COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the role that larger social systems play in defining, developing, and delivering social welfare services. The specific systems covered in the course include primary groups, natural groups, "informal" helping networks, neighborhoods, and communities. The course also focuses on social agencies as complex organizations, covering the spectrum of organizational structures from associations, not-for-profits, firms, and governmental agencies.

Course objectives:

1. To expose students to prevailing theories of organizational structure and behavior.
2. To provide a framework for analyzing organizational structures and roles.
3. To assess the impact that organizations have upon professional practice.
4. To examine various theories of the community as a social system.
5. To explore the impact that racial, ethnic and cultural, gender and age differences have upon the development of priorities in both communities and organizations.
6. To analyze the role that communities and organizations play in the development and implementation of social welfare policies.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS. All students are expected to purchase the following:

Other Readings will be assigned and made available to you.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS.** All students are expected:

1. **To attend** the entire class session every week. In class activities and discussion are a part of our learning together. If you must miss more than two class sessions, the instructor expects a written explanation. Absences will reduce your "participation" points. Roll may be taken at anytime during the class period.

2. **To participate in class discussion and all activities.** If you are uncomfortable speaking aloud in class, plan to meet with the instructor during her office hours (or by appointment) to discuss the readings or any parts of the assignments. Make certain that the instructor knows who you are, and has heard some of your thinking about issues covered in this class.

3. **To complete all assigned readings** to prepare for discussion, use the readings in written analyses and know content for exams.

4. **To contribute in a substantial way to the team community analysis project.**

5. **To submit all written assignments on the due date.**

6. Students are encouraged to bring to class and share relevant articles from the popular media and information about local current events addressing topics covered in class.

**ANALYTIC MEMOS**

There will be three written assignments requiring that you observe and analyze some facets of an organization and a neighborhood, and prepare a brief written report (a memo) on each. Together these are worth 30 points. Because such analysis will be new to many students, rewrites will be permitted within two weeks of the due date, to try to improve your grade.

**EXAMS**

There will be **two exams.** The Midterm Exam will be held during the 8th class session, for one hour; class will then resume after a break until the regular completion time. This is a closed book exam; you will be permitted to bring only one card of notes. Anyone needing to take the exam at another time must submit a written request two weeks before these dates; one alternate time for the administration of each exam may be arranged. Anyone requiring assistance or special considerations in taking the exam should notify the instructor.

The Final Exam will be a take-home essay exam due on the last day of class.

**RESEARCH TEAM COMMUNITY ANALYSIS**

A Community Analysis assignment will be completed on a specific geographic community in the Milwaukee area. Students will work cooperatively in
small groups of 2-4 students to study a neighborhood/community in which they (ideally) reside. (Basically, working with your "neighbors".) Teams will produce posters reporting their findings, and the projects will be evaluated by the class. All team members will receive the same grade.

**IN CLASS DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATIONS**

Students are expected to participate in class discussion of readings and films, and occasionally in small group analyses. As time permits students will also have the opportunity to share with the class findings from their observational research.

**STUDENT EVALUATION AND GRADING**

Grades will be given on the basis of points. Accumulated point totals will be available for student inspection at any time in the course, based upon completion of the following:

- **Observational activity & analytic memo**
  - Systems exchanges: 10
  - Organizational goals/structure: 10
  - Citizen responsiveness: 10

- **Community Analysis-team grade**: 20
- **Midterm exam (1 hour)**: 20
- **Final exam (Take Home)**: 20
- **Preparation for discussion of weekly readings**: 10

The grading scale will be as follows:

- 94-100% A
- 90-93.9 A-
- 88-89.9 B+
- 80-87.9 B
- 75-79.9 B-
- 70-74.9 C+
- 65-69.9 C
- 60-64.9 C-

**Schedule of Topics and Required Readings, Sect. 002**

All Chapters & articles must be read for day assigned

3. Sept. 21 Organizational Roles, Structures, & Processes  Neug. 2, 4, 5
Ritzer, "McDonaldization"

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Organizational Subsystems; Leadership</td>
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<td>Rec. Neug. 8</td>
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<td>5. Oct. 5</td>
<td>Organizational Technologies for Management &amp;</td>
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<td>Professional Practice; Routines</td>
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<td>How to diagnose a community</td>
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<td>7. Oct. 19</td>
<td>Local Communities: Social Systems vs.</td>
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<td>REVIEW FOR MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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<td>8. Oct. 26</td>
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<td>Ecological View: Race and Social Stratification</td>
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<td>A cultural chasm.</td>
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<td>9. Nov. 2</td>
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<td>Bye Bye Suburban Dream</td>
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<td>10. Nov. 9</td>
<td>The Social Systems Perspective</td>
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<td>Voluntary associations</td>
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<td>Social welfare and health care systems</td>
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<td>The community education system</td>
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<td>11. Nov. 16</td>
<td>External Forces Shaping Communities</td>
<td>Fellin 10,11</td>
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<td>Political and Economic Contexts</td>
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<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>NO CLASS--Community Project Groups Meet</td>
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<td>12. Nov. 30</td>
<td>Community Conflict</td>
<td>Fellin 12</td>
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<td>ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE</td>
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<td>13. Dec. 7</td>
<td>Social Integration in Communities, System Change</td>
<td>Fellin, Ch 13-14</td>
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<td>Analysis Posters (All groups)</td>
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<td>15. Dec. 21</td>
<td>FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM DUE</td>
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**Additional Readings/References**

= Required reading


Berry, Wendell. *Home Economics*.


