

Organizational Science Overview (OSCI 8000)
Fall 2016
Thursday 12:30-3:15
Colvard 3131

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Course Goal and Objectives

The goal of this course is to provide a broad overview of the field of organizational science. Organizational science is a multi- and inter-disciplinary field consisting of a complex array of theoretical and methodological paradigms. This diversity of perspectives is perhaps its greatest asset, but its fragmentation can present challenges for students as they develop programmatic research skills in a doctoral program like ours.

While a fully comprehensive survey of the field cannot be accomplished in one semester, OSCI 8000 provides the opportunity for new Ph.D. students to explore key concerns that unite (and occasionally divide) the field by learning some history and overview of each field and some topics of shared significance to scholars in communication studies, management, psychology, and sociology. Specific learning objectives include:

- Introducing the four fields comprising our OS program: I/O psychology, management, organizational communication, and organizational sociology
- Developing a basic appreciation for similarities and differences across disciplines and paradigms, particularly where the tensions define the interesting discussions
- Developing your own research interests within organizational science
- Increasing your capacity to engage in constructive, creative intellectual discussions

Required Materials

We will be reading from a variety of sources including book chapters, monographs, edited volumes, and journals. The reading assignments are listed in the last section of the syllabus. You do not need to purchase anything. All journal articles can be found online via the university's library system. The rest will be provided in electronic form.

Methods of Evaluation

We will have five methods of evaluation in this class:

- Weekly memos (20%)
- Discussion Lead (10%)
- Course participation (20%)
- Take home exam (20%)
- Final paper (20%) and presentation (10%)

Course Participation

This class will primarily be conducted as a seminar, involving discussions of the assigned readings and other topics that arise. As a graduate course, the success of this format depends as much—probably more—on the students as it does the instructor. That means that you should come to every class prepared to discuss the materials including:

- the main points of the readings
- the ways the readings connect and/or contrast
- what you find useful, appropriate, interesting (or not) in their theoretical perspectives and methods
- what is not clear to you

As some readings are particularly difficult or have a complex (or interesting!) history, don't worry if you don't understand every point. But, do read thoroughly and think about each reading. Our primary hope is that our class meetings will be insightful, challenging, and collegial. We will enjoy getting to know one another and the broad field of Organizational Science throughout the semester.

Class participation is determined by our judgment of the quality of your involvement in the class. It will be based on **your contribution to class discussion each class. We will reward knowledge of course readings, value added to class discussion and activities, and competent, respectful classroom leadership. You need to talk and participate to get credit!** However, if you are the type of person who likes to talk a lot during classes, be mindful of this and allow others to have a chance to speak as well. Sometimes this means pauses and silence. If you know you are a talker, please monitor yourself and don't always be the first person to jump in. ;)

Weekly Memos

To help you prepare for class as described above, each week, prepare a two-page memo or essay about the readings. These are assignments in which we want you to push yourself, your conceptual thinking, and your understanding about the readings. You can write about general reactions to the readings, specific articles you find interesting, conflicts and critiques that may arise for you, and other deep thoughts the papers inspire you. It should NOT, however, be a "book report" in which you just repeat what you read. Also, if you do not like a perspective or conceptualization, this is the time to practice arguing why it is not appropriate based on theory/empirical arguments. Also, it would be appropriate to see if there is any challenging assumption or belief that you should examine.

You should also include **at least one discussion question** at the end of each weekly memo. We understand these questions are difficult to write for students, but it is part of your stretch exercise. It also gives you practice for the types of questions you'll be expected to answer on your Qualifying Exams (!). We suggest that you try questions that start with "Why" and "How" and try to relate the questions to broader topics that we've covered before, the article's home discipline or another one, or connecting to disparate topics, for example, "How do X (2009) and Y (2013) differ in their assumptions to address and fix diversity problems in current organizations?" This would be fun to discuss in depth in class.

Please upload your paper to our Moodle 2 class page by 6:00 PM on Tuesday before each class. We will discuss your reactions, comments, questions, and go over any confusing parts of the readings in class.

Discussion Lead

For some of our weekly meetings (starting on 10/6), class members will take turns leading the discussion. You will each lead the discussion one time during the semester. The key task is to organize class discussions and facilitate intellectual exchanges on what are the important and interesting ideas, findings, and approaches in the assigned readings. Although the discussion leader does NOT need to write a formal weekly memo, your preparation should be more comprehensive and thorough. You need to consider the main ideas, arguments, and contributions of required readings. You can also identify connections among assigned readings and between them and other studies. Most importantly, you should raise a set of questions and issues for class discussions, and feel free to incorporate the materials and questions in classmates' weekly memos. When you are the discussion leader, please upload your plan/outline for discussion (e.g., several questions and a brief outline for the discussion) by 6:00 PM on Wednesday.

