UPADM-GP 103:  
Introduction to Managing Public Service Organizations

Wagner Graduate School of Public Service  
New York University  
Fall 2017

Professor Simone Nicole McGurl  
Email: ss9756@nyu.edu  
Office Hours: By request (and please do request!)  
Class Location: Bldg: GSCASL Room: 279  
Class Time: Thursday, 4:55pm-7:25pm

Course Assistant: Joyce Chiao  
Email: jc3893@nyu.edu

Course Goals and Objectives  
The goal of Introduction to Managing Public Service Organizations (IMPSO) is to enhance your management and leadership skills for potential service in the public and non-profit sectors. The course provides you with the tools you will need to diagnose and solve organizational problems, to influence the actions of individuals, groups, and organizations, and to lead impactful public service organizations.

You’ve presumably taken this class because you want to have a positive impact in the world. Your interest could be affordable housing, more bicycle lanes, arts programs for disadvantaged kids or access to quality pre-natal care. It could be making sure public policies are based on the best possible evidence, or that nonprofits are financially solvent, or that staff are treated fairly and respectfully. Whatever your passion, you can only realize that impact by mastering organizational processes. Organizations are the way work gets organized, coordinated, and accomplished. Knowing how organizations work – how to work within them – are perhaps the most powerful tools you can have.

A key management task is to assemble the skills, talents, and resources of individuals and groups into those combinations that best solve the organizational problems at hand. You must manage people, information, and processes to accomplish organizational goals; you must make things happen, and often not under conditions or timeframes of your own choosing; and you must learn from the challenges you experience. The successful execution of these tasks requires leaders to understand what skills and abilities they bring to and need from their teams and organizations, to formulate a mission and strategy, to make effective and ethical decisions, to recruit, influence and motivate diverse individuals, to optimize the structure of their organization, to measure and improve performance, and to drive organizational change.

IMPSO prepares you to achieve these objectives by providing you with fundamental frameworks and tools developed from the behavioral and social sciences and tested by leaders in organizations representing all sectors of the economy.

Course Format
Each week we will focus on a particular set of management skills. Our goal will be to distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies. We will accomplish this by discussing key concepts, analyzing related cases, engaging in role-play exercises, and completing team projects.

This course reflects a dual focus on practice and conceptual training. The course readings introduce key concepts and useful ways of thinking about common situations in complex organizations. Case studies and class exercises provide opportunities to apply theories, concepts, and research findings to particular situations, sectors, and fields of interest to students and to hone your skills in problem definition and problem solving. The written assignments, including the team project, ask you to consolidate your insights and to practice your analytic skills.

Preparing for Class
It is critical that you complete the readings for each session in advance of class. You and your classmates will not benefit as much from the class sessions if you come unprepared. Take care to analyze and absorb case studies to prepare for class discussion. Many of the principles and issues involved in IMPSO are relatively timeless and not limited only to organizations of a public service nature. Consequently, you should not rely on the copyright dates or specific organizational applications of either the readings or the cases in evaluating their usefulness. “Classic” readings and cases are included because they speak to important issues in useful, interesting, and time-tested ways.

The articles in our readings provide key ideas and theoretical insights into human behavior and its impact on productivity and performance. To be sure you have grasped the point of each piece, ask yourself:

- What is the author’s main argument?
- What are the key concepts and principles introduced?
- How does this matter for an organization?
- What are the implications for the kinds of challenges I might face as a leader, a manager, a policy analyst, an urban planner, or a financial analyst?
- How can I apply this to my organization, my job, and/or my career?

The cases provide concrete situations to which you should apply the concepts introduced in articles. They provide an opportunity for you to practice diagnosing the nature and causes of organizational performance and thinking through the potential consequences of decisions.

