

University of North Texas

G. Brint Ryan College of Business

MGMT 4860.401 ~ Organizational Design & Change

Summer 2026 | 5W1

Online Delivery

Professor: Professor Tammy van der Leest

Department: Management ~ BLB 305

Office Hours: Wednesday, 10:00–11:00 am via Zoom

(<https://unt.zoom.us/j/87575275064>)

Email: tammy.vanderleest@unt.edu

TA: Sneha Narayan Kumar, Sneha.NarayanKumar@unt.edu



Course Introduction

Welcome to MGMT 4860, Organizational Design. This course moves beyond understanding how individuals behave in organizations and instead focuses on how organizations themselves are intentionally structured, aligned, and redesigned to achieve strategic objectives.

In today's business environment, organizations must continuously evolve. Leaders are expected not only to identify challenges, but to design systems, structures, and processes that address them effectively. This course is built around that expectation.

As a **4000-level course**, the expectations for critical thinking, analysis, and professional communication are elevated. Additionally, this is a **condensed five-week summer course**, in which sixteen weeks of material are delivered in an accelerated format. Students should plan accordingly and be mindful of the time commitment required to successfully engage with the course.

Required textbook: Organization Theory & Design, Richard Daft, 13th ed., Cengage

Course Overview (3 hours)

Organizational design is a primary management tool for organizing business processes and developing organizational capabilities. The course focuses on developing an understanding of the basics of organizational design, how to utilize organizational design principles to manage change and how to keep the design aligned with the needs of the firm and the demands to which it must respond. The design and development effort includes study of organizational structures, the basic work patterns of the organization, organizational cultures, managerial roles and the use of teams.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze organizational structures and their alignment with strategic goals
 2. Evaluate the impact of external environments on organizational design
 3. Assess organizational culture as a component of design and performance
 4. Identify structural and operational challenges within organizations
 5. Apply data-driven reasoning to organizational decision-making
 6. Develop organizational redesign recommendations grounded in course concepts
 7. Communicate complex organizational analyses in a clear, professional format
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Professional Expectations

This course is designed to reflect the expectations of a professional business environment. As such, students are expected to demonstrate:

- Accountability through adherence to deadlines and course requirements
- Preparation through completion of assigned materials prior to engagement
- Professional communication that is clear, concise, and well-structured
- Active and meaningful engagement in all course activities
- Ownership of work that reflects individual effort, critical thinking, and a consistent author's voice

Students who approach this course with professionalism, discipline, and attention to detail will find that these skills translate directly to success beyond the classroom.

[Academic Integrity Policy \(PDF\) \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003).

Communication

Connect with me through UNT email, Canvas Inbox, or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

I conduct office hours every week via Zoom (see page 1 for the Zoom link). Please do not feel like you must wait for office hours to meet with me. Office hours are simply a time to drop in without setting an appointment. In other words, instead of me making you wait until a narrow window on a specific day of the week arrives, you may email me 24/7/365.

While I may not be able to reply immediately after you click “send,” I do aim to respond to all emails within 24-26 hours. My goal is always to respond within 24 hours but often I am in attendance at committee meetings, conducting service hours, assisting corporate partners, etc). If you have questions that are not answered in this syllabus or within the Canvas modules (please review these two options first), then do not hesitate to contact me.

- Check Canvas announcements every 24–36 hours
- Use your UNT email or Canvas Inbox
- Include **MGMT 4860 + section number** in subject lines
- *Do not use assignment comments for communication*

As noted earlier, I try to answer emails within one business day if I can, so if you ever have questions (*that are not already answered here in the syllabus or in Canvas*), please email me. While I am not “on call” 24/7 (and that is what it would take for me to be able to automatically accommodate the schedules of 100s of globally-dispersed students who each have their own

schedules), you can (and should) email me 24/7. For example, please do not be shy if you do not understand course material or assignment requirements. Having said that, please also remember to try not to email me “at the last minute” and expect an immediate response. (For example, if you wait until the day before a deadline to begin your work and then email me, you may not receive a reply before the deadline has passed, e.g., I may be on a plane traveling to an academic conference when your last-minute email was sent.) Please plan ahead.

