

Up-to-date as of January 2, 2021 (subject to change)

Managing in Organizations (MiO)

38001 Syllabus | Winter 2021 | Sections 01, 02 | Professor Ed O'Brien

Welcome to MiO!

The workplace is designed, inhabited, and controlled by people, but people make mistakes. Executives make decisions today that lead to unforeseen problems tomorrow, competitors miscalculate their rival's moves and motives, and coworkers misperceive each other's thoughts and feelings. This course highlights how the human mind comes to make such errors, and what to do about them—ultimately, to understand how to manage yourself and others just a bit more wisely, both in the work environment and in daily life.

To accomplish this goal we will draw upon experimental social psychology, the bedrock of the course. Through laboratory findings and basic science, each week you will learn well-tested, well-replicated insights about social life: you'll be armed with management wisdom that works as opposed to management wisdom that "sounds right." The first few weeks (Internal Thought) outline the psychological underpinnings of how people—you, me, colleagues, clients, all of us—process information in biased ways. The latter few weeks (External Change) use these insights to understand real organizational issues like persuasion, giving feedback, building culture, working in groups, and work-life balance.

•CONTACT INFORMATION•

Professor:

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Zoom office hours by appointment

Teaching Assistants (send questions to the TA for your registered section):

Sect 01: Andy Nwaelele (andy.nwaelele@chicagobooth.edu), M.B.A. student, Booth

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•PREREQUISITES•

No course prerequisites. No auditors are allowed; no "sitting in"; etcetera. This is a strict policy for this year. This course is available only to students who are registered for it.

•PROVISIONAL GRADES•

I will submit provisional grades for students graduating this quarter based on performance at the time these grades are due.

•ACADEMIC SERVICES•

The University of Chicago is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate, complete course requirements, or benefit from the University's programs or services, please contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. To receive a reasonable accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with Student Disability Services. Please contact the office at 773-702-6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu, or visit disabilities.uchicago.edu. Student Disability Services is at 5501 S. Ellis Avenue. If you have an approved accommodation from Student Disability Services for this course, please contact Academic Services at AcademicServices@lists.chicagobooth.edu as soon as possible.

•RECORDING POLICY•

Instructors have the discretion to record course sessions, except when recording is required to meet the needs of students granted an accommodation by the Office of Student Disability Services. Recordings in which students are identifiable will be managed in accordance with FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). This time-limited policy has been implemented to effectively deliver a remote education while safeguarding privacy and protecting rights in courses and instructional materials. By attending course sessions, students acknowledge that they will not: (i) record, share, or disseminate course sessions, videos, transcripts, audio, or chats; (ii) retain such materials after the end of the course; (iii) use such materials for any purpose other than in connection with participation in the course; (iv) share links to course sessions with any persons not authorized to be in the course session. Course recordings, content, and materials are covered by copyrights held by the University of Chicago. Any unauthorized use of any of the course materials will violate such copyrights. Any violation of this policy will be referred to the Area Dean of Students.

•MATERIALS•

—Course website: <https://canvas.uchicago.edu/>

—Readings: I will provide all readings for you as PDFs on our Canvas site (you are not required to purchase any books, materials, and so on—though I will be recommending some fantastic books for those of you who want to dive deeper outside of class). All readings are required, before watching each lecture. I will not summarize the readings in lecture. You will be expected to understand basic references about the readings. The readings lay the groundwork for some fundamental principles that will help you then more efficiently process the lectures in real time. The lectures comprise new material that will go beyond the readings.

—Lecture slides: I will post the lecture slides after all optional live sessions are done for that week. In other words, you will not have access to the slides before or during lecture. I promise this isn't to annoy you, but to enhance learning, keep the slides interesting, and allow the lecture to be as fresh as possible. Therefore, plan on spending your Zoom time taking your own notes as I move along the material (the slides will be numbered during lecture, for your reference while taking notes).

Per Booth policy, lecture slides (and all course material, including everything over Zoom) are confidential, privileged, and only for the information of the intended recipient and may not be used, published or redistributed without my prior written consent.

•GRADING•

***Note well: For ALL assignments below, the 11:59pm deadline is painfully literal: The submission portal will close at exactly 11:59pm on the due date. You won't be able to submit anything at this point, and you will earn zero points (...even if you're, literally, one second late). Emailing us with late work will also earn you zero points. You've been warned! No exceptions. I know this is an annoying policy, but it is the only way that I can fully ensure equal fairness in grading each and every student.**

Please see Canvas to find detailed documents outlining each graded component of the course (i.e., what exactly to do for each) and what we're looking for when grading them. But, to reiterate the key details here, your final course grade comprises these components:

—Weekly Activity Tasks (15% of course grade): **Every Monday by 11:59pm**, you'll need to complete an Activity Task. You get full credit simply for completing them; there are no right or wrong answers. This component of the course is meant to be experiential and to get your feet wet in the world of psychology. Task times range from ~5 minutes to ~30 minutes. You'll submit your data, which I'll incorporate into lecture that week. (Rest assured, I'll always describe data via class averages. I'll never individually call you out. Your responses are 100% confidential to me, and 100% anonymous to everyone else).

