Kent State University
College of Business Administration

MIS 34185 (Call 14176) Syllabus – Individual and Group Behavior – Fall 2006
Class Schedule: M 6:15–8:55pm, Room 213 BSA

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Course Overview

Students will develop an understanding of workplace behavior and how it can help an organization gain a valuable competitive advantage. Results in the modern organization hinge on the ability to attract, develop, motivate and retain a diverse array of people. The course material will give present and future managers the knowledge to succeed in the organization and contribute to its growth and success.

Class Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Chapter(s)</th>
<th>Note</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course intro and 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ch 2: Foundations of Individual Behavior</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
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<td>Ch 3: Personality and Emotions</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ch 4: Basic Motivation Concepts</td>
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<td>Ch 5: Motivation: Concepts to Applications</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Ch 6: Individual Decision Making and Review</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Ch 7: Foundations of Group Behavior</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ch 8: Understanding Work Teams</td>
<td>MP1 due</td>
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<td>Ch 9: Communication</td>
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<td>Ch 10: Leadership and Creating Trust</td>
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<td>Ch 11: Power and Politics</td>
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<td>Ch 12: Conflict and Negotiation</td>
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<td>10*</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Ch 13: Foundations of Organizational Structure</td>
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<td>Ch 14: Organizational Culture</td>
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<td>Ch 15: Human Resource Policies and Practices</td>
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<td>Ch 16: Organizational Change and Development</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
<td>MP2 due</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Project Presentations and Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Final Exam  Monday, December 11, 6:00pm</td>
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*Note: Last day to withdraw is Sunday, November 5, 2006. Withdrawal before the deadline results in a grade of “W” on the official transcript; after the deadline a grade must be calculated and reported.
### Grading

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<tr>
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<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini Projects – 2 @ 45 points each</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams – 3 @ 60 points each</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>Short Answers – 3 @ 10 points each</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100%</td>
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#### Grades

- **A** = 270 – 300 points (90%)
- **B** = 240 – 269 points (80%)
- **C** = 210 – 239 points (70%)
- **D** = 180 – 209 points (60%)
- **F** = Below 180 points

### A Note on Grading

Dates for exams and mini-projects are shown on the above schedule. Except for documented emergencies (ie death in the family, doctor’s excuse), no makeup exams will be allowed and no late assignments will be accepted.

Exams will be based on your readings and material covered in class. Unless I specifically tell you otherwise, you can expect that any and all material covered in the textbook and/or in class are fair-game for an exam. Therefore, it is to your advantage to attend class regularly and to keep up with readings.

Once grades for an exam, quiz or homework are received, you have three days to let me know by e-mail, that you feel a mistake has been made in your grade. If you fail to contact me about your grade within this three day period, then the grade will be considered final.

A letter grade of A will be earned if you have a total score of 90% or more. A grade of B will be earned for a total score that is at least 80% and less than 90%. For a C, you must have at least 70% and less than 80%. A D will be assigned with at least 60% and less than 70% for your total score. An F will be assigned to all students receiving a total score that is less than 60%. Note, a total score of 79.9% is less than 80% and will result in a final grade of C.

### Academic Dishonesty

Except for those projects where you are allowed to work with others, it is expected that all work you submit for a grade will be your own. If this is not the case, a failing grade will be assigned for the work and/or course, and the instructor reserves the right to pursue additional sanctions, as provided by University rules and regulations. If you are not familiar with these rules and regulations, you can find them in the current University Phone Directory.

For those projects that are individual in nature, each of you must submit your own work. Should two or more of you submit identical or substantially identical assignments/quizzes, then I can only assume that one (or more) of you copied from the other(s). In such a circumstance, every student involved will receive a failing grade for the assignment or course. Additional sanctions may be pursued in accord with University rules and regulations.

### Students With Disabilities

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in the Michael Schwartz Student Services Center (672-3391).
**Class Registration**

Students have responsibility to ensure they are properly enrolled in classes. You are advised to review your official class schedule (using Web for Students) during the first two weeks of the semester to ensure you are properly enrolled in this class and section. Should you find an error in your class schedule, you have until Sunday, September 10, 2006 to correct the error with your advising office. If registration errors are not corrected by this date and you continue to attend and participate in classes for which you are not officially enrolled, you are advised now that you will not receive a grade at the conclusion of the semester for any class which you are not properly registered.

