

Organizational Behavior

1. Objectives

This doctoral seminar provides an in-depth look at the major topics of interest in contemporary organizational behavior (OB). The topics and readings focus primarily on individual and collective processes – such as the study of individuals and groups within an organizational context, and the study of internal processes and practices as they affect individuals and groups. This course offers an introduction to established and emerging themes, knowledge, theory, and research in the field of organizational behavior.

Organizational Behavior is one of the most relevant fields in management, one that we can sense, experience, and apply in our daily life. It may also be related to several other fields in business and management such as strategy, marketing, finance, or accounting, etc., whenever individual behavior and decision-making processes are involved. You will become familiar with the basic concepts of organizational behavior, develop the skill of critically reviewing academic journal articles, explore the main journals in this field¹, and write a research paper on a specific topic in OB.

2. Contents

We will meet regularly on Wednesdays (more or less, see the online schedule). The specific topics that will be discussed are presented in the table below.

Session	Topics	Assignments Due
1	What is Organizational Behavior Theory	
2	Personality and Individual Differences	Weekly memo
3	Cognition and Decision Making	Weekly memo
4	Leadership, Power, and Politics	Weekly memo
5	Conceptual Lenses & Methodological Choices	Weekly memo
6-9	***	Weekly memo
10	Term Paper Presentations	Term paper

***topics to be determined after voting on topics in class. Potential topics include: Motivation, Justice & Fairness, Trust, Prosocial and Unethical behavior, Groups & Teams, Organizational Culture and Identification, Upper Echelons Theory, Emotions, Negotiations, Behavioral Economics in Organizations, Organizational Learning

3. Methodology

The course consists of 10 sessions of 3 hours each (with a fifteen minutes break in between). The meetings will follow a seminar discussion format, which means that participants will present and discuss the assigned material. All students are expected to (a) have read **all** assigned readings before meeting each week, and (b) discuss and comment on all the readings listed for that day. The class is based upon our small group

¹ Journal of Applied Psychology; Academy of Management Journal; Academy of Management Review; Journal of Personality and Social Psychology; Journal of Organizational Behavior; Journal of Management; Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology; Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes; Administrative Science Quarterly; Organizational Science; Research in Organizational Behavior; Psychological Science; Journal of Experimental Social Psychology; Academy of Management Annals; Management Science; Journal of Behavioral Decision Making; Judgment and Decision Making; Journal of Experimental Psychology: General; Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

discussion. A lack of preparation therefore undermines not only your own learning but also brings down the quality of the class.

In addition, each student will lead or co-lead the discussion for one or two topics (discussed in detail later on). We will assign the topics on the first day of class.

3.1 Weekly memo: 30%

You are expected to prepare each reading according to the following requirements:

- 1) Summarize the main contribution and key points of the study. Imagine you are describing this paper to a colleague over lunch, how would you do it? For each paper separately, you should include the phenomenon (what happens in the real world), the theory/hypotheses development (what are the arguments), methodologies (how are data collected and analyzed), and key findings. Pay attention to the relationships among different sections within the paper, e.g., does the theory explain the phenomenon well? Is the methodology appropriate to address the research questions? etc.
- 2) Identify one strength of the study and what we can learn from it.
- 3) Identify one assumption from the study that you can question or debate,
- 4) Pose one unanswered question that you have about this paper that would make for the basis of a good discussion.

Memos should be sent to me **by email before 7 pm the day before class**.

3.2 Class participation: 30%

Your primary assignment in this course is to be actively engaged in class discussions and to immerse yourself into the field of organizational behavior. Thus, enthusiastic seminar participation, including presentations and constructively critical contributions to the work of others in the seminar, will be a central requirement of the course. When reading to prepare for class, consider the following questions:

- What is the central claim the authors try to make?
- What evidence do the authors present for this claim? What criteria do they use to argue for the quality of their (type of) evidence?
- If you are persuaded by the central claim, why are you persuaded? Were you persuaded already before reading the paper, or did the paper change your mind? If so, how? If you're not persuaded, why not? In both cases, which new evidence would change your mind?
- Do you see boundary conditions of the claim?
- Is the central claim of the authors different from other claims you've read or heard (about the same phenomena), and if so, could you resolve the differences empirically? How would you do that?

3.3 Discussion Leadership: 10%

Each participant will be assigned to be discussion leader for one or two topics. As a leader, you need to provide structure for the class, ensuring we compare and contrast readings and perspectives, discuss the primary themes and contributions of the research, identify gaps and potential areas for future research, and stay focused on the topic. You need to facilitate everyone's participation. Be sure to bring an outline that structures our interaction, and bring thought-provoking discussion questions to stimulate engaging class interaction.

The burden of making class meetings interesting, controversial, educational, creative and interactive will fall on the leader of each particular topic. In class, we will explore what we know and what we don't know about the day's topic. We will pursue what we'd like to know and how we would investigate that.

3.4 Term Paper: 30%

This paper should provide a thorough literature review of one of the areas or sub-areas covered in the seminar. You will be able to choose the topic of your paper according to your interests, and we will discuss issues around topic choice in class. Moreover, the paper should also develop a theory-driven, testable model with hypotheses and a methods section. Thus it should look like the front end of one of the papers we have read this term. The paper should be about 15-20 pages. Quality is the focus, not length, so if you can say what you want to say in fewer pages then do so. The goal of this paper is for it to be the start of your 'second-year empirical paper' (if you are in our OB division), a conference submission, or the front end of a study you may eventually publish. As such, try to focus on something that interests you and that you could potentially continue to pursue. You will write the paper in 3 steps.

1. You'll write one paragraph (about 200 words), following the model of the "nature summary paragraph" (https://www.geomar.de/fileadmin/personal/fb4/gdy/cberndt/Letter_bold_para.pdf). This paragraph is due on April 26th.
2. You'll write an outline of the paper, detailing the key sentence (<http://secondlanguage.blogspot.com.es/2012/11/key-sentences.html>) for each paragraph you plan to write. This outline is due on May 14th.
3. The full paper is due on June 20th.

Please email your documents (paragraph, outline, paper) as Word documents.

The paper should include:

- 1) **Introduction:** What is your research question? Why is it important? How will you answer your question? What prior research has been done? What can your study answer that prior research could not? What does your new study contribute to the literature? Highlight one new opportunity in the field. Convince the reader why this study should be done.
- 2) **Theory and Model:** Propose a theory and testable model that aims at answering your research question. Define each part of the model (constructs), explain the logic how they relate to each other, and what testable hypotheses the model implies.
- 3) **Methods:** Describe in as much detail as you can how your hypotheses will be tested and make up a mock methods section. That is, what is your sample, the procedure, the measures you would use? Follow closely the format of the 'methods section' found in journal articles we are reading.

You will also be required to make a 15 minutes presentation summarizing your term paper. The presentations will follow the style of a conference presentation and will be made during the final class period on **June 6th**. I will provide feedback on your term paper and your presentation two weeks after the due date.

4. Grading

Weekly memo	30%
Class participation	30%
Discussion leader	10%
Term paper	30%

Late work will NOT be accepted. Students should not ask for an extension except in cases of extreme hardship. Acceptable excuses for lateness include such things as a nuclear war (in which you are directly involved), earthquake (magnitude 6.5 or greater with the epicenter within 1k of your work area), and incarceration (your own, for a period of 30 days or more).

5. Competencies

By taking the course, students will develop the following competences:

- Knowledge of key concepts and research areas in the field of organizational behavior research
- Ability to understand state-of-the-art research in organization behavior published in the top academic journals and compare and contrast the arguments developed in the papers from a logical and empirical point of view
- Profound understanding of the strengths and weakness of various research methods in conducting organizational behavior research
- Develop a scientific report with the objective to integrate the existing literature of a chosen research topic and to articulate research questions that could extend our understanding of the field
- Publicly present ideas, procedures or research reports to academic audience

6. Office Hours

I am open to meeting with you quite flexibly. Please send me an email to make an appointment in advance to facilitate availability.