***There will be 7 Activity Tasks in total, one before each non-exam week
(*Note: This includes the Monday before our very first class that Wednesday!)***

—Weekly Reflection Tasks (15% of course grade): **Every Monday by 11:59pm**, you will also submit weekly reflection papers. You will formulate your reactions to the previous lecture and/or the upcoming readings, based on questions that I send out. Each paper will be scored on a “check” scale and cannot exceed 1 page single-spaced. If you exceed this limit, know that we will grade only what we see on the first page. If you get a check: Good work. This means that you did a good job and met the high expectations that I have for Booth students. Keep it up. *Note that the grading scheme is designed such that, if you receive checks for every Reflection Task, that earns you maximum (100%) points!* Some papers may receive a “check-minus.” These papers are below the bar, usually meaning you didn't answer part of the question, you answered without considering the psychological orientation of the class, or if it was clear you dashed off an answer without thinking much. A small handful of papers may receive a “check-plus.” These will be rare by design and count as extra credit (*Again: note that the grading scheme is designed such that a “check” earns you 100%, thus rendering check-pluses to be extra credit*). These are reserved for the best papers relative to your peers that also offer unique insight—that others would find useful after doing all readings and attending class.

***There will be 7 Reflection Tasks in total, one before each non-exam week
(*Note: This includes the Monday before our very first class that Wednesday!)***

—Exams (40% of course grade): You'll be assigned an exam, to be completed on your own, near the start of the quarter and again near the end of the quarter (in order to tap into different sets of material, comprising each half of the course). To help save you time to take the exam, I won't assign Activity Tasks or Reflection Tasks during exam weeks.

There will be 2 Exams in total: Exam 1 is due Monday Feb 8 at 11:59pm and Exam 2 is due Monday March 8 at 11:59pm.

—Final Paper (30% of course grade): The final assignment is a final paper. You will pick a real-world organization (including your own, if you so choose; you can anonymize where needed to maintain confidentiality) and write a list of recommendations for how to improve it, based on class concepts. No more than 10 double-spaced pages in total. More details to follow; nothing to do for now. You'll have the choice to write it by yourself, or as a group (no more than 5 members). Every group member will receive the same grade.

There will be 1 Final Paper in total, due Monday March 15 by 11:59pm.

On Canvas, you'll also find an Excel document ("grade calculator") where you can plug-and-play your individual grades in order to keep track of your final letter grade for the course. This is simply meant to be a helpful resource for you, to keep track of how you're doing. This Excel document is programmed to automatically account for the percentage weighting listed above (15% Activity, 15% Reflection, 40% Exams, 30% Final Paper).

<i>Final course scores of...</i>	<i>Translate into this course letter grade...</i>
95.00 or above	A
92.00 to 94.99	A-
89.00 to 91.99	B+
86.00 to 88.99	B
83.00 to 85.99	B-
80.00 to 82.99	C+
77.00 to 79.99	C
74.00 to 76.99	C-
71.00 to 73.99	D+
68.00 to 70.99	D
65.00 to 67.99	D-
64.99 or below	F

•CLASS ETIQUETTE•

Despite our virtual Zoom environment, I still expect Booth students to adhere to all standard classroom norms. Note that if your final course grade falls right on the border of a grade cut-off and therefore requires manual correction, having been a good MiO citizen throughout the quarter will likely earn you the benefit of the doubt (and less likely so for students who did these things less consistently throughout the quarter). This includes:

—Having empathy and being a supportive and constructive team player (e.g., respecting your classmates' comments and never disparaging them, no matter how cute you think your comment is). Now more than ever, snark is not welcome here. All of us—me, you, your classmates—will likely fumble something on Zoom at some point, and all of us are experiencing hidden hardships during this time. I want every one of my students to feel comfortable and to view themselves as part of the same Social Psychology team. We're here to bring material to life *together*. You need to play your part in making this happen.

—Devoting your full genuine attention to Zoom lectures, and in the live Q&A sessions (if you attend). This means, for example, that I expect that you won't be checking your phone or completing other tasks while watching the lecture videos and on Zoom (obvious exceptions aside, such as dealing with family emergencies). I'll be treating this course just like I'd treat it if we were meeting normally in person. I think you (and all of us) will have the most rewarding learning experience if that's how you try to treat the course, too.

