Objectives

This doctoral seminar is designed for new doctoral students to gain an understanding of classic and contemporary research that addresses fundamental issues of organizational behavior. Drawing on theory and research in psychology, social psychology, and organizational behavior, we shall explore individual, interpersonal, and group processes in work organizations. Our emphasis will be on the development of theory and research. It is critical that you read the required readings before class and spend some time thinking about the research implications of the readings, both individually and as a group. We will use these readings to gain a sense of the important perspectives and approaches in the field, not just as a set of findings that are to be digested or summarized. The class will also explore more current OB research topics published in top tier journals.

Readings

You must read all required readings. The recommended readings could be useful for your research papers for this class. For those who are interested, more extensive lists of references to OB topics and history are posted under Course Information on the blackboard.

Course Requirements

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Session Leader (10%)

The success of this course depends on how students are actively engaged. Each student must be prepared to discuss all the required readings for each session. As you reflect on your readings please consider the following:

- What is the basic theoretical model of the paper (constructs and relationships among them), and what is the foundational theory upon which the theoretical model is built?
- What is the main contribution of this paper? What ideas you find interesting?
- Do you agree or disagree with the arguments made in the paper, and why?
- How does a given paper relate to other papers in this and other sessions?
• Are there gaps you can fill and tensions you can resolve through further research?

In addition, each student is required to act as a session leader once during the semester. A session leader for each class will be assigned in our first class. The session leader makes a power point presentation of the assigned readings and the current research in the topic area of the week. Leading the discussion requires a deeper understanding of the major research questions, the strengths, weaknesses, controversies, and gaps in the readings as well as a literature review of current research literature. Specifically, the session leader should:

a. Provide an organizing framework for classroom discussion of theories and empirical research;
b. Compare & contrast (as appropriate) theories or themes of research covered within a given session or between sessions;
c. Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the week’s readings and lastly
d. Report to class emerging theories and research in recent years in the topic area of the week and recommend to the class 2-3 best emerging papers. For this part of the presentation, you must conduct a literature review on relevant articles in recent five years (2010-2015) in the journals of Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Administrative Science Quarterly, Journal of Applied Psychology, Organizational Science, and Journal of International Business Studies.

Please upload your presentation to the blackboard under Session Leading PPT and the recommend articles under Recommended Articles.

**Weekly one-page synthesis (starting with the first week) (15%)**

Except for the weeks when you submit the theory building exercise papers or when you are the session leader, you are required to submit a one-page summary that synthesizes the required readings each week. Please submit your assignment to the blackboard by 10am on the class day. Possible questions you might consider when integrating the readings include:

1. What are the common themes across the readings assigned?
2. Are there distinct theoretical perspectives/approaches that you can identify from the readings for the given topic?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective? In what circumstances and for whom each perspective might be more applicable?
4. Can you think of a new conceptual angle (or a new set of hypotheses) to examine outcomes or processes of the given topic?

**Theory building exercises (35%)**

You are responsible for turning in three short papers in Classes 4, 7, and 10, which aim at developing your theory building capabilities. Please see the appended Theory Building Exercise Instructions. Feel free to use these short papers as foundations for developing your term paper.

**Term paper (40%)**
The term paper is a research proposal due in Class 13. The research proposal provides each student the opportunity to conceive and plan a study on some issue within the domain of the course. An initial one-page proposal for your study is due in Class 11. In the term paper, you should provide a literature review of the related work to-date, a theoretical framework consisting of hypotheses, and methodology to be used for testing the hypotheses (for the format, use AMJ publications as examples). The paper should be in no more than 15 double-spaced pages of text. Each student will give a 15 minutes presentation of his or her term paper in the last two classes.

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 (for the format of referencing, see AMJ publication guides). 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.

