

VICTORIA MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

**MMBA 505 ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

Trimester One 2009

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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**Contact Details**

**COURSE COORDINATOR**

**Dr Paul McDonald**

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Website: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/vms>

**SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR**

**Linda Walker**

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Phone: 463 5367

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**Class Times and Room Numbers**

Lectures: Wednesdays

Time: 19:40 – 21:30

Venue: RH LT 3

**Trimester Dates:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March to Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009.

**Withdrawal dates:** Information available via

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

**Introduction**

The Master of Business Administration Programme serves to educate professional managers, thereby enabling the fulfilment of strategic roles within corporate and government enterprises, including the exercise of management capability. The primary objective of this course is to enhance students' management potential by studying the application of current management theories in relation to the modern workplace context.

The business context for this course is the modern information age. The essence of value creation in the information age is "thinking – mental work" versus "doing – physical work," characteristic of the preceding industrial age. As a result, classical management principles and norms of management control are giving way to the creation of collaborative workplaces, including high employee commitment and involvement. These fundamental changes in the nature of work challenge managers to apply innovative practices and processes.

This course aims to provide students with a solid theoretical base upon which a practical framework for managing and succeeding in the modern workplace can be established. The scope of this course, being the initial offering in the MBA programme, is broad. All three levels of the organisational behaviour domain — personal, interpersonal, and organisational — are covered.

Subsequent offerings in the MBA programme will allow students to focus in on topics of particular interest.

### **Programme and Course-related Learning Objectives**

This course will provide students opportunity:

- to develop oral and written communication skills
  - through active participation in class discussion
  - through the development and presentation of discussion papers
  - through formal and informal classroom debate
- to develop critical and creative thinking skills
  - through case studies and assignments requiring analysis, evaluation, interpretation and synthesis
  - through debate and classroom discussion
- to develop management capability
  - through an understanding of the major theories and concepts underlying the social science of organisational behaviour,
  - through gaining insights a sense of how these theories are applicable within the context of modern information-age organisations, and
  - through achieving a strategic perspective with respect to the linkages and interrelationships in managing human resource interventions.

### **Overall Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should:

1. Have an understanding of individual behaviour, group dynamics, and organisational theory within the context of an information age workplace,
2. Have a more in-depth conceptual appreciation for the complexities of management theory, and
3. Be confident in analysing a management case study situation.

### **Course-related Student Learning Objectives**

On successful completion of the course, students should be able:

- to demonstrate an understanding of major theories and concepts relevant to organisational behaviour,
- to apply such concepts and frameworks to their own management thinking and behaviour,
- to diagnose a business case situation and apply appropriate management theories, and
- to recognise the importance of effective management within the modern business context.

### **Expected Workload**

Workload expectations for this course are 10 hours per week for the 12 teaching weeks and 30 hours during the mid-trimester break.

### **Individual Work**

While the Victoria MBA programme has a tradition of study group collaboration, there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed beyond general discussion as to how one might interpret the nature of the assignment question. Please do not work together to formulate a response and do not loan out your completed assignments.

## Course Content

This course comprises twelve two-hour lectures covering the traditional span of organisational behaviour as follows:

### Introduction

- Course Introduction
- OB in the context of the Information Age

### Individual Behaviour

- Individual Behaviour
- Motivation
- Learning Theories

### Group Behaviour

- Group Dynamics
- Interpersonal Communication
- Leadership
- Power and Politics

### Organisational Behaviour

- Organisational Structure and Design
- Organisational Culture
- Organisation Change

## Readings

The required textbook is:

Steven McShane and Tony Travaglione (2007 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) Organisational Behaviour: on the Pacific Rim. McGraw-Hill / Irwin.\*

\* - In addition to the textbook, this course will rely on materials from a variety of sources, including practitioner and academic journals.

## Materials and Equipment

It is expected that all assignment submissions will be prepared in electronic softcopy and submitted via email to [paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz). The final examination will require hand-written responses to a case-study situation to be submitted in a VUW examination booklet.

