



BUSI 3103-Introduction to Organizational Theory

Winter 2026

Instructor	Ben Semnani
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Class Times	
Modality	In-Person
Office Hours	Upon Appointment
Office Location	
TA Name/Email	

Pre-Requisites & Preclusions:

Pre-Requisites: second-year standing, and one of BUSI 2101, BUSI 2121, BUSI 2702, or PSYC 2801

Lecture three hours a week.

Find the pre-requisites & precludes at <https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/courses/BUSI/>

Course Description/Instructor's Statement

Macro-organization theory. Structuring of organizations in a complex global economy. Effects of the external environment, technology, culture and organizational goals on the structure, processes and effectiveness of the organization.

Instructor's Description:

Introduction to Organization Theory is a foundational course that explores the principles, concepts, and key theoretical frameworks that underpin the understanding of organizations and their functioning in various contexts. The course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of how organizations are structured, managed, and influenced, as well as how they interact with their environments. By examining classical and contemporary theories, students will gain insights into the complex dynamics of organizations and their impact on individuals, groups, and society as a whole.

Course Learning Objectives:

- CO 1- Describe and differentiate the key theories and concepts of organization theory.
- CO 2- Analyze and evaluate organizational structures and practices.
- CO 3- Apply organization theory to real-world scenarios.

Required/Optional Materials & Prices

Textbook

DAFT, R.L. AND ARMSTRONG, A. (2021). ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY & DESIGN (4TH CANADIAN EDITION). CENGAGE CANADA. (ISBN-10: 0176915583; ISBN-13: 978-0176915582)

NOTE 1: Students need access to and read the full version of the textbook.

- eBook price: \$77.95
- Hardcopy price: \$180.95

Course Case Pack

Students are required to purchase a course pack that includes the five cases you will work on in groups throughout the semester. The cost is **24.75 USD**, and the course pack can be accessed through the link provided below:

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1356336>

NOTE 2: Students must acquire the required equipment to access Brightspace both inside and outside the classroom.

NOTE 3: Please purchase the textbook(s) from the campus bookstore in Nideyinàn (formerly the University Centre) or through the bookstore website: <https://carleton.ca/campus-services/the-bookstore/>.

Grading Scheme

Activity	Scored Out of	Percent of Total Grade
Quizzes (3 best out of 4)	15 each	15%
In-Class Discussions (5 Discussions*5%)	100 each	25%
Group Case Study (5 Cases*6%)	100 each	30%
Class Contribution	100	30%
TOTAL		100%

Class Format: The first two classes are mainly lecture based, with Class 1 also used to introduce the course and give everyone a chance to meet each other. Starting in Week 3, each session will have two parts. The first part, about one hour to an hour and a half, will be a lecture style review of the course content. The second part shifts to applied work, where you will practice the concepts with my guidance. This includes writing quizzes, participating in group case studies, completing in class discussions and their responses, or writing your weekly lesson learned. Please refer to the course schedule provided in the next sections of this outline for exact details.

Group Case Studies: There will be five case studies in Sessions 4, 6, 9, 11, and 13. For each case, groups must read the case, discuss it in class, and submit a written report that answers the assigned questions. This group assignment is worth 30 percent of the final grade. Although discussion begins in class, groups have about one week after class to finalize and submit their report before the next session. All instructions and deadlines must be followed precisely.

To support the group process, each student must post two meaningful contributions on the case discussion forum. Each post must be 100 to 150 words. The first post is due during class time, and the second post is due no later than 72 hours before the case submission deadline. For example, if the case is due on Mar 9 at 23:59, both posts must be completed by Mar 6 at 23:59. Posts must add new insight rather than repeat existing points.

Students who fail to post two contributions will receive 50 percent of their group's grade. Students who submit only one contribution will receive 75 percent of their group's grade. The final grade is based on the group report, but completing the posting requirements is mandatory.

Quizzes: There will be four quizzes during the term in weeks 4, 6, 11, and 13. They cover course materials and class lectures. Only your best three scores will count toward your final grade and together they make up 15 percent of the course grade. The quiz schedule is provided in the course outline. Quizzes will be written on Brightspace, but you must be present in class to complete them. Any quiz written outside class will receive a grade of zero.

In-Class Discussions: 25% of the course grade is based on five in-class discussions on provided questions (2 questions per discussion), held in Weeks 3, 5, 8, 10, and 12 (Please refer to the course schedule table). For each discussion, students work in groups to share insights and answer questions drawn from the course book and class lectures. Active contribution in these sessions also counts toward your class contribution grade. To participate properly, you are expected to come prepared and engage meaningfully. All discussions must be completed in class; any submission made outside the class will receive a grade of zero. Students can write one missed discussion during the make-up discussion session in week 14.