Note: To ensure efficient communication, please include your full course number and section in all email correspondence (e.g., 3660.010, 3720.401, 4860.401, or 3721.403). While I strive to respond to students in a timely and professional manner, missing course information may result in delays in response time.

Like many of you, I balance a demanding schedule that includes teaching responsibilities, departmental obligations, and university service commitments. To support your success and encourage professional problem-solving skills, I also encourage you to first review the syllabus and Canvas course materials, as many questions can be answered in those locations. If you are unable to locate the information, please include your course and section number along with a clear explanation of your question so I may assist you as efficiently as possible.

Canvas & Technology

Students are responsible for maintaining access to Canvas and submitting all work through course modules. Technical issues must be documented through the UNT Help Desk with a screen shot and a ticket number.

Note: All assignments must be submitted through Canvas prior to the stated deadline. Canvas is a digital system, and time is recorded precisely. **If an assignment is submitted at 11:59 pm, it is considered late and subject to the late penalty.** Students should plan to submit work in advance of the deadline to avoid any issues.

Statements such as “there was a computer glitch” or “I experienced technical difficulties” are not considered valid excuses for late submissions. Students are responsible for ensuring that their technology is functioning properly and that assignments are submitted on time.

Please understand that offering this course through Canvas affords us many opportunities and challenges. Canvas provides you the convenience of being able to complete the course asynchronously (meaning, you do not have to drive to campus two days every week to sit in a classroom and listen to lectures). You are also provided the convenience of not coming to campus to take quizzes or exams. As such, there must be some form of accountability.

Remember, these courses are not easy open-book, open- notes courses but rather, are courses designed with rigor to help prepare you for the business world.

We all know that technology has its own set of issues and challenges. Therefore, it is best not to wait until the last minute to submit an assignment or quiz only to find out the power is out, or your internet is lagging, or your computer is not fully charged. I am not IT. I have limited ability to assist with any IT related issues. As such, you must contact IT right away and provide them with a screenshot of the problem. Then, email me with the help ticket number and the screenshot. This way, I can follow up with IT if necessary.

Course Structure

This course is **asynchronous** but **not self-paced**. Students must adhere to all deadlines and remain consistently engaged throughout the course. This is a condensed summer course. The pace is accelerated and requires consistent attention and time management.

There are no mandatory online sessions for this course. See UNT's Attendance Policy (<http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2->) to learn more. Having said that, while this is a fully online course, you are still expected to log into Canvas at least once a week to ensure that you do not miss important course announcements. For example, if there is a schedule change and you do not know about it because you are not regularly logging in and reading important announcements, then you will be fully responsible if you miss a deadline because you did not know about the schedule change.

Late Work Policy

This course no longer imposes automatic zeros if you miss a deadline. Instead of a no-exception, automatic zero, you now have automatic permission to submit work late, subject to a daily penalty of 15%. You do not need to tell me something came (or is coming) up and then ask for permission to submit after the deadline. As you already have permission, simply submit your work as early as you can to minimize the penalty.

Ideally, you will work ahead and not wait until the last minute to submit your work. That way, if something comes up at the last minute – e.g., something comes up at work, a personal situation or emergency arises, you lose your internet connection due to a storm, you have trouble installing proctoring software, etc. – you will not have to worry about: (A) earning a lower grade because you rushed to submit on time, or (B) earning a zero because you did not submit your work at all.

But if you do choose to wait, and something does come up, please do not ask me for extensions or waivers of this penalty unless you have a verifiable excuse in accordance with university

policy (in which case you should include documentation of this verifiable reason when you email me to ask for an extension/waiver). Why should you not ask for an extensions/waiver otherwise? Because I cannot give you special treatment that was not extended to others.

Awarding you an extension or waiving this penalty is simply not fair to those who structured their lives – often in very inconvenient ways – to ensure that they did learn the material and complete their work on time. It is also unfair to those who earned lower grades because they rushed to finish on time. I am sure (and I mean this sincerely) that you probably – quite understandably, given how busy we can be – had good reasons to decide to wait until the last minute to submit your work (and were then simply unlucky when something did come up).

