CULTURE AND ORGANIZATION
Ph.D. Course: 26:620:677:01, Spring 2015
Chao C. Chen

OFFICE: MEC 303, Tel: 973-353-5425; E-mail: chaochen@business.rutgers.edu

CLASS HOURS: Wed 2:30-5:20, Room 204

OFFICE HOURS: Wed. 11:30am-12:20pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course reviews and examines theories and research on culture and how it related to various aspects of organization and management. We will first examine conceptualizations of culture, theoretical perspectives linking culture to behavior, methodological issues in conducting cross-cultural research, as well as recent research on the ways in which cultures vary. We will then examine how culture affects psychological processes and organizational behaviors including motivation, cognition, social networking, leadership, and teams.

Course Requirements

Class Participation 15%
Weekly Reports 20%
Mid-term Innovation Paper 25%
Final Research Proposal 40%

Class participation (15%)

Attendance is mandatory. Participation in the class involves reading the articles, being prepared, and making thoughtful comments in class discussions. In addition, students will team up to do a book report and take turns to play the roles of a synthesizer and a critic (in place of the weekly report) as described below.

Session Synthesizer. This involves analyses of all the readings of a given session, and distributing to the class (by 8am Wednesday) a one-page outline of your discussion points that:

- Provide an overall framework of the readings
- Compare and contrast theories or perspectives covered within a given session or between different sessions
- Identify three or more interesting issues, ideas, or hypotheses for future research

Critic. Select one paper to conduct an in-depth critique. A one-page report is to be distributed to the class (by 8am Wednesday). In the critique, you should go beyond a mere summary but identify what you regard as specific strengths and weaknesses of the paper. For an empirical paper, comment on theory development, methodology, findings, and/or implications. Some basic questions include: what does the paper add to the literature? Does it offer convincing rationales
for the hypotheses? How confident are you in validity of the findings? Might boundary conditions exist? What additional questions can be generated and explored for future research?

Literature Search. Conduct a literature search of top tier journals such as AMJ, AMR, ASQ, JAP, SMJ, and JIBS for most recent (within 3 years) publications on your assigned topic and select two papers that you deem best to replace two papers (please specify) in the current assigned readings.

Written Reports (20%)

Weekly Report (15%). Each week, students write a 2-page report of the readings. The first page is a summary of the key points of all of the assigned readings. The second page is your personal reflections on the readings, especially new and interesting research ideas you have identified (see questions in the above Critic section). The reports should be submitted by 8am Wednesday through email.

Book Report (5%). Students (preferably from different cultural backgrounds) form a two member-team to do a 3 pages book report on one of the books listed at the end of the syllabus. In your report, present the guiding theoretical framework of the book, assess its impact (contributions or limitations) on cross-cultural research, and propose new research ideas that can be derived from the book. A session is scheduled for book report presentations.

Mid-term Innovation Short Paper (25%)

This is a short 4-6 page description of a novel idea or hypothesis related to the assigned readings and class discussions (something not already known or immediately obvious to cultural researchers). You should use theories from one of the topic areas covered in this class in a substantive and novel manner. You should state your hypothesis and then present a theoretical justification about why it is a good idea and how it fills a gap in existing literatures or answers important questions that researchers have overlooked (3 pages). You should also mention how you might test your ideas (1-2 pages of the total). The paper should include a figure, diagram or table that illustrates the causal relationships that your propose. The figure and/or table is not included in the page limit.

You do not need to do an elaborate literature search to make sure that your idea is new; the course readings and a quick computer search will suffice. Here are some questions that might spark your creativity:

1. Is there a theory that did not fit with your personal experiences or observations in organizations or in groups? If the theory does not fit, suggest how it might be modified and tested.
2. Did any of the theories seem to contradict each other? How can the contradiction be resolved and the amended theory be tested?
3. Is there a setting in which you could test a theory we read about and find opposite results, or no results at all? Describe how you would revise the theory and test the amended theory.

4. Was there a theory that you found to be wrong? Why? Describe how you would revise the theory and test the amended theory.

When I grade your papers I will be primarily looking for two things:

1. Your argument/idea is written clearly enough so that I can understand it; that means there is a logical structure and a clear thesis.
2. You have made reasonable arguments to support your thesis and supported those arguments with evidence from existing empirical literature.

Additional Resources:

The following three papers (available on blackboard) should serve as resources for you in finding an interesting topic and building the case for its interest and importance.


Research Proposal (40%)

The final paper is a research proposal in no more than 15 double-spaced pages of text (excluding References) due in the last sessions of the class. In the proposal, you should provide a literature review of the related work to date, construct a theoretical model consisting of hypotheses, and methodology to be used for testing the hypotheses (for the format, use AMJ publications as examples). For the proposal to benefit from the knowledge of every one in the class, each student will present the proposal and lead a discussion on his or her proposal.

It is important that you appropriately cite all references within the text of your proposal, as well as including a reference list at the conclusion of your paper. Sentences that are paraphrased and ideas that are adopted from another work must be appropriately cited. If you are including a sentence or passage verbatim from another work (published or unpublished), you must indicate this with the appropriate quotation marks and citation. Failure to do so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism or even disciplinary actions.
OUTLINE OF CLASSES

1 – Jan. 21  Introduction
2 – Jan. 28  Conceptions of culture
3 – Feb. 04  Methodological issues
4 – Feb. 11  Cultural value dimensions
5 – Feb. 18  Values, systems, and practices
6 – Feb. 25  Culture, Leadership, and Teams
7 – Mar. 04  Book report
8 – Mar. 11  Culture and cognition

March 18: Spring Recess

9 – Mar. 25  Innovation paper presentations

**Short paper due**

10 – April 01  Culture, morality and ethical decision making
11 – April 08  International assignment
12 – April 15  Culture and organizational characteristics
13 – April 22  Organizational culture
14 – April 29  Term paper presentations

**Term paper due**

Topics and Assigned Readings

**Session 1. Introduction**


**Session 2. Conceptions of Culture**


Additional Papers (Not required but recommended)


**Session 3. Methodological Issues**


**Additional Papers**


Session 4. Cultural Value Dimensions


Additional Papers


Session 5. Values, Systems, and Practices


**Additional Papers**


**Session 6. Culture, Leadership and Teams**


theories: Are attributes of charismatic/transformational leadership universally endorsed?. *The Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 219-256.

**Additional Papers**


**Session 7. Book Report**

**Session 8. Culture and Cognition**


**Additional Articles**


**Spring Break**

**Session 9. Presentations; Innovation paper due**

**Session 10. Culture, Morality and Ethical Decision Making**


**Additional Papers**


Session 11. International Assignments


Additional Papers


Session 12. Culture and Organizational Characteristics


Comparative Management, 9, 3-38.


Additional Papers


Session 13. Organizational Culture


Additional Papers


**Session 14. Presentation**

**Books on Reserve in the Dana Library**