

**Fall 2021 Online Tutorial**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR & INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**  
**BUAD 202 WA**  
**7--WEEK SCHEDULE**

**Claire T. Kent, Associate Professor Emerita of Business Administration**  
**Online Offering--Fall Semester 2021**

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**(conference availability by phone or Zoom upon email request)**

**Course Description:** Focuses on critical aspects of organizational behavior and interpersonal communication. Covers topics such as systems theory, organizational culture and learning, motivation, leadership, individual, team & group dynamics, as well as other vital areas such as conscious & unconscious communication, listening, assertion, conflict resolution and negotiation. Understanding of the centrality of communication in person-to-person relationships and recognition and acceptance of diversity are critical elements on a micro and macro level. Organizational leadership and change management are explored as elements of healthy and sustainable organizational cultures.

**Note:** course also counts toward the Peace-building and Conflict Resolution minor

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) To gain a solid foundation in theory and concepts in the field of organizational behavior and understand the significance of interpersonal communication in the organizational framework and beyond
- 2) To become aware of and be able to discuss emerging issues in the organizational environment within the context of the global economy
- 3) To link theory with reality by examining real-life examples and relating them to OB concepts and elements of interpersonal communication
- 4) To explore issues related to cultural diversity and gender within the framework of the organizational environment as well as the broader context of society
- 5) To explore key topic areas such as communication habits, need for both connection and independence, emotional responsibility and healthy boundaries, supportive listening, and collaborative negotiation
- 6) To explore what it means to establish and maintain a sustainable organizational culture and healthy interpersonal relationships

### **Required Resource Materials:**

1) **[Organizational Behavior: Bridging Science and Practice v4.0](#)**

By: Talya Bauer and Berrin Erdogan

Published: 2021

ISBN (Digital):

978-1-4533-3767-7

Student Link:

<https://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course/2597691>

For questions, please contact FlatWorld Customer Service at [support@flatworld.com](mailto:support@flatworld.com) or call [877.257.9243](tel:877.257.9243).

*All students are required to have access to the digital version of this text. (FlatWorld is able to sell directly to students.) Students may purchase a textbook in the affordable format of their choice or redeem an Access Pass, if offered by bookstore.*

2) **Supplementary book: The Thin Book of Naming Elephants: How to Surface Undiscussables for Greater Organizational Effectiveness, authors Sue Annis Hammond and Andrea B. Mayfield, 2004, ISBN: 0-9665373-51, OR <https://www.thinbook.com/the-thin-book-of-naming-elephants>**

**IMP NOTE--Free Digital access is provided for this resource for MBU students via our library site.)**

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**Additional Note: A recommended, but not required resource is listed below, for your information: (selected excerpts will be shared during the semester)**

Conscious Communication: How to Establish Healthy Relationships and Resolve Conflict Peacefully while Maintaining Independence, author Miles Sherts, 2009, ISBN: 978-1-934938-60-7 (also listed as 1-934938-60-2) Or 978-0-9854359-1-2, 2014 edition

### **Grading Components:**

**Module 1, Course Intro-- “A Look at NASA using a Different Lens” 50 pts (view clips and submit assignment)**

**Modules 2-6, Weekly Readings and Multimedia Case Assignments,  
“As assigned” via the Module in our CANVAS Portal**

(this information will be necessary to complete the following work)

- **Responses to Online Discussion Assignments/Prompts** **300 pts**  
(OB Toolbox exercises and TED talk responses via CANVAS)
- **Responses to Assigned Text Cases via Online Discussion** **200 pts**

**Essay—based on The Thin Book of Naming Elephants** **200 pts**  
(to be submitted via CANVAS by MONDAY of last week of semester)

**Final Exam (discussion-based questions)** **250 pts**  
(to be submitted via CANVAS by last day of semester)

**GRADING SCALE: (final grade based on 1000 pts available, then adjusted to the 100 point scale in final grade tabulation)**

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D+	67-69
B-	80-82	D	60-66
		F	below 60

**Weekly Readings and Multimedia Case Assignments:** Students should plan to read approximately three (3) text chapters per week and complete associated work. Most of the weekly readings will come from our FlatWorld text. For each assigned case, the expectation is that students will read the case and watch the multimedia extension.

