**Synchronous Small Group Discussion:** Session 5

Topic: Scott and Davis, Organizations as Natural-Social Systems, Chapter 3

**Instructions**

Introduce yourselves. Then, select a note-taker who will record the key components of your discussion. Select a time-keeper who will keep the conversation on track. As you work, keep track of questions that emerge. Everyone should be ready to share ideas with the larger group.

I. In your small group, discuss each of the quotes below.

**Quotes**

A. “[T]here is frequently a disparity between the stated and the “real” goals pursued by organizations—between the professed or official goals that are announced and the actual or operative goals that can be observed to govern the activities of participants.” (Scott and Davis, p. 60)

B. “[E]ven when the stated goals are actually being pursued, they are never the only goals governing participants’ behavior.” (Scott & Davis, p. 60)

C. “Formal structures purposefully designed to regulate behavior in the service of specific goals are greatly affected—supplemented, eroded, transformed—by the emergence of informal structures. “(Scott & Davis, p. 62)

D. “[T]he social structure of an organization does not consist of the formal structure plus the idiosyncratic beliefs and behaviors of individual participants, but rather of a formal structure and an informal structure: informal life is itself structure and orderly.” (Scott & Davis, p. 63)

E. “[T]he specific output goals of organizations are often undermined or distorted by energies devoted to the pursuit of system goals, chief among which is the concern to survive.” (Scott & Davis, p. 83)

II. To conclude your discussion, consider:

*What are the benefits of analyzing an organization from a natural-social perspective?*