



Università
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Organization Theory

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Course Description

The purpose of this seminar is to take a rigorous in-depth look at selected theoretical approaches to explain organizational phenomena. We concentrate primarily on what are called macro- theories of organizations.

In each session we will examine both important historical contributions and more recent treatments of the topic. Each session may contain both theoretical and empirical contributions. While sessions may differ somewhat in their execution, each session will generally begin with a more general discussion of the components and boundaries of the week's topic. This discussion will be followed by a more in-depth exploration of the articles assigned for the week, where we will explore not just what has been said but also how these theories have been tested and debated. One or two students will be assigned to lead each session's discussion, and will develop the questions that will guide and structure each week's class.

Course Evaluation

Class Preparation and Contribution (40% of grade) - Each participant is required to come prepared to class. Since class discussion is an integral part of the course, absences and lack of study are unacceptable. Preparation will always involve reading all the weekly assignments. In addition, each article will be assigned to class member who will prepare a short (preferably a single page) written synopsis / critique of the article that they will e-mail to all class members by the day prior to our class meeting. While I will provide some lecture materials, much of the course will involve engaging in discussions about seminar topics. As noted above, 1-2 students will be tasked each week with leading the class discussions.

Final Assignment Individual Paper (60% of grade) - Participants will also need to write a research paper that relates a topic(s) covered in class to their own research interests. At a minimum, the final product should define a research question, review and critique the extant literature, develop a few testable hypotheses, and propose a method for testing the proposed hypotheses. The body of the manuscript (excluding title page, references, figures, etc.) should not exceed 20 pages, double spaced with one inch margins and times roman font.

Papers spanning Organization Theories and other disciplines such as organizational behavior, accounting, marketing, strategy, sociology, etc. are also acceptable --subject to prior approval of the professor.

Schedule

Date	Topic
September, 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Overview: What is a Theory? Does Theory matter?• Organizational Studies and Organization Theories: level of analysis, unit of analysis and multiplicity of paradigms
September, 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision Making and Structural Contingencies: The “organizational rationality”
October, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limits and Pitfalls of Contingency Approach
October, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The “Cambrian Era” of Organization Studies: New Forms and New Theories
October 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizations and Institutions (Neo-institutionalism)
November, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evolution and Population (Evolutionary Studies and P.E.O)
November, 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy and Organization: from structure to resources
November, 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource-based view of the Firm
November 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning and Knowledge-based approaches
December, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What’s next? New Landscapes and Perspectives

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