



# **BUS-PSYC 460 - Organizational Behavior: An Evidence-Based Approach**

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Spring Semester 2023**

**Instructor:** John L. Dennis, Ph.D.

**Credits:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Prerequisites:** None

**Class Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30pm-2:00pm

**Office Hours:** By appointment, use link: (<https://calendly.com/drjohndennis/10min-meeting>) or before/after class.

**Course Type:** Course with Service Learning component

**Lab/Site-Visits Fee:** USD\$100

*Working hard and working smart sometimes can be two different things – Byron Dorgan*

*Being a professional is doing the things you love to do – even on the days you don't feel like doing it - Julius Erving*

## **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and topics in organizational behavior with three main areas of focus: the individual, the interpersonal, and group levels. At the individual level, this course will cover decision-making, motivation, and personality. At the interpersonal level, power, influence, and negotiations will be discussed. Finally, at the group level, the leadership and organizational context will be explored.

Effectively using organizational behavior concepts means being a leader – i.e., being able to diagnose problems, communicate clearly, and make effective decisions that will motivate and influence others to effectively drive organizational change all within a diverse environment. This course will help students gain leadership skills within a structured, supportive classroom environment.

The course service learning project will use organizational behavior concepts studied in this course to help [Birrificio La Gramigna](#) at the interpersonal and group level.

## **Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures**

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

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Measures</b>
Reflect on organizational behavior concepts at the individual, interpersonal and group levels	Class Discussion, Presentations, Blog

Develop applicable critical thinking skills regarding organizational behavior concepts	Tickets, Class Discussion
Generate effective leadership skills	Presentations, Service Learning Project
Analyze how organizations and people within them work	Ticket, Service Learning Project
Gain knowledge of how leadership motivates and influences people regarding organizational change	Service Learning Project, Presentations
Design a project with community partner that applies organizational behavior concepts as viable solutions for a well-defined issue	Service Learning Project, Blog
Create and broadcast materials that will help students to start thinking about their future careers	Class Discussion, Blog, Community Engagement Presentations

## Course Materials

### Readings

#### Books (selected chapters)

Clear, J. (2018). *Atomic Habits* Random House.

Collins, J. (2009). *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap and others don't*. Harper.

Coyle, D. (2017). *Culture Code*. Random House.

Edmondson, A.C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. Wiley.

### Instruction Methods

This class uses a method in which students gain a significant amount of knowledge before each class begins. Once each class starts, students actively and interactively clarify and apply their new knowledge; the professor helps guide students through this process as a facilitator. This is referred to in pedagogy as a flipped instruction method (to view The University of Texas at Austin's discussion about this method, visit <http://vimeo.com/70893101>).

Assignments will be done with the help of several cooperative tools that are consistent with the flipped instruction method outlined above:

1. Students will submit short reactions (250-500 words) to readings 24 hours before class on Google Drive.
2. Students will review materials submitted by fellow students.
3. Students will guide a part of classroom discussion with mini-presentations based on readings, exercises, case studies, and individual/team assignments.

All assignments, and all rubrics will be accessed via Moodle.

**NOTE:** All writing should be written in 12-point, Garamond font, single spaced, and justified. All files submitted should have written in the top left part of the page the following:

*First Name Last Name*

*File type (e.g., Ticket #1, Blog)*

*Book section name, article title or blog title*

## Assessments

Attendance & Participation	10%
Service Learning Project	20%
Community Engagement Presentation	5%
Tickets	20%
Blog	15%
Peer Reviews	10%
Presentations	20%

### Attendance & Participation (10%)

The core work of this course involves reading and collectively making sense of the assigned readings. Being consistently prepared for class, asking questions, responding to questions, and attentively listening to others is essential. Successful participation has four prerequisites, and these can be considered the participation rubric, where each class you will be given a max score of 5, with 1 point given for each:

1. Being there. When a student is absent, the class cannot benefit from his/her comments and insights. Absences will therefore hurt his/her participation grade. If a student is absent, he/she should make arrangements with a classmate to take notes and pick up any assignments or handouts.
2. Being on time. If a student needs to be late for class, please notify the professor at least 24 hours in advance.
3. Being prepared. To contribute to class discussion, students must come to class having carefully prepared all assignments (i.e., readings, tickets, cases, exercises). If students are unsure of the assignments for an upcoming class session, please ask.
4. Being brave. Students are expected to participate fully in all class exercises, to voice personal views during discussions, and to ask questions about things that are not understood. Asking questions might be intimidating, but doing so also helps classmates by moving the discussion forward in new directions.
5. Being courteous. Listening carefully to the comments and questions that classmates' voice will help one another to learn something new from their perspectives. Voicing disagreement is essential as it often leads to thoughtful and informative class discussions. Disagreements should be kind and considerate.

