

# Organizational Behavior and Management MANA 6A32

\*\*\*\* This is a 100% asynchronous online class \*\*\*\*

**Spring 2021**

**Ksenia O Krylova, Ph.D., LL.M.**

Office: 325D Melcher Hall

Phone: 713-743-7144

Email: [kkrylova@bauer.uh.edu](mailto:kkrylova@bauer.uh.edu)

Response time will be within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom

***COVID-19 era principles © Brandon Bayne, UNC Chapel Hill:***

1. *Nobody signed up for this.*

- Not for the sickness, not for the social distancing, not for the sudden end of our collective lives together on campus
- Not for an online class, not for teaching remotely, not for learning from home, not for mastering new technologies, not for varied access to learning materials

2. *The humane option is the best option.*

- We are going to prioritize supporting each other as humans
- We are going to prioritize simple solutions that make sense for the most
- We are going to prioritize sharing resources and communicating clearly

3. *We cannot just do the same thing online.*

- Some assignments are no longer possible
- Some expectations are no longer reasonable
- Some objectives are no longer valuable

4. *We will foster intellectual nourishment, social connection, and personal accommodation.*

- Accessible asynchronous content for diverse access, time zones, and contexts
- Optional synchronous discussion to learn together and combat isolation

5. *We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation.*

- Nobody knows where this is going and what we'll need to adapt
- Everybody needs support and understanding in this unprecedented moment

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**The information contained in this class syllabus is subject to change with reasonable notice to students. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.**

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**Course Description:**

The goal of this course is to provide students with a more in-depth understanding of the behavior of people in complex organizations and, more specifically, an appreciation of the best practices that can be used in managing those people.

The course focuses on OB at three levels: individual, interpersonal, and collective. At the individual level, topics of decision-making, motivation, and personality will be covered. At the interpersonal level, topics of relationships and influence, and at the collective level, topics of groups and organizations will be covered. The hope is that exposure to these principles will give students a more critical perspective on organizations and guidelines for their own activities in current and future work environments.

**Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a theory of practice of how to create organizations, units and jobs that foster excellence;
2. Analyze individual human behavior in the workplace as influenced by relationships, biases, motivations, org culture;
3. Outline the elements of group behavior including group dynamics, and leadership;
4. Create high quality connections at workplace and utilize positive feedback as part of best self practice;
5. Evaluate and adjust for biases in decision making process.

**Textbook and materials:**

***There is no required textbook for this class.*** Links to all the required and recommended readings will be posted on BB. Some of the materials (cases, core curriculum materials, assessments, simulations etc.) will need to be purchased from Harvard Business Publishing or other websites. Students are expected to read all of the required readings in order to participate effectively in class.

## Course Requirements:

### Book Review – TED Talk (40 points):

I understand that each and everyone of you has busy lives (and who doesn't nowadays?) but I encourage you to see this assignment as a challenge for yourself in establishing a routine to read more books (I am sure some of you had this goal as your new year resolution:)

To enrich your learning, this class gives you an opportunity to get acquainted with a book of your choice based on OB and psychology research. You will choose one of the books below and submit a mini TED talk video about an idea/ideas (up to 3) from the book that you found most fascinating/counterintuitive. Feel free to cover anything specific from the book and structure your TED talk in any manner, but consider those questions as a starting point: *What idea/ideas have you found most fascinating and why? Is there anything about this idea that you disagree with? What insights will you apply to your life—and how?*

*Books (full list of books with author details and ISBNs is available on BB):*

- **Relationships and influence:** Friendship: The Evolution, Biology, and Extraordinary Power of Life's Fundamental Bond;  
Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World
- **Leadership:** Leading Without Authority: How the New Power of Co-Elevation Can Break Down Silos, Transform Teams, and Reinvent Collaboration;  
Leadership by Algorithm: Who Leads and Who Follows in the AI Era?
- **Decision-making, communication, thinking mode:** All You Have to Do Is Ask: How to Master the Most Important Skill for Success;  
You're Not Listening: What You're Missing and Why It Matters;  
Clearer, Closer, Better: How Successful People See the World
- **Motivation:** Joy at Work: Organizing Your Professional Life;
- **Teams, Organizational future:** Inclusify: The Power of Uniqueness and Belonging to Build Innovative Teams;  
2030: How Today's Biggest Trends Will Collide and Reshape the Future of Everything;  
Nine Lies About Work: A Freethinking Leader's Guide to the Real World

If you have already read one of the books, challenge yourself and pick another one that you have not read and set a goal to finish it in 8 weeks of this course.

