DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT  
SEMINAR IN ORGANIZATION THEORY (MGMT 8333-01)  
Spring 2019

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OFFICE HOURS: T 10:00AM-1:00PM, and by appointment  
MEETING PLACE & TIME: T 1:40pm-4:20pm, WCIC 2.206

Required Textbook:  

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
This course focuses on the fundamental perspectives and theories of organizations. Accordingly, the main purpose of this course is to familiarize doctoral students with the overall conceptualizations and contexts of the modern organization. More specifically, the contents of this course emphasize how the modern form of organizations evolved, how these organizations interact, influence and get influenced by their immediate and remote environments as well as how they organize their internal configurations. In this course, five major theories of organizations will be presented, discussed and critiqued. These include structural contingency, resource dependence, transaction cost economics, population ecology and institutional theories of organizations. In addition to introducing doctoral students to the major organization theories, this course also encourages and equips students to utilize these and other existing theories of organizations in their research endeavors including but not limited to identifying novel research questions, developing thorough and extensive theoretical arguments and research hypotheses.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES  
At the end of the course, doctoral students will specifically be able to (1) identify and explain the three major theoretical underpinnings (conceptualizations) of organizations, namely, natural, rational and open system perspectives, (2) identify and explain in detail the major assumptions and central tenets of the five major theories of organizations, and (3) distinguish, compare and contrast the major underlying arguments of each of these theories.
### PhD Learning Goals

This course contributes to the following PhD learning objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PhD Learning Goals</th>
<th>Assessment method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipline knowledge</td>
<td>Assigned readings, in-class presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced theoretical or practical research skills for the specialization</td>
<td>Assigned readings, Research Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation for teaching responsibilities</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation competency preparation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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### COURSE GRADING & EVALUATION

The grading criteria for this seminar include a complete research proposal, a comprehensive final exam and in-class presentations and participation as indicated below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Category</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH PROPOSAL</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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*A = 90% or above; B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = Below 60%

**IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION:** As any doctoral level seminars, this course requires an active, intensive and thorough participation from students. Students in this class are assigned multiple reading materials and therefore are expected to cover the weekly assignments and come prepared to class to discuss (and criticize) the assigned reading material. Every week students will be assigned reading materials that they will be responsible for summarizing and presenting to the whole class. Accordingly, I will pay attention to not only the quantity of participation but also the quality of ideas and discourse during the class sessions.

**COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM:** There will be a comprehensive final examination at the end of the course. The purpose of this exam is both to assess the extent of students’ understanding of fundamental theories of organization as well as prepare students to the upcoming comprehensive field exam they are required to take at the end of their coursework. The general orientation of the exam will be focused on the description, comparison and critique of major theories of organizations. More detailed guidelines regarding the comprehensive final exam will be given during the semester.
**RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** At the end of the semester, students are expected to submit a complete research proposal on their topic of choice. Basically, the complete research proposal includes a well-articulated research question, clearly outlined theoretical framework (could be from theories covered during the semester) and a carefully designed methodology for testing the research question(s) if the proposal is of an empirical nature. While the proposal’s deadline is set at the end of the semester, students are generally advised to identify their topic of interest well ahead of time and discuss this particular topic with their colleagues and the instructor. There will be a preliminary presentation of research topics by each student during the semester. Each student then is expected to take the comments/suggestions he/she received during the presentation and incorporate them in the final research proposal. **THE INSTRUCTOR HIGHLY ENCOURAGES ALL STUDENTS TO START PLANNING AHEAD OF TIME TO SUBMIT THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL TO AN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE AFTER THE END OF THE SEMESTER.**

**ATTENDANCE:** Since there is only one meeting time every week and the fact that doctoral seminars (including this course) tend to involve substantial student participation, I highly encourage students to attend class regularly. Along with physical attendance, I expect an active intellectual contribution from each student in the class via suggestions, comments and critiques. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

**SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:** As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time.
Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD: Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Online evaluations will be available April 10 – May 1. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE: In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Useful sources for academic articles:

UTRGV Library: Business Source Complete, JSTOR as well as all major journal publishers accessed through UTRGV

General Sources: Google Scholar

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Week 1: January 15th. Introductory Notes (What’s OT all about?)

Reading List: Organizations as Rational, Natural & Open Systems

Chapters 2, 3 & 4 of the Textbook (Scott & Davis, 2007) - Instructor will present Overview of major theories of the firm (why do firms exist?)


Week 2: January 22nd. Structural Contingency Theory-Part I

Required Reading: Presenters: _________________


Optional Readings:


**Week 3: January 29th. Structural Contingency Theory-Part II (Organizational Adaptation Perspective)**

Required Reading: **Presenters: ____________**


Optional Readings:


TWO-PAGE SUMMARY OF WEEK 2 & 3 REQUIRED READING LIST DUE

Week 4: February 5th. **Resource Dependence Theory (RDT)-Part I**

Required Reading: Presenters: __________


Optional Readings:


Week 5: February 12th- RDT-Part II (Empirical Evidence)

Required Reading: Presenters: ________________


Optional Readings:


TWO-PAGE SUMMARY OF WEEK 4 & 5 REQUIRED READING LIST DUE

Week 6: February 19th- Neo-Institutional Theory

Required Reading: Presenters: ________________

1. Chapter 10 of the Textbook (Scott & Davis, 2007)


Optional Readings:


**Week 7: February 26th- Neo-Institutional Theory (Empirical Evidence)**

**Required Reading: Presenters: ____________**


**TWO-PAGE SUMMARY OF WEEK 6 & 7 REQUIRED READING LIST DUE**
Week 8: March 5th- Organizational (Population) Ecology

Required Reading: Presenters: _______________


Optional Readings:


TWO-PAGE SUMMARY OF WEEK 8 REQUIRED READING LIST DUE

Week 9: March 19th- Managerial and Organizational Cognition

Required Reading: Presenters: _______________


**Optional Readings:**


**Week 10: March 26th—Student Research Proposal Presentations (First Draft)**

**Week 11: April 2nd—Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)**

**Required Reading: Presenters:**


**Optional Readings:**


**TWO-PAGE SUMMARY OF WEEK 9 REQUIRED READING LIST DUE**

**Week 12: April 9th- Social Capital and Organizational Identity**

**Required Reading: Presenters: __________**


**Optional Readings:**


**Two-Page Summary of Week 11 Required Reading List Due**

**Week 13: April 16th - OT Perspectives on Corporate Governance**

**Required Reading: Presenters: ________**


**Optional Readings:**


Week 14: April 23rd- Publication Process & Issues

Week 15: April 30th-

FINAL STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS (FINAL PAPER DUE)

Week 16: May 7th-FINAL EXAM**

IMPORTANT DATES:
Some important dates for Spring 2019 include:

January 14        First day of classes
January 17        Last day to add a course or register for spring 2019
January 21        Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO classes
April 10          Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule
April 19-20       Easter Holiday – NO classes
May 2             Study Day – NO classes
May 3-9           Final Exams
May 10-11         Commencement Exercises