Description

This seminar is designed to provide a concise overview of the field of industrial & organizational psychology (IOP). We will conceptualize selected major topics of the field by reading, discussing, and evaluating relevant literature. You will receive an overview of IOP as a science, scholarly endeavor, and profession.

The course is designed as a seminar; a guided self-learning experience. I have developed a structured set of topics and associated readings. Your task is to read, think about, and critically evaluate the readings. You need to be prepared to discuss and share your thoughts, ask questions, and provide reactions during our meetings. At a minimum, that means identifying the theme(s) or main point(s) of each reading, defining the central concepts or issues, and evaluating the merit of the paper's position and findings (for empirical papers) or conceptual coherence and value (for theory or review papers). I will serve as resource person and guide. The point is to develop your own coherent understanding of key topics, theoretical foundations, and important research issues. Your understanding of the topics covered by IOP will evolve as you learn more in grad school and beyond. For now, the goal is to begin the process of learning to make sense of organizational behavior from the perspective of an industrial / organizational psychologist.

Learning Strategies

As an introduction, the course covers a lot of material. As a novice to the field, there is simply a lot of basic content that you have to read, encode, and learn. I do not expect you to commit every word you read to memory, but you are expected to acquire basic information from each reading and to develop learning strategies for retaining the information for our discussion in class – and beyond for your use as an organizational scientist. For example:

- For a review reading, you should (1) have a clear understanding of the review structure, (2) be able to describe / discuss specific topics covered in the review, (3) be aware of how research on the topic is evolving, and (4) identify relevant theory and research issues for the future.
- For a theoretical reading, you should (1) know the premise (background, assumptions, gap in the literature), (2) theoretical model and mechanisms, and (3) research directions the theory prompts.
- For empirical research papers, you should (1) know the key contribution, (2) theoretical framework-model-hypotheses, (3) methodology / approach, (4) key findings, and (5) strengths and weaknesses (6) future directions.

HOW you accomplish this is up to you, but you need to develop a system for capturing this information and retaining it in a way that you can add to it and update it. Not just for this course, but for other courses and other learning activities. Learning is an ongoing process. Many classic readings will be read multiple times, new insights will be gained with each exposure, and you need to have a way to capture this systematically. Highlighting key parts of a reading and making margin notes are the most basic strategy; necessary, but not sufficient. I urge you to take notes as you read (or after you read) as a way to capture and crystallize your thoughts and reactions. They should be updated as we discuss the material and your understanding evolves. I recommend that you get your notes into bibliographic software so your citations, articles, and notes are all easily accessible, modifiable, and searchable. Reading and learning should generate artifacts that help you organize, retain, and evolve your expertise!

If there is one key take-away from our first class meeting, this is it!
Course Requirements

Participation (20%). Because the seminar requires active participation and discussion to be effective, it is critical that readings be completed prior to class meetings. As a novice, you need to acquire a lot of content (the 1st step of expertise) and you need to make sense of it (which distinguishes experts from novices). Seminar members are expected to attend all sessions and to actively discuss and critically decompose the assigned reading material. I will evaluate the amount and quality of discussion participation. It is not important that every comment you make is a pearl of wisdom, but it is important that you are aware of the basics (outlined above); make consistent contributions to enable collective sensemaking; and show evidence of comprehension, insight, and development. If I have questions about your understanding or contributions, I will review your learning artifacts to gauge your learning efforts.

Assignments (20%). Most of the topic areas have concise thought pieces that are designed to prompt your reflection about a topic area. In the absence of further instructions, you can assume that such assignments should be printed DS on 1-2 sheets of paper. On 10/23, you will collaborate to lead a class discussion. Your lesson plan is your assignment. All assignments are due at the beginning of the assigned class—please bring one copy for yourself and one to hand in to me. If discussion stalls, I will use your written material to catalyze discussion.

Presentation (10%). The written product for the course is a review paper that is described in detail below. In weeks 14 and 15 of the course students will present their project to the class. This exercise has two goals. First, it provides an opportunity for you to develop and refine your presentation skills. These skills are central to your development as an effective professional. Second, it will give you an opportunity to share your knowledge with the rest of the class and to get some critical and constructive feedback. You should plan on 40 minutes total for your presentation, including questions.