Sometimes that is how life works. Still, you did wait. Something did come up. And I cannot give you special treatment when others earned lower grades because they rushed to submit on time, or incurred late penalties if they did not. So please, simply accept the consequences of your decision (and bad luck) with grace, knowing that there is zero judgment on my part.

Assignments and Grading

Grades in this course are based on total points earned. **Grades are not rounded, and no assignments or scores will be dropped.** The grade you receive at the conclusion of the course reflects the work you have completed and the points you have earned. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

Any extra credit opportunities will be communicated through Canvas. These opportunities are designed to support engagement and provide limited flexibility; however, students should not rely on extra credit to improve their overall grade.

Consistent engagement and quality work are the most effective strategies for success in this course.

For example, while many students balance demanding schedules and may primarily focus on completing a degree for career advancement or promotion opportunities, earning high grades requires a significant investment of time, effort, and consistent engagement with the course material. Students should not expect to earn top grades if they are unable to devote adequate time to their studies.

To be specific, this course was specifically designed to meet the standards set forth by the Ryan College of Business, The University of North Texas, and The State of Texas. It was also designed around standards set by the world's most prestigious collegiate accrediting agency for business schools, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Less than 6% of the world's business schools have earned this accreditation, and you are earning your degree at one of them. This accreditation virtually guarantees that your degree will be accepted as legitimate in the eyes of employers and schools around the world, versus being thought of as a diploma mill or program where everyone who simply completes the work earns a degree.

In other words, this is a rigorous course. You will have to work hard to pass the course (RCOB policy requires a minimum grade of a C). If earning an A or B is an important personal goal of yours (versus mainly wishing to graduate with your degree), this will probably not be possible without putting in a tremendous amount of time and effort. The keys to success for most students are practicing time management, staying current with assignments and quizzes, studying very, very hard before taking exams, and communicating with me if you have questions or concerns before taking your exams.

If your work or personal schedule is especially demanding, haphazard, and unpredictable right now, or if you are the kind of person who does much better working under highly structured, face-to-face conditions, then it is possible that an online course like this is not the best choice for you right now. Please take into account the number of hours (how many classes) and the online structure. You must ask yourself is this will this be the best delivery mode to meet your learning objectives.

Assessing your work

Grades are based on mastery of the content. As a general rule, I do not grade on a “curve” because that is a comparison of your outcomes to others. I do, however, encourage you to maximize your learning with our coaching staff at the Learning Center. Also, please feel free to contact me if you ever feel like you are struggling, and remember that UNT offers a suite of Academic Support Services to help you:

- Academic Resource Center (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- Academic Success Center (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- UNT Libraries (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- Writing Lab (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

Please remember our Honor Code: “I commit myself to honor, integrity, and responsibility as a student representing the University of North Texas community. I understand and pledge to uphold academic integrity as set forth by UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy, 06.003 (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). I affirm that the work I submit will always be my own, and the support I provide and receive will always be honorable.”

Grading Principle

Your grade in this class will be calculated by adding up the total points earned during the semester. Because we use a point system, there is no such thing as “rounding a grade up” (so please do not ask for this). The letter grade that you earn for the course will be based on your completion of the following deliverables:

Assignment	Points
Quizzes (5)	250
Discussion Post + Responses	250
Project Milestones (4)	350
Final Organizational Design Report	150
Total Points	1000

Grading Scale

- A: 900–1000
 - B: 800–899
 - C: 700–799
 - D: 600–699
 - F: 599 and below
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Organizational Redesign Project (Consulting-Based)

This course centers on a consulting-style organizational redesign project. Students will analyze an organization and develop strategic recommendations for improvement.

Project Phases:

1. Organization Selection & Overview
2. Structural and Environmental Analysis
3. Problem Identification & Data Considerations
4. Redesign Recommendation
5. Final Report

Students are expected to demonstrate alignment between analysis and recommendations, application of course concepts, and professional-quality business communication.