- **Cases:** Consider what is most notable to you about the case. What new information was provided by the media extension? Did this additional information pique your interest in some way? Consider your primary “takeaway” from the case?
- **Case Questions:** Case questions will be provided for you to submit or post online. Look within our CANVAS course Modules for these questions/prompts.

**Responses to Online Discussion Assignments/Prompts:** “OB Toolbox” responses and reaction to TED talks will be specified for most chapters. Please refer to your **Course MODULES provided online** and make every effort to stay current with your work. **We will use the Discussion feature to exchange ideas and information related to the assigned OB Toolbox exercises and selected TED talks.** These exercises are not

difficult or time consuming but can be of tremendous benefit. Your participation is important to the group learning experience in this course! Please plan to respond in some fashion to 1-2 posts per week made by fellow students based on each assignment.

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**Essay or Short Reaction Paper associated with *The Thin Book of Naming Elephants: How to Surface Undiscussables for Greater Organizational Success.* (Paper at least 1-2 pages in length, single-spaced)**

**This is a very unusual but extremely useful “thin” book. It discusses what many now routinely refer to as “the elephant in the room.” The following excerpt appears in the opening pages of the book.**

*Everyone talks around the elephant and thinks that everyone else knows about the elephant, but until the elephant’s presence is made explicit, the level of dialogue—and therefore the quality of decision-making—is limited. The elephant stands for all the things no one talks about in an open forum. Make no mistake, people do talk about the elephant, but they do so at the proverbial water cooler, which is now electronic. The elephant is discussed in an unmanaged and potentially destructive, rather than constructive manner. People are fearful of naming the elephant because they are afraid they will lose their jobs or “face.” However, not naming elephants can eat away at a person and at an organization. Unnamed elephants can pull the pillars away from your organization’s foundational strengths, bringing down the entire structure. The real challenge is to decide which is more destructive: acknowledging the elephant to deal with it or ignoring it at your organization’s peril. (pg. 4)*

Your **assignment** is to complete an essay or short reaction paper based on the information in this brief but insightful book. It discusses mistakes that have been made in some of our most significant and prestigious companies when “elephants in the room” were ignored (sometimes for extended periods of time). You may choose to “journal” as you read through this short text, and then use your journal or notes to create an essay or reaction paper that summarizes your major “takeaways.”

If you wish, you may conclude your piece by responding to the following question: In today’s environment, can you think of organizations (profit, not-for-profit, or governmental organizations) that you think have ignored “the elephant in the room”?

Please discuss and explain why you think this has happened. **Or, an alternative approach** you may want to consider (and write about) how you might explain the content of this book to someone outside of our class (friend, colleague, perhaps even your boss!) and then perhaps get their reaction to the material. If you have a conversation such as this, you can share highlights of the conversation in your essay or paper. **Try to have fun w/this assignment!!!**

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## **FINAL EXAM:**

**In preparation for the Final Exam—to be taken during WEEK 7, please do the following:**

- **Check out the open book/open notes final exam posted in the Modules section and note the instructions for completing and submitting.**
- **Review the Assigned Cases you read throughout the semester, along with the multimedia extensions you viewed. Consider any notes you recorded immediately after reading/viewing the case assignment. In addition, be sure to review the questions associated with the cases (those that are provided in your FlatWorld text and those that you responded to for submission).**  
**IMP NOTE:** The last question of the final exam (#6) allows you to pick a “case of your choice” to discuss.

## **WEEK 7**

**Final Exam is to be completed during WEEK 7 (Specific due date—to be determined)** It is an open book/open notes exam--online submission using our CANVAS portal.

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**Conferences:** I will be available for conferences by appointment. Phone appointments and Zoom appointments can be easily scheduled and conducted. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are having difficulty or are unsure of an assignment. After initial email contact, we can schedule a time to chat.

**Penalty for Late Work:** There will be a penalty for late work and there will be a strict cut-off time/date for submission of late work. Penalty for late work will be built into the rubric for grading assignments. It will appear on our CANVAS course portal.