The video must be 4-5 minutes in total. The talk will be evaluated on the comprehension of the idea, the insights and commentary offered, and how engaging the overall delivery is.

Submit your TED talk to this shared ONE drive folder [https://uofh-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/kkrylova\\_cougarnet\\_uh\\_edu/EhN158TGealBiHFTafoJToYBqgHojKoEIa8HJOqUEysfew?e=LkQFie](https://uofh-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/kkrylova_cougarnet_uh_edu/EhN158TGealBiHFTafoJToYBqgHojKoEIa8HJOqUEysfew?e=LkQFie)

**Name the file with your LAST NAME\_FirstName, course section number.**

DO NOT SUBMIT through BLACKBOARD.

### **Discussion Participation (40 points):**

We will be doing **5 online activities**. Online discussions might consist of collective mini-case analysis or providing answer to the instructor's questions related to the topic, participation in a group exercise/simulation or a self-assessment exercise.

Yellowdig (outside BB, link will be sent to each student to join the community) will be the online discussion platform for the duration of our course.

***PLEASE USE YOUR FIRST NAME\_LAST NAME AS YOUR NICKNAME IN YELLOWDIG.***

Unlike typical Blackboard discussions where all of you would respond to the same prompt, Yellowdig lets you find and share real-world content (articles, videos, etc.) that YOU feel is relevant to lectures and readings. As you create Pins and make Comments, and as other students up-vote or comment on your posts, you will automatically receive participation points.

Each week you can earn up to **500** points of the **2500** required by the end of the course. *2500 points on Yellowdig correspond to 50 points grade for the class participation counted towards your overall grade.*

There is a weekly maximum of points you can earn, which is set at **600** points. You are encouraged to participate weekly to earn points, but I wanted to give you some flexibility. At **11 pm of each Tuesday**, the weekly maximum points will reset and you will again have until the following Tuesday to get up to the weekly maximum. If you are having a fun discussion you can always keep posting even after you have reached the weekly maximum; you just will stop earning additional credit toward your grade until the next Tuesday at 11 pm.

Each **Pin of 200 words** or more earns **80 points**; each **Comment** of 70 words or more earns **40 points**; **receiving** a comment earns **20 points** and **getting a Like** earns **10 point** (getting a heart -- red, yellow--and applause emoji earn **12 points**). Earning Likes and receiving Comments on your Pins are not things you directly control, but you will increase your chances of getting Likes and Comments if you post early in the week. That will get you closer to your weekly target if you do a good job. Each week starts at **12:00 AM CST Wednesday**.

One important thing to note is that, due to privacy regulations, notifications in Yellowdig are set to "off". I highly recommend that you look at the available notifications and elect to receive the ones that will be helpful for you (e.g., you can be notified when someone in the class specifically @ mentions you).

**I really want you to read what other people are thinking and to have a real discussion about course-relevant content. Therefore, I'd like everyone to pay attention to the fact that you will earn quite a few points when other people**

**upvote (Like or Love) your Pins and Comments. Your Pins will also get more points if they get a good conversation started (i.e., if people comment on them). So think about your audience when you are posting (i.e., your fellow classmates). Also, be sure to recognize good posts by upvoting them and talking about them.**

**It is also helpful to realize that you can't get points from people interacting with your posts if you don't have posts up for other students to see. Therefore, coming in earlier and getting good conversations started can actually save you work. I will also be dropping in occasionally to badge posts that are exceptionally good or thoughtful. You'll definitely increase your odds of your posts receiving that recognition if you have them up early and I can see you are contributing to a vibrant discussion.**

Here are examples of the types of comments you might make to move the online discussion forward.

