Course Description

The primary objective of this doctoral seminar is to survey the major theoretical perspectives and issues studied in organizational theory (OT) research. Formal organizations and organizing processes are ubiquitous in modern society. They dominate most facets of modern social life; education, employment, family, recreation, religion, and politics. Organization theory provides a set of theoretical approaches explain how organizations form, survive, grow, change, compete, interact, influence, and generally manage problems internal and external to their boundaries. The field of organizational theory has a rich history and tradition but is also constantly changing as new developments in markets and societies challenge our understanding about how organizations work. Each session in this course provides students with an introductory exposure to classical, neoclassical, and modern theories of organizational theory covering both theoretical and empirical work.

The course is organized as a seminar. Students will be responsible for completing all of the assigned readings and being prepared for general discussions about the session topic as well as in-depth discussion about assigned articles. Students will be required to submit summarized discussion questions in advance of each class. To facilitate adequate preparation, the number of readings for each session have purposely been kept small.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Organization Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rational System Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Natural Systems Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Open Systems Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Contingency Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Carnegie School Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Neo-Institutional Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Institutional Change &amp; Social Movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Organizational Ecology and Evolutionary Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Power and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Structure of Markets: Organizational Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Economic Action and Social Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Social Construction of Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Legitimacy, Status and Reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Organizational Learning</td>
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Course Prerequisites
This course is open to Ph.D. students from all department in the University. Master’s students who want to take the course must obtain the instructor’s permission.

Course Materials
Articles and book selections not available online through the University Library will be included in the course packet.

Assignments
A central aspect of this course will be to socialize students to the journal submission and review process. Approximately two-thirds through the semester, each student will submit a research manuscript for double-blind peer review where each student serves as a reviewer for a fellow classmate’s paper. Students will be graded on the quality of the review they write as well as the quality of their own revised manuscript with accompanied response letter. Each student will also be required to hand in one short (2 page single-spaced) article critique on or before the 7th class session. The overall course grade will be based on the following rubric:

Article Critique (10%) - One short critique of an empirical article assigned for class discussion. Two page single-space maximum. The critique should:
(1) Summarize the question the author is trying to answer
(2) Briefly describe the model the author uses to answer the research question
(3) Discuss appropriateness of author’s methodology
(4) Evaluate author’s conclusions
(5) Provide suggestions for improvement of manuscript

Individual Paper and Response Letter (40%) – Students will be required to write a research paper related to one or more of the topics covered in class. Students are encouraged to tailor this assignment to their own research interests. To this end, I am flexible regarding the format of this paper. It can be the “front end” of a full research paper (i.e. introduction, literature review, hypothesis development, proposed methodology), it can be a full research paper with analysis and conclusions, or it can be a theory paper. Regardless of format, the paper should not exceed 20 pages double-spaced (excluding title page, references, tables, and figures), and be should be formatted based on the Academy of Management Journal style guidelines (see: http://www.aom.pace.edu/amj/style_guide.pdf). The initial paper submission will not be graded. Students will be graded on the quality of the revised version (which should incorporate reviewer comments), and the accompanying response letter detailing how you responded to each comment and/or why you elected not to adopt a particular suggestion.

Manuscript Review (20%) – Each student is responsible for providing a quality review of a term paper submitted to the blind review process. Each review is limited to two single-spaced pages.

Class preparation and participation (30%) – Since class discussion is a vital component to this course, each student is required to come prepared to class. Unexcused absences and unpreparedness are unacceptable. Preparation involves reading all of the assignments and preparing discussion questions for class. Discussion question should be e-mailed to the entire class, including me, 24 hours before class starts.
Reading List

Students are responsible for getting hold of the required reading journal articles. They should be available via online databases (e.g. JStor) through the UT library. All the required readings that come from books are available as part of the course packet at the Co-op.

There are no required books for the course but there are two that I would suggest for any serious students of organizational theory. Several of the course readings come from these books:


Readings with an * are required, all others are optional

1. Introduction to Organizational Theory


2. Rational Systems Perspective


3. Natural Systems Perspective


4. Open Systems Perspective


### 5. Contingency Theory


### 6. Carnegie School Approach


7. Neo-Institutional Theory


8. Institutional Change & Social Movements


### 9. Ecological and Evolutionary Perspectives


10. **Power and Politics in Organizations**


11. **Organizational economics and market exchange**


12. Economic Action and Social Structure


14. Organizational Legitimacy, Status & Reputation


15. Organizational Learning


