

School of Management

MMBA 505 ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

Trimester 1, 2013

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

COURSE COORDINATOR

Dr Paul McDonald

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Website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/som>

SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR

Linda Walker

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Trimester Dates

Teaching Period: Monday 4 March – Friday 7 June

Study Period: Monday 10 June – Thursday 13 June

Examination Period: Friday 14 June – Wednesday 3 July (inclusive)

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 15 March 2013.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 17 May. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation

The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Wednesdays

Time: 19:40 – 21:30

Venue: GB LT2

(Government Bldg.)

Mid-Term Test:

09:30 – 12:30

Saturday 13 April

Venue: T.B.A.

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 on topics of particular interest.

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

Course Learning Objectives

This course will provide students with the opportunity:

- to develop oral and written communication skills through:
 - active participation in class discussion,
 - the development and presentation of discussion papers, and
 - formal and informal classroom debate.

- to develop critical and creative thinking skills through:
 - case studies and assignments requiring analysis, interpretation and synthesis, and
 - debate and classroom discussion.

- to develop management capability through:
 - understanding of the major theories and concepts underlying the social science of organisational behaviour,
 - gaining insights and a sense of how these theories are applicable within the context of modern information-age organisations, and
 - achieving a strategic perspective with respect to the linkages and interrelationships in managing human resource interventions.

Course Delivery

The course will be delivered over a series of twelve two-hour lectures, which will include class discussion. It is expected that you will arrive at the class having read the assigned material and prepared to discuss it. In addition, there will be a three-hour mid-trimester test.

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.

Group Work

There is group work as part of this course. It is anticipated that this work will involve one study group meeting each week of 1 – 2 hours duration. Complete details as to assessment criteria for group work follow under ‘Assessment Requirements’.

Readings

The required textbook is:

Steven McShane and Tony Travaglione (2010 – 3rd 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 (available on Blackboard).

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 using the term: "MMBA 505, Discussion Paper # ___" in the Subject Heading. 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 Papers
5% each due Wednesdays 1 May and 12 June – 5 pm
- 1 x Group Assignment – Academic Article
15% due Wednesday 5 June – 5 pm
- 1 x Mid-Term Test (open book)
25 % on Saturday AM – 13 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 1 May at 5 pm) and one discussion paper from Lectures 7 – 12 (due 12 June at 5 pm). NB: Submit electronically by email to: paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz

At the end of each of the twelve lectures a discussion topic will be provided as an opportunity for students to reflect on a personal application of organisational behaviour theory. Students are invited to write up and submit for assessment two topics of their choice. 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 with the email Subject Heading: "MMBA 505 Discussion Paper # ___" to paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz as follows: one topic from lectures 1 – 6 due 1 May by 5 pm and one topic from lectures 7 – 12 due 12 June by 5 pm. 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".

Individual Discussion Papers are expected to be in the order of 1,500 words each, 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. Please include your name and student number on a title page.

Mid-Term Test (25%) - 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, 13 April, from 09:30 to 12:30 (location – T.B.A.).

Group Assignment – Review and Critique of Relevant Academic Article (15%)

The academic literature (peer-reviewed journal articles) and the practitioner literature (e.g., 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 confirm 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 within 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 Wednesday, 1 May.

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

1. Summation of the article: (5% out of total 15% for group assignment)
 - 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(s)?

2. Choice of the article: (5% out of total 15% for group assignment)
 - Is the article timely? (Post-2008 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 choose this article as your top choice relevant to other possibilities?

3. Critical Thinking: (5% out of total 15% for group assignment)
 - 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

Assignment 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 6,000 - 8,000 words, 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. Due by Wednesday, 5 June at 5 pm by electronic submission to: paul.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz .

Note to Student

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCom programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Examinations

Students who enrol in courses with examinations are obliged to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period. The final examination for this course will be scheduled at some time during the period from Friday 14 June – Wednesday 3 July 2013.

Final Examination (50%)

A final open-book examination of three hours length 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.

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 coordinator prior to the deadline date.

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, and
- c. Submit one Group Assignment.

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.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

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 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

Course information will be communicated via Blackboard announcements. Students should log on to Blackboard regularly to check for course announcements and updates. In addition, all readings, course notes and materials will be available electronically on Blackboard.

Use of Turnitin (if applicable)

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 compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. 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.

Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters, go to <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information>

Lecture Schedule – MMBA 505 - 2013

Week	Date	Topic	Basic Reading McShane et al. (2010)
1	6 March	- Course Introduction - Organisational Behaviour Defined	— Chap. 1
2	13 March	- The Future OB Context	(see handouts)
3	20 March	- The Nature of Individual Personality and Behaviour	Chaps. 2, 3, & 4 (up to pg. 139)
4	27 March	- Motivation	Chaps. 5 & 6
(Easter Break)			
5	10 April	- Learning and OB Modification	Kreitner and Kinicki (Ch 7)
*	13 April	- MMBA 505 – Mid-Term Test	9:30 am to 12:30 pm
6	17 April	- Group Dynamics	Chap. 8
(Mid-Trimester Break)			
7	1 May	- Communication	Chap. 9
8	8 May	- Leadership	Chap. 12
9	15 May	- Organisational Power and Politics	Chap. 10
10	22 May	- Organisational Design	Chaps. 13
11	29 May	- Organisational Culture	Chaps. 14
12	5 June	- Organisational Change	Chap. 15
14 June – 3 July		- Mid-Year University Examination Period	