

**Draft – Updated 1/2/07**

**Culture, Organization and Technology  
PUBP 503-003  
Spring 2007**

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**Course Information**

Meets: Tuesdays, 7:20 – 10:00 pm, Arlington Campus Room 268

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 or by appointment, Arlington 201

Contact: Email [bstabile@gmu.edu](mailto:bstabile@gmu.edu); or phone 703 447-1786

**Course Description**

Effective policy analysis, program design, implementation and management often depend on understanding cultures, organizations and technologies and how they interact with one another. Whether we are talking about the professional culture of transportation, technological, military or business systems, or the processes of organizational, societal or technological change, lack of knowledge of cultures and organizations frequently results in conflict or program or policy failure. This course is designed to provide practical and intellectual skills, not only to help minimize such failures, but to maximize success in organizational and societal contexts.

This course focuses on the role of culture, organization and technologies in societal, political, and economic processes, nationally and internationally. Culture, organizations and technology are seen as dynamic and interactional, often shaping and being shaped by technological change and one another, and as influenced by, influencing, or otherwise interacting with the process of globalization.

Thus, the objectives of this course include learning to:

- Understand the framing of policy questions
- Observe and describe culture and organization at the micro and macro levels
- Observe and describe the role of technologies and their interactions with organizations and culture in the global context
- Identify cultural enablers and barriers to effective policy development, program design, and implementation

Students will also be introduced to various methodological skills and will participate in selected exercises:

- Organizational and cultural audits
- Open-ended interviewing
- Participant observation
- Social network analysis
- Negotiation
- Scenario planning and risk assessment

The course teaches students pertinent approaches to the study of technologies, organization and culture, from the analysis of technologies and organizational structures, to social networks, to that of belief systems and identities.

One aspect of the course examines culture and cultures in terms of two primary units of analysis: cultures as nations or social-political-economic identifiable sub-societies (e.g. “American” or “Muslim” culture); and cultures as social-political-economic organizations, communities, or groups embedded or situated in national or trans-national units (e.g. the culture of the digital society, of business consultants or engineers, of the FBI or the Department of Transportation).

Another aspect of the course deals with inter- and multi-cultural dynamics, with attention given to such crucial and challenging issues as: attempts by one culture to do business with another (for example, American business seeking to penetrate Japanese or Chinese markets); the influence of culture on technology and vice-versa; foreign aid delivery (especially grant and technical assistance) as an inter-cultural challenge (for example, in providing aid to Russia or Argentina); and cultural issues in international diplomacy.

Finally, the course will give considerable attention to the dynamics between technologies, organizations and culture through a close look at how technologies underpin work and social life, how technologies shape and are shaped by organizational forces, and how technologies become embedded in national industrial, social and cultural patterns, discernable over time and space. We will address the issue of control of technology as a policy matter as well.

### **Requirements, Grades and Examinations**

Written assignments	Workplace observation (5 – 8 pages)	20%
	Research paper (10 – 12 pages)	25%
Exams	Midterm	20%
	Final	20%
Effort, Participation and Approach		15%

## **The SPP Policy on Plagiarism**

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. (<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>)

## **Students with Special Needs**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

## **New Voices in Public Policy**

I will consider nominating the very best papers in this course for publication in *New Voices in Public Policy*. *New Voices* is a student- and faculty-reviewed journal that shares SPP's finest student work with the rest of the world.

## **Required Books**

Available in the bookstore; some also on reserve at the library circulation desk

Fukuyama, Francis, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, (New York: Free Press, 1995).

Garreau, Joel, *Radical Evolution*, (New York: Broadway Books, 2005).

Harrison, Laurence and Samuel Huntington, eds., *Culture Matters* (New York: MIT Press, 2004).

Morgan, Gareth, *Images of Organization*. 2nd ed., (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1997).

Schein, Edgar H., *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).

Volti, Rudi, *Society and Technological Change*, 4th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2000).

## **E-Reserves**

To access E-Reserves:

- Go to <http://library.gmu.edu>
- Go to the "Library Quick Links" pull-down menu
- Choose "E-reserves" and click "Go"
- Click on "Search electronic reserves", select "Stabile" from under the instructor's list, or select "PUBP503-03" under course. (Do not select both.)
- The password will be "jasmine"

## **Weekly Reading and Assignments**

**Session 1 (January 23): Introduction to the Topic and Overview of Course**

**Session 2 (January 30): Organizations: Principles and Perspectives**

Morgan, Gareth, *Images of Organization*. 2nd ed., (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1997)

chapter 1, "Mechanization takes command: organizations as machines," pp. 11-31,  
chapter 2, "Nature intervenes: organizations as organisms," pp. 32-71,

chapter 3, "Learning and self-organization: organizations as brains," pp. 72-118.

Elwell, Frank, "The sociology of Max Weber," Rogers State University, unpublished Web text. Available at <http://www.faculty.rsu.edu/~felwell/Theorists/Weber/Whome.htm> or in reformatted form from instructor.

Taylor, Fredrick W., *The Principles of Scientific Management* (excerpt), 1911.

