

Final Examination
PSPA 297 Seminar in Organization Theory
Professor Van Geest
June 19, 1996

Directions: You must answer two of the first four questions in Part I and you must answer question number five in Part II. Each of the two questions you answer in Part I are worth 25% of your examination grade and the question in Part II is worth 50% of the grade. PLEASE CLEARLY INDICATE WHICH QUESTIONS YOU ANSWER. Good luck.

Part I

1. Explain and evaluate the significance of the following concepts:
 - a) negative entropy
 - b) steady state, dynamic equilibrium and homeostasis
 - c) equifinality of open systems
 - d) "technical rationality" vs. "organizational rationality"
 - e) the "organization ecology" perspective

2. Identify four models of decision-making and match each of these models to the major topics or schools of thought in organization theory (i.e. explain the theoretical relevance and consistency). You may assume the models are either descriptive or prescriptive.

3. What are the sources of power for lower level participants in an organization? How does this power compare with that held by higher level participants, and that held by external actors or constituents? Would your answer vary according to the type of organization you are considering? If so, why?

4. Dealing with environmental change is a major challenge for organizations. Choose three perspectives in organization theory and explain how the concepts associated with each demonstrates what an organization can or cannot do in order to best position itself to deal with unanticipated environmental change.

Part II

You must answer question number five.

5. Much of the history of organization theory has been about organizational structure. What type of organizational structure do the various organization theorists prescribe, and under what circumstances is this structure appropriate? Why does the subject of organizational structure seem to have declined in importance over time, and what explains the choice of subjects for study that have been made in more recent years? How important is organizational structure?