NOTE: Some people are uncomfortable with presenting viewpoints in a large group setting. However, contributing to discussions is an important part of the students' career development. If there is anything that may interfere with their ability to contribute on an ongoing basis, students should discuss it with the professor sooner rather than later. The professor will work with students off-line to develop a strategy or plan to increase their comfort level and performance in class participation.

### Service Learning Project (20%)

Students will work as a team with a local company using interviews, observations, and/or surveys with the goal of answering the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the area in need of improvement?
2. What are its causes?
3. How can organizational behavior concepts be applied and extended to solve the area in need of improvement?
4. What specific action steps should the organization take to solve the area in need of improvement?
5. What changes should be implemented?
6. What are the potential barriers, obstacles, and challenges you foresee?
7. What are the risks, costs, and possible unintended consequences of your recommendations?
8. How will you communicate your findings to the organization and overcome potential resistance?

Please see the *Service Learning Syllabus Appendix* at the end of the syllabus for more information. Grading for the Service Learning Project is ongoing. It is highly recommended to create Notes pages within the Google Drive that clearly indicate that you are actively gathering information to learn more about the project. These notes pages can include article summaries, links to videos, images, interviews, etc. Active engagement in answering these above questions will occur regularly during the semester.

NOTE: The Service Learning Project will include 30 minutes of online work every week. Instructions on what that work will entail will be discussed every week in class as the project progresses.

### **End of Semester Community Engagement Presentations (5%)**

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the project experience to the Umbra community during the Community Engagement Presentations on **Tuesday, April 25th**. Students will receive the guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break. Participation in this event is MANDATORY and an integral part of the community engagement grade.

### **Tickets (20%)**

Students will submit one ticket (250-500 words) per reading. Every other ticket will be submitted online to [Google Drive](#) at least 24 hours before class, while the other ticket will be completed in class. See the ticket [rubric](#) to better understand what is expected of you. For articles and book chapters tickets must answer the following 4 W's, with each question being scored at 2.5 points, and a max score of 10.

1. What was the reading's main question in a single sentence?
2. What was done/discussed and what did they find?
3. How does the reading relate to other readings, in class discussion, and/or class projects?
4. Which part of the reading did you find useful/are you critical of?

The first two Ws will help students remember the positive points from what they have read first while the last two Ws integrate their experiences/thoughts with what they have read.

Please see Moodle for all assignments.

**NOTE:** Given that fact that tickets must be between 250-500 words, students should not give a summary of the ENTIRE reading, rather they need to focus their attention on a part of it that they found to be the most interesting to you.

### **Blog (15%)**

Students will submit one blog entry (exactly 500 words) to [Google Drive](#) based on classroom experiences during the semester. These blog posts can be based off tickets, the community research project, or any other exercise, discussion, etc. that happens inside the class or with classmates. Once the blog has been reviewed and approved, they will be submitted for publication on the Umbra institute blog. A signup sheet for blog entries will be shared on [Google Drive](#). Follow the [blog rubric](#) to understand better what is expected of you. Please see Moodle for all assignments.

### **Peer Reviews (10%)**

Students will review tickets and blog entries submitted by fellow students. Reviews should consist of helpful and constructive comments and provide "additive feedback"—making suggestions about what the writer might add to or develop further. Students are responsible for completing one Ticket peer review per class, and one Blog review that will be assigned during the semester. A signup sheet for all peer reviews will be shared on [Google Drive](#). Reviews are due within 48 hours of when the document you are reviewing has been submitted to [Google Drive](#) or has been completed in class. Please use the [writing review rubric](#) and the [peer review guidelines](#). Please see Moodle for all assignments.

### **Presentations (20%)**

Students will lead a portion of class via short presentation of their ticket during the semester. Presentations as well as student-led discussion typically will occupy the first half of the class while the professor will guide discussion during the remaining half of the class. Presentations should include an activity for the class and a discussion of the reading that connects to the reading. Activities for the class have included students filling out a questionnaire, watching a part of a TED talk video, doing an improvisation game, breaking into groups to answer specific questions, etc. You should not rely *solely* on [Google Slide](#) presentation. The presentation should include a short summary of the reading—enough that anyone who has not done the reading would be able to

follow what you are talking about, and then you should focus your attention on some particular part of the reading that you find most interesting. All presentations have a leader and a second. The leader is responsible for presenting the material, while the second is there to assist if the leader needs help. Please see Moodle for all assignments.

### Additional Notes

#### *Feedback and Questions*

This course should be a valuable learning experience for all students. Their feedback regarding the class is appreciated at any time during the semester. It is easiest to reach the professor by email or right before or after class, or an appointment can be set up.