**Purchase of texts:** Please use the instructions provided in the resource section of the syllabus. I **will not** be placing a specific order through the MBU bookstore for these books. **It will be your responsibility to secure access to the digital version of the 4.0 text from FlatWorld.** Again, details are included in an earlier section of the syllabus.

**Plagiarism:** Please refer to Mary Baldwin University Policy. **It is imperative that you submit your own work!** Appropriately cite material that is not your own as you work through assignments.

Syllabus construction date 7-5-2021; updated 8-6-2021

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND OVERVIEW ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES!

### BUAD 202, Fall 2021, Overview of Weeks 1-7

#### WEEK 1

- WHY DO WE STUDY ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR?
  - IS IT A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH?
    - YES, IT COULD BE!
  - CAN IT HELP US IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES?
    - ABSOLUTELY!
- In Module 1, “A Look at NASA using a Different Lens,” we consider a well-known organization that faces situations and matters of a “life and death” magnitude every day. Through Module 1, you are offered the opportunity to view clips that give us a look at how organizational behavior and culture do indeed have great potential impact.
- Please watch/review at least one of the following YouTube clips with ppt slides embedded (links provided for you—below) regarding “Elements of Organizational Culture.”

- 11 minutes clip—overview of Edgar Schein’s Model of Culture and the various approaches to studying organizational culture  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wd1bsxWeM6Q>

#### OR

- Approx 16 minute narration of slides based on Edgar Schein’s Culture Model; clear and straightforward—and includes tips on steps to analysis  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSbBxwxZilY>

#### THEN, you’ll be ready to begin viewing the following NASA related clips!

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> ASSIGNMENT—VIEW ONE OF THE TWO CLIPS

**IMMEDIATELY BELOW describing, in hindsight, how a major event in space (an equipment malfunction that severely damaged the spacecraft) unfolded and how NASA brought the three astronauts on board Apollo 13 (1970—time period) back home against incredible odds.** As you may remember from the popular movie version of **Apollo 13** (featuring actors Tom Hanks and Gary Sinise), it was indeed a dramatic demonstration of leadership, knowledge, and a “can-do” attitude within the organization.

- **Apollo 13—a short version** of the issue and the “can do” attitude that brought the flight home! **7 min**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdvoA-sjs0A>

#### OR

- **Apollo 13—the Real Story, 40 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69LDSL-9--g>

**2<sup>nd</sup> ASSIGNMENT—VIEW BOTH OF THE TWO CLIPS BELOW describing what happened shortly after the launch of the Challenger Space Shuttle (1986—time period) and then what caused this horrific explosion.** The cause became clear and it also revealed significant organizational failures, as the analysis unfolded.

- **Challenger launch CNN coverage, January 28, 1986, 6 min**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmAbcDud2L8>  
**AND**
- **Excellent presentation of info—via Discovery UK—"What Caused the Challenger to Explode? Disasters Engineered" 8 min length re: after the fact analysis**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OomSth3zGBs>

**3<sup>rd</sup> ASSIGNMENT—VIEW THE TWO CLIPS BELOW describing what happened when what appeared to be a highly successful mission turned into tragedy as the Space Shuttle Columbia re-entered the atmosphere on February 1, 2003.** A very thorough investigation ensued and a problem that had been identified on prior flights (and classified after the fact as “no risk to flight safety”) caused the Columbia disaster. **What happened? Was this an organizational failure? Many would conclude, “Yes.”**

- Space Shuttle Columbia Disaster, 9 min  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNdDpc8HsaY>  
**AND**
- Columbia Re-entry, 4 min  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R4ctaCBapM>

**NOTE: IF YOU ARE UP FOR A MORE INDEPTH STUDY, YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO FOLLOW:**

- BBC Space Documentary Columbia Space Disaster, (2003 flight), 1 hour  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOBRbE7VVjg>

**No organization is perfect, of course.** Leaders at NASA learned from both their successes and their failures. At present, NASA is partnering with SPACEX. **Please see the August, 2020 link to a digital piece filled with information about the development of the relationship between NASA and SPACEX.**

- CNN BUSINESS, AUGUST 2020 PIECE REGARDING SPACEX AND NASA (link below)

