



# Rotman Commerce UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## Course Outline

### **RSM 260H1 F**

Organizational Behaviour  
Fall 2019

Course meets:

L0501 Thursday 10am-12pm (WI1017)

L0701 Wednesday 3-5pm (WW121)

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Instructor: Yao Yao [yaoyao.yao@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:yaoyao.yao@mail.utoronto.ca)

Office Hours: Office hours will be on Thursday from 12-2:30pm & by appointment. Location will be IR102 (121 Saint George Street), or advised otherwise at appointment. Please note that I will also be more readily available by phone and email during office hours.

Course website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

Text website: <http://www.pearsoned.ca/highered/divisions/myOBlab/index.html>

The text contains useful information that complements lectures. In particular, the text includes definitions of the key concepts, and practice essay/application questions for each chapter. Please note that “My OB Lab” is a supplemental study guide that comes with the text. Previous students have not found it particularly helpful and it is **not** required for the course.

**Please note: If you have questions about the class, please check the syllabus first, as we have tried to answer as many questions as possible here.**

# 1. SCOPE AND EXPECTATION

## 1.1 Scope

This course is designed to provide you with an in-depth introduction to the broad range of theory, research, and practice in organizational behaviour. Organizational behaviour is the study of how individuals and groups impact the behaviour within an organization. As managers or as employees, you will encounter issues ranging from the individual level to the group level and the organizational level, and you will need to be aware of how these areas fit into your working life. Topics in this course include understanding individual differences, motivating and leading employees, working in effective groups, ethics and negotiations, among others.

Our goal in this course is for you to become familiar with organizational behaviour research and theory, and to be able to think critically about organizations and their effectiveness. We encourage you to think of yourself not as a student in a course but as a “manager in training” to get the most out of this course.

Since your organizational experience is somewhat limited at this stage, we will do our best to create activities that help you apply your learning to the real world. Our goal is that you learn as much as possible about organizational behaviour that you can actually use in your own life.

### Course Prerequisites:

RSM100H1/MGT100H1/RSM100Y1

### Course Exclusions:

IRE260H1, PSY332H1, WDW260H1

## 1.2 Expectations

- Students will be proactive and will seek out resources to help facilitate learning. I am happy to help you identify resources; however, if you have specific questions about the class, please check the syllabus before asking questions as I have tried to answer most of them here.
- Students will learn to act professionally as they would with coworkers and with supervisors/superiors. Therefore, you will learn to communicate professionally (including email), work professionally in groups, present knowledge gained, equitably and fairly distribute work, as well as meet strict deadlines as you would in any modern organization.
- Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in Organizational Behaviour (OB).
- Students will use critical and creative thinking skills, skeptical inquiry, and the scientific approach to solve practical problems in organizations.
- Students will understand and apply OB principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.
- Students will develop insight into their own and others’ behaviour and mental processes and apply effective strategies for self-management and self-improvement.
- Students will develop realistic ideas about how to implement their OB knowledge and skills in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings.

## 1.3 Required Readings

*G. Johns & A. M. Saks. (2017). Organizational Behaviour (10th edition). Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.*

This is the best textbook for an introductory organizational behaviour course. Designed more for a two-term course instead of one, you will be reading selected chapters.

NOTE: In the past, some students have asked whether they could use older versions of this textbook. We recommend the current version (10th edition) because it is the most up-to-date, but the material in older versions of this textbook is fairly similar to that in the current version. Please note that content does not change much year to year, but it will be your responsibility to figure out what page numbers and chapters the readings cover in these old versions.

## 2. EVALUATION AND GRADES

### 2.1 Overview

Grades are a measure of the performance of a student in individual courses. Each student shall be judged on the basis of how well he or she has command of the course materials. The last day to drop this course from academic record and GPA is **November 5, 2018**.

Assignment	Value	Due dates (Subject to change)
Class participation	5%	Ongoing
Group project presentation	2%	Week 10 class (Nov 20/21)
Group project report	20%	Week 11 class (Nov 27/28)
Midterm test	30%	Oct 11 <sup>th</sup>
Final exam	40%	TBA (during the Faculty of Arts & Science Final Examination period)
Research Credit	3%	Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>

\*The midterm location and date are TBD. The test is common to all sections of RSM260. If you have another class during the scheduled midterm time you must inform your instructor by Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>. Otherwise, you are expected to be present and, if not, are subject to either a zero for the test or, in the case of a properly documented absence, taking the final at 70% of your grade.