Required Readings
All except four of the readings are posted on the course NYU Classes website. The other four readings are case studies available for download via the Harvard Business Review website. If you use the link below, it will take you to the coursepack created for this course, and the case studies will cost $3.95 each. The purchased case studies will be used in the classes covering Managing & Measuring Organizational Performance, Designing Organizational Structure, Motivating Performance and Power & Strategic Influence, covered weeks 5, 6, 7 & 13. These readings are NOT optional.

https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/32170907

Optional
The syllabus indicates a number of optional readings provided on NYUC for students who would like to read more about a particular topic. For students who want to read a thorough, academic treatment of many of the topics we will cover in class, reviewing the literature in organizational theory and organizational behavior, I would recommend the following:


**NYU CLASSES**
You must have access to the NYU Classes class site at [http://classes.nyu.edu/](http://classes.nyu.edu/)

- Many class related documents (extra readings, discussion questions, class handouts, etc.) and surveys/exercises will be posted here. If you have not activated your NYU account or have forgotten your password, you can activate or change your password at [http://start.nyu.edu](http://start.nyu.edu). Your account must be activated to access NYU Classes.
- Some class announcements will also be distributed via e-mail. Thus, it is important that you actively use your NYU e-mail account, or have appropriate forwarding set up on NYUHome [https://home.nyu.edu/](https://home.nyu.edu/)

**Grading**
Your grade for the course will be based on the following elements:

- 25% Class participation (see guidelines below)
- 35% Team project (intermediate assignments, final team challenge, team member evaluations)
- 20% Two Written assignments (each worth 10%)
- 20% Final exam

Both exams will be case study analyses, done outside of class.

**Class Participation**
All class sessions will involve active discussion based on the readings and cases, with an emphasis on applying theory to practice. You should be prepared to share your ideas and to listen to and interpret the issues presented by classmates. One of the challenges and interesting aspects of management in the public sector is that often there is more than one right answer, amidst a complex set of facts and unknowns, addressing multiple audiences with different agendas. Share freely, adopt an open-minded stance, entertain new ideas from classmates and consider how your recommendations might change in light of new insights.

Your class participation is **crucial** to understanding the complexity of decision-making and the success of the class session. Participation includes presence, promptness, preparation, and engagement. Students are expected to attend all classes (with no more than one excused absence during the semester). Please email your professor and your CA before class if you will be absent.

Most participation will be voluntary; however, to insure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved, individuals will occasionally be called upon at my discretion. Keep in mind that your contributions should focus on quality rather than quantity. Questions are welcome and comments are encouraged that: are relevant to the current discussion; move the discussion forward;
contribute new insights; offer different perspectives; and bring in related real world experiences of your own or in the news.

Classroom Etiquette: I will not tolerate impolite behavior from anyone. Period. If I find your behavior inappropriate, I will ask you to withdraw from the class. This classroom is a safe space for people to express opinions and ask questions relevant to the topic under discussion.

Cookie Policy: If your cell phone rings or buzzes you will bring cookies in for everyone. If I catch you texting or wandering the web, the same rule applies.

**Team Project**
The goals of the team project are (1) to practice using team concepts on a weekly basis, (2) to connect theory to practice by utilizing the conceptual frameworks, strategies and analytic and practical tools of the course to create with your teammates a virtual organization (3) to engage your creativity and passion to design that organization to effectively address social change you desire.

The team project represents an excellent opportunity to enhance your understanding of the essential elements of organizations, how they behave and what they require to be effective and efficient. Your team will work on this project throughout the semester and it will address and reinforce the material we cover in the course. In addition, the project will afford students an opportunity to exercise their creativity and passions, addressing social problems you care about. That may be climate change, homeless housing, after school activities for disadvantaged children, improved educational performance, improved access to healthcare, bike lanes or any other topic addressing social or public concerns.

The team will choose the social arena their organization will operate in. This will require negotiation and compromise for team members and will be the first opportunity for some to see the benefit of creating a Team Charter as the first team activity. The organizations missions and goals must be grounded in reality (after all, there are plenty of real problems to choose from) and the organizations strategy must be similarly realistic in the sense that it cannot have unrealistic or magical solutions to social problems. The teaching team will reject submissions not grounded in reality. Having said that, we are looking for creativity. Social problems that have existed for decades or centuries may be amenable to solution today, given the advances in knowledge, technology and global awareness. If you see opportunities go for it.