Take Home Exam

There is one exam for this class. It is a take home exam consisting of essay questions covering material from the class. You may consult your notes, readings, and/or other sources, but you may not discuss the questions or your answers with anyone else.

Final Project

Your final project assignment is to write a literature review on a topic of interest to you. Your goal is to learn about an area of interest that is relevant to one or more faculty and begin formulating some preliminary research ideas (i.e., directions in which you might want to take the research). Although your goal is to identify and use research that incorporates the inter- and trans-disciplinary research, you may need to focus on research (i.e., concepts and citations) **from at least two of the four OS disciplines**. This project will help you to develop research interests of your own within OS and start thinking about how you might conduct research on the topic in the future.

PAPER – The paper portion of the assignment is to be written very like the start of a journal article, with an introduction and a review of the relevant literature. The introduction (i.e., the first 3-5 paragraphs) describes the general topic and establishes why it is important to know more about this topic and your particular take on it. The literature review portion of the paper is not intended to be an exhaustive review of all possible literature on the topic. Instead, it focuses on relevant theory and recent empirical advances. Your goal is not to create a laundry list of everything done on it, but to **provide a reader with your interpretation of the important issues and research you have found**. In the final section of the paper, you should conclude with where you would take this topic if you were to conduct research on it. **You will NOT include a methods section in this paper**. This is a “conceptual” paper and you should end it with future research questions and/or hypotheses. BUT if you would like to develop a research proposal that goes a step beyond a literature review to actually propose a research plan, please let us know and we can discuss other options.

The paper should be formatted in APA style, and should include a reference section. Article lengths may vary across our four disciplines, but as a guide the paper will probably be between 10-15 pages long, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. The paper is due on **Thursday 12/15** by class time.

PRESENTATION – Your presentation will be given on **Thursday 12/1**. It should be approximately **15 minutes in length**. It should provide the audience with a brief overview of the background, conceptual reasoning and need for the idea (how it advances the current state of knowledge on the topic). The main focus of the presentation will be on presenting the topic, i.e., telling us what it is, defining your terms, telling us why it interests you, giving us some conceptual and empirical background (any relevant theories and some of the recent empirical research on it), and telling us some of your preliminary ideas for future research on the topic. Also include how it cuts across at least two OS disciplines, and which faculty interests match it best. This will be an opportunity for the class to give you feedback on your project before you turn in your paper.

Grade

A	90 and above
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Administrative Notes:

1. In case of absence you will be responsible for getting notes from your peers and arranging a replacement if you are serving as the discussion leader. In doctoral-level courses, absence should be *exceptionally* rare.
2. Arrive to class on time and be prepared with notes, questions, and comments on the readings.
3. If you are having any problems at all, PLEASE let us know as early as possible. Nothing is gained (individually or collectively) when students are less than honest about their comfort with course material, assignments, or class discussion.
4. You are bound by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. More information is available at <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>.
5. UNC Charlotte strives to create an academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Topics & Reading Assignments

Week 1 (8/25) Introduction and Course Overview

Starbuck, W. H. (2003). Shouldn't organization theory emerge from adolescence? *Organization*, 10(3), 439-452.

Davis, G. F. (2015). Editorial essay: What is organizational research for? *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 60(2), 179-188.

Week 2 (9/1) History of the Disciplines

Zickar, M., & Gibby, R. (2007). Four persistent themes throughout the history of I-O psychology. In L. L. Koppes (Eds.): *Historical Perspectives in Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, pp. 61-80. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Tompkins, P. K., & Wanca-Thibault, M. (2001). Organizational communication: Prelude and prospects. In F. M. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.): *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication*, pp. xvii-xxxi. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Scott, W. R. (2004). Reflections on a half-century of organizational sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 1-21.

Cummings, S., & Bridgman, T. (2011). The relevant past: Why the history of management should be critical for our future. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 10(1), 77-93.

Week 3 (9/8) I/O Psychology: Cognitive Ability, Motivation, & Job Performance

Motowidlo, S. J., Borman, W. C., & Schmit, M. J. (1997). A theory of individual differences in task and contextual performance. *Human Performance*, 10(2), 71-83.

Steers, R. M., Mowday, R. T., & Shapiro, D. L. (2004). The future of work motivation theory. *Academy of Management Review*, 29(3), 379-387.

Byington, E., & Felps, W. (2010). Why do IQ scores predict job performance? An alternative, sociological explanation. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 30, 175-202.

Week 4 (9/15) Communication: Metaphors, Resistance, & Sensemaking

Putnam, L.L., Phillips, N., and Chapman, P. (1996). Metaphors of Communication and Organization. In S.R. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. Nord (Eds.): *Handbook of Organizational Studies*, pp. 375-408. London: Sage, Ltd.

Murphy, A.G. (1998). Hidden transcripts of flight attendant resistance. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 11(4), 499-535.