#### *Email*

Please understand that the professor responds to emails between the hours of **12:30-6:30 pm Monday-Thursday**.

#### *Broadcasting*

Students will significantly improve submitted materials during the course of the semester, and, in the process, develop skills so that they are [so good they can't be ignored](#) (*So Good They Can't Ignore You* by Cal Newport). The result will be materials that will be so good that we will broadcast them online. For example, selected documents, videos, photos, etc., will be used as the basis for student blog posts, and, in the past, they have been shared on social networks such as [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Tumblr](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Slideshare](#). The goal in broadcasting is to help students develop materials that will allow them to think about their careers – to think like they are a [start-up](#). (*The Start-Up of You* by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha).

#### *Peer-Reviewed Research-based Article*

Every semester, this course does a project that most likely will result in a peer-reviewed article submission that will be completed in the ensuing months post-completion of this course. The writing of this article, while open to all students, will require a commitment of about an hour or so each week. Bi-weekly meetings (or as needed) will occur via Zoom at a time that will fit all co-writers. Student-authors, as per my practice, will always be first-authors. You will learn how to read and summarize original research articles, and organize what we've done with our Service Learning project using APA guidelines. Students who participate in this writing project will be encouraged and supported in submitting this research to their institution (if they so desire) for research projects—like honor's thesis, for example. In addition, if funding opportunities exist, I will again support you in gaining them so that you can present this project at international conferences that specialize in projects similar to what we do in this course.

## Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C	77% - 79% 73% - 76%	Satisfactory

C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

**Please note:** decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

### **Extension & Submitting Late Work**

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. This can be used for any assignment but the final project. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

### **Attendance & Lateness Policy**

Class attendance (in person or through live connection) is mandatory. All students are allowed 2 “sick days” (i.e. unexcused absences), which do not need to be justified. It is the student’s responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity. i.e., sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class. More than 2 absences will affect your final grade by 2% per absence. Excessive unexcused absences (8 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. Three late arrivals to or early departures from class will count as an unexcused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students’ final grade in that course by 4% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

Additional absences relating to illness may be approved by the Director but only if a medical certification is provided. Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

### **Academic Integrity**

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

### **Classroom Policy**

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions for anything other than note-taking, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.

## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1

Day 1 *Introduction and Course Overview*

Day 2 Service Learning Project - Present current project: brief overview  
*Edmondson, Chapter 1*  
Ticket 1 - In class

### WEEK 2

Day 1 *Clear, The Fundamentals, Chapters 1-2*  
Ticket 2 - GoogleDrive

Day 2 *Collins, Chapter 1-2*  
Ticket 3 - In class  
Blog - Concepts discussed and initial notes due on GoogleDrive

### WEEK 3

Day 1 *Coyle, Chapters 1-3*  
Ticket 4 - GoogleDrive  
Service Learning Project - Present current project: In depth overview

Day 2 *Edmondson, Chapter 3*  
Ticket 5 - In class  
Service Learning Project - Set roles and division of responsibilities, and review deadlines and project goals.

### WEEK 4

Day 1 *Clear, The 1st Law, Chapters 5-6*  
Ticket 6 - GoogleDrive

Day 2 *Collins, Chapter 3-4*  
Ticket 7 - In class

Feb 17 Field Trip -Visit Partner

### WEEK 5

Day 1 *Service Learning Project Development*  
Service Learning Project - Debriefing from Field Trip

Day 2 *Coyle, Chapters 7-9*  
Ticket 8 - GoogleDrive  
Blog - Concepts discussed and 1<sup>st</sup> draft due on GoogleDrive  
Service Learning Project – Work through project.

**WEEK 6**

Day 1 Edmondson, Chapter 4  
Ticket 9 - In class  
Service Learning Project - Work through project.

Day 2 Clear, The 2nd Law, Chapters 8-9  
Ticket 10 - GoogleDrive

**SEMESTER BREAK**

**WEEK 7**

Day 1 *Service Learning Project Development*  
Service Learning Project - Work through project.

Day 2 Collins, Chapter 5-6  
Ticket 11 - In class  
Blog Concepts discussed and 2<sup>nd</sup> draft due on GoogleDrive

**WEEK 8**

Day 1 *Service Learning Project Development*  
Service Learning Project - Conversation with partner - TBA

Day 2 Coyle, Chapters 13-14  
Ticket 12 - GoogleDrive  
Service Learning Project - Work through project.

