
THE BASICS

To quote from the SILS course descriptions, this course is about:

Basic concepts in the way that information, people, and technology interact to influence organizational effectiveness. Principles of problem solving, teamwork, leadership, and organizational change/innovation.

BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

What it means is that we are going to consider the ways information is used within organizations. But to do that, we will have to consider the cultures of organizations and how they behave. In the process, we will consider the role of information technology within organizations, but it won't be our primary focus.

Our primary focus will be on understanding organizations and how they think, how information flows within that organization, and how that understanding can provide us with a way to deal with innovation and change in organizational contexts.

We consider theoretical foundations for practical applications and we will look at lots of examples, perhaps some you may never have considered.

Plan to read a lot, think even more, and to share the results of your reading and thinking with your peers. We want to develop the capacity for critical thinking about information use and, in the process, begin to develop some personal problem-solving skills that may be put to good use in any organization.

METHOD OF TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION

Most of the class will be a mix of lecture, question and answer, discussion, and in class activities. Plan to bring your laptops with you to reach out for information you might want to introduce in class.

You will have three written assignments and two exams in this class. Plan to store each of them in an online portfolio that you will create. The instructor will be able to reach it either by going to a web page that you will create with links to each of the five products, or by going to an online storage location that you will provide.

READINGS

THERE ARE NO ASSIGNED TEXTBOOKS, BUT WE WILL HAVE LOTS OF READINGS

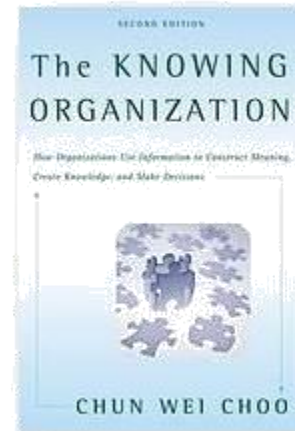
ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT WILL BE

Choo, C. W. (2006). **The knowing organization: How organizations use information to construct meaning, create knowledge, and make decisions**. New York: Oxford University Press.

Readings from it will be available online from UNC Libraries.

A book review of this text noted:

Because this book examines system design and knowledge management by treating the corporation as an information-seeking, creating, and using community, it has direct relevance to scholars of communication in the corporate context. Choo builds a framework that shows the corporation as an organised intelligent seeker, creator, and user of information and knowledge for the construction of meaning and decision-making. He incorporates Karl Weick's theory of sensemaking in the sharing of meanings and the use of rules and routines to reduce complexity and uncertainty. The text is well crafted and detailed, requiring some effort to navigate through the many concepts and levels of integration that Choo attempts in building his framework. The book will appeal to information systems specialists, and should be attentively visited by communication specialists, too.



Richard Varey, University of Salford, review in *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 1999 4(2), p. 106-7

OTHER READINGS

When additional readings are assigned, they will be made available electronically through the class schedule and the specific session pages.

EVALUATION

We will do a lot in this class	worth
Task 01. Your organization	10%
Task 02. Your ethics	10%
Task 03. Organizational culture	10%
Task 04. Leadership	10%
Task 05. Organizational memory	10%
Task 06. Technological involvement	10%
In-class activities	15%
Final Examination	25%

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Be prepared to engage with the topic of the day and with your peers.

In each of the topic areas, we will have a mix of lecture and discussion. You will want to have done the readings so that you will be prepared to contribute to or lead a discussion. We will work out a method whereby everyone gets a chance to lead.

Additionally, we will have a class blog to use to continue conversations before, during, and after each session. You are expected to be contributors to those conversations.

GRADING

THE TABLE BELOW SHOWS THE STANDARD FOR GRADING USED IN THIS CLASS.

To be explicit, when averaging grades for the semester, we will round off to two decimal places. The resultant number must equal the lower number in a grade range to reach the minimum necessary to get that letter grade. A 94.99 is an A- a 95.00 is an A, for example.

Letter	Points	What it means
A	95 >	Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected
A- B+ B B-	92-94 87-91 83-86 80-82	A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment
C+ C C- D+ D	77-79 73-76 70-72 67-69 60-66	A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level
F	< 60	For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance

HONOR CODE

Faculty and students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill adhere to their Code of Student Conduct. Accordingly, you all should recognize that most software applications available in the computer lab are copyrighted and cannot be copied.

We can learn much from each other and we will do that. I expect each of you to help each other.

We'll discuss what we expect in terms of cooperative, collaborative, shared work and the honor code.

THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Honor Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

Campus Code

It shall be the further responsibility of every student to abide by the Campus Code; namely, to conduct oneself so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

WHAT IT MEANS TO US

The system rests on several central tenets:

- the university community, including faculty and students, share a commitment to the pursuit of truth, and the dissemination of knowledge to succeeding generations of citizens devoted to the high ideals of personal honor and respect for the rights of others
- these goals can only be achieved in a setting in which intellectual honesty and personal integrity are highly valued; other individuals are trusted, respected, and fairly treated; and the responsibility for articulating and maintaining high standards is widely shared
- both students and faculty must play active roles in fostering a culture in which honor is prized and acting to remedy violations of community norms relating to academic misconduct, injuries to members of the University community, and conduct that adversely affect University operations and resources

The principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship govern the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University as they have during the long life of this institution.

- your acceptance of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in the Code of Student Conduct and a respect for the most significant Carolina tradition
- your reward is in the practice of these principles

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code.

- you are encouraged to work together with your fellow students and to share knowledge and learning
- however, academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work

DIVERSITY

In this class, we will discuss diversity as a general good for organizations. It is a fundamental value for INLS285.

WHAT THIS FACULTY STANDS FOR

In support of the University's diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value.

We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability.

As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to:

- Ensure inclusive leadership, policies and practices;
- Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research;
- Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse opinions are valued;
- Recruit traditionally underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff; and
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups in the State.

The statement represents a commitment of resources to the development and maintenance of an academic environment that is open, representative, reflective and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness.