

OB 7300 – FOUNDATIONS OF ORGANIZATION THEORY

Richard Harrison
Tuesdays, 1:00 - 3:45 p.m.

Course Objectives:

This doctoral seminar will consider the historical development and major theoretical perspectives in the field of organization theory. The focus will be on the development and consequences of organizational structure and the interrelationships of organizations and their environments. Emphasis will be given to theoretical development, comparison of theoretical foundations, the assessment of empirical support for the theories, and current frontiers in organizational research.

Required Text:

Scott, W. Richard, and Gerald F. Davis. 2007. *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural and Open Systems Perspectives*. Pearson Prentice Hall.

Course Structure:

Topics will be considered in the order presented in the “Required Readings” section below, combining chapters from the Scott & Davis book with additional readings to provide deeper coverage of areas of major historical significance and of current research interest. Class members will be expected to participate actively in class discussions.

Assignments:

In addition to the readings, each class member will write three short papers and a term paper, and make a class presentation at the end of the semester.

Grading:

Short papers (25%); term paper (40%); class presentation (10%); class participation (25%).

Office Hours:

After class and by appointment, SOM 4.214. Contact: harrison@utdallas.edu.

Academic Honesty:

Work submitted for credit (exams and papers) should be the work of the class member alone. Class members may consult library materials, web resources, and other informational sources, but may not receive the assistance of others in writing exams and papers. Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, false references, submitting substantially the same work for more than one class without permission, and falsifying academic records are expressly prohibited by UTD. All episodes of suspected scholastic dishonesty will be reported according to University policy. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Penalties that may be assessed for scholastic dishonesty may be reviewed in Subchapter D. Penalties in The University of Texas at Dallas’ Handbook of Operating Procedures Title V Chapter 49.

UTD syllabus policies and procedures, including the requirement that faculty report information about student sexual misconduct, can be located at <http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>.

OB 7300 - REQUIRED READINGS

Background

- Selznick, Philip. 1948. "Foundations of the Theory of Organization." *American Sociological Review*, 13: 25-35.
- Simon, Herbert A. 1962. "The Architecture of Complexity." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 106: 467-482.
- Thompson, James D. 1967. Chapters 2, 5, and 6 from *Organizations in Action*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stinchcombe, Arthur L. 1965. "Social Structure and Organizations." Pp. 142-193 in James G. March (ed.), *Handbook of Organizations*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Harrison, J. Richard, Zhiang Lin, Glenn R. Carroll, and Kathleen M. Carley. 2007. "Simulation Modeling in Organizational and Management Research." *Academy of Management Review*, 32: 1229-1245.
- Denrell, Jerker, Christina Fang, and Chengwei Liu. 2015. Chance Explanations in the Management Sciences. *Organization Science*, 26: 923-940.
- Hamermesh, Daniel S. 1992. "The Young Economist's Guide to Professional Etiquette." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 6: 169-179.

Resource Dependence Theory

- Pfeffer, Jeffrey. 1976. "Beyond Management and the Worker: The Institutional Function of Management." *Academy of Management Review*, 1: 36-46.
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Gerald R. Salancik. 2003. "Introduction to the Classic Edition." Pp. xi-xxix in *The External Control of Organizations*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Casciaro, Tiziana, and Mikolaj Jan Piskorski. 2005. "Power Imbalance, Mutual Dependence, and Constraint Absorption: A Closer Look at Resource Dependence Theory." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 50: 167-199.
- Hillman, Amy J., Michael C. Withers and Brian J. Collins. 2009. "Resource Dependence Theory: A Review." *Journal of Management*, 35: 1404-1427.
- Drees, Johannes M., and Pursey P. M. A. R. Heugens. 2011. "Synthesizing and Extending Resource Dependence Theory: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Management*, 39: 1666-1698.

Institutional Theory

- Meyer, John W., and Brian Rowan. 1977. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." *American Journal of Sociology*, 83: 340-363.
- DiMaggio, Paul J., and Walter W. Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." *American Sociological Review*, 48: 147-160.
- Abrahamson, Eric, and Gregory Fairchild. 1999. "Management Fashion: Lifecycles, Triggers, and Collective Learning Processes." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44: 708-740.
- Scott, W. Richard. 2008. "Approaching Adulthood: The Maturing of Institutional Theory." *Theory and Society*, 37: 427-442.

Organizational Ecology

- Hannan, Michael T., and John Freeman. 1977. "The Population Ecology of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology*, 82: 929-964.
- Hannan, Michael T., and John Freeman. 1984. "Structural Inertia and Organizational Change." *American Sociological Review*, 49: 149-164.