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/09/business/spacex-nasa-astronaut-launch-demo-2-culture-clash-scn/index.html>

**SPECIAL NOTE—FOR THOSE SAMPLING A MARY BALDWIN ONLINE COURSE FOR THE 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME:**

If you choose to enroll in **Mary Baldwin University’s Buad 202 Organizational Behavior and Interpersonal Communication** course, you will have the opportunity to further explore relationships, structure, and inner workings of organizations, both in theory and practice. You will also gain an appreciation for the potential impact you and others have through maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships, making your goals a reality, and aiming for the STARS, if that’s what you choose to do!

We will utilize the following resources: (FALL 2021)

- **Organizational Behavior: Bridging Science and Practice, Version 4.0** by Tayla Bauer and Berrin Erdogan, FlatWorld
- **The Thin Book of Naming Elephants: How to Surface Undiscussables for Greater Organizational Success** by Sue Annis Hammond and Andrea B. Mayfield, Thin Book Publishing Co, 2004.
- Various TED talks available via You Tube

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**At the conclusion of WEEK 1**, prepare to read through **The Thin Book of Naming Elephants: How to Surface Undiscussables for Greater Organizational Success** by Sue Annis Hammond and Andrea B. Mayfield. This is a “short but mighty” little book. **You will find it is particularly applicable to the NASA clips you viewed during WEEK 1. As you make your way through the semester, please reflect on how this information can be used elsewhere and how it pertains to the remainder of the material we will be studying in this course!**

- **IMP Note:** The *Thin Book* is available digitally via the MBU library website. MBU students will not need to purchase it unless they want to read and keep a hard copy. (Please contact me, if you cannot locate the MBU student access link)

**WEEK 2**

**Readings:** Chapters 2, 3 and 4 in our FlatWorld book:

- Ch 2, Diversity in the Workplace
- Case 2.1 **Open to All and Color Proud: The Case of Gap Inc. plus media ext** (in 4.0 edition of text OR provided to ALL via the Modules)
  
- Ch 3, Understanding People at Work: Individual Differences and Perception

- Ch 4, Individual Attitudes and Behaviors
- *Thin Book* reading—on a schedule determined by you!

### **WEEK 2--continued**

**Read and Comment:** utilizing the “**discussion**” feature of CANVAS, our MBU Learning Management System:

- **Ch 2 OB Toolbox: I think I’m being asked illegal interview questions. What can I do?**
- **Ch 3 OB Toolbox: Help, I work with a negative person!**
- **Ch 4 OB Toolbox: Tips for Leaving Your Job Gracefully**
- **ONE CASE and PROMPTS—you will find this within the Module for this week!**

### **WEEK 3**

**Readings:** Chapters 5, 6, and 7 in our FlatWorld book:

- Ch 5, Theories of Motivation
- Ch 6, Designing a Motivating Work Environment
- Short Case 6.7 (4.0) Retail with a Purpose: The Case of REI (plus the multimedia ext)
- Ch 7, Managing Stress and Emotions
- Short Case 7.7 (4.0 text) The Case of NASA’s Mission to Mars (plus the multimedia ext) Be sure to watch the Scott Kelly clip

**Read and Comment:** utilizing the **discussion feature of CANVAS**

- **Ch 5 OB Toolbox Be Effective in Your Use of Discipline**
- **Ch 6 OB Toolbox: Increase the Feedback You Receive: Seek It!**
- **ONE CASE QUESTION/PROMPT—you will find this within the Module for this week!**
- **Plus--watch the following TED Talk AND respond to the prompt on the discussion feature of CANVAS:**
  - TedX, 2014, *Embrace the near win*, ABOUT 11 MIN  
  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah\\_lewis\\_embrace\\_the\\_near\\_win](https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah_lewis_embrace_the_near_win)
  - **Be sure to share your most significant “takeaway” from the clip with others via the discussion feature of CANVAS!**

### **WEEK 4**

**Readings:** Chapters 8, 9, and 10 in our FlatWorld book:

- Ch 8, Communication
- Ch 9, Managing Groups and Teams
- Short Case 9.7 (4.0 text) Four Generations of Teamwork: The Case of Lego Group (plus media ext)
- Ch 10, Conflict and Negotiations