•COURSE SCHEDULE•

PART ONE: INTERNAL THOUGHT

Week 1 — The Power of the Situation (Wed Jan 13)

- Readings: (i) The Talent Myth (ii) A Tale of Two Plants
- In-video activity: NUMMI
- **Hence, due Mon Jan 11, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 1 + Reflection Task 1

Week 2 — Mistaken Impressions: Receiving and Seeking Information (Wed Jan 20)

- Readings: (i) Why CEOs Fail (ii) How We Know What Isn't So: Chapter 4 and Chapter 6; (iii) Made to Stick: Introduction and Chapter 1
- In-video activity: Carter Racing
- **Hence, due Mon Jan 18, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 2 + Reflection Task 2

Week 3 — Sense Making: How Beliefs Create Reality (Wed Jan 27)

- Readings: (i) Pygmalion in Management (ii) How (Un)ethical Are You? (iii) Set-Up-to-Fail Syndrome (iv) Ann Hopkins - A (v) Amicus Curiae Brief
- In-video activity: Ann Hopkins
- **Hence, due Mon Jan 25, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 3 + Reflection Task 3

Week 4 — Mind Reading: Knowing Others' Thoughts (Wed Feb 3)

- Readings: (i) Managing Your Boss (ii) The Better Boss
- In-video activity: Perspective Making
- **Hence, due Mon Feb 1, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 4 + Reflection Task 4

PART TWO: EXTERNAL CHANGE

Week 5 — Motivation (Wed Feb 10)

- Readings: (i) On the Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B (ii) Motivation: A Diagnostic Approach (iii) Pick any 5 readings from “Working” and be prepared to reflect on them in lecture
- In-video activity: Motivation at Work
- **Hence, due Mon Feb 8, 11:59pm:** The readings above + **Exam 1** (covering: Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4); No Activity Task this week and no Reflection Task this week; good luck on the exam!

Week 6 — Workplace Wellbeing: Hacks for Happiness and Creativity (Wed Feb 17)

- Readings: (i) Creativity Under the Gun (ii) The Futile Pursuit of Happiness (iii) More Isn't Always Better
- In-video activity: Design Demos
- **Hence, due Mon Feb 15, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 5 + Reflection Task 5

Week 7 — Group Decision Making (Wed Feb 24)

- Readings: (i) Groupthink (ii) The Abilene Paradox
- In-video activity: Subarctic Survival
- **Hence, due Mon Feb 22, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 6 + Reflection Task 6

Week 8 — Passive Influence: Culture, Commitment, and Norms (Wed March 3)

- Readings: (i) Applying and Resisting Peer Influence (ii) Cult-like Cultures (iii) Is Yours a Learning Organization?
- In-video activity: Class Experiences
- **Hence, due Mon Mar 1, 11:59pm:** The readings above + Activity Task 7 + Reflection Task 7

Week 9 — Active Influence: Managerial Persuasion (Wed March 10)

- Readings: (i) The Necessary Art of Persuasion (ii) Harnessing the Science of Persuasion
- In-video activity: 12 Angry Men
- **Hence, due Mon Mar 8, 11:59pm:** The readings above + **Exam 2** (covering: Weeks 5, 6, 7, 8); No Activity Task this week and no Reflection Task this week; good luck on the exam!

Week 10 — SUBMIT FINAL PAPER

- **Hence, due Mon Mar 15, 11:59pm:** Submit a PDF of the paper via Canvas (If you are working in a group: Make sure that the names of all group members are listed on the first page. Then, only ONE group member should submit the paper and that's that. Other group members shouldn't submit anything. Rest assured that we will find you all and match you all up!)

Your MiO Master Checklist (O'Brien, Winter 2021)

Everything marked in **red is a mandatory task for all students (even if you don't join the live Q&A sessions).

**The live Q&A sessions are optional. If you attend, feel free to pick any 1 of the 2 offerings each week (they're both the same each week). The only rule is that you must *first* watch that week's lecture *in full, before* attending.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
JAN 2021	10	11 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 1	12 At 5:00pm Lecture 1 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	13 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 1 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 1	14	15	16
	17	18 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 2	19 At 5:00pm Lecture 2 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	20 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 2 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 2	21	22	23
	24	25 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 3	26 At 5:00pm Lecture 3 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	27 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 3 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 3	28	29	30
FEB 2021	31	1 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 4	2 At 5:00pm Lecture 4 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	3 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 4 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 4	4	5	6
	7	8 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Exam 1	9 At 5:00pm Lecture 5 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	10 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 5 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 5	11	12	13
	14	15 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 5	16 At 5:00pm Lecture 6 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	17 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 6 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 6	18	19	20
	21	22 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 6	23 At 5:00pm Lecture 7 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	24 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 7 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 7	25	26	27
MAR 2021	28	1 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection 7	2 At 5:00pm Lecture 8 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	3 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 8 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 8	4	5	6
	7	8 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> All readings <input type="checkbox"/> Exam 2	9 At 5:00pm Lecture 9 video released (<input type="checkbox"/> Must finish watching by 3:45pm Wed)	10 10:45-11:30am Live Q&A 9 3:45-4:30pm Live Q&A 9	11	12	13
	14	15 By 11:59pm <input type="checkbox"/> Final paper	16	17	18	19	20