- **Ask for Clarification or Elaboration:** Explain in your comment what is unclear or where you'd want to see further evidence to support the ideas proposed by your classmates.
- **Highlight Argumentative Gaps:** Often arguments are sound but not complete, help a classmate's thinking become clearer and more compelling by highlighting gaps in an argument.
- **Challenge or give a counterexample:** Point out arguments a critic might give on the other side.
- **Draw Out the Consequences:** To really understand a position, we need to see its implications. Highlight the implication of a claim if it were true (i.e. the impact on a person's life, society, or the environment).
- **Surface Assumptions:** Many arguments contain unchallenged biases, basic theoretical models or philosophical outlooks that are working in the background. Try to tease out the reasoning behind someone's claims and ask if you have accurately stated their underlying motivations.
- **Find Analogies:** Describe how an idea resonates with other ideas, thinkers or fields.

A few pointers and recommendations:

- Review the student section of the Yellowdig knowledge base, especially the learner orientation guide.
- Use the 'Help' section (see top nav bar) for tips and info on different features.
- If you have any technical questions or are having trouble, use the Help button at the bottom-right within the Yellowdig platform to contact their support, or reach out to [support@yellowdig.com](mailto:support@yellowdig.com).
- Take advantage of features like #hashtags and @ mentions to bring the discussion to life.

**Best self exercise reflection (20 points):** Please refer to the instructions for the best self exercise on BB. ***You will have to start preparing it from the beginning of the semester – do not wait until week 4 – it will be too late!***

This exercise is designed to reveal your unique competencies and skills, that is, the special capabilities you bring to your work and others. You will seek input from other people who know you in order to more deeply understand your personal, interpersonal, and managerial strengths. Your reflection should be ***at least 2 pages in length*** (double-spaced, 1” margins all around, 12 point font), but may need to be longer for you to fully and accurately reflect what you have learned from the exercise. The reflection is due ***on February 12th***, by the end of the day, and is worth ***20 points***.

**Examination (50 points):** There will be an exam at the end of the semester. It will consist of essay questions and it will take place entirely online. You will not have to come to class. ***The exam will take place over the period of 3 days – March 9<sup>th</sup>-March 11<sup>th</sup>, during which you will be able to start the exam at any convenient time and finish in one sitting.***

**A diagnosis paper (40 points):** In order to apply the concepts discussed more fully, one application paper is required. The objective of the application paper is to give you some practice in looking at your life through an organizational behavior lens. For this assignment you will reflect on an organizational problem that you experienced. The term ‘organizational’ is used very broadly here: You can write about an experience at a summer job, on a sports team, in a school work group, or any other situation in which you worked with other people for the purposes of completing a collective task. If necessary you may interview someone fully employed outside the home regarding a situation at their job. Once you have selected an organizational problem from your past, you should describe and diagnose the problem using concepts from the course, outline the factors that contributed to the situation, and discuss how the concepts could have helped you and/or others deal with the situation more effectively.

The paper should be at least ***5 pages long*** (double-spaced, 1” margins all around, 12 point font) and will be due on ***February 19th***. The paper should be submitted through the assignments tab on BB and will go through Turnitin system to check for plagiarism. Papers submitted after the deadline will have 5 points deducted from the maximum possible score for each day late.

***Additional grading information:*** Academic honesty is expected in this course. In other words: don’t be a cheater. Written assignments will be graded on five criteria:

- Depth of analysis: The paper demonstrates thorough research and reflection,,and compelling insight.

- Integration with course content: The paper uses, applies, and extends concepts covered in the class.
- Creativity and insight: The material is presented in an original, engaging, and interesting manner.
- Organization and structure: The paper employs a logical framework.
- Style: The paper is professionally written, using appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

**Extra credit**

Occasionally, extra credit opportunities will be offered to the entire class. Extra credit will only be assigned if the student completes ALL requirements in the required time frame. If an extra credit is offered, always take a screenshot as proof of your completion (also, take screenshots if any issues arise so that you can better communicate those issues to me). No extra credit will be offered on an individual basis. Extra credit will not be offered at the end of the semester to “help” your grade. Take advantage of extra credit when it is offered.