### 2.2 Class Participation (5%)

You will be graded based on the value your participation provides to other students in the class. You begin the semester with 2.5 out of 5 points and gain points by increasing the value of the course for other students. Students have previously increased value for other students in the following ways:

- Offered comments in class that clarified issues pertaining to the material.
- Asked questions that prompted the instructor to clarify complex material.
- Discussed with the instructor ways to enhance any component of the course.

I will make notes of any student behaviour that increases the value of the course for other students. You can lose points by decreasing the value of the course for other students. For example, students in the past have decreased the value for other students in the following ways:

- Attended sections in which they were not registered. This decreases value for other students because of overcrowding (students sitting on floor, crowded space), distraction, and, ironically, larger classes decrease class participation.
- Arrived to class late or left early. It is disruptive for students who arrive and attend class on time.

- Absent from class.
- On cell phone or laptop during lecture.
- Made inappropriate comments or behaviours that distracted from the learning environment.

Special Note about Electronic Devices:

**I encourage you NOT to use laptops during lecture.** There is good empirical evidence that notetaking on a laptop decreases how much conceptual content you remember:

<http://www.vox.com/2014/6/4/5776804/note-taking-by-hand-versus-laptop>. Moreover, this is now the norm in most top MBA programs. I post an outline of the slides before class to facilitate this process. If you do use technology during class, please note that the use of electronic devices (phones, computers, tablets) for *any* purpose besides taking notes will result in you losing class participation credit. Not only does this behavior ensure that your learning suffers, but it unfairly impairs others' learning.

**2.3 Weekly Reaction Papers (5%):**

For each class, you will be expected to turn in a short reaction paper in response to that week's assignment. You will receive a pass/fail grade on each assignment.

Unless otherwise specified by me, to get a passing grade, you should write about 2-3 paragraphs explaining (a) what you found interesting, surprising, or confusing, (b) how what you've learned relates to your own life both in terms of experiences you have already had and in terms of experiences you could potentially have in the future, and (c) things you would like to know more about regarding the assignment's topic.

In total, reaction papers will be worth 5% of your grade. I highly encourage you to complete all reaction paper assignments. They are designed to help you prepare for class, enhance your learning, and assist you in working on your critical thinking and writing skills. Yet, I recognize that "things happen". Therefore, you will be allowed to not submit or receive a fail grade on up to two reaction papers in total and still receive the full 5 points.

You will need to submit both an electronic and hard copy of each reaction paper. If you have to miss a class, please provide a hard copy to a friend in the class to turn in for you. The hard copy will be graded. The electronic copy is only used for record-keeping purposes.

**2.4 Additional Assignments:**

There will be a weekly assignment designed to introduce that week's concept to you and get your curiosity flowing. You should do this assignment prior to attending class that week. These assignments will include reading a media article about scientific research, watching a video, or coming up with a potential solution to a critical thinking problem. The goal of these assignments is to make the knowledge personally relevant to you. Learning is most effective when information is personally relevant.

I will email you the upcoming week's assignment via Quercus. Sometimes I will require you to reflect on these additional assignments in your weekly reaction papers. Please read the assignment instructions on Quercus carefully.

**2.5 Group Project:**

In total, the group project is worth 22% of your grade: 2% for presentation + 20% for the final report

The topics and theories we discuss pertain to real organizational issues in current issues and events. This assignment is intended to further your knowledge of how organizational behaviour can apply to these current events and the real issues that organizations and employees are facing, while improving your writing and theoretical application skills.

You will write this paper and present it as part of a group of 4-5 students of you are assigned to (I will randomly assign you to groups, so you will interact with more peers and make new friends in this class).

You will locate and analyze a current article in a mainstream, North American newspaper or magazine article that relates to a theory or topic we discuss in class (that is, directly relates to an issue within an organization, or by a manager or employee of an organization). Please save a copy of the article, and turn it into me via Quercus by the due date posted below. You will also be asked to briefly outline the issue(s) you plan to focus on, and the theories or course concepts you plan to apply. This proposal is for feedback purposes to allow you to improve for the final submission. Note that the first group to submit an article to me will have the rights to that article and no two groups can use the same one.