Discussion Posts

Weekly discussions require critical thinking, **application of course concepts**, and professional engagement. *Responses must add value to the discussion.*

Note: I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure safe and welcoming discussions for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please contact me. We are all learning together.

Quizzes

Quizzes assess understanding of key concepts and ensure consistent engagement with course material. Quizzes are based on that week's assigned textbook reading.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use: Course Policy

Intellectual honesty remains a foundational expectation in this course. All submitted work must reflect your own thinking, analysis, and professional judgment. However, this course acknowledges that artificial intelligence tools are increasingly integrated into modern organizational environments.

Acceptable Use: AI-Assisted Work

AI tools (such as ChatGPT) may be used to support brainstorming, clarification, and refinement. Students must remain the primary author.

Prohibited Use: AI-Generated Work

Submitting AI-generated work as original, relying on AI to complete assignments, or producing work without a clear author's voice is not permitted.

Author's Voice Expectation

All submissions must reflect a consistent and identifiable author's voice. Work that appears overly generic or inconsistent may be subject to review.

Guiding Principle

If AI is doing the thinking for you, it is not acceptable.
If AI is supporting your thinking, it may be appropriate.

Course Schedule

Start Date	Subject Matter & Reading List	*Assignments
Week 1 18 May	<i>Introduction to Organization Design & Change</i> Week 1: Foundations of Organizational Design Read: Chapters 1-3	Concept Quiz 1 Discussion Post + Responses Project Step 1
Week 2 25 May	Week 2: Strategy, Environment, and Structure Read: Chapter 7,11, 13, and 14	Concept Quiz 2 Discussion Post + Responses Project Step 2
Week 3 1 June	Week 3: Culture and Decision Systems Read: Chapter 9 and 10	Concept Quiz 3 Discussion Post + Responses Project Step 3
Week 4 8 June	Week 4: Organizational Challenges and Redesign Read: Chapter 4 and 12	Concept Quiz 4 Discussion Post + Responses Project Step 4
Week 5 15 June	Week 5: Implementation and Final Report Read: Chapter 5 and 6	Concept Quiz 5 Discussion Post + Responses Final Project Due

Note: This course follows a structured schedule to assist students in their time management and course success. However, please take note of the due dates for Week 5, since they do not follow the typical formula. Week 5 marks the end of the session and all work must be submitted by the end of the term date.

Extra Credit

Please note that UNT, the RCOB (especially its Department of Management), and accreditation agencies (e.g., the AACSB) are highly protective of the value of your degree, as ensuring the rigor of a degree program is a vital determinant of whether employers, graduate schools, etc., view it as legitimate or not.

Courses where the class average grade has historically been “too high” are now being monitored. This includes all of my courses. That, unfortunately, makes it difficult for me to offer Extra Credit. Nevertheless, because I do want to encourage students to learn as much as possible, and I also want to reward those who have shown that they sincerely care about their grades, I do sometimes offer potential Extra Credit to students who demonstrate a willingness to put in “extra” time and effort throughout the course (i.e., not just at the end if you need it).

Extra credit assignments, if offered, are typically posted on Canvas and are normally used to help students reach the next letter grade up at the end of the course if they fall 10 points or less short, e.g., while 799 points is a C, students who care enough (about how much they learn and their grade) to complete “extra” work throughout the course (not just at the end) could receive a B instead. Note that this means that I cannot raise the grades of anyone who does not complete “extra” work throughout the course, because it would be unfair to give you special treatment compared to those who diligently completed this work.

So please, if earning a certain course grade is important to you (e.g., you are the kind of student who will lose sleep over falling just short of the next letter grade up in the course, you need a certain grade to graduate or qualify for financial aid or tuition reimbursement, etc.), then you should strongly consider completing any extra credit assignments. *And if you choose not to complete extra credit work, then please do not ask me to raise your grade if you finish the course with 899 points, 699 points, etc.* Please simply accept the grade you earned with grace (or better yet, complete the extra credit).

Syllabus Modifications

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus, schedule, and course content as needed. All updates will be communicated through Canvas announcements and course modules.