**WEEK 9**

Day 1 *Service Learning Project Development.*  
Service Learning Project – Resolve areas in need of improvement

Day 2 Edmondson, Chapter 5  
Ticket 13 - In class  
Blog Concepts discussed and 3<sup>rd</sup> draft due on GoogleDrive

**WEEK 10**

Day 1 *Service Learning Project Development.*  
Service Learning Project – Practice presentation for partner.

Day 2 Clear, The 3rd Law, Chapters 13-14  
Ticket 14 - GoogleDrive

**WEEK 11**

Day 1 Collins, Chapter 7-8  
Ticket 15 - In class

Day 2 *Service Learning Project Development.*  
Service Learning Project - Presentation with partner.

**WEEK 12**

Day 1 Clear, The 4th Law, Chapters 15-16.  
Ticket 16 - GoogleDrive  
Blog - Final versions are due.

Day 2 *Service Learning Project Development.*  
Service Learning Project - Practice Community Engagement Presentation  
Ticket - Final versions with all revisions due.

**WEEK 13**

The Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester





**BUS/PSYC 460: Organizational Behavior: An Evidence-Based Approach**  
**Service Learning Project**  
**Syllabus Appendix**

**What is service learning?**

Service learning is a type of experiential education integrated into a course in which:

- students engage in an organized activity or project aimed to address a community need that is identified in collaboration with the community partner;
- students critically reflect on the link between the experience in the community, course content, and the learning goals; and
- there is reciprocal learning both by the students and by the community partners.

Students will need a certain degree of flexibility, creativity, and self-initiative in order to realize a service learning project. Organization and open communication in-class with the professor and team members will be key to student success.

**Service Learning Project Overview**

**Community Partner**

La Gramigna brewery was founded in 2016 in Casa del Diavolo, a small village in a rural area, just outside of Perugia. Everything that Gramigna makes is from organically locally cultivated primary ingredients - and never are pesticides used on those ingredients. During last years Gramigna also opened a tap room in the city center of Perugia and started a new hospitality project called “Bed&Beer” located nearby the brewery.

**Project Description and Goals**

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and topics in organizational behavior that includes three main areas of focus: the individual, the interpersonal, and group levels. At the individual level, the class will analyze the process of our partner’s decision-making practices and gain a better understanding of their motivations, which will, in turn, help students better understand their role in the project. At the interpersonal level, the class will gain a better understanding of the power, influence, and negotiations needed to organize these various events and divisions within the company. At the group level, the class will gain a better understanding of Alberto Castaldo’s (co-owner of the brewery) leadership and organizational skills to help students better locate weaknesses, thus informing student’s suggestions intervention.

Based on the visit to Birrificio La Gramigna and online research, students will analyze key aspects of wine and product tasting experiences. These results will be aimed at helping inform and improve the company’s approach to marketing and communicating the Birrificio La Gramigna experience to local and international clients. Furthermore, students’ work may eventually be used to support Birrificio La Gramigna’s future efforts to encourage the Umbrian regional government to invest in wine-related tourism.

**Team Organization, Expectations, and Roles**

Student teams will be organized around personal, interpersonal, and group levels and will be chosen by the professor. An important amount of time will be dedicated to the service learning project's progress in class.

When needed, teams will meet outside of class.

Teams will be responsible for deciding how to divide the various tasks to ensure members contribute equally throughout the project. Team members will have a Project Log that will be shared on GoogleDrive to record individual project contributions. The professor will use this log to inform students of their final participation grade. At the conclusion of the project, team members will be asked to complete a Peer- and Self-Evaluation Form.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Through this project, students will:

1. develop awareness and skills in applying OB concepts to the wine tourism experience;
2. gain a better understanding of wine tourism;
3. discover the importance of starting with the question “Why?” when marketing a product; and
4. improve critical thinking skills by understanding and meeting the company's needs.

### **Method**

Students will work as a team using methods, including best practices, interviews, observations, and/or surveys with the goal of answering the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the area in need of improvement?
2. What are its causes?
3. How can organizational behavior concepts be applied and extended to solve the area in need of improvement?
4. What specific steps should the organization take to improve the area in need?
5. What changes should be implemented?
6. What are the potential barriers, obstacles, and challenges you foresee?
7. What are the risks, costs, and possible unintended consequences of your recommendations?
8. How will you communicate your findings to the organization and overcome potential resistance?

### **Community Engagement Presentation**

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the project experience to the Umbra community during the Community Engagement Presentations on **Tuesday, April 25th**. Students will receive the guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break.

### **Grading Rubric**

The service learning project is worth a total of 25% of the final course grade, which will be divided into three categories, each worth 8.33% of the final course grade:

1. Participation in team and peer- and self-evaluations
2. Project materials necessary for rendering the project a success
3. Community Engagement Presentation