Class Contribution: Class contribution is worth 30 percent of the final grade. Attendance is not mandatory, and you do not need to report absences. Still, contributions can only occur when you are physically present and actively participating in class discussions and activities, and when you submit the first written contribution for each group case study. Simply sitting in the room without contributing does not count; however, each session includes multiple opportunities to participate, so every student can demonstrate their engagement. Contribution is evaluated based on asking and answering questions, sharing ideas, writing weekly lessons-learned posts, and engaging meaningfully in classwork. The contribution grade is divided evenly across all class sessions. Students may miss up to two classes without losing contribution points, since the grades from those missed sessions will be redistributed across the classes they do attend.

Note: Weekly lessons-learned posts give you an extra way to show your class contribution by sharing what you've learned with your classmates each week in a discussion format. These posts are completely optional, and there is no separate grade assigned to them. They simply offer a space for anyone who wants to deepen their learning and strengthen the learning of the whole class by sharing insights, ideas, and experiences from course activities as a collective effort

Peer Feedback: To deter social loafing and ensure fairness in grading, you will be asked to assess the contribution of your fellow group members. This information will be used when assigning the grade for the group case studies. Each student is required to evaluate the contributions of their group members, assigning a score out of a maximum of 10 points to reflect each member's level of participation and effort. A low evaluation is defined as a score below 70% of the maximum grade. Students who receive low evaluations from two or more group members will have their accumulative group case study grade reduced, with the extent of the reduction determined by the number and severity of low evaluations received.

Failure to submit a peer evaluation will result in all other group members automatically receiving the maximum score from that student.

Group Formation: We have about 90 students in this class, and we need to form 15 groups of 6 members each (or fewer if the number of registered students drops below 90). The first group work starts on Tuesday January 27, 2026. You have until Friday, January 23, at 23:50 p.m. to self-enroll in your preferred group on Brightspace. After that deadline, I will assign any remaining students to groups and finalize all group lists before January 27.

Important Dates to Note

In-Class Discussion 1	January 20, 2026; 17:25
Group Self Enrolment	January 23, 2026; 23:59
Quiz 1	January 27, 2026; During Class
Group Case Study 1	February 2, 2026; 23:59
In-Class Discussion 2	February 3, 2026; 17:25
Quiz 2	February 10, 2026; During Class
Group Case Study 2	February 23, 2026; 23:59
In-Class Discussion 3	February 24, 2026; 17:25
Group Case Study 3	March 9, 2026; 23:59
In-Class Discussion 4	March 10, 2026; 17:25
Quiz 3	March 17, 2026; During Class
Group Case Study 4	March 23, 2026; 23:59
In-Class Discussion 5	March 24, 2026; 17:25
Quiz 4	March 31, 2026; During Class
Group Case Study 5	April 6, 2026; 23:59
In-Class Discussion Make-up	April 7, 2026; 17:25

Final Exam Date: No Final Exam

Policies & Accommodations

<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>

<https://carleton.ca/pmc/current-students/academic-accommodations/>



Stay updated with important notifications and announcements from Carleton University, by downloading the Carleton University App!

Course Schedule

Week #	Date	Topic	Material	Activity	Deliverable
Week 1	Jan 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course/Class Introduction • Organizations and Organizational theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 1 		
Week 2	Jan 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Environment • Strategy, Organizational Design and Effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapters 2 & 3 		
Week 3	Jan 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamentals of Organizational Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 1 (Due end of class time)
Week 4	Jan 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing Organizations for Social and Environmental Purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 1 (Covers Chapters 1, 2, & 3) • Group Case Study 1 (<i>Arla Foods - Matching Structure with Strategy</i>) 	
Week 5	Feb 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interorganizational Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 1 (Due Feb 2, 23:59) • In-Class Discussion 2 (Due end of class time)
Week 6	Feb 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing Organizations for the International Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 2 (Covers Chapters 4, 5 & 6) • Group Case Study 2 (<i>Kent Chemical: Organizing for International Growth</i>) 	
Week 7	Reading Week Break				
Week 8	Feb 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Size, Life Cycle and Decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 2 (Due Feb 23, 23:59) • In-Class Discussion 3 (Due end of class time)
Week 9	Mar 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Culture and Ethics/Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 3 (<i>Toters Delivery: Culture Driving Performance</i>) 	
Week 10	Mar 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing and Service Technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 3 (Due Mar 9, 23:59) • In-Class Discussion 4 (Due end of class time)
Week 11	Mar 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 3 (Covers Chapters 7, 8, & 9) • Group Case Study 4 (<i>Emtec: Culture, Acquisitions, and Co-</i> 	

				<i>innovation as the Upstream Future for Midmarket Firms)</i>	
Week 12	Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict, Power, and Politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 4 (Due Mar 23, 23:59) • In-Class Discussion 5 (Due end of class time)
Week 13	Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-Making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Slides • Textbook Chapter 13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 4 (Covers Chapters 10, 11 & 12) • Group Case Study 5 (<i>OpenAI: Boardroom Battles</i>) 	
Week 14	Apr 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and Makeup 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Discussion Make-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Case Study 5 (Due Apr 6, 23:59) • In-Class Discussion Make-up (Due end of class time)

Student Support

Academic Support

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a collection of student support services designed to help you achieve your goals and improve your learning.