University Policies

Examination Policy

While there is no in-person proctoring, and no one will monitor you through your webcam, all Quizzes and Exams in this course are considered to be “Closed Book”. As a proxy for in-person proctoring, we will use a combination of the Respondus, the Honor System, and time limits. (Respondus prevents you from looking up answers online while take Quizzes/Exams, the Honor System prevents you from

consulting your notes, and if you violate the Honor System, time limits will hopefully prevent you from having the time to look up more than a handful of answers.)

Exams are “knowledge-acquisition-application” oriented. The questions cover content from all material assigned in the course and are designed to “quickly” test your knowledge. You must complete them on your own and in one sitting. Links to take them will be posted on Canvas. (If you see a link to take an Exam, feel free to take it.) I strongly recommend that you start your exam WELL BEFORE deadlines to allow plenty of time to resolve any technical issues that may occur (e.g., Respondus errors) and avoid any delays due to things that may arise at the last minute to prevent you from taking it on time (e.g., personal emergency, power outage, etc.).

Should you lose Internet connection during the exam, you would need to contact the Student Helpdesk and document the remedy ticket number before contacting me. Finally, remember that UNT policy requires faculty to submit final grades the Monday following the last day of the term (typically the previous Friday). If you have coursework to complete and the course is nearing its end, please remember that you will earn AUTOMATIC LATE PENALTIES if you do not submit your work on time, and AUTOMATIC ZEROS if you do not finish the course before the last day of the term. That last point is important enough to say twice. UNT policy does not permit work to be accepted beyond the end of the term end date. Therefore, if something important has arisen and you need to contact me for help or advice, you must do so prior to term end date.

Exam Academic Integrity

Usage of cell phones, tablets, cameras, other computers, or ANY other electronic device is NOT allowed during quizzes or exams. Talking to other students, soliciting or giving help is NOT allowed. Copying, photographing, or disseminating the questions in any form is prohibited. Exam questions are randomized so you will NOT have the same questions as your classmates nor will the questions be in the same order as your classmates.

International Students

Federal regulations state that students may apply only 3 fully-online semester credit hours (SCH) to the hours required for full-time status for [F-1 Visa \(DOC\)](#) holders. Full-time status for F-1 Visa students is 12 hours for undergraduates and 9 hours for graduate students.

Office of Disability Access

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it’s important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](#) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>).

Supporting Your Success

UNT strives to offer a high-quality education in a supportive environment where you can learn, grow, and thrive. As a faculty member, I am committed to supporting you, and I want to remind you that UNT offers a range of mental health and wellness services to help maintain balance and well-being. Utilizing these resources is a proactive way to support your academic and personal success. To explore campus resources designed to support you, check out [mental health services \(https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies\)](https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies), visit unt.edu/success, and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Technology Requirements

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and a webcam. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere \(https://online.unt.edu/learn\)](https://online.unt.edu/learn).

UNT Campus Notifications

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and describe that the calendar is subject to change, citing the [Campus Closures Policy \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006).

Grading

Grades are based on mastery of the content. As a rule, I do not grade on a “curve” because that is a comparison of your outcomes to others. I do, however, encourage you to find opportunities to learn with and through others. Explore [Navigate360’s Study Buddy \(https://navigate.unt.edu\)](https://navigate.unt.edu) tool to join study groups. Maximize your learning with our coaching staff at the Learning Center. Focus on areas where you are struggling in this course by attending scheduled study group sessions with me the week before each exam. Forward together!

Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people’s work without citations will be violating UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of [guidelines for your academic success \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or discuss this with me during my office hours.

Class Participation

Research has shown that students who participate in class are more likely to be successful. You should read the content in the textbook, review material from recommended sources, read announcements, follow Canvas course schedule, and participate on a daily basis unless you have a university excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official university function as stated in the [Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy \(PDF\) \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039). If you cannot participate in course content due to an emergency, please let me know. Your safety and well-being are important to me.

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

- UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- Individual Counseling (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>) Additional student support services offered by UNT include:
 - Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
 - Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
 - Student Legal Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
 - Career Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
 - Student Affairs Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/programs-and-services/care-team/>)
 - Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>)