Review Paper (50%). The purpose of the assignment is to give you an opportunity to apply your scholarship to thoroughly study and understand the conceptual development of an important topic area and to convey the evolution of the topic over time. The paper should be organized around two primary foci that should receive equal weight (i.e., similar number of pages). This assignment is described in detail on the next page.

Reading Assignments

Assigned readings in the form of journal articles and book chapters are listed in the remainder of this syllabus. These readings will form the basis for our discussions. Please read them well in advance so you have time to take notes on key points (we will discuss specifics of the readings) and time to reflect for the thought pieces. In other words, don’t try to cram them in Monday morning!

If you have not taken an undergraduate course in IOP, I recommend using a basic text to get a concise and reasonably coherent overview of key topic areas prior to tackling readings for our more focused and in-depth discussions. Here are two alternatives.


In addition, although I have assigned several articles from the Special Centennial Issue of the Journal of Applied Psychology as part of your reading assignments, I have not assigned every article in the Special Issue. However, the entire Special Centennial Issue is recommended reading for newcomers to the field.
Review Paper Details

This assignment is structured to give you an opportunity (1) to organize and explain the development of a topic area and (2) to critically review the topic to provide insights as to how theory and research can be improved. The purpose of the **first focus** is to review key milestones in the thinking, theory, and research for a topic relevant to organizational psychology. The paper should identify the earliest thinking about the topic and trace its evolution, reconceptualization, and advances up through the end of the 20th century. This portion of the paper should focus on **major developments**; the purpose is to provide a description of how we arrived at the contemporary perspective for the topic -- "how we got here." At this point (± 2000), the review should provide a more detailed analysis of more recent research and developments for the topic. The purpose here is to indicate the current state of the research area -- "where we are now." Time frames need to be calibrated to the history of the topic and its time frame. In other words, enduring topics have a lot of history, whereas more recent topics have less history, so the nature of your coverage will need to be calibrated and adjusted to your topic.

Given the substantial number of review articles / chapters that have appeared over the last couple of decades, it is also important that you select a topic that is sufficiently focused (i.e., a Goldilocks solution: not too big, not too small, just right!) and unique relative to existing reviews. So, for example, rather than "work motivation" as a topic which has many reviews and is too big, you might instead select a topic like self-regulation models of work motivation.

The **second focus** is designed to be a critical evaluation of the topic, which then leads to suggestions for improvement. The many review papers that you will read for the course provide several models to emulate. For example:

- Has the research become static and routine, with little new progress, or at a dead end -- What new issues should be considered to revitalize it?
- Have investigators made implicit, untested assumptions that are open to challenge -- How is "conventional wisdom" challenged if the assumptions are revised?
- Are there opposing points of view, or conflicting data -- How can they be integrated or critically tested?
- Is the theory interesting, but the research of low quality -- How can it be improved?

I think this should convey the idea. The point is to critique the current status of the topic and to then provide insightful scholarly suggestions for what ought to be done to improve theory, research, and practice -- "where we ought to be going." Such suggestions need to be guided by theory, research methodology, logic, and critical analysis; not mere opinion or assertion; this is the essence of professional scholarship. I emphasize that this is a very important and creative aspect of the paper, and one to which most people devote too little time and attention. It is central to my evaluation.

Papers should be in the neighborhood of 25-30 pages of text and should conform to the guidelines stipulated by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Edition).