- **Reminder—also make sure you are working your way through The Thin Book of Naming Elephants, if you have not already completed it.**

**Read and Comment: utilizing the discussion feature of CANVAS**

- **Ch 8 OB Toolbox: How to Be An Active Listener**
- **Ch 9 OB Toolbox: Steps to Creating and Maintaining a Cohesive Team**
- **Ch 10 OB Toolbox: BATNA Best Practices**
- **ONE CASE QUESTION/PROMPT—you will find this within the Module for this week!**
- **OPTIONAL TO WATCH—GOOD INFO--TEDX, 2011—(on conflict), The Walk from “NO” to “YES”--about 17-18 minutes**  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/william\\_ury\\_the\\_walk\\_from\\_no\\_to\\_yes](https://www.ted.com/talks/william_ury_the_walk_from_no_to_yes)

**WEEK 5**

**Readings: Chapters 11, 12, and 13 in our FlatWorld book:**

- Ch 11, Making Decisions
- Ch 12, Leading People Within Organizations
- Short Case 12.7 (4.0 text) A Different Approach to Leadership at Apple: The Case of Tim Cook
- Ch 13, Power and Politics
- **Reminder—also make sure you are working your way through The Thin Book of Naming Elephants, if you have not already completed it.**

**Read and Comment: utilizing the discussion feature of CANVAS**

- **Ch 11 OB Toolbox: Recommendations for Avoiding Groupthink**
- **Ch 12 OB Toolbox: Ideas for Improving Your Relationship With Your Manager**
- **ONE CASE QUESTION/PROMPT—you will find this within the Module for this week!**
- **Plus--watch the following TED Talk AND respond to the prompt on the discussion feature of CANVAS:**
  - TEDX, 2015, **Forget the Pecking Order at Work**, approx. 15 ½ min  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/margaret\\_heffernan\\_forget\\_the\\_pecking\\_order\\_at\\_work](https://www.ted.com/talks/margaret_heffernan_forget_the_pecking_order_at_work)
  - **Be sure to share your most significant “takeaway” from the clip with others via the discussion feature of CANVAS!**

## WEEK 6

**Readings: Chapters 14 and 15** in our FlatWorld book:

- Ch 14, Organizational Structure and Change
- Ch 15, Organizational Culture

### **AND,**

- **CRAFT an essay or short reaction paper related to *The Thin Book of Naming Elephants*.** As you prepare to write this piece, ponder your most significant takeaways from this little book. Consider how you might best communicate this information to a friend, coworker, or boss! Via this paper, you may share your takeaways and articulate how you can approach someone else who may be able to benefit from the information in this “Thin Book.” Also, please spend some time pondering the following questions:

*Can I think of other “Elephants in the Room”---some that I have perhaps encountered in my career and/or life journey thus far?*

And, as you consider these examples, do you feel better informed about the reasons to raise concerns, after reading our “Thin Book”? **How might you respond the next time you encounter an Elephant in the Room?**

**Your written piece should be at least 1-2 pages in length (single-spaced) and be submitted by the Monday of the final week of the semester.**

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### **IN PREPARATION FOR THE FINAL EXAM—to be taken during WEEK 7, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Check out open book/open notes final exam posted in the Module and note the instructions for completing and submitting.**
- **Review the Assigned Cases** you read throughout the semester, along with the multimedia extensions you viewed. **Consider any notes you recorded immediately after reading/viewing the case assignment. In addition, be sure to review the questions associated with the cases (those that are provided in your FlatWorld text and those that you responded to for submission).**  
**IMP NOTE:** The last question of the final exam allows you to pick a “case of your choice” to discuss.

## WEEK 7

- **FINAL EXAM WILL BE DUE DURING WEEK 7 (SPECIFIC DUE DATE—to be determined)**  
**(It is an open book/open notes exam--online submission using our CANVAS portal)**

- I hope you will keep up with NASA/SPACEX launches and future ventures between these two organizations. It will be interesting to see and hear about how those in leadership positions cope with differences in organizational culture.