**Evaluation:**

Assignment	Points
Discussion participation	50
Book review	40
Application paper	40
Exam	50
Best self exercise reflection	20
Total	200 points

A	188-200	C+	154-159
A-	180-187	C	146-153

B+	174-179	C-	140-145
B	166-173	D	120-140
B-	160-165	F	119 and below

### **IMPORTANT Notes on class format, expectations and assignments:**

**Format:** This is an asynchronous online course. The class will not meet on campus and you do not have to login to the course Blackboard site at any specific time. However, following the feedback of students who had previously taken this class, I have decided to provide time for the class to convene on a voluntary basis in a weekly Zoom meeting to discuss topics and concepts for the week and engage in meaningful idea and knowledge exchange with classmates and me, as well as address any questions or confusions that may arise.

Weekly Zoom gatherings will happen on **Fridays from 1 to 2.30 pm (CT)** and are voluntary, with no graded and required participation.

In order to accommodate your professional life schedule and following suggestions of students from previous classes I taught, I have decided that, for the purposes of readings and assignments, each week starts **on Wednesday and ends on Tuesday (the following week)**. This will accommodate a well-known fact that most of the discussion activities in online classes such as this happen over the weekend. Switching the schedule for the week to run from Wednesday till Tuesday will give you plenty of time to read over the materials, participate in the discussions over the weekend, and reply to your classmates' posts until Tuesday the following week.

Powerpoint slides for the topics (if needed) will be provided in Blackboard. These will serve to outline the structure and highlight the major points of each topic. They are not, however, a substitute for having access to and knowledge of the fuller body of information available through the course readings.

**Assignments:** This is a very short (thus, intense) course. We have to cover a lot of material and discuss a lot of topics. So please, plan your time accordingly and pace yourself. You will have to stay on the top of your schedule and follow the due dates that are listed in the syllabus. I will send occasional reminders of the due dates, but I expect students in a grad level course to be aware of those without constant supervision and reminding.

Due to the half-semester nature of this course, it is hard to envision mid-(half)-semester activities (like the regular schedule class will have with the mid-term exams and papers). That is why this class will start feeling overwhelming and super busy towards the end of the semester with all the assignments that will be due. However, I also want to give you plenty of time and knowledge to read your book (Ted talk book review assignment) and write your application paper, which is why they are scheduled to be submitted at the end of the semester. That does not mean, though, that you cannot submit them earlier. So, again, plan your participation and submissions in this course accordingly in order not to feel overwhelmed and frustrated at the end.

***Deadlines and late submissions:*** Over time, I have come to appreciate the degree to which students want to be treated fairly and equitably when dealing with deadlines and length limits on assignments. I am well aware of the significant frustration associated with scrambling to meet a deadline, or working at crafting a succinct and coherent response to an assignment, only to find that a colleague has received greater latitude in their submission. Since there is ample lead time on the assignment and since it is short in length, I have instituted very significant penalties. Given your busy schedules I expect that you will complete the assignment with sufficient lead time to ensure there are no last minute constraints.

Late assignments will be accepted with penalty up to one week after the due date. Late assignments will be penalized with 2 points if turned in within the first 24-hour period after the specified due date and time, and 1 point per 24-hour period (including weekends) after that time, up to a week after the due date. Assignments submitted at any later time without an approved excuse will not be accepted.

***Feedback:*** I will grade the assignments including discussion participation and best self exercise reflections as soon as I possibly can. Due to the high volume of posts and number of students in online sections, I usually do not give specific feedback on discussion participation and best self exercise reflection grade unless they are obviously outside of normal expectations and range. If you want any specific feedback on the grade you received for a particular assignment, please contact me and I will be glad to provide it to you.