To improve the team’s performance, particularly as the work requires many decisions that involve negotiation and compromise, including assigning project tasks and meeting project deadlines, a Team Charter is the team’s first assignment. A Team Charter defines the rules you establish about how you will work together, including rules for decision-making (i.e. consensus or majority rule), a process to resolve potential disputes among team members, and establishing time(s) outside of class when all the team members can be available for meeting together. Specific instructions for the Team Charter can be found on NYU Classes / Resources / Team Project.

*Although some class time will be designated for team work, to complete the project students will have to meet additionally, outside of class hours.* Teams should anticipate class time being available for the team assignment during weeks we cover *Team, Organizational Structure, and Motivation.*
Each team assignment will be due after the class has covered the topic with readings and lecture. BEFORE SUBMITTING THE TEAM ASSIGNMENT ON MISSION, TEAMS ARE REQUIRED TO SHARE THEIR DRAFT WITH THE CA(by email, by one designated member of the team), for her advice and counsel on choice of organization and creation of mission. After the Mission assignment, students are welcome to consult the CA on other assignments or any course related questions they have.

All assignments should be submitted on NYU Classes, and for team assignments, only one member of the team should submit the assignment. Assignments will be reviewed and returned to teams as either approved or with instructions for additional work. Teams are encouraged to continue work on the next assignment and not wait until their prior assignment is approved.

The specific Team deliverables are:

**Organization Charter**
See NYU Classes / Assignments for instructions on drafting a team charter.

For each written assignment creating the organization, the team should: 1. Describe how their organization will function (i.e. create a mission statement, design a specific strategy) and 2. Explain how what the team designed is consistent with academic readings covered for class.

**Organization Mission**
The team will write a Mission Statement for the organization, defining their organizations Purpose, Core Values and Primary Goals. The team will use course readings to design an effective mission statement that is motivational, identifies the scope of work and provides a way to measure success. The goals should be specific so that the strategy you next design can accomplish goals that are feasible. The team should carefully review course readings on Mission and may do independent research on this and all other topics. (If independent research is used it must be specifically cited.).

**Organization Strategy**
The team will design a strategy for the organization to effect the change or service desired. Based on the organization mission, a strategy will:

- Assess the internal and external environments, including potential competition
- Identify challenges facing the organization (found in similar real world organizations)
- Formulate strategies, methods to achieve goals in the Mission Statement. The strategy must address the goals, and the need to raise revenue.

The team should consider how to create competitive advantage (what will the organization do to demonstrate it is worthy of grants and donations, and what will it do to effect the change it’s mission identifies?). The strategy should not mistake goals for strategy. Developing the strategy will require the team to establish priorities and make choices, as realistically, organizations cannot due more than they can raise revenue to achieve.

**Team / Individual Status Reports**

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The team status report is the teaching team’s method of making sure we are aware of the accomplishments, and trials and tribulations of teams. Share them all. This will enable us to help you more effectively. Teams are never penalized for problems they experience, if they report them.

Individual reports are confidential and should express your individual opinions of any challenges / concerns / issues that you have had working on the team and/or executing the project. The Individual report gives students who don’t agree, fully or otherwise, with the team report, an opportunity to share their opinion. Sort of like minority opinions submitted by Supreme Court Justices, in cases where they don’t agree with the majority opinion.

Reports should include team name and membership.

**Organization Measurement Tools**
The team will develop performance measures appropriate to the specific purpose of each goal. The team must identify the outcomes you want to achieve by the activities of the organization, to enable meaningful measures of impact. Meaningful performance measures serve to evaluate, control, motivate and teach. Measures should be sufficiently clear to effectively inform managers who need to make program improvement decisions, to either change methods or expand the service. They will also be used to solicit additional funding from donors, so they need to be meaningful and tied to desired outcomes. An important test of the viability of performance measures is the feasibility and difficulty involved in collecting the data required to measure performance.

