Course Aims & Structure This course is designed to critically acquire fundamental knowledge in the OT field, allowing students to participate competently in the scientific community discussion. The sessions are organized around the major ‘theories’ or ‘perspectives’ in which the field is structured, and are the main lenses used to study the majority of problems and phenomena. They are presented roughly according to the history of emergence of those perspectives in organizational thought, but only ‘living’ perspectives are considered and their evolution is traced up to contemporary research. Particular attention is given to those research programs and key concepts that are widely used and have wide application domain in both private and public organizations.

Session format is seminar-like, with previous readings common to all students, class discussion, synthesis lectures and work on possible applications.

For each session there are required readings: typically selected classics plus research application and overview articles. Given the presence of students from both public policy and business administration field, attention to applications in both fields will be given. Considering that the course is located for most students in the very first module of the entire Phd program, in order to support the comprehension of the original writings, for each session an optional reading is indicated presenting the perspective in a teaching oriented mode. In support of the development of the end course paper (and eventual future further study) a list of suggested readings is also provided on the developments of the various research programs in OT.

The agenda for class discussion on each perspective is articulated around the following five elements: Assumptions, Key concepts, Main propositions, Conditions/domain of validity of the propositions, Methods used/usable in doing research in the perspective.

Application assignment: For each double session (except the first one), for the main perspective considered, students are requested to prepare an answer to the question: How would you apply the discussed perspective/concepts to do research in a field/problem of your interest? One team of students per session (hence, 5 teams in total) will briefly present a possible application for collective discussion and teacher’s feedback.

Evaluation is based on a final in class individual ‘diagnostic test’ immediately after the end of the course and the team work on the research application.

The diagnostic test (individual evaluation, weighting 67%) includes notionistic questions checking knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts and key perspectives covered in the course; for example: questions on the definition, measurement and applications of core OT concepts within and across perspectives.

The research application (team evaluation, weighting 33%) consists in delivering the slides presented on how to develop research in the course on the chosen topic of student interest using the learned perspectives.

Grades are expressed according to the general PhD evaluation rules on the standard A,B,C and F scale. An additional ‘plus’ will be added to the grade for good continued class participation.
Instructor  Prof. Anna Grandori, anna.grandori@unibocconi.it, Uff 4-e2-11 via Roentgen. Office hrs posted on web are always open to Phd students.
Professor of Business Organization at Bocconi University. She has been visiting professor, teacher in Phd Programs and member of Thesis Committees, in various universities in Europe and the US (e.g. NYU, Stanford, Chicago, Copenhagen BS, Groeningen, Zurich, Tilburg); Director of Research Centers at Bocconi and of various international research programs; Editor of academic international journals in Organization and Management. Her research has been oriented to integrating organizational economics and organizational and behavioral science also through specifically dedicated works (e.g Perspectives on Organization Theory, Ballinger 1987; ‘For an integrated perspective on organization’ Human Relations, Millenium SI 2001; Organization and economic behavior, Routledge 2001; Handbook of Economic Organization. Integrating economic and organization theory’ (ed) Edward Elgar 2013) and applied to themes as innovative decision making, governance, and inter-organizational networks in articles published in major international journals.

COURSE PROGRAMME & Readings

General suggested readings for the entire course/the end course paper (1 copy of each of those texts is available for Phd reserved use at the Phd Secretary office – some chapters from those books will be used as supporting optional readings in some sessions of the course):

1-2 The Micro-foundations of organization science: Bounded Rationality and Decision making models

Required readings

Theoretical foundations:
Simon H.A. 1957 ‘A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice” Chapter 14 in Models of Man, 241-256

Research Review/Discussion paper

Application: Simulation of a protocol analysis of a decision process in class

Suggested Readings:
Classics:

Overview&Developments:


3-4 Micro-organization: From rival approaches to the Socio-Technical synthesis to High Performance Work Systems

Required readings

The ancestors:  
Excerpts from: Taylor, Mayo

The socio