***Expectations:*** I expect all the students in this class to observe the rules of netiquette and overall respectful behavior. This includes proper communication with me with regards to any issues/concerns/ accommodation requests that you have. I appreciate proper beforehand notifications and requests, and will not respond to any last minute end-of-semester emails about missed assignments and the possibility of adding extra points to bump up your grade.

***Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:***

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. To this end, in order to receive academic accommodations, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (telephone 713-743-5400), and present approved accommodation documentation to their instructors in a timely manner.

### **Academic Honesty:**

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy is strictly enforced by the C. T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of this policy will be tolerated in this course. A discussion of the policy is included in the University of Houston Student Handbook, which can be reviewed at <http://www.uh.edu/dos/studenthandbook>. Students are expected to be familiar with this policy.

**A Note on Plagiarism:** Plagiarism involves the stealing/copying and passing off as your work, the ideas or words of another person. Since researching and writing your paper involves reviewing articles and books written by other people, it is important that you avoid plagiarism. You may do so by: (a) using quotation marks when you are using the exact words of another person (and then giving credit to that person through an appropriate footnote that indicates the author's name, the title of the article and the place and date that the article was published), or (b) summarizing the author's words by paraphrasing (please note that merely changing a few words in a sentence/paragraph is not acceptable paraphrasing – acceptable paraphrasing is accomplished by substantially rewriting the original passage) . If you paraphrase, you must also give credit to that person through an appropriate citation in the text of the paper. I will check for plagiarism using the University's plagiarism software (Turnitin). Since many UH professors use Turnitin, it will likely include papers that you have written for other classes. So, if you have written a paper about a similar topic in the past, I suggest that you avoid using the same wording in the paper you write for this course or that, too, will be considered plagiarism. It is also important to include citations in your paper. Any part of your paper that reflects information from your sources should be cited. **Finally, in preparing the paper you should avoid using more than three direct quotes and no quote should be longer than one or two sentences.**

### **Course Evaluations:**

The Bauer College of Business has a policy that requires all of its instructors to be evaluated by their students. The results of these evaluations are important to provide feedback to instructors on how their performance can be improved. In addition, these evaluations are carefully considered in promotion, salary adjustment, and other important decisions. We openly encourage students to provide feedback to instructors and to the Bauer College through the evaluation process.

The following are UH guidelines related to Fall 2020 semester in times of COVID19:

## Syllabus Changes

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

## Resources for Online Learning

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On](#) website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact [UHOnline@uh.edu](mailto:UHOnline@uh.edu).

## UH Email

Email communications related to this course will be sent to your [Exchange email account](#) which each University of Houston student receives. The Exchange mail server can be accessed via Outlook, which provides a single location for organizing and managing day-to-day information, from email and calendars to contacts and task lists. Exchange email accounts can be accessed by logging into Office 365 with your CougarNet credentials or through Access UH. They can also be configured on [IOS](#) and [Android](#) mobile devices. Additional assistance can be found at the [Get Help](#) page.

**Put the Course number in the title of the email.**

Below is an example of an appropriate email:

*"Hello,*

*I have looked on the syllabus and checked Blackboard announcements but I still require assistance. [Can you tell me about XYZ?]*

*Thank you,*

*Your Proper Blackboard Name*

## Honor Code Statement

Students may be asked to sign an honor code statement as part of their submission of any graded work including but not limited to projects, quizzes, and exams: *"I understand and agree to abide by the provisions in the (select: [University of Houston Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy](#), [University of Houston Graduate Academic Honesty Policy](#)). I understand that academic honesty is taken very seriously and, in the cases of violations, penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University of Houston."*

## **Helpful Information**

**COVID-19 Updates:** <https://uh.edu/covid-19/>

**Coogs Care:** <https://www.uh.edu/dsaes/coogscare/>

**Laptop Checkout Requests:**

<https://www.uh.edu/infotech/about/planning/off-campus/index.php#do-you-need-a-laptop>

**Health FAQs:** <https://uh.edu/covid-19/faq/health-wellness-prevention-faqs/>

**Student Health Center:** <https://uh.edu/class/english/lcc/current-students/student-health-center/index.php>