Ritzer, George, *The McDonaldization of Society*, (Pine Forge Press, 1993), chapter 1, pp. 1-17.

### **Session 3 (February 6): Organizational Analysis**

#### **Submit topic paragraph for research paper.**

Geertz, Clifford, "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture," chapter 1 in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1974), pp. 3-30.

Schutt, R. K., "Qualitative methods: observing, participating, listening," chapter 8 in *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Social Research*, 3rd ed., (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2001), pp. 263-325.

Frechtling, Joy and Laurie Sharp, eds., "Common qualitative methods," chapter 3 in the *User Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations*, NSF97-153, 1997. Available at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/start.htm>

U.S. Government Accounting Office, *Ethnographic Studies Can Inform Agencies' Actions*, GAO-03-455, March 2003, (see especially pp. 1-14). Available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03455.pdf>

Schwartzman, Helen. *Ethnography and Organizations*, (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE, 1993), pp. 27-46.

### **Session 4 (February 13): Organizational Culture and Management**

Schein, Edgar H., *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), chapters 1-5, pp. 1-93. An outline of the entire text by Ted Nellen is available at: <http://www.tnellen.com/ted/tc/schein.html>

Ledeneva, Alena V. (2001). *Unwritten Rules: How Russia Really Works* (London: Centre for European Reform).

Practitioner example: Richard Seel, "Describing culture: From diagnosis to inquiry," Oct 2001, [http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/describing\\_culture.htm](http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/describing_culture.htm) and "Organizational culture check list," <http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/checklist.htm>

## **Session 5 (February 20): Civilizations, Contact and Conflict**

**Workplace observation due.**

**Guest Speaker Peter Mandaville, "External Perspectives on America: The View from the Muslim World."**

**\*\*Tonight we will meet in room 329 and be joined by students and faculty from other sessions of the class.**

Lewis, Bernard, "The roots of Muslim rage." *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 266, no. 3, September 1990, pp. 47-60.

Huntington, Samuel, "The clash of civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3, Summer 1993, pp. 22-50.

Said, Edward, "Islam through Western eyes," *The Nation*, April 26, 1980, <http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=19800426&s=19800426said>

Zakaria, Fareed, "The politics of rage: why do they hate us?" *Newsweek*, vol. 138, no. 16, October 15, 2001, pp. 22-40.

Antran, Scott, "Mishandling suicide terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 3, Summer 2004, pp. 67-90.

## **Session 6 (February 27): Cultures, Values and Civilizations**

**Midterm distributed.**

Griswold, Wendy, "Culture and the cultural diamond," chapter 1 and "Culture and organization: getting things done in a multicultural world," chapter 6, in *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*, (Pine Forge Press, 1994), pp. 1-17, pp. 116-137.

Hofstede, Gert and Hofstede, Geert-Jan, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 2nd ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), chapter 2, "More equal than others," pp. 39-46, chapter 3, "I, we, and they," pp. 73-85.

Notes on Hofstede from an Andrews University course by Prof. Charles Tidwell are available at: <http://www.andrews.edu/%7Eetidwell/bsad560/Notes2004.html>

Inglehart, Ronald, "Globalization and post-materialist values," Washington Monthly, vol. 23, no. 1, Winter 2000, pp. 215-228. Available at: <http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/papers/globaliza.pdf>. See also figures illustrating findings of several World Values Survey researchers, available at: <http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/fig.shtml>

Inglehart, Ronald and Norris, Pippa, "The true clash of civilizations," Foreign Affairs, vol. 82, no. 2, March/April 2003, pp. 67-74. Available at: <http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/papers/FornPol2.pdf>

## **Session 7 (March 6): Social Networks and Social Capital**

### **Midterm due.**

Watts, Duncan, "Decentralized Intelligence." Slate, 2004. Available at: <http://slate.msn.com/id/2104808>

Granovetter, Mark, "The Strength of Weak Ties." American Journal of Sociology vol. 78, no. 6, 1973, pp. 1360-80.

Castells, Manuel, "Prologue," in Rise of the Network Society, (London: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, pp. 1-28.

Castells, Manuel. "Culture, institutions and economic organization: East Asian business networks," End of Millennium, vol. 1, pp. 188-215.

Sampson, Steven, "Missing Fingers and White Jeep States: Mafia Kingdoms in Post-Communist Europe," unpublished paper, Lund University Department of Social Anthropology, October 1998.

Fukuyama, Francis, Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity, (New York: Free Press, 1995), chapters 1-6, pp. 1-57.

Recommended film: The Godfather

## **Reminder: No Class March 13 – GMU Spring Break**

**Session 8 (March 21 – \*\*Please note that this class meeting is not on our regular night. If a schedule conflict will make it impossible for you to attend, please let me know.):**

### **Guest Speaker Don Kash**

\*\*Tonight we will meet in room 329 and be joined by students and faculty from other sessions of the class.

Rycroft, Robert and Don E. Kash. "The Silent Emergence of Complexity" and "Complexity," chapters 1 and 4 in *The Complexity Challenge: Technological Innovation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (London and New York: Pinter, 1999), pp. 3 – 13 and 54 – 73.