An example. For a program to address delinquency prevention the organization would measure program activities that count the number of:

- Parenting education classes established
- Parents completing the program
- Families referred to outside services
- Parents providing student encouragement
- Children with improved attendance at school
- Behavior problems at school
- Improvement in grades

The team should distinguish between short and long term goals. Assigned readings, particularly the material from Robert Behn should be helpful.

**Organization Culture**
A great workplace is where people are engaged (motivated) in their work, and involves mutual respect, particularly people being treated fairly, and results in high retention of employees. Describe the features of your organization that will establish a healthy, motivational environment. How will you communicate with, motivate and manage your employees? What are the features of your culture that will achieve these outcomes? Keep in mind your nonprofit status so money is a limited motivator. Also consider Expectancy Theory and potential unanticipated consequences of your plan.

**Organizational Grant Request**
The Team Final Presentation will be an opportunity to secure seed funding for your organization. This effort is similar to Echoing Green “whose cornerstone is providing seed
funding to social entrepreneurs who are launching bold new ideas to generate positive systemic change.” Echoing Green “believes investing in and supporting the right people to the ideas and ability to execute, rather than specific business plans, …”

Or, think “Shark Tank,” the reality television series in which “The Sharks - tough, self-made multi-millionaire and billionaire tycoons – give budding entrepreneurs the chance to make their dreams come true and potentially secure business deals that could make them millionaires,” or, as in your case, achieve meaningful and significant social change.

Your Team Final Presentation should seek to demonstrate the ability of your organization to achieve effective, impactful social change that can be scaled and sustained over a considerable period of time. You should address: Who you are? Why should we care? Explain your organizational culture; identify how you will motivate and measure performance, to build funder confidence in your ability to deliver promised results. Your Team Final Presentation should be creative, compelling, and convincing, since you will be competing for funding with your colleagues.

Prepare and deliver a persuasive presentation as if you were presenting to a group of potential funders, such as Acumen Fund, Echoing Green, and/or Gates Foundation. The presentation should be no more than eight minutes in length, with an additional four minutes allotted for questions and answers. This is a formal presentation so you should prepare visual aids to complement your verbal delivery. All team members should speak, at some point, during the presentation. It is acceptable if one or two team members focus solely on the question and answer section of your presentation.

Assignments, Grading and Outside-of-Class Exercises
To facilitate application of the class concepts and your project team development, you will be asked to complete some individual and team exercises, reflections, and written assignments, outside of class in addition to the team assignments. The instructions for all assignments can be
found on NYUC / Assignments. The exercises, reflections, and assignments and their due dates are listed below (individual assignments are **bold**):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Maximum Length &amp; Method of Submission</th>
<th>Graded?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment #1</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>5 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Charter</td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>2 pgs / NYUC / Final hard copy signed to professor after appvd</td>
<td>Yes- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team – Organization Mission</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>3 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment # 2</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>5 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implicit Association Exercise &amp; Reflection</td>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>1 pg/ NYUC</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team- Organization Strategy</td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>5 pgs / NYUC Individual-email to CA</td>
<td>Yes- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team &amp; Individual Status Reports</td>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>3 pgs / NYUC Individual- email to CA</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision Making &amp; Ethics Exercise</td>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team- Organization Measurement Tools</td>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>3 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team- Organization Culture</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>3 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Grant Request</td>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Yes- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Member &amp; Self Evaluations</td>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>1 page form / NYUC</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Posted December 4</td>
<td>8 pgs / NYUC</td>
<td>Yes- 20%</td>
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All assignments are due at 5:00PM on the due date. All assignments should be submitted double-spaced with 12-point font, preferably inside the text box on NYUC/ Assignments.