Hiss, Tony. *The Experience of Place*.


Community Assets Model.


Schwartz, Ed. 1994, Fall. Reviving Community development. The American Prospect, 82-87.


Warren, R & L Lyon (eds) 1983. New Perspective on the American Community. Homewood, IL; Dorsey press. includes "The good community: what would it be?"


Novels and Descriptive Accounts with a strong sense of place and community


Kotlowitz, Alex. *There Are No Children Here*.

Kotlowitz, Alex. (1997). *The Other Side of the River*.


Paretsky, Sara. *Guardian Angel*. A novel about an old woman in Uptown, Chicago, whose yuppie neighbors try to steal the title to her property to gentrify it.


MEMO 1:

**AN OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS OF "MCDONALDIZATION" (or systems exchanges) IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

**GOALS:**

"To develop skills--picking up visual and other sensory clues--which are necessary for observing social processes.

"To distill behavioral patterns from observations

"To generalize from those patterns to large social forces and processes.

"To write a concise report using empirical data.

**1. Data Gathering:** Observe some institution of public life at work.

Spend at least 1-2 hours actually watching how this institution operates, how people give and
take, transact business, interact, exchange resources, compete, etc. Allow time to observe participants' attitudes. Identify some patterns in at least two things that participants do.

a. Note the way "work" or exchanges are systematized or routinized. Is there a kind of ritual or game to it?

b. How does routinization improve the functioning of this institution? How does it detract? What do you see as the impacts on: the workers, the customers or clients, the general environment, or context surrounding this exchange?

c. Note, if you can, any mechanisms by which this enterprise (or process) solicits or obtains consumer feedback, if it does. Is it formal or informal? Does it feed-back the "right" information?

2. Data Reporting and Analysis: Write a 2-3 page memo describing (in at least one page)

a. the setting and context of what you observed

b. the actual transactions/exchanges you observed

And evaluating (in at least a second page):

"what "else" was going on? What are your insights from the readings on the "Systems Model" and our discussion of "McDonalizations."

"questions (if any) this exchange raised for you about any of the other organizational models in Neugeboren chapter 3.

Due Session 4.

MEMO 2:

AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AND THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

To better understand the constraints on social service agencies, you will observe the work of a social service or health agency from its leader's perspective—from the "top down." The agency may be one familiar to you or one in the community you hope to study for your group project. Following the instructions outlined below, write a 3 page memo. Memos are due Session 7.

I. Data Gathering

Make an appointment and then interview an executive or director of a social service agency. This interview may be done alone or with other students. Ask questions to learn:

A) The purposes of its programs, its goals, objectives (be specific), the population it aims to serve, how it measures its effectiveness, its major contributions to the community, and its relations with other community organizations.
B) This leader's orientation to the work of this agency. Clarify this person's job title, duties, and position within the organization. (To whom do they report, and who reports to them?) Obtain an official organization chart.

**Regarding "Productivity" (A):**

1. Obtain written descriptions of the services of this agency: its annual report, advertising and/or information provided to applicants, the board of director, funders, or the community in general.

2. Identify at least 3 key ways that this agency measures what it does, how it operationalizes its goals. In other words, what are 3 things it clearly accomplishes? How does it know it has accomplished this? How does it get feedback?

**Regarding Leadership (B)**

1. Inquire about the kinds of critical decisions facing this executive today (see Neugeboren, p. 150). Do these involve Coordinating internal operations?

2. Maintaining linkages with the environment & other organizations?

3. Identify (as best you can) the sources of this official's legitimacy, authority or power. What types of power does this individual exert? How much is formal authority?

**II. Data Reporting and Analysis**

Using Neugeboren's descriptions, chapter 1, what type of agency is this?

Write up your observations and summarize the data you obtained, addressing each of the questions above under both Productivity and Leadership.

Given your observation of this leader's style, as well as their results, does this leader appear to be oriented to instrumental or social-emotional leadership (as described by Neugeboren, p. 152)?

Strive to be objective (neither overly critical, nor unduly praiseworthy) in your assessment.

Due Session 7

**MEMO 3:**

**AN ANALYSIS OF SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY, CONSUMER FRIENDLINESS and CITIZEN RESPONSIVENESS**

To better understand the constraints on social service agencies, you will observe the work of a social service or health agency in your community from the "bottom up." The agency you select should be new to you, one with which you have no prior experience. It should not be one where you presently work, have worked in the past, or are doing your field placement. It would be ideal to examine an agency in the community you are studying for your group project.

Follow the instructions outlined below, then write a 2-3 page memo; due Session 12.
1. Data Gathering

You will observe how people access service by doing one of the following:

   a. Apply for a service that you really need,

   b. accompany someone who is applying for service, or

   c. simply observe the application process at an agency by observing a

waiting room and the workers who take applications.

Try to talk to the workers at the agency about the process, and obtain a copy of any written

guidelines or rules. Gather any information that would really help explain how to obtain benefits or

services here.

Carefully observe and identify all the contextual factors that would encourage or discourage an

applicant from applying and actually obtaining this service or benefit.

2. Data Reporting

Document your observations by

a. Writing a description of the steps in the application process.

b. Drawing a diagram of the steps required, detailing the names/jobs of each of the persons who

   actually process an application, as best you can.

3. Analysis

   Given what you know of the needs in this community now, does this agency address the

real problems in the community?

   Does this agency provide easy access to persons who have serious needs? Strive to be

   objective

   (neither overly critical, nor unduly praiseworthy) in your assessment.

   What additional knowledge did this observation give you about this community?