- CSAS can help you with academic reading, academic writing, critical thinking, time management, and more.
- For complete information on their workshops and other services, please visit the [Centre for Student Academic Support](#).

Technical Support

A variety of technical support options are available to students on our [Brightspace Student Support](#) page through documentation and videos, including information on:

- How to use Brightspace
- Communication and collaboration
- Assessments

Students can access support by phone, chat or email by contacting the [D2L Brightspace Service Desk](#).

Health and Wellness Support Services

Carleton offers a wide range of Student Support Services, including resources for mental health, healthy living, getting active, and getting support. For complete information on resources, please visit: [Carleton Wellness Resources: Supporting Your Mental Health](#).

Grading

The [Carleton University grading system](#) will be used to determine your final course grade. Letter grades correspond to the following percentages:

Percentage	Final Grade
90 - 100	A+
85 - 89	A
80 - 84	A–
77 - 79	B+
73 - 76	B
70 - 72	B–
67 - 69	C+
63 - 66	C
60 - 62	C–
57 - 59	D+
53 - 56	C
50 - 52	D–
0 - 49	F

Final grades in this course are determined by the course instructor and must be approved by the Dean. Grades submitted by the instructor are subject to revision and should not be considered final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Please keep in mind that points for individual assessment and thus your final grades are added, rather than deducted – i.e., you all start with 0 and work your way up, rather than starting at 100 and having points reduced from there. A subtle but important point.

Late Assignments

To ensure fairness to all students, penalties will be applied to late assignments: Failure to submit an assignment on time will result in an initial penalty of five (5) percentage points, followed by an additional (2) percentage points per day thereafter. For example, an assignment that would normally merit a grade of 80% would receive a grade of 75% if submitted after the deadline on the due date, 73% if submitted the following day, and so on. As in-class discussions are designed to be done during the class time, no delay is accepted for these activities, however, a make-up session is planned for these activities so students can write a make-up answer for these activities.

Students already have one built-in quiz drop and one in-class discussion make-up, so there is no need to stress about missing a single quiz or discussion during the semester. If anything beyond that comes up, they can contact the instructor to arrange accommodation. Requests for extensions without penalty will be considered only in cases of illness, family emergency, or other exceptional circumstances.

Communication

Brightspace and email are the primary means of communicating with the instructor. See the [Student Support Site](#) for more information. Please do not contact the instructor for Brightspace support.

To ensure instructors and administrators can respond to your emails, your full name and Carleton University ID must be visible. This means all course-related messages must be sent from your Carleton email account. Please contact your instructor only through the email address listed in this outline.

Instructor Response Times

Expect to receive a reply to your question(s)/inquiry(ies) within 48 hours, Monday through Friday, unless otherwise posted by the instructor.

Academic Regulations

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and related matters can be found at [Academic Regulations](#).

Requests for Academic Accommodation

Carleton University is committed to academic accessibility for all individuals. Academic accommodation refers to educational practices, systems, and support mechanisms that accommodate diversity and difference and allow students to perform the essential requirements of their academic programs. The processes for submitting these requests are as follows:

Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please visit the [Equity Services website: Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

Religious Obligations

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please visit the [Equity Services website: Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodation in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the due date of the first assignment or exam for which you require accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, be sure to communicate with your instructor to ensure that the necessary accommodation arrangements are in place.

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy](#).

For more information on academic accommodation, please consult Carleton's [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodation](#).

Academic Integrity

Carleton University's Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Any submission prepared in whole or in part by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment;

- Using someone else's data or research findings without acknowledgement;
Failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Violations of academic integrity also include:

- Using unauthorized material when completing an assignment or exam,
- Fabricating or misrepresenting research data;
- Unauthorized co-operation or collaboration, and;
- Completing work for another student.

Academic integrity violations constitute a serious academic offence, weaken the quality of the degree, and will not be tolerated. Penalties may include: a failing grade for the submitted work and/or course; academic probation; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; suspension from full-time studies; suspension from all studies at Carleton, and; expulsion from Carleton.

Students should familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy, which is available, along with resources for compliance, at: [Student Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Course Copyright

Materials used in this course—including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, discussions, learning activities, posted notes, case studies, assignments, and exams—are copyright protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Students registered in this course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students may not reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Equity and Inclusion

All members of the Carleton University community share responsibility for ensuring that the University's educational, work and living environments are free from discrimination and harassment. Should you have concerns about harassment or discrimination relating to your age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed (religion), disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, place of origin, race, sex (including pregnancy), or sexual orientation, please visit the website of Carleton's [Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities](#).