All written work will be evaluated using the following criteria:

*Theory*: How well can you apply the conceptual material offered in readings and lectures?
*Data*: How well do you utilize descriptive data to support your argument?
*Analysis*: How well do you integrate theory and data to create a coherent and logical argument?
*Organization*: How clear and well-organized is your presentation?
*Writing*: How well do you reflect professional quality in spelling, grammar, and writing style? (see section “Writing Resources” for writing assistance)
*Formatting*: Written assignments, including the team paper, should be submitted in 14-point font, left justified, with 1-inch margins, numbered pages, and no longer than the page limit specified for the assignment.

One general guideline to consider is to favor depth over breadth. That is, papers and memos covering fewer topics tend to also display more thorough analysis than assignments trying to cover more topics.
Exams
Both exams will be analyses of case studies covered in the readings and will be done outside of class and submitted on NYU Classes. Students are reminded that these are individual assignments and rules covering academic integrity apply.

Writing Resources
The school provides a writing consultant (free) and a writing workshop (not free) for assistance with written work. More information is available at the URL below: http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/services/tutoring

Memo writing guidelines can be found at the URL below: http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/students/WritingMemos.pdf

Statement of Academic Integrity
As members of the NYU Wagner community, we are all expected to adhere to high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. You can view our Academic Code at the following URL: http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies/academic-code

This is a good resource for issues of academic integrity, especially regarding writing. For this particular course, there are some specific behaviors required to meet our standards of academic integrity:

Team Project & Individual Assignments: Team projects should be completed by teams working together. Individual written assignments should be the sole work of the individual student.
Exams: All exams must be the sole work of the individual student.

Violations of these standards will automatically result in all participating students failing the course and being remanded to the discipline committee for further action.
COURSE OUTLINE AND SESSION SCHEDULE

Week 1: September 7

Objectives

- Introduction to syllabus, team project and class participants
- Reading, analyzing and discussing case studies effectively
- Understand the logic behind organization mission

Readings


In Class

- Review the syllabus, course requirements
- Discuss effective ways to read and analyze case studies
- Meet each other
- Discuss the value of an organization's mission
- CASE: Blast at Centralia No 5

1. What does this case study tell us about the central problems and issues facing public administrators in their work? Why is governmental administration such a complex and difficult task, according to this study?
2. What does the case say about any special public obligations of public administrators compared to the obligations of those engaged in private administration?
3. If you had actually been one of the leading administrative officials in the case—Driscoll O._scanlan, Dwight Green, or Robert Medill--what would have been your view of public administration, and how might such a perspective on administration have helped shape the outcome of the story?

Week 2: September 14

Objectives

- Explore the concepts of division of labor and coordination in teamwork
- Exploring potential for social media to impact the nonprofit world
Readings


The attached article that follows on Collaborative Strategic Planning is optional reading.

In Class
• EXERCISE: Team Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3: September 21</th>
<th>Strategic Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learn the key features of an organizational strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learn how to perform a strategic analysis of an organization</td>
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Readings


*Written Assignment due September 22

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4: September 28</th>
<th>Managing and Measuring Organizational Performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop an understanding of the reasons for measuring performance</td>
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<td>• Learn how performance measurement translates into effective resource allocation</td>
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Readings

In Class
- CASE: Harlem Children’s Zone discussion
  1. What are the crucial success factors for Rheedlin before the strategic planning process?
  2. What are HCZ’s goals? Are there any conflicting goals?
  3. What is HCZ’s theory of the problem? Does the focus on neighborhood and concentration make sense?
  4. What outcomes does HCZ emphasize? Is there more emphasis on process or impact?
  5. What do you think of HCZ’s evaluation strategy?
  6. What impact has the business plan and the focus on measurement had on the staff?

