Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Shanghai
Course Code / Title: SH/MGMT353 Organizational Behavior: The Chinese Perspective
Contact Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Management / Business, Psychology
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites/Requirements: Prior coursework in Management or Business recommended

---

Description
This course focuses on the theoretical foundations from organizational behavior and the practical relevance and insights from the Chinese perspective. Specifically, it examines organizational behavior at three analytically distinct yet interdependent levels of analysis: the individual level, the group level, and the organizational level. Theoretically, organizational behavior emphasizes systematic, theory-driven, and empirical analysis of workplace phenomena. Students are introduced to foundational theories and contemporary research findings, and are expected to critically evaluate their assumptions, limitations, and practical implications. Practically, the Chinese Perspective emphasizes its contextual applications and innovations in the business reality. Students are also introduced to contextualized concepts and business practices, and are expected to explore and evaluate their uniqueness, strengths and weaknesses from China's perspective in the global context.

The course emphasizes the application of organizational behavior concepts to real-world organizational challenges from a distinctive perspective. By integrating theory with practice, students develop the analytical capability to diagnose behavioral issues and evaluate managerial interventions. By integrating field classes in companies from the consumer, manufacturer, service and technology industries, students develop the problem-solving and innovation capabilities to behave professionally and make informed decisions that are both effective and ethically responsible.

Objectives
Through their participation in this course, students will:

- Explain core theories and concepts in organizational behavior.
- Analyze individual-level factors affecting behavior at work and understand business practices related to employee selection and evaluation.
- Analyze group-level dynamics affecting performance and understand business practices related to employee development and deployment, decision-making, and leadership.
- Evaluate organizational-level structures and processes, and relevant business practices.
- Apply evidence-based organizational behavior concepts to real business contexts for business analysis.
- Develop self-awareness, interpersonal competence, and business knowledge from the Chinese perspective.

- Integrate different perspectives such as ethical, contextual, cross-cultural, technical, and sustainability into business analysis.

Requirements
This course is based on a model of active learning, with class discussions, exercises, and group activities playing a central role. By being an active participant, students ensure they maximize learning in the course. Students are required to read the assigned material and carefully prepare for all assignments and exercises before coming to class. Attendance is expected as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Presence in the classroom ensures exposure to the substantial amount of course material that is covered in class but not in the readings. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas unless otherwise noted.

Graded assignments include:

- **Participation:** Evaluated from the quality of contributions to class discussion and the demonstration of preparation for discussion.

- **Written reflections:** Students will submit 10 weekly assignments of 1-page, double-spaced reflection on topics from the syllabus as well as homework assignments from the textbook. Each assignment is due before or at the beginning of class and will guide class discussion.

- **Exams:** Two non-comprehensive exams are given during the semester, with each exam covering roughly one-half of the course material. All the exams include essay and short-answer components as well as some multiple-choice.

- **Team project:** To facilitate the use of frameworks and theories studied to understand the people, groups, and organizations that compose organizations, students will complete a project (in groups of 3-4 students). Students assume the role of an HRM/OB consulting team and use concepts studied to advise the top management team of a company that is looking for guidance on HRM/OB practices. Students are expected to make a compelling but balanced business case for the implementation of an HR practice that considers both the benefits of implementing the practice as well as the potential risks. Ideal projects identify interesting topics and questions and present unique insights from the course. As part of the project, teams will prepare an online toolkit and present their findings to the class.

Grading
The final grade is determined as follows:

Participation *(see rubric below)* 10%
Written reflections (10 at 1%) 10%
Exams (2 at 20%) 40%
Team project 40%
  - Project: 20%
  - Presentation: 15%
  - Toolkit: 5%

Participation Grading Rubric

Grade	*Class Discussion*	*Class Preparation and Assignments*
A range	Excellent: consistent contributor; offers original analysis and comments; always has ideas on readings/class topics and easily connects theory with practice; takes care not to dominate discussion	Demonstrates fluency with all readings; thoughtfully and critically uses resultant understanding to formulate comments and advance the class
C range	Poor: sporadic contributor; comments/questions often show lack of understanding of key concepts; digresses or contributes in unhelpful ways.	Displays familiarity with few readings; rarely demonstrates analytical thought.
D	Very Poor: rarely speaks; merely quotes text and repeats own comments or those of others. Comments are disconnected from topics and do not advance class learning.	Little apparent familiarity with assigned material or application to relevant experience.
F	Failing: Absent from or does not participate in class. Online or using the phone during class.	No familiarity with readings or application to relevant experience.

Readings / Resources

Textbook:

Bauer, T., & Erdogan, B. (2024). Organizational Behavior: Bridging Science and Practice (Version 5.0). Boston, MA: FlatWorld. (ISBN: 979-8-88794-057-1).

Reference books:

S.P. Robbins & T. A. Judge (2022) Essentials of organizational behavior 15e ISBN 978-0-135-46889-0. Publisher: Pearson Education

N. Li (2026) AI native organizations: the challenges and breakthroughs of Corporate AI transformations. ISBN 978-7-5217-8973-7. Publisher: CITIC Publication Group.

Additional readings:

An-Chih Wang (2019) Developmental or Exploitative? How Chinese Leaders Integrate Authoritarianism and Benevolence to Cultivate Subordinates. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 5, 291–313.

Blocker, C.P., Cannon, J.P. and Zhang, J.Z. (2025) Purpose orientation: An emerging theory transforming business for a better world. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science.* 53, 367–393.