## Assessment Requirements

2 x Individual Weekly Discussion / Thinking Paper	5% each	(Choose Two)
1 x Group Assignment – Academic Article	20%	due Monday – 8 June – 5 pm
1 x Mid-Term Test (open book)	20 %	on Saturday AM – 4 April
1 x Final Examination (open book)	50 %	University Examination Period

*Discussion / Thinking Papers* (5% each – choose two out of twelve possibilities) – Please choose one discussion paper from Lectures 1 – 6 (due April 22 at 5 pm) and one discussion paper from Lectures 7 – 12 due 10 June at 5 pm).

At the end of each of the twelve lectures a discussion topic will be provided as an opportunity for students to reflect and write on a personal application of organisational behaviour theory. Students are invited to reflect on and write on the topic up to a maximum of 1500 words (typed, double-spaced). For example: the discussion topic at the end of the first lecture will be: “What right do I have to manage other people?” The operative word here is “reflect”. These papers should not be used to summarise other people’s theory as discussed in the course. They are an opportunity to delve into your own personal thoughts regarding the various topic areas.

Discussion papers will be due via electronic submission to [paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz) as follows: one topic from lectures 1 – 6 due April 22 at 5 pm and one topic from lectures 7 – 12 due 10 June at 5 pm. Please include: “MMBA 505 Discussion Paper” in the subject line of your email. Feedback to discussion papers will be provided by return email. You are invited to discuss the nature of these

assignments within your study groups, but the actual write up must be entirely your own work. These assignments constitute “individual work”.

*Mid-Term Test (20%)* - In the past, some students have been "taken by surprise" by the demands of the final examination. To address this issue a mid-term test is planned that will "model" the final examination in form and approach. This test (3 hours – open book) will take place on Saturday morning, 4 April, from 09:30 to 12:30 (location RH LT 1).

*Group Assignment – Review and Critique of Relevant Academic Article (20%)*

The academic literature (referred journal articles) and the practitioner literature (i.e. Academy of Management Executive, and Harvard Business Review) are full of articles on management and organisational behaviour. The purpose of this group assignment is to make you familiar with the academic literature.

Your study group contribution in this regard is to find one excellent article that has significant meaning to your study group – an article that helped the members of your study group to understand one aspect of organisational behaviour (see course content list) and, ultimately, to become better managers.

How to go about this assignment: You need to select an area of shared interest within your group. These areas reflect each of the twelve lecture topics comprising the course. Then, your group will need to start with a literature search online. Start with abstracts and then work into a smaller set of articles. Pick the one that you find the most valuable and insightful. It should be an article that you want to share, one that you would recommend to your colleagues. Please clear your proposed area of interest with the course coordinator (via email) in advance, before you get too far along in your search mode. It is expected that different study groups will tackle different topic areas under the OB discipline.

Once you have the article – log it in with me via email – I will keep a first-come, first-served log. If someone has already logged in your first choice, then you will have to revert to your second choice. More than one group cannot cover the same article. All study groups should have logged in and received approval for their article review by 8 April.

There are four critical success factors in this study group assignment:

1. Summation of the article: (5%)

- Is there an executive summary?
- Do you capture (in your own words) the main points and conceptual frameworks?
- Do you discuss the presentation structure of the article?
- Do you demonstrate an understanding of the article?
- Do you recognise supporting evidence?
- Do you conclude as to the article’s key message?

2. Choice of the article: (5%)

- Is the article timely? (Post 2003 articles preferred)
- Is it relevant / useful to a management practitioner?
- Does it give greater insight into one of the MMBA 505 Lecture Topics?
- Is it substantive – in an academic / scientific sense?
- Is it seminal and holistic within the chosen OB topic area?
- Why did you chose this article as your top choice relevant to other possibilities?

3. Critical Thinking: (5%)

- Assess the strengths of the article
- Assess the weaknesses of the article
- Discuss the validity of the article, including methodology

- Discuss counter-positions to the article
- Discuss exceptions to the article
- Discuss context relevance issues, including NZ context
- Summary Critique of the Article

4. Application of the Article: (5%)

- Discuss possible applications of the article within your current organisational context, one individual section for each group member.
- Discuss personal learning from article, one individual section for each group member.
- Discuss ways in which the article may influence you to manage / behave differently, one individual section for each group member.

5. Appendix A:

- Include as an appendix , details on the top ten articles you considered during your selection process and discuss, in Section 2, why certain articles were ruled out as your first choice.