Topics should be selected as soon as possible—consult with me as necessary. **You should select a topic, and provide a one-page write-up by 9/18 (Week 4).** Starting today, you have **13 weeks** to work on this project. **Time flies; start early!** I am available for consultation throughout, and I strongly urge you to take advantage of my advice EARLY in the process. **Papers are due at the beginning of class (by 2:00 PM) on Nov. 20.** Late papers will have 5% deducted for each day late. Research sources for the review process will be discussed in class.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Schedule &amp; Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 8/30</td>
<td>Course Organization, Topic Overview, Assignments, and Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. 9/4</td>
<td>Labor Day--No Class Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. 9/11</td>
<td>What is Organizational Psychology and Where Is It Headed? Building Theory and Generating Research Ideas Science and Publication Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. 9/18</td>
<td>Research Methods, Measurement, and Analytic Techniques (Deadline for paper topic selection; one page project description due)</td>
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<td>5. 9/25</td>
<td>Work Outcomes: Job Performance, Attitudes, and Affect</td>
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<td>6. 10/2</td>
<td>Individual Differences, Selection, and Validation</td>
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<td>7. 10/9</td>
<td>Learning, Training, and Development</td>
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<td>8. 10/16</td>
<td>Work Motivation</td>
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<td>9. 10/23</td>
<td>Job Design, Stress &amp; Well-Being, and Occupational Safety</td>
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<td>10. 10/30</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td>11. 11/6</td>
<td>Socialization, Mentoring, and Organizational Climate &amp; Culture</td>
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<td>12. 11/13</td>
<td>Work Groups and Teams</td>
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<td>13. 11/20</td>
<td>&quot;Classic&quot; Organizational Systems Theory (Review Paper Due 2 PM)</td>
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<td>11/23</td>
<td>Have a Happy Thanksgiving 🍁</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. 11/27</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
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<td>15. 12/4</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
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(Course Evaluation, Wrap-up, and Lessons Learned)
Reading Assignments

1. **Organization and Overview**
   - No Reading Assignment

2. **Labor Day**
   - No Reading Assignment -- Enjoy!

3. **What is I/O psychology and where is it headed?**

   [The end section that describes each chapter in the handbook is optional]


**Building Theory and Generating Research Ideas**


**Science and Publication**


JApplied checklist

**Assignment:** Generate a research idea and develop 2 or more associated hypotheses. Also consider: (1) Problem framing (What is the real-world problem?) (2) Contribution (How will your work fill an important gap in the research literature? So what? Why is your idea important?)

**OPTIONAL Reading – Useful for your development as a scientific writer (will not discuss in class).**

4. **Research Methods, Measurement, and Analytic Techniques**


Assignment: You are interested in the question of how leader “consideration” (focus on employee needs) and/or “task oriented” (focus on task requirements) behaviors affect subordinate satisfaction and job performance. Specify your concise “theory” about these behavior clusters and evaluate it with one or more hypotheses. (a) Design a field research study (quasi-experiment or non-experimental design) to test your hypotheses. Be specific as to the method (how, sample), setting (where), and data (constructs and measures) required to evaluate your hypotheses. What are the potential limitations (dilemmas or trade-offs) inherent in your design? (b) Design a lab experiment to evaluate the hypothesis. Be sure your design deals with the most common problems that can plague lab studies. Describe (as above) your method, setting, and data. What dilemmas do you face? What advantages/drawbacks does this design have relative to your field design? Be prepared to discuss your designs in class. For both designs, sketch how you would analyze your data.

5. **Work Outcomes: Job Performance, Attitudes, and Affect**


Assignment: Develop a comprehensive definition of job performance. Define the phenomenon—what constitutes performance? (I’m interested in your view of the nature of performance as a phenomenon—a process—not necessarily a list of dimensions.) What key factors influence job performance?

6. **Individual Differences, Selection, and Validation**

An exercise illustrating individual differences. Please prepare responses in advance of our meeting.


**OPTIONAL Reading – For background, as needed.**


Assignment: What do you see as the three most significant challenges to conventional approaches of personnel selection over the next quarter century—Why are they challenges and what can be done to help resolve them?

7. **Learning, Training, & Development**


Assignment: Distill the readings to identify five key areas of research to advance training and development; think broadly; use the literature to support your ideas.

8. **Work Motivation**


Assignment: Select one of the following individual behavior outcomes—job performance, turnover, OCBs—or select your own outcome of interest. Then select a motivational theory or approach that accounts for the psychological processes that yield that behavioral outcome. Discuss why the selected theory is well suited for explaining the phenomenon; and why others are not.

9. **Work Design, Stress & Well-Being, and Occupational Safety**


Assignment - Discussion leadership: Grads will cluster as 2 dyads and 1 triad and will collaborate to plan discussion leadership for each of the topics. Discussion leaders should be well-prepared for prompting and guiding class discussion for each topic. You will develop a lesson plan (i.e., learning objectives, key discussion questions / prompts, key insight targets) that will be your assignment this week. Each topic will have 55 minutes of class time for discussion.