Please see a separate document for detailed instructions for this project.

## **2.6 Examinations (70%):**

Together, two examinations will be worth 70% of your total grade: 30% midterm exam + 40% final exam

**Midterm Exam (30%):** It will be a two hour midterm covering material from readings, assignments, lectures, and in-class experiences up to and including Lecture 3. There will be NO class the week of the exam. If you cannot complete the midterm exam because of an *excused* absence the value of the midterm exam (30% of your final grade) will be transferred to the final exam that will then account for 70% of your final grade.

**Final Exam (40%):** The exam will be a two hour exam covering material from the entire semester. The final exam will take place during the Faculty of Arts & Science Final Examination period.

## **2.7 Research Participation (3%):**

Organizational Behaviour researchers develop hypotheses and run experimental studies to test these hypotheses with actual behaviour. You will receive course credit for participating in research studies conducted by University of Toronto researchers. This opportunity is intended to supplement the course material by giving you more direct exposure to management research.

You can earn credit for research participation by:

1. Participation in three hours (credits) of research studies, **or**
2. Analysis of three articles that report research studies, **or**
3. A combination of research studies and article analyses

**Participation:** To participate in a research study, you will be using the Rotman Behavioural Lab (BRL) Sona participation website: <https://rotman.sona-systems.com>. Both new and former BRL Study Pool participants have had accounts created, or updated so that their **usernames (now) match their UTORids**. New users should look for a message in their UofT email containing a link to complete registration. Former participants' accounts have retained their former passwords and emails, but now use their UTORid to log into the system. **All participants have been pre-registered for all of their RSM credit**

**pool participating courses this fall** (you can add or drop needed classes yourself, at any time, from your profile page).

After logging in, Sona, you can find a list of studies currently running at the BRL via the “Studies” tab. Read the study descriptions carefully: most studies take place in the lower level of the Rotman building in the Behavioural Research Lab (LL1015K), but others may run online, or in another physical location. Once you identify a study you are interested in participating in, select an open time slot that works with your schedule, and choose which course you want the study credit applied to on the final registration screen.

Participation in the actual research will take between 45 and 60 minutes for a 1 credit study or between 15 and 30 minutes for a 0.5 credit study. You will be debriefed at the end of the study, and you will be asked to answer a question about some aspect of the study. Once you correctly answer the question you will be given credit. More detailed instructions on the assignment, and using the Sona system can be found in your [Subject Participation Guide](#).

**Analysis of Article:** Although, we highly encourage you fulfill your participation requirement through research study participation, you may also elect to earn research credits through completion of article analyses. These analyses must be based on research articles from designated journals dependent on your class, and are graded on a pass/fail basis. Article analyses are worth 1-credit-hour of participation, and are graded on a pass/fail basis. To submit an article analysis, sign up for any open time spot on the “[Alternative Study Participation Article Analysis Assignment](#)” found on the Sona studies page (you will be asked to fill out the details of the article you are reporting on, and upload a word document). For detailed information on the article analysis assignment, including instructions on properly submitting the analysis to ensure credit is received, please, refer to your [Subject Participation Guide](#), or the FAQ on Sona. To earn full participation doing only the alternative assignment, you would need to write 3 article analyses for this course.

**Assignment Timeline & Important Deadlines:** You must complete 3-credit-hour worth of studies to fulfill your research participation requirement in this course. **Participation opportunities** in research studies for the Fall 2018 session are **anticipated to begin** the academic week starting, **Thursday, September 6, 2018**. The final study **participation deadline, and last day to submit an article analysis, is Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 5 pm**.

If you have any trouble with registration, questions the subject guide or SONA FAQ do not clarify, or need any further assistance, please contact **Team BRL:** [Behavioural.Lab@Rotman.Utoronto.ca](mailto:Behavioural.Lab@Rotman.Utoronto.ca), and we will be happy to assist you!