**Course Prerequisite(s)**

The prerequisite for this course is MIS 24163. Students attending this course who do not have the proper prerequisite(s) risk being deregistered from this class.

**Class Attendance**

Class attendance is not required, but it is expected. If you must miss a class, then you should obtain all material covered in class from another student. Except for documented emergencies, do not come to me for the material that you missed by not coming to class.

**A Note on Class Decorum**

I interpret your coming to class as an expression of your interest in learning as much as you possibly can. Certainly, you should assume that this is your classmates' intention in being here. In fairness to your classmates (and me), I expect you to refrain from talking to others, reading newspapers, sleeping, playing radios or CDs, making telephone calls and other similar, disruptive activities. Don't be surprised if I ask you or someone else to leave because of conduct detrimental to the class. If you simply must study for a test later that day, stay home, go to the Library, find a bench outdoors. Don't do it in class.

**A Note on Extra Credit**

In general, I do not make extra credit available. It is up to you to stay current with the material covered in class, and a poor grade on an assignment is not a reason for me to provide extra credit. On rare occasions, I may consider giving an extra credit assignment, but it will only be for a few points, and in order to be fair, must be made available to everyone.

**Readings**

This course is designed to help you develop skills that will serve you in an ever changing professional environment. In particular, your text and any other supplementary materials you may acquire are resources to help you master important concepts. You should take the extra time to familiarize yourself with them.

**Special Note**

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus.
**Mini Projects**

You will complete two mini projects during the course of this semester. The first will be an individual project, and the second will be a group project. As soon as possible, pick an individual mini project that interests you and begin working on it. In addition, you should begin identifying classmates who you would like to include in your group for the group mini project. Your group can be as small as two people, or as large as four people. What is important is that you find individual(s) who will work well together for the group project.

For both the individual and group mini projects, your finished product will be a report written for a managerial audience. The individual mini project should be no more than 4-6 double-spaced pages; the group mini project should be no more than 10-12 double-spaced pages. The group mini project will also have a 10 minute presentation at the end of the semester.

When writing for a business audience, there are a variety of acceptable formats. You have some latitude in the format you use; a suggested format is provided below:

I. Executive Summary: a few sentences that summarize your key findings.
II. Introduction: provide problem statement and why it’s important.
III. Background: What have others found or suggest should be found? What do you expect to find? Make sure you properly cite your sources.
IV. Project: Provide detail of your project (what, how, when, where, etc)
V. Results: What were your results? Present them in an easy-to-understand format.
VI. Discussion: Did your results match your expectations and/or what others have done or suggested? Why or why not.
VII. Conclusion: Restate your problem, your key findings, and why this is important.

Except for the executive summary, you may deviate from the above suggested format depending on the mini project that you choose. However, your report must have a logical “flow” (to guide the reader from problem to conclusion) and be concise in writing style.

**Individual Mini Projects**

1. **Diversity.** Not only is the US workforce becoming increasingly diverse, but organizations continue to locate operations overseas. Therefore, it is imperative that managers understand some of the issues minorities face on a daily basis, so that team productivity can be enhanced. This project focuses on living as a minority, so you may either:
   a. Interview an individual who is a racial, national, or religious minority at KSU. Discover what it feels like to be a minority, how others treat him or her, how she or he would like to be treated, what challenges they have faced and how they were handled, etc.
   b. Become a minority yourself by becoming a person with a disability. If you have access to a wheelchair, take it for 2-3 hours around the KSU campus. Don’t use your legs and try to get in and out of buildings, restrooms, cars, etc. (I have a wheelchair that you may borrow)
   c. Your report should minimally discuss what you thought about the subject beforehand, what your experiences were during the interview/exercise, what your thoughts are now about the subject, and the lessons learned.