Cameron, L. D. (2024). The Making of the "Good Bad" Job: How Algorithmic Management Manufactures Consent Through Constant and Confined Choices. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *69*(2), 458-514.

Gong, Q., Liu, D., Chen, X.-P., Jiang, C. and Chen, G. (2024), The Fire to Inspire: A Multilevel and Multimethod Investigation of How and When CEO Passion for Organizational Development Impacts Employee Creativity. *Journal of Management Studies*, 61: 3594-3626.

Gu, Q., Wang, Y. and Zhang, J. (2025). Foreignness as a double-edged sword for internationalizing cultural goods: deep learning–based semiotic analysis of Hollywood movies in China. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 56, 1029-1049.

Guan. J, Chen. X-P, Yu. S, and Qin. X. (2025) Explaining disparities in robot applications among nations and regions: A cross-level lens of cultural tightness-looseness. *PLoS ONE* 20.

Ou, Y., Lu, Q, Li, X., Chung, C. and Chen, G. (2024) CEO humility and corporate social irresponsibility: Evidence based on a new unobtrusive measure. *Organization Science*, 35.

Peng, J., L. Wu, and K. Yin. (2026). The Double-Edged Sword Effect of Green Human Resource Management Practices on Employees' Green Behaviors at Home. *Human Resource Management* 65, 2, 325–350.

Perrigino, B. M. and Raveendhran, R. (2025) A Theory of Strategic Boundary Control for Remote Work. *Academy of Management Review.*

Ravasi, D., Rindova, V, and Stigliani, I. (2019): The Stuff of Legend: History, Memory, and the Temporality of Organizational Identity Construction. *Academy of Management Journal,* 62, 1523–1555.

Reif, A. N. and Cummings, N. J. (2026): The generative ai dilemma in knowledge-intensive teams. *Academy of Management Review.*

Slavich, B. Opazo, M. P. and Capdevila, I. (2026): Hungry Minds: Provoking and Sustaining Curiosity in Organizations. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 12, 91–112.

Smith, K. W. Lewis, W. M., and Tushman, L. M. (2016): "Both/And" Leadership. *Harvard Business Review*.

Town, S. Reina, S. C. Brummans, H. M. J. M. B. and Pirson, M. (2024) Humanistic Organizing: The Transformative Force of Mindful Organizational Communication. *Academy of Management Review*, 49, 824–84.

Xie, X-Y., Ye, C., Hu, Q., He, W. and Dai, H. (2025) Cross-Functional Coordination, Status–Authority Asymmetry, and Contingent Exploitation of Digital Technology. *Management and Organization Review*, 21(5):864-888.

Zhang, Y., Waldman, A. D., Han, Y. and Li, X. (2015) Paradoxical Leader Behaviors in People Management: Antecedents and Consequences. *Academy of Management Journal*. 58, 538–566.

Content

Topic 1 – Organizational Behavior

- This topic provides an introduction of the course, including OB as a discipline, the Chinese Perspective, and the assessment.

Topic 2 – Individual Differences

- This topic relates to the practices of employee selection and evaluation, including diversity, personality, values, affectivity etc.
- Main cases:
  - Managing Gen-Z: The case of Storm Base
  - Streamline the interview: The case of Inspur
- Field study: Exploring and analyzing individual differences
  - Consumer and service provider companies such as Estée Lauder, Shanghai Brand Coffee

Topic 3 – Motivation

- This topic relates to the practices of employee development and deployment, including needs, job design, motivations, goals setting, performance evaluation etc.
- Main cases:
  - Motivation through Gamification: The case of *Moxi* Tech
  - Motivated by performance management empowerment: The case of *Shaoyin* Tech
  - Goal alignment for product-type organization: The case of *Feishu*
- Field study: Designing a motivational work environment
  - Manufacturer and service provider companies such as Vertaxi, Matrix Design

Topic 4 – Group and Team Dynamics

- This topic relates to the practices of team building and management, including group, team roles, formation and development, coordination among different entities, and new forms of teams etc.
- Main cases:
  - Team management of Gen-Z: The case of Little Universe App
  - Human-Intelligence coordination: The case of Anta
  - Non-human entities as colleagues: multiple cases
- Field study:
  - Technology and service provider companies such as Little Universe App, Bilibili

Topic 5 – Decision-making

- This topic relates to the practices of decision-making at different levels, including perceptions, bias, attributions, decision-making types and creativity etc.
- Main cases:
    - Knowledge-driven creativity: The case of *Zhangxue* Motor
    - Creativity for different professions: multiple cases
    - Decision-making with ambiguity: multiple cases

Topic 6 – Leadership

- This topic relates to leader development and leadership practices, including leader traits, contingencies, and leadership styles.
- Main cases:
    - The form of middle level management in firm transformation: The case of Li car
    - Managing digitalization: The case of SMG

Topic 7 – Organizational dynamics

- This topic relates to practices related to organizational design and transformation, including organizational structure, change and culture.
- Main cases:
    - Institutional experiments for firm evolvement: the case of *Qiuye*
    - Remote working: The case of Ctrip
    - The forging of tech culture: The case of Style3D

Topic 8 – Sustainability Considerations

- This topic will include sustainability related aspects including employee experience, decision-making paradox and green leadership and HR practices.
- Main cases:
    - Innovation from the cultural and governance mode: The case of *Fangtai*

Syllabus of Record is subject to minor changes in Term-specific Syllabus at faculty's discretion.