Title Page: (should contain the following information) – due via electronic submission.

Name of Article:

Source:

Authors:

Year of Publication:

Type of Publication: Academic Journal or Practitioner Journal

Article Number of Pages:

Course Number and Title: MMBA 505 – Organisational Behaviour

Study Group Names and Student Numbers:

Submission Date:

Word Count:

Group Reports are expected to be in the order of 10,000 words (not including appendices), well-organised and presented in accordance with professional business standards. Please use M-S word format, 12 point font, 1.5 line spacing, page numbers, and standard margins.

*Final Examination (50%)*

Examination dates for trimester one: Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June to Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009 (inclusive). Students who enrol in courses with examinations are obliged to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

A final open-book examination will be held during which students will be expected to apply their knowledge to organisational problem situations described by means of case vignettes. In accordance with Victoria MBA programme policy, students must obtain a minimum of forty percent of the marks available on the final examination in order to pass the course.

**Mandatory Course Requirements**

To meet Mandatory Course Requirements, students are required to:

- a. Submit two out of twelve organisational behaviour discussion papers;
- b. Sit the MMBA 505 Mid-Term Test,
- c. Submit one Group Assignment;
- d. Be an active member of class, including participation and listening to others; and
- e. Participate in a one day equivalent ‘Cross Cultural Management Workshop’

Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements for this course but who obtain 50% or more overall, will be awarded a "K" grade.

Standard fail grades (D or E) will be awarded when the student's overall course mark falls below the minimum pass mark, regardless of whether the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied or not.

Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Course Requirements will be posted on Blackboard or on the Mezzanine Floor Notice-board.

### **Penalties**

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline will be subject to a penalty of 5% of the total marks available per day of lateness. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. A "zero" mark will be applied. In the event of unusual, unforeseen circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement), students should discuss waiver of the penalty with the course controller prior to the deadline date.

### **Victoria MBA Grading Standards are as follows:**

#### Excellent Category

A- (75 – 79%) to A (80 – 84%) to A+ (85% and above): The learning is demonstrated to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Master's level.

#### Very Good Category

B+ (70 – 74%): The learning is demonstrated at a high standard. Students have reached a level that clearly exceeds "competency".

#### Good Category

B (65 – 69%): The learning is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as fully competent.

#### Satisfactory Category

B- (60 – 64%): The learning is demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent.

#### Marginal Category

C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The learning is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to "fail" the student.

#### Unsatisfactory / Failure Category

E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The learning is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed.

### **Referencing**

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/library/research/reference/referencingguides.aspx>).

### **Communication of Additional Information**

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

## **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

### Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

### Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

## **Use of Turnitin**

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting mis-referencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

## **General University Policies and Statutes**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx)

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website [www.victoria.ac.nz/fca](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca) under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: including the work of others will not be considered plagiarism as long as the work is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html)

### **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email [manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz) or phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email [pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz) or phone (04) 463 5842.



### Lecture Schedule – MMBA 505 - 2009

Week	Date	Topic	Basic Reading McShane et al. (2007)
1	4 March	- Course Introduction - Organisational Behaviour Defined	— Chap. 1
2	11 March	- The Future OB Context	(see handout)
3	18 March	- The Nature of Individual Personality and Behaviour	Chaps. 2, 3(to pg 85) & 4
4	25 March	- Motivation	Chaps. 5 & 6
5	1 April	- Learning and OB Modification	Chap. 3 (from pg 85) & Kreitner and Kinicki (Ch 7)
*	4 April	- MMBA 505 – Mid-Term Test 9:30 am to 12:30 pm – RH LT 1	
6	8 April	- Group Dynamics	Chap. 9 & 10
*	10 April to 26 April – Mid-Trimester Break		
7	29 April	- Communication	Chap. 11
8	6 May	- Leadership	Chap. 14
9	13 May	- Organisational Power and Politics	Chap. 12
10	20 May	- Organisational Design	Chaps. 15
11	27 May	- Organisational Culture	Chaps. 16
12	3 June	- Organisational Change	Chap. 17
12 June – 1 July		- Mid-Year University Examination Period	