Job Design: _______________ _____________ _______________

Stress & Well-Being: _______________ _____________ _______________

Safety: _______________ _____________ _______________
10. **Leadership**


Assignment: What is the nature of leadership? Looking across the different perspectives offered in the readings, develop a definition of leadership that concisely captures its essential “characteristics” (i.e., factors, processes, behaviors, etc.). Be prepared to defend the key characteristics in your definition.

11. **Socialization, Mentoring, and Organizational Climate & Culture**


Assignment: (1) What is the purpose of newcomer socialization, how does it occur, and what are its outcomes?
(2) What is mentoring? Is it desirable or undesirable from the perspective of the organization – why? If it is desirable, how can it be facilitated and, if not desirable, how can it be mitigated?
(3) Where does climate originate—is it a property of the setting, the person, both? Explain. What is the difference between climate and culture? Succinctly describe their similarities and differences.

12. Work Groups and Teams


Assignment: Distill the readings to identify three critical characteristics for creating and sustaining effective work teams. Use the readings to justify the top three characteristics you select as critical.

13. "Classic" Organizational Systems Theory


Assignment: (a) Identify the contingencies linking organizational environment, technology, and structure; (b) How are these macro factors and their relations relevant to individual perceptions, attitudes, and behavior?

11/28  Have a Happy Thanksgiving 😊

14.  **Project Presentations (4)**

____________________    __________________    ____________________    ____________________

15.  **Project Presentations (3)**

____________________    __________________    ____________________

Course Evaluation, Wrap-up, and Lessons Learned
**Policies**

Final Grades will be determined as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (4.0)</td>
<td>90% and above</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ (3.5)</td>
<td>85 – 89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B (3.0)</td>
<td>80 – 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+ (2.5)</td>
<td>75 – 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (2.0)</td>
<td>70 – 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (1.0)</td>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F (0.0)</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
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**MAKE-UP POLICY**

All assignments must be completed when scheduled. Unless prior permission has been obtained, NO late or makeup assignments or tests will be accepted or given. Permission may be granted for those who contact the instructor prior to the scheduled date, and provide valid documentation related to the absence either before or after the absence.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is not mandatory but strongly encouraged, and it will influence your participation grade. You are expected to be aware of any changes in dates of assignment or tests. Ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY**

The official university policy is as follows:

*It has always been the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith.*

The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors. It is also the responsibility of those faculty who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their chairpersons, who shall assume the responsibility for covering their classes.

As Michigan State University has become increasingly multicultural, the incidence of conflicts between mandatory academic requirements and religious observances has increased. In the absence of a simple and dignified way to determine the validity of individual claims, the claim of a religious conflict should be accepted at face value. Be aware that some degrees of observance may have a more extensive period of observance. Instructors may expect a reasonable limit to the number of requests by any one student. Some instructors attempt to cover all reasons for student absences from required academic events such as quizzes or exams with a blanket policy, e.g., allowing the student to drop one grade or two quizzes without penalty. If this is meant to extend to religious observances, the instructor should state this clearly at the beginning of the term. If instructors require make-up exams, they retain the right to determine the content of the exams and the conditions of administration, giving due consideration to equitable treatment.
MISCONDUCT
Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course.
The official university policy is as follows:

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

• claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.
• procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
• complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
• allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
• alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
• fabricate or falsify data or results.

INCOMPLETE POLICY
The official university policy is as follows:

The I-Incomplete may be given only when: the student (a) has completed at least 6/7 of the term of instruction, but is unable to complete the class work and/or take the final examination because of illness or other compelling reason; and (b) has done satisfactory work in the course; and (c) in the instructor's judgment can complete the required work without repeating the course.

Provided these conditions are met, the instructor electing to give an I-Incomplete files an Agreement for Completion of (I) Incomplete at the time course grades are due. This agreement specifies what the student must do, and when, to remove the I-Incomplete. The department or school office gives a copy to the student, and retains a copy for at least one year.