## 2.8 What Do Grades Mean?

Percentage	Grade Value	Definition
90-100	A+	4.0
85-89	A	4.0
80-84	A-	3.7
77-79	B+	3.3
73-76	B	3.0
70-72	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
63-66	C	2.0
60-62	C-	1.7
57-59	D+	1.3

53-56	D	1.0	Marginal
50-52	D-	0.7	
0-49	F	0.0	Wholly inadequate

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**Other Important Information:**

- The role of the instructor is to create an atmosphere conducive to learning and to give students the best opportunity to succeed.
- The role of the student is to be open to the opportunity to learn.
- This is a dynamic setting. Changes to the course may occur during the semester. I welcome your feedback about how to enrich the course.
- Students with disabilities or special needs are asked to inform the instructor as early as possible in the term in order to facilitate appropriate accommodation.
- Please be prompt for class and expect to stay for the entire period.
- Lecture outlines will be posted on Quercus but please note that these are only guidelines, and they are meant to be supplemented with your own note-taking.
- Please note that clear, concise, and correct writing will be considered in the evaluation of all written assignments. That is, you may lose points for writing that impedes communication: poor organization, weak paragraph development, excessive wordiness, hard-to-follow sentence structure, spelling mistakes, and grammatical errors. Students who require additional support and/or tutoring with respect to their writing skills are encouraged to visit the Academic Success Centre ([www.asc.utoronto.ca](http://www.asc.utoronto.ca)) or one of the College Writing Centres ([www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres)). These centres are teaching facilities – not editing services – where trained staff can assist students in developing their academic writing skills. There is no charge for the instruction and support.
- There is no extra credit for this course.
- A student who believes that an individual item of term work has been unfairly marked may ask the person who marked the work for re-evaluation. Re-marking of finals will follow university procedures—please note that the entire work (i.e., test, proposal, project) will be re-evaluated.
- Final grades will not be changed except for computational error.

**Submission of Assignments**

Assignments are due as indicated in the syllabus both in hard copy at the time of class as well as electronically through Turnitin.com (through Quercus). Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

### 3. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

#### 3.1 Email

I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 business hours of receipt.

At times, I may communicate important course information by email. As such, all U of T students are required to have a valid UTmail+ email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UTmail+ email address is set up AND properly entered on the ROSI system. For more information please visit <http://help.ic.utoronto.ca/category/3/utmail.html>

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that important messages from me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Please always use your UTmail+ account to contact me and the TAs, as emails from external accounts may end up in my junk box.

#### 3.2 Missed Tests and Assignments (including midterm examinations):

Students who miss a test or assignment for reasons entirely beyond their control (e.g. illness) may submit a request for special consideration. The Request for Special Consideration Form and supporting documentation must be submitted in a timely manner in order for the request to be reviewed.

In such cases, students must notify the Rotman Commerce Program Office on the date of the course deliverable such as a missed test, or assignment missed class (in the case of participation marks), or due date. They must then complete a [Request for Special Consideration Form](#) and submit it along with supporting documentation (e.g. [Verification of Student Illness or Injury form](#)) to the Rotman Commerce Office within **2 business days** of the originally scheduled course deliverable. Students who do not provide appropriate or sufficient supporting documentation will be given a grade of 0 (zero) for the missed course deliverable.

Documentation submitted in support of petitions for missing tests and assignments must be original; no faxed or scanned copies will be accepted.

**Note that the physician's report must establish that the patient was examined and diagnosed at the time of illness, not after the fact. Rotman Commerce will not accept a statement that merely confirms a later report of illness made by the student to a physician.**

If a student misses the midterm exam for an approved absence, the final exam will be reweighted and will count for 65% of the total grade. Any other issues that arise will be addressed on an individual basis at the discretion of the instructor.

#### 3.3 Late Assignments:

Assignment grades will normally be reduced by 5 percentage points (e.g., from a 75% to a 70%) if the assignment is not received by the specified time, and by an additional 5% points for each additional 24 hours late. However, late submission by itself will not result in a grade being reduced below 50%. The instructor reserves the right to refuse to grade any assignment that is more than two weeks late, in which case a grade of 0% will be assigned for that part of the course



grade. If the delay is the result of illness or domestic affliction, the individual involved must contact the instructor **BEFORE** the due date of the assignment and explain the position. A medical certificate or other supporting evidence will be required, although if necessary these may follow after the due date.

Students who, for reasons beyond their control, are unable to submit an assignment by its deadline must obtain approval from the instructor for an extension. Supporting documentation (e.g., medical certificate) will be required. Without appropriate documentation, I will not accept any late assignments.