Weick, K. E. (1993). The collapse of sensemaking in organizations: The Mann Gulch disaster. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38(4), 628-652.

Week 5 (9/22) Sociology: Institution & Social Network

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147-160.

Kwon, S., Heflin, C., & Ruef, M. (2013). Community social capital and entrepreneurship. *American Sociological Review*, 78(6), 980-1008.

Vasudeva, G., Zaheer, A., & Hernandez, E. (2013). The embeddedness of networks: Institutions, structural holes, and innovativeness in the fuel cell industry. *Organization Science*, 24(3): 645–663.

Week 6 (9/29) Management: Strategic Human Resources & Business Risk

Pfeffer, J. (2007). Human Resources from an organizational behavior perspective: Some paradoxes explained. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21(4), 115-134.

Banks, G., Pollack, J., Bochantin, J., Whelpley, C., O’Boyle, E., & Kirkman, B. (in press). The science-practice gap: Identifying the inherent principal-agent issue, addressing “collaboration costs” and bridging the divide. *Academy of Management Journal*.

Gómez-Mejía, L. R., Haynes, K. T., Núñez-Nickel, M., Jacobson, K. J. L., & Moyano-Fuentes, J. (2007). Socioemotional wealth and business risks in family-controlled firms: Evidence from Spanish olive oil mills. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 52(1), 106-137.

Week 7 (10/6) Theory Building at the Intersection

Zahra, S. A., & Newey, L. R. (2009). Maximizing the impact of organization science: Theory-building at the intersection of disciplines and/or fields. *Journal of Management Studies*, 46(6), 1059-1075.

Markóczy, L., & Deeds, D. (2009). Theory building at the intersection: Recipe for impact or road to nowhere? *Journal of Management Studies*, 46(6), 1076-1088.

Hambrick, D.C. (2007). The field of management’s devotion to theory: Too much of a good thing? *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(6), 1346-1352.

Week 8 (10/13) Reading across Disciplines (RAD): Power & Leadership

- Plowman, D. A., Solansky, S., Beck, T. E., Baker, L., Kulkarni, M., & Travis, D. V. (2007). The role of leadership in emergent, self-organization. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *18*(4), 341-356.
- Blair-Loy, M. (2001). Cultural constructions of family schemas: The case of women finance executives. *Gender and Society*, *15*(5), 687-709.
- Barker, J. R. (1993). Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *38*(3), 408-437.

Week 9 (10/20) RAD: Gender & Diversity

- Ridgeway, C. L., & Correll, S. J. (2004). Unpacking the gender system: A theoretical perspective on gender beliefs and social relations. *Gender & Society*, *18*(4), 510-531.
- Huffman, M. L., Cohen, P. N., & Pearlman, J. (2010). Engendering change: Organizational dynamics and workplace gender desegregation, 1975–2005. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *55*(2), 255–277.
- Buzzanell, P. M., & Liu, M. (2005). Struggling with maternity leave policies and practices: A poststructuralist feminist analysis of gendered organizing. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *33*(1), 1-25.

Week 10 (10/27) RAD: Employment Relationship and Employee Well-Being

- Lutgen-Sandvick, P., Tracy, S. J., & Alberts, J. K. (2007). Burned by bullying in the American workplace: Prevalence, perception, degree, and impact. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(6), 837-862.
- Kalleberg, A. (2009). Precarious work, insecure workers: Employment relations in transition. *American Sociological Review*, *74*(1), 1-22.
- Tracy, S. J. (2000). Becoming a character for commerce: Emotion labor, self-subordination and discursive construction of identity in a total institution. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *14*(1), 90-128.

Week 11 (11/3) RAD: Rationalization & Social Structure

- Ritzer, G. (1983). The “McDonaldization” of society. *Journal of American culture*, *6*(1), 100-107.
- Barley, S. (2010). Building an institutional field to corral a government. *Organization Studies*, *31*(6), 777-805.

Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S. (1998). Social capital, intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage. *Academy of Management Review*, 23(2), 242-266.

Week 12 (11/10) RAD: Intra-Organizational Process & Social Interaction

Webster, M., Jr., & Driskell, J. E., Jr. (1983). Beauty as status. *American Journal of Sociology* 89(1), 140-165.

Leonardi, P. M., & Rodriguez-Lluesma, C. (2013). Occupational stereotypes, perceived status differences, and intercultural communication in global organizations. *Communication Monographs*, 80(4), 478-502.

Vijayalakshmi, V., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2012). Emotional contagion and its relevance to individual behavior and organizational processes: A position paper. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 27(3), 363-374.

REMAINDER OF COURSE/DEADLINES

Week 13 (11/17) – Receive Take Home Final, which will be due on November 23; Work day in or outside of class for exam, presentation or final paper, and/or consult with your professors about presentation or paper

Week 14 (11/24) – No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15 (12/1) – Presentations

Week 17 (12/15) – Final Paper Due; Class reflections