### **Session 9 (March 27): Culture and Economic Development**

Landes, David, "Culture makes almost all the difference," chapter 1 in *Culture Matters*, (New York: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 2-13.

Grondona, Mariano, "A cultural typology of economic development," chapter 4 in *Culture Matters*, (New York: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 44-55.

Etounga-Manguelle, Daniel, "Does Africa need a cultural adjustment program?" chapter 6 in *Culture Matters*, (New York: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 65-77.

Shweder, Richard A., "Moral maps, "First World" conceits, and the new evangelists," chapter 12 in *Culture Matters*, (New York: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 158-176.

### **Session 10 (April 3): Language, Politics and Culture**

Orwell, George, "Politics and the English language," in 1984 (New York: New American Library, 1945, 1981). Available at:  
<http://www.lexrex.com/informed/otherdocuments/politics.html>

Lakoff, George, "Simple framing," Rockridge Institute website, Dec. 20, 2004. Available at: [http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/projects/strategic/simple\\_framing](http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/projects/strategic/simple_framing)

Rockridge Institute, "The nation as family," "The Progressive Worldview," and "The Conservative Worldview," [n.d.] linked articles at  
<http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/projects/strategic/nationasfamily/nationasfamily>

Lakoff, George, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 2nd ed., (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996, 2002), chapter 2, "The worldview problem for American politics," pp. 24-37, and chapter 10, "Social programs and taxes," pp. 179-196.

Lutz, William, "The world of doublespeak," in *Doublespeak* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), chapter 1, pp. 1-21.

### **Session 11 (April 10): Technology in Economy, Society and Culture**

Volti, Rudi. (2000). *Society and Technological Change*, 4th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers),  
chapter 1, "The nature of technology," pp. 3-16,

chapter 2, "Winners and losers," pp. 17-32.

Pacey, Arnold, *The Culture of Technology*, (London: MIT Press, 1983), chapter 1, pp. 1-12.

Winner, Langdon, "Do artifacts have politics?" in *The Whale and the Reactor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 19-39. Available at:  
<http://www-personal.si.umich.edu/~rfrost/courses/Women+Tech/readings/Winner.html>  
or [http://www.courses.psu.edu/phil/phil403\\_pam208/winner/19.html](http://www.courses.psu.edu/phil/phil403_pam208/winner/19.html)

## **Session 12 (April 17): Technology and Progress**

### **Research papers due tonight.**

Volti, Rudi. (2000). *Society and Technological Change*, 4th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers),

chapter 3, "Sources of technological change," pp. 33-53,

chapter 5, "The diffusion of technology," pp. 68-87.

Pacey, Arnold, *The Culture of Technology*, (London: MIT Press, 1983), chapter 2, pp. 13-34.

Marx, Leo, "Does improved technology mean progress?" *Technology Review*, vol. 90, Jan. 1987, p. 32+.

Halstead, Ted, "American paradox: the country with the most patents, Nobel laureates, and millionaires is also the country with the highest levels of poverty, homicide and infant mortality," *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 291, issue 1, Jan/Feb. 2003, pp. 123-125.

Kapur, Akash, "Poor but prosperous: development and quality of life can't always be measured purely in economic terms. The Indian state of Kerala is a case in point," *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 282, issue 3, Sept. 1998, pp. 40, 42+.

## **Session 13 (April 24): Technology, Work and Culture**

### **Final distributed.**

Volti, Rudi, *Society and Technological Change*, 4th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2000),

chapter 8, "Work in non-industrial societies," pp 127-144,

chapter 9, "Technology and jobs: more of one, less of the other?" pp. 145-158,

chapter 10, "Technological change and life on the job," pp. 159-176.

Street, John, "The political effects of technology," in *Politics and Technology*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1992,) chapter 5, pp. 92-114.

Miller, Barbara D., "Cultures in motion—snowmobile and Sami reindeer herding," *Cultural Anthropology*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), n.p.

Zuboff, Shoshana, "In the age of the smart machine," in *Technology and the Future*, 7th ed., Albert H. Teich, ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 370-379.

Lindholdt, Paul, "Luddism and its discontents," review of Kirkpatrick Sale, *Rebels Against the Future*, in *American Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 4, Dec. 1997, pp. 866-873.

Berry, Wendell, "Why I am not going to buy a computer," in *Technology and the Future*, Al Teich, ed., 9th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2003), pp. 31-36. Originally published in *What Are People For?* in 1990. Available at: <http://www.tipiglen.dircon.co.uk/berrynot.html>.

#### **Session 14 (May 1): The Future of Culture, Organization and Technology**

##### **Final due.**

Joy, Bill, "Why the Future Doesn't Need Us," *Wired*, April 2000.

Garreau, Joel, *Radical Evolution* (New York: Broadway Books, 2005)

Chapter 1, *Prologue: The Future of Human Nature*

Chapter 2, *Be All You Can Be*

Chapter 3, *The Curve*