2. **Skill development.** Most of us have something that we would like to do better – communicate more assertively, exercise more often, stop procrastinating, study more, etc. Follow the specified change routine that includes identifying a specific behavior that you want to increase or decrease, and rewarding yourself for following your plan. The entire process will take at least 3 weeks, so get started quickly.
   a. Choose a specific, discrete, measurable behavior that is relevant to the course, difficult for you to do/avoid doing and important. Avoid picking something that’s
easy/trivial and that are enacted infrequently. Try to pick a behavior that occurs (or should occur) at least daily.

b. Make observations of the behavior over a three day period to get a baseline. Count the number of times you enact the behavior with out trying to increase/decrease it at all. Count when the behavior occurs as it occurs (not later on), so the recording must be simple. Be accurate and strict with your counting.

c. Write down your specific plan for behavior modification (e.g. the number of times that you would like to increase or decrease the behavior and how you plan to make the change). In your plan, specify the reward/punishment for meeting/not meeting the plan. Also choose the schedule for the reward/punishment.

d. Keep a record of the behavior while you are applying the rewards/punishments. Continue the reward/punishment schedule for 14 consecutive days by constantly recording your behaviors. Your report should include a visual (graph) of the behavior frequency.

Group Mini Projects

1. Team effectiveness. Consider a highly successful or highly unsuccessful team that you have some familiarity with. The team can be any organization – a business, a non-profit, an athletic team, etc. What is important about your choice is that you are able to obtain data on that team/organization. This data can come from public sources (e.g. annual reports, press, etc.) or non-public sources (e.g. interviews). Your book has much to say about team effectiveness. Using your book as a guide, assume that your group is a consulting firm that has been hired to assess the team's/organization's effectiveness. Your report should minimally:
   a. Describe what is meant by “Team effectiveness” (how is it defined, how has it been measured, etc.)
   b. Describe the characteristics of the team that you will be analyzing that you consider important toward team effectiveness. These characteristics must have a prior research basis, so you will need to cite prior work in this area.
   c. Get data on your focal team/organization as it pertains to these characteristics. You should get as much data as possible, with multiple periods of data being especially useful. You should also have data on the team's effectiveness score as well.
   d. It will be extremely beneficial to have data on “matched” organization that is more/less successful than the one you chose. Collecting similar data on this organization will help show that your prescription can work.
   e. Write up your report in a logical manner, so that a non-expert reader can easily see what the problem is, why your prescription should work, how your prescription will bring about the desired outcome, and some proof that it will work.

2. Integrative. Pick a story from the Wall Street Journal (or any other business paper) that depicts a company and/or management team facing a substantial problem. This should not be difficult to do, as the Wall Street Journal provides a comprehensive daily review of the problems, successes, opportunities and threats faced by American business/business leaders. Some recent examples of problems that may make an interesting paper are options back-dating, succession-planning, the impact of oil prices. What is important is that the problem must incorporate an individual, group or organizational behavior/dynamic that is being impacted. Your group, as consultants, has been hired to address this problem as it affects the individual, group or organization and provide a workable solution. Therefore, your report should minimally:
   a. Fully describe the problem: you will need to fully research your company/problem. Depending on the problem, you may need to collect financial data, biographical data, competitor data, etc. Excellent sources of data include the Compustat ®, Lexis-Nexis ®, company annual reports/10Ks, and the Wall Street Journal.
   b. Based on your understanding of the problem, recommend a workable solution: You have learned many theories and interventions that can influence the behavior of
individuals, groups and the organization. Use at least one of these concepts in your proposed solution. You may need to do further reading to gain additional examples/knowledge/citations that will bolster your recommendation.

c. Lay out the plan for implementing the solution: As a consultant, you must not only recommend a solution, but you must also provide the details for how to implement the solution. Your plan should minimally include a time-line and resources required to implement your plan.

d. Discuss the main benefits/shortfalls of your recommendation: The success of any plan is subject to the proper confluence of numerous variables. Make sure to explain what the anticipated results are if everything goes well. Then, discuss some things that might go wrong, and how they may be prevented.

e. Conclusion: restate the main points of your paper, and prepare a PowerPoint presentation for review with the class.