### **3.4 Re-grades:**

A student who believes that an individual item of term work has been unfairly marked may ask the person who marked the work for re-evaluation. Re-marking of finals will follow university procedures. Please note that the entire work (i.e., test, proposal, project) will be re-evaluated. The regrade marks may be higher or lower than original marks.

Final grades will not be changed except for computational error. Unsubstantiated re-grade requests will not be looked upon favorably.

To request a re-grade, the student must do each of the following:

- 1.) Put in writing exactly what question(s) is being disputed.
- 2.) Explain exactly why the student believes that question(s) has been graded unfairly/incorrectly.
- 3.) Provide specific reference to page numbers in the textbook or other resources that support the student's argument.
- 4.) Submit this written request no later than 1 week after the exam has been returned to the student.

### **3.5 Accessibility Needs**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>.

### **3.6 Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarships at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the UofT degree that you earn will continue to be valued and respected as a true signifier of a student's individual work and academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously.

*The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm> outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the process for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes collaborating with others on assignments that are supposed to be completed individually).

On test and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to), medical notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated by the following procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have any question about what is or is not permitted in the course, please do not hesitate to contact the course instructor. If you have any questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from the instructor or other UofT resources such as College Writing Centres or the Academic Success Centre.

### **3.7 QUERCUS and the Course Page**

The online course page for this course is accessed through Quercus. To access the course page, go to the UofT Quercus login at <https://q.utoronto.ca> and log in using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in, look for your courses on your Dashboard where you'll find the link to all your course websites. If you don't see the course listed here but you are properly registered for the course in ROSI, wait 48 hours. If the course does not appear, go to the Information Commons Help Desk in Robarts Library, 1st floor, for help, or explore additional Portal Information for Students at <http://portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>.

### **3.8 Recording Lectures**

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record a lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission, and may not do so unless permission is granted (note: students who have been previously granted permission to record lectures as an accommodation for a disability are, of course, excepted). This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Quercus materials, etc.

If permission is granted by the instructor (or via Accessibility Services), it is intended for the individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in anyway. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in any other form without formal permission.

#### 4. YOUR OBJECTIVES: HOW CAN YOU SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE?

We will do everything possible to create conditions that will allow you to succeed. Ultimately, though, your success depends on your personal effort. To help you succeed, we recommend the following guidelines:

1. **Complete assigned readings AFTER class.** You will be most comfortable when you have completed readings/exercises after the day's lecture (**unless otherwise specified**); that way, you will have familiarity with the main concepts.
2. **Check on and read EMAILS or WEB ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Vigilantly check for email and postings on the course web site as additional information will be sent to you regarding the class throughout the term.
3. **Write thoughtfully.** You will be happiest with the evaluation of your performance on your writing assignments when your work is grammatically correct, free of spelling errors, logically organized, concise, clear, and creative. Thoughtfully written work is the most persuasive and defensible.
4. **Attend class sessions regularly.** You will get the greatest benefit from this course when you commit to attend every lecture. I aim to design lectures that make your attendance worthwhile and interesting. Lectures are designed to complement and extend the textbook. We will do exercises, discuss cases, and view videos that will demonstrate the "real life" importance of the concepts discussed in the textbook. Some exam questions will cover the exercises, cases, and videos from class.
5. **Participate in class.** An important part of class sessions will be the dialogue between you, your classmates, and your instructor. Questions will be posed in a friendly and non-confrontational manner. Further, we will use these classroom conversations to help you discover new ways of thinking about the material you have studied, rather than as tests of whether you can recite a specific set of facts. As much as possible, I want to create a classroom environment that allows you to actively participate in learning about organizational behaviour. Toward this end, I encourage you to interact both formally and informally with me and with your classmates. In addition to lectures, we will also spend some of our class time working on applied cases, exercises, and demonstrations, analyzing real world issues.
6. **Keep me informed.** I encourage students to visit me for feedback and answering questions about projects and examinations. Please do not hesitate to come to my office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. Also, you are responsible for notifying me immediately about problems or issues. Please do not assume that I know if something is bothering you – tell me.
7. **Writing aids.** The website *Writing at the University* at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/> includes many specific files of advice on academic writing which might be of great value to students. Also, writing workshops are frequently made available at your college.