Organizational Ecology (cont.)

- Carroll, Glenn R., and J. Richard Harrison. 1994. "On the Historical Efficiency of Competition between Organizational Populations." *American Journal of Sociology*, 100: 720-749.
- Carroll, Glenn R., Stanislav Dobrev, and Anand Swaminathan. 2002. "Organizational Processes of Resource Partitioning." *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 24: 1-40.

Transaction Cost Theory

- Williamson, Oliver E. 1975. Chapter 2 in *Markets and Hierarchies: Analysis and Antitrust Implications*. New York: Free Press.
- Williamson, Oliver E. 1985. Chapters 1 and 2 in *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*. New York: Free Press.
- David, Robert J., and Shin-Kap Han. 2004. "A Systematic Assessment of the Empirical Support for Transaction Cost Economics." *Strategic Management Journal*, 25: 39-58.

Agency Theory

- Fama, Eugene F., and Michael C. Jensen. 1983. "Separation of Ownership and Control." *Journal of Law and Economics*, 26: 301-325.
- Eisenhardt, Kathleen M. 1989. "Agency Theory: An Assessment and Review." *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 57-74.
- Shapiro, Susan P. 2005. "Agency Theory." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31: 263-284.

Political Theory

- Fligstein, Neil. 1987. "The Intraorganizational Power Struggle: Rise of Finance Personnel to Top Leadership in Large Corporations, 1919-1979." *American Sociological Review*, 52: 44-58.
- Westphal, James D., and Edward J. Zajac. 1998. "The Symbolic Management of Stockholders: Corporate Governance Reforms and Shareholder Reactions." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43: 127-153.
- Ocasio, William, and Hyosun Kim. 1999. "The Circulation of Corporate Control: Selection of Functional Backgrounds of New CEOs in Large U.S. Manufacturing Firms, 1981-1992." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44: 532-562.
- Fleming, Peter, and André Spicer. 2014. "Power in Management and Organization Science." *Academy of Management Annals*, 8: 237-298.

Organizational Learning and Innovation

- Tushman, Michael L., and Phillip Anderson. 1986. "Technological Discontinuities and Organizational Environments." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 31: 439-465.
- Henderson, Rebecca M., and Kim B. Clark. 1990. "Architectural Innovation: The Reconfiguration of Existing Product Technologies and the Failure of Established Firms." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 35: 9-30.
- Cohen, Wesley M., and Daniel A. Levinthal. 1990. "Absorptive Capacity: A New Perspective on Learning and Innovation." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 35: 128-152.
- March, James G. 1991. "Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning." *Organizational Science*, 2: 71-87.
- Levinthal, Daniel A. 1997. "Adaptation on Rugged Landscapes." *Management Science*, 43: 934-950.

Organizational Learning and Innovation (cont.)

- Sørensen, Jesper B., and Toby E. Stuart. 2000. "Aging, Obsolescence, and Organizational Innovation." *Administration Science Quarterly*, 45: 81-112.
- Feldman, Martha S., and Brian T. Pentland. 2003. "Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines as a Source of Flexibility and Change." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48: 94-118.
- Tushman, Michael, Wendy K. Smith, Robert Chapman Wood, George Westerman, Charles O'Reilly. 2010. "Organizational Designs and Innovation Streams." *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 19: 1331-1366.

Organizational Culture

- Harrison, J. Richard, and Glenn R. Carroll. 1991. "Keeping the Faith: A Model of Cultural Transmission in Formal Organizations." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36: 552-582.
- Sørensen, Jesper B. 2002. "The Strength of Corporate Culture and the Reliability of Firm Performance." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47: 70-91.

Status, Reputation and Identity

- Podolny, Joel M. 1993. "A Status-Based Model of Market Competition." *American Journal of Sociology*, 98: 829-872.
- Rao, Hayagreeva. 1994. "The Social Construction of Reputation: Contests, Credentialing and Legitimation in the American Automobile Industry; 1895-1912." *Strategic Management Journal*, 15: 29-44.
- Stuart, Toby E. 1998. "Network Positions and Propensities to Collaborate: An Investigation of Strategic Alliance Formation in a High-technology Industry." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43: 668-698.
- Barron, James N. 2004. "Employing Identities in Organizational Ecology." *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 13: 3-32.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS

- Cyert, Richard M., and James G. March. 1963. *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Gerald R. Salancik. 1978. *The External Control of Organizations*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Herman, Edward S. 1981. *Corporate Control, Corporate Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Carroll, Glenn R., and Michael T. Hannan. 2000. *The Demography of Corporations and Industries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.