participation	20%

Midterm and Final Exams: Exams will test comprehension of lecture and reading materials, using an open-note format comprised of several short- and long-answer questions. Study guides will be provided in advance of the scheduled exam dates.

Portfolio: This project requires that you compile a number of short documents that will help you formulate your fieldwork plans and prepare to present yourself to the professional world. The details of this assignment will be addressed in a separate handout and discussed in class.

Theory & Practice Paper: This project models (in miniature) the major requirement of the practicum course. It is intended to help you gain experience in the techniques of conducting/reporting participant observation research and to think through (in advance) the empirical questions and scholarly literatures you would like to explore through your PBJ 397 fieldwork. Time has been set aside at the end of the term for presentation of your work. The details of this assignment will be addressed in a separate handout and discussed in class.

Participation: To ensure we stay on top of the readings and that our time in the classroom is productive, every class meeting (unless otherwise instructed) you should expect to bring in a typed set of study notes. Usually, this will consist of a short (i.e., roughly 200-word) written reaction to the readings for that day; alternatively, you may be asked to address some specific question or submit the results of some other task assigned to you. These assignments are due at the start of class and will be graded as “satisfactory” (full credit), “unsatisfactory” (half credit) or unacceptable (no credit). Except in the case of an excused absence, late work is always unacceptable. Unexcused late work may be submitted for review but never for credit. At the end of the semester, two zeros will be dropped from the participation grade; uses these “free passes” wisely. If a student has fewer than two zeros, extra credit will be awarded.

All students are expected to make a good-faith effort to contribute to class discussions. This requires being in class, prepared, for the duration of each class session. As a basic expectation of upperclassmen and –women, there is no grade incentive for proper conduct—only disincentives for improper conduct. An apathetic classroom performance will be incur penalties to the participation grade and may, where appropriate, result in a failing grade for the course.

ACADMIC HONESTY:

Dishonesty in any form (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) is not worthwhile. The university policy can be found here: http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy_text.html#cpji. Dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. “Bluffing” responses to uncompleted assignments is considered cheating.

Public Justice Department Academic Policies

Retention of Graded Materials

Education requires evaluation, both of individual students' performance as well as the performance of an academic program as a whole. Work you submit for grading in this course may be retained by the Department in order to assess the quality of curriculum we offer to students of Public Justice.

Research Paper Guidelines

Assignments submitted by Public Justice students, and all other students taking public justice courses, must adhere to the Research Paper requirements. Following these guidelines will ensure that the paper meets the minimum standards required by the Department, regardless of the public justice course involved. Draft papers must also conform to these guidelines. Please note that these are minimum requirements. The Public Justice professor may include additional requirements.

The Research Paper Guidelines can be found at:

http://www.oswego.edu/academics/colleges_and_departments/departments/public_justice/resources/Paper_Requirements.pdf

Intellectual Integrity

The College Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism applies to all assignments and exams in this course. You should familiarize yourself with that policy, which is reproduced in the College Catalogue. If it is determined that you have cheated or plagiarized on an assignment or exam in this course, the professor reserves the right to assign a grade of E for that assignment or exam, or a grade of E for the course, depending on the circumstances.

"Intellectual integrity on the part of all students is basic to individual growth and development through college course work. When academic dishonesty occurs, the teaching/learning climate is seriously undermined and student growth and development are impeded. For these reasons, any form of intellectual dishonesty is a serious concern and is therefore prohibited."

http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy_text.html#cpji

Disability Services

If you have a disabling condition which may interfere with your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones will be turned off during class. There will be no text messaging. Cell phones will be relinquished to the professor while students take exams if found to be in use.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

I. Introductions to the Course

F 1/25 Introductions

Readings: Course Syllabus

M 1/28 Portfolio / Theory & Practice Paper Guidelines

Readings: Guideline Handouts (available online)
Gordon et al, Ch. 1—4

W 1/30 Concept and Theory

Readings: Article: “A Note on the Status of Discretion in Police Research”

F 2/1 Organization: Rational, Natural and Open Systems

Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 1

II. Research in Criminal Justice Organizations

M 2/4: Knowledge for What?

Readings: Gordon et al, Ch. 15

W 2/6: Qualitative Research

Readings: Article: “What Fresh Hell is This? A Guy Marooned in Women’s Studies.”
Article: “What would Jesus Do? But More Important, What were Jesus’ Fitness Secrets?”

F 2/8 Participant Observation

Readings: Gordon et al, Ch. 4
Assignment: “Someplace Odd”

III. The Public Justice System

M 2/11 Rationalization and Bureaucracy—The Essential Weber

Readings: Article: “The Uniqueness of Western Civilisation”

W 2/13 Nature of Criminal Justice Organizations

Readings: Article: “Two Models of the Criminal Justice System: An Organizational Perspective”

F 2/15 Criminal Justice Theory

Readings Article: “Why is there So Little Criminal Justice Theory?”

IV. Public Justice Organizations

M 2/18 Structure of Criminal Justice Organizations

Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 2
Gordon et al, Ch. 8

W 2/20 Criminal Justice System and its Environment

Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 3
Gordon et al, Ch. 9

F 2/22 Workshop
 Readings: Article: “Militarizing Mayberry”
 Assignment: Site Selection & Preliminary Research Question

V. The Individual in Organizations

M 2/25 Motivation to Work
 Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 5

W 2/27 Job Design
 Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 6

F 2/29 Disenchantment and the Irrationality of Rationality
 Readings: Article: “Banana Time”
 Article: “The Bureaucratic Personality”

VI. Leadership and Supervision

M 3/3 Leadership
 Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 7

W 3/5 Supervision
 Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 8

F 3/7 Professionalization
 Readings: Article: “The Asshole”

M 3/10 Midterm Review

W 3/12 Workshop
 Assignment: 1st Site Observation Draft

F 3/14 TBA

M 3/17 MIDTERM

W 3/19 Midterms Returned, Portfolios Submitted, Bibliography Assigned
 Assignment: Portfolio Due

F 3/21—3/28 No Classes (Spring Break)

VII. Communication & Socialization

M 3/31 Network Dynamics
 Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 4
 Assignment: Annotated Bibliography

W 4/2 Humor
 Readings: Article: “Humor in the Briefing Room”
 Article: “Humor and Administration”

- F 4/4 Storytelling**
Readings: Article: “Heroes and Lies”
- M 4/7 Socialization**
Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 9
- W 4/9 Labeling**
Readings: Article: “On Being Sane in Insane Places

VIII. Group Dynamics

- F 4/11 Power and Political Behavior**
Reading: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 10
- M 4/14 Decision Making**
Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 12
- W 4/16 Small Group Dynamics**
Readings: Decision Making Tasks (handout)
- F 4/18 Groupthink**
Readings: TBA
- M 4/21 Organizational Conflict**
Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 11
- W 4/23 Quest—No Class**
- F 4/25 Inter-organizational Conflict**
Readings: Article: The Desirability of Goal Conflict Within the Criminal Justice System”

IX. Evaluation and Reform

- M 4/28 Organizational Effectiveness**
Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 13
- W 4/30 Change and Innovation**
Readings: Stojkovic et al, Ch. 14
- F 5/2 Humanitarian Reforms, Unintended Consequences**
Readings: Article: “The Dangers of Criminal Justice Reform”

X. Presentations

M 5/5—F 5/9 Presentations

Final Exam

Section 800 (1:50 pm) Monday, May 12, 2:00—4:00 pm
Section 810 (3:00 pm) Wednesday, May 14, 2:00—4:00 pm