- Team Charter Due September 29

Week 5: October 5 Designing Organizational Structure

Objectives
- Understand how structure can solve coordination problems
- Discuss the impact of structure on other aspects of the organization

Readings

In Class
- CASE: Mercy Corps discussion
1. What are the strengths and concerns of a highly entrepreneurial organization?
2. How much of a challenge is it for Mercy Corps to achieve consistent quality across all of its sites? What are they doing well in this pursuit and what concerns you?
3. How does Mercy Corps’ headquarters provide the needed support for each of its operating units? What are the variables they need to consider in designing and implementing this support?
4. How should Mercy Corps decide which functions should be performed at the operating unit and which functions should be the responsibility of headquarters?
5. How important is the regional program director for success? If you were a country director, what is the one thing you would want from your regional program director?

**Week 6: October 12  Motivating Performance**

**Objectives**
- Understand how to motivate people
- Understand how to set goals and incentives to induce productive behavior

**Readings**

**In Class**
- Lecture on concepts that are essential for your Second Writing Assignment, the *Performance Pay for MGOA Physicians* case analysis

*Team Mission Due October 13*

**Week 7: October 19  Communicating Effectively**

**Objectives**
- Provide strategies for communicating feedback up and down the hierarchy
- Learn how to structure meetings effectively

**Readings**
In Class
- EXERCISE

*Written Assignment #2 Due October 27

* Reflection Due October 23
- Complete one Implicit Association Exercise, the one on race [NYUC/Assignments for link]. Note: You may have to take the assessment several times as it occasionally times out, leave yourself ample time to complete the exercise
- Implicit Association and Stereotyping Reflection [NYUC/Assignments for instructions] (post Reflection on NYUC). This assignment should enrich our discussion of diversity in our next class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8: October 26</th>
<th>Managing Diversity</th>
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Objectives
- Understand stereotyping and diversity-related issues
- Develop strategies to address issues of diversity in organizations
- Provide mid-semester feedback

Readings

In Class
- Implicit Association Exercise & Reflections discussion
- CASE: *Seattle Community Association* discussion
  1. What do you like about what SCA is trying to do? What are the problems with, and unintended effects of, the anti-racism initiative?
  2. What is the SCA leadership trying to achieve in the short-term? In the long-term? Which diversity paradigm (from Thomas & Ely’s article) is motivating the anti-racism initiative?
  3. Do you feel that there is a problem with diversity at SCA? How could you collect and use evidence to determine whether SCA’s hiring process could be called institutionally racist?
  4. What does the leadership’s thinking reveal about which constituents they feel most accountable to?
  5. Why did the anti-racism initiative and the new hiring policy adopted in 2003 meet so much resistance?

*Team Organizational Strategy due November 6*
Week 9: November 9  
*Organizational Culture*

**Objectives**
- Develop strategies for creating an effective culture
- Understand how culture provides an advantage for employee selection and retention

**Readings**

*Team Status Reports due November 13
* Decision Making & Ethics exercise due November 16

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Week 10: November 16  
*Decision Making and Ethics*

**Objectives**
- Demonstrate the sources of systematic decision-making biases
- Understand the sources of and solutions for ethical dilemmas in organizations

**Readings**
   **Required: Introduction, Biases 1, 2, 3, 9, 11. Recommended: entire chapter.**

**In Class**
- CASE: *Why Should My Conscience Bother Me?* Discussion
  1. Who is to blame for the unethical behavior?
  2. What factors increased B.F. Goodrich’s commitment to the flawed brake design?
  3. What could Lawson have done differently to prevent the production of a flawed brake?
  4. How would you go about blowing the whistle on unethical behavior in this situation?
5. What would you do to improve the organization if you were hired at Goodrich immediately after these incidents occurred?

*Team- Organization Measurement Tools due November 27

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<th>Week 11: November 30</th>
<th>Values and Justice in the Allocation of Resources</th>
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**Objectives**
- Explore decision-making in resource-constrained environments
- Understand the role of values in ethical dilemmas in organizations

**Readings**

**In Class**
- Allocation Exercise

*Team – Organizational Culture due December 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 12: December 7</th>
<th>Team Presentations</th>
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*Team Member and Self Evaluations Due December 11
*Final Exam - Posted December 4, Due December 14