7. Course Outline

Session 1: What is Organizational Behavior Theory

1. Petriglieri, G., Ashford, S. J., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2018). Agony and Ecstasy in the Gig Economy: Cultivating Holding Environments for Precarious and Personalized Work Identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1-47
2. Bartunek, J. M., Rynes, S. L., & Ireland, R. D. (2006). What makes management research interesting, and why does it matter? *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 9-15.
3. Davis, M. (1971). That's interesting! Towards a phenomenology of sociology and a sociology of phenomenology. *Philosophy of Social Science*, 309-344.
4. Dutton, J. E. & Dukerich, J. M. (2006). The relational foundation of research: An underappreciated dimension of interesting research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 21-26.
5. Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J. & Sutton, R. (2005). Economics language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling. *Academy of Management Review*, 30, 8-24.

Session 2: Personality and Individual Differences

1. Davis-Blake, A. & Pfeffer, J. (1989). Just a mirage: The search for dispositional effects in organizational research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 385-400.
2. Funder, D. & Colvin, R. (1991). Exploration in behavioral consistency: Properties of persons, situations, and behaviors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 773-794.
3. Heine, S.J., Buchtel, E.E., & Norenzayan, A. (2008). What do cross-cultural comparisons of personality traits tell us? The case of conscientiousness. *Psychological Science*, 19, 309-313.
4. Judge, T. A., Piccolo, R. F., & Kosalka, T. (2009). The bright and dark sides of leader traits: A review and theoretical extension of the leader trait paradigm. *Leadership Quarterly*, 20(6), 855-875.

Recommended:

1. Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The big five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology, 44*, 1-26.
2. Heine, S. J., & Buchtel, E. E. (2009). Personality: The universal and the culturally specific. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 369-394.
3. Snyder, M. (1982). The influence of individuals on situations: Implications for understanding the links between personality and social behavior. *Journal of Personality, 51*, 497-516.

Session 3: Cognition and Decision Making

1. Dane, E. & Pratt, M. G. (2007). Exploring intuition and its role in managerial decision making. *Academy of Management Review, 32*, 33-54.
2. March, J. G., & Shapira, Z. (1987). Managerial perspectives on risk and risk taking. *Management Science, 33*(11), 1404-1418.
3. Tversky, A. & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science, 185*, 1124-1131.
4. Gigerenzer, G. (1996). On narrow norms and vague heuristics: A reply to Kahneman and Tversky. *Psychological Review 103*(3), 592-596

Recommended:

1. Fiske, S. T. (1993). Social Cognition and Social Perception. *Annual Review of Psychology, 44*(1), 155-194.
2. Hayes, J. & Allinson, C. W. (1994). Cognitive style and its relevance for management practice. *British Journal of Management, 5*, 53-71.
3. Walsh, J. P. (1995). Managerial and organizational cognition: Notes from a trip down memory lane. *Organization Science, 6*(3), 280-321.

Session 4: Power

1. Blader, S. L. & Chen, Y.-R. (2012). Differentiating the effects of status and power: A justice perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 102*, 994-1014.
2. Keltner, D, Gruenfeld, D., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, approach, and inhibition. *Psychological Review, 110*, 265-284.
3. Lee, F. & L. Z. Tiedens (2001). Is it lonely at the top? The independence and interdependence of power holders. *Research In Organizational Behavior, 23*, 43-91.
4. Magee, J. C. & Smith, P. K. (2013). The social distance theory of power. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 17*, 158-186.

Recommended:

1. French, J. R. P. Jr., & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of power. In D. P. Cartwright (Ed.), *Studies in social power* (pp. 150-167). Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan.
2. Galinsky, A. D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Magee, J. C. (2003). From power to action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 85*, 453-466.
3. Fiske, S. T. (1993). Controlling other people: The impact of power on stereotyping. *American Psychologist, 48*, 621-628.

Sessions 5-10: details too be determined after voting.