XXXIV CICLO

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT THEORIES

Term I

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of this course is to introduce students to fundamental questions and theoretical approaches in the study of organizations, and to the fundamental issues about organizational design. At the beginning a particular attention will be placed to the introduction of qualitative and quantitative research approach.

The readings are organized historically and thematically to capture the intellectual trajectories of organization theory and various shifts in emphasis: from workers to managers, from organizational processes to outputs, from studies of single organizations in their environments to studies of collective action in organizational populations and fields. Students are expected to complete all the readings prior to class.

Our primary goal is to cover the major theoretical approaches to organizations, and we will examine recent advances in theory and research that extend these approaches in interesting ways. During the course, students will develop a solid understanding of some of the major economic perspectives guiding the study of organizations and they will examine how different theoretical perspectives are tested.

The course does not presume specialized background in organization theory.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to develop your skills in discussing and critiquing both arguments and evidence. Students not only need to understand the arguments, but also need to be able to talk about them and extend them. Each lesson’s readings will typically include some “classics” defining the particular perspective, some more recent theoretical and/or empirical developments of the perspectives, and either implicit or explicit critiques of the basic perspective.
EXAM & EVALUATION

Article presentation & Discussion
40% - Each student will be required to present in front of the class and discuss at least one article assigned by teachers. The article presentation sessions will be organized as follows: at first, one student (presenter) will present the article (30-40 minutes) as he would be the author. At the end of the presentation two students (discussants), whose role has been assigned at least one week before, will discuss the article. Both the presenter and the discussants are required to highlight the main links with the theoretical concepts presented so far in the course. The article presentation will also help students to familiarize with the methodological issues (i.e. qualitative and quantitative research methods) in organizational theory.

Assignment
60% - Each student will be required to write an original paper based on the literature covered in the course. The paper should present a conceptual/theoretical framework concerning an organizational level question. The paper must present an underlying theoretical rationale and contain the key elements of a theory as discussed in class. Each paper will be presented at the end of the course to the class.

CLASS SCHEDULE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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| Tuesday 17 Oct 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 1  
Course Overview  
Does Organization Theory matter?  
**Cecilia Rossignoli UniVr** |
| Tuesday 24 Oct 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 2  
Introduction to research methodologies  
The qualitative approach  
**Sara Moggi** |
| Thursday 26 Oct 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 3  
Introduction to research methodologies  
The quantitative approach  
**Alessandro Zardini UniVr**  
**Ludovico Bullini Orlandi UniVr** |
| Thursday 2 Nov 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 4  
Transaction Cost Economics  
**Cecilia Rossignoli UniVr** |
| Tuesday 7 Nov 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 5  
Institutions and Organizations  
**Cecilia Rossignoli UniVr**  
**Ludovico Bullini Orlandi UniVr** |
| Thursday 9 Nov 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 6  
Contingency theories  
Decision Making (Basic considerations)  
**Maddalena Sorrentino Unimi** |
| Tuesday 14 Nov 2017 | 14.00-17.00 | Lesson 7  
Organization in Action: Resource Based View e Business Process Management  
**Alessandro Zardini UniVr** |
LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION THEORIES: AN OVERVIEW

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS & AIMS
Which are the foundations of organizational theories and their evolution? Classical theories: similarities and differences between the ideas of Taylor, Fayol, and Weber. The universal process approach: lessons and limitations. New theories of organization: brief introduction to challenges facing contemporary scholars

REQUIRED READINGS


FURTHER READINGS
Lesson 2. Introduction to Qualitative Research

Specific questions & Aims

The role of qualitative research in management studies. Research design in qualitative studies. Ontology and Epistemology. Qualitative research vs quantitative research: driving the correct choice. Key information gathering techniques: interviews and focus groups. Text analysis and coding. Case study research: longitudinal approaches and mixed methods.

Required readings


Further readings


Lesson 3. Introduction to Quantitative Research in Management

Specific questions & Aims

Nowadays, the role of quantitative research in management studies is really widespread. Sometimes, it is quite difficult to properly use the methods inside this methodology. The aim of this course is to understand and use the main methods in the management fields. In particular, it will face the following topics:

- Validity and reliability
- Explorative Factor Analysis (EFA)
- Confirmative Factor Analysis (CFA)
- Introduction to the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Required readings

Further readings


Lesson 4. Transaction Cost Economics

Specific questions & Aims

Why do firms exist (according to the TCE)? Why is there any organization? What are transaction costs? And where they come from? What are the transaction’s attributes that affect the level of transaction costs?

Required readings


Further readings


Lesson 5 Institutions and Organizations

Specific questions & Aims

The importance of institutions (rules, roles, values) for economic prosperity. Institutional systems as crossroads of economic and organizational studies. Different perspectives on organizational institutionalism: old institutionalism, new institutionalism, institutional logics, institutional work. Institutional theories in top journals: recent trends.
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Required readings


Further readings


Lesson 6. Decision making and bounded rationality

Specific questions & Aims


Required readings


JONES B.D., 2001, “Bounded rationality and public policy: Herbert A. Simon and the decisional foundation of collective choice”, *Policy Sciences*, (35), 269-284,

Further readings


Supplementary readings


Lesson 6. Organization and its Environment: Contingency Theories

Specific questions & Aims

Why are organizations structured the way they are? Do organizations choose their structures? What is the proper alignment or fit between the organization’s structure and its environment? Is there such thing as an optimal structure? Do companies that find the proper fit actually perform better? How do organizations cope with the integration challenges created by horizontal and vertical differentiation and specialization? What is equifinality?

Required readings


Further readings


Lesson 7. Resource Based View and Business Process Management

Specific questions & Aims

Objective of the seminar is to investigate the organizational theories that are the foundation and have inspired the Business Process Management. Special attention will be dedicated to the analysis of the evolution that this phenomenon has had over the last 20 years and the influence it has had in the contest of the different approaches to organizational design.

Required readings


Further readings


Lesson 8. Inter-Organizational Network Theories

Specific questions & Aims
Objective of the seminar is to explore mainstream theories on inter-organizational phenomena: Transaction Costs Economics, Agency Theory, Resource Dependence Theory, Game theories, Collaborative Networks theory, Institutional theories, Organizational Ecology, Resource Based – Relational Based View of the firm, and Knowledge Networks – Social Networks theories. Moreover will introduce the impact of ICT on inter-organizational phenomena: virtual organizations, e-intermediates, e-marketplaces.

Required readings

Further readings

Lesson 9 and 10. Article presentation