A note about the term paper. While you must incorporate what you have learned from this course in your final paper, I aim to be flexible on the topic of your term paper. The last thing I want is for you to write a paper that you are not interested in developing further. Indeed, my hope is that this paper will eventually develop into a publishable journal article (e.g., for *Academy of Management Review*, or the basis for an empirical paper for a top tier journal submission).
OUTLINE OF CLASSES

Overview

1 – Sept. 2   Introduction to OB and theorizing
2 – Sept. 9   Person-situation debate
3 – Sept. 16  Motivation
4 – Sept. 23  Emotion and affect

Theory Building Exercise 1 due

5 – Sept. 30  Decision making and sense making
6 – Oct. 7    Identity and identification in organizational context
7 – Oct. 14   Social Networking

Theory Building Exercise 2 due

8 – Oct. 21   Ethical issues at work
9 – Oct. 28   Organizational justice
10 – Nov. 4   Leadership

Theory Building Exercise 3 due

11 – Nov. 11  Demography and diversity

Term paper proposal due

12 – Nov. 18  Groups and teams

Nov. 25       Following Friday classes=Thanksgiving Recess

13 – Dec. 2   Presentations

Term paper due

14 – Dec. 9   Presentations
OB Theory Building Exercise 1
(Please bring 2 copies to class)

Instructions:

Look through national, local and or trade newspapers to identify a story of interest that could spark a research study. For example, the New York Times on August 18, 2015 had a front page article on a Pay What You Want (PWYW) at a restaurant in Montclair, N.J. and an editorial on “What your vacation says about you”.

Write a research question and a short abstract discussing the question (2-3 double-spaced pages).

Steps I and II may help you think more deeply about your write-up.

I. What do you think your article is really about?
   - Why is it of interest to OB scholars and/or OB practitioners?
   - What OB theories are relevant to the story?
   - What research questions come to mind?

II. Select one of your research questions and develop it more fully by discussing the following.
   - What assumptions are related to this theory/phenomenon?
   - How does your research question address these assumptions?
   - What are possible answers to your questions?
   - How could you study this phenomenon and test competing answers to your question?

III. Assignment: Write a research question and short abstract related to the question (2-3 double-spaced pages)
**OB Theory Building Exercise 2**  
(Please bring 2 copies to class)

**Instructions:**

Think about contexts that you love (Jazz Orchestras, French restaurants, NASCR racing, Hollywood films) or organizational phenomena in contexts that interest you (coordination problems in hospitals, lack of trust in leaders of rapid response military teams, unethical behavior in innovative companies, gendered behavior on Oil Rigs). What research questions come to mind or what type of research would be necessary to uncover the important research questions in these settings. Write a research abstract about your research questions and short abstract related to the question (2-3 double-spaced pages). Be sure to include a bulleted list of benefits an organization would receive by allowing you to conduct your research in their organization. Following is an example of how to develop this type of research.


**Steps I and II may help you think more deeply about your article.**

I. **What contexts/phenomena interest you? Why?**
   - Why is it of interest to OB scholars and/or OB practitioners?
   - What OB theories are likely to be relevant to this context/phenomena?
   - What research questions come to mind?

II. **Select one of your research questions and develop it more fully by discussing the following?**
   - What assumptions have you made about this context/phenomenon?
   - How does your research question address these assumptions?
   - What are possible answers to your questions?
   - How could you study this context/phenomenon and test competing answers to your question?

III. **Assignment:** Write a research question and short abstract related to the question (2-3 double-spaced pages)
OB Theory Building Exercise 3
(Please bring 2 copies to class)

INNOVATION PAPER PROPOSAL

An innovation paper 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 researchers in O.B.). 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). Your paper should be 4-6 pages (double-spaced, 11 or 12-point font) and 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. Some of you have already described ideas and empirical tests in your weekly comments and theory building exercises that could be turned into innovation papers. Here are some questions that might spark your creativity:

1. Is there a theory that did not fit with your personal experiences 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 (i.e. context may matter)? 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.

Articles assigned in the first class should serve as resources for you in finding an interesting topic and building the case for its interest and importance.
Class 1 – Introduction

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


**Overview of Organizational Behavior Research**


**Class 2 - Person-Situation Debate**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Class 3 - Motivation

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


**Class 4 - Emotion and Affect**


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**Recommended Readings**


**Class 5 - Sense-making and decision-making**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Class 6 – Identity and Identification in Organizational Context

Required Readings


Recommended Reading:


Class-7. Social Networking

Required Readings


**Recommended Readings**


**Class 8 – Ethical issues at work**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings**


Class 9 – Organizational justice

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


**Class 10 - Leadership**

**Required Readings**


**Xxx Humility or Confucian model/paradox leadership**

**Recommended Readings**


Class 11 - Demography and Diversity

Required Readings


**Recommended Readings**


**Class 12 - Groups and Teams**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Classes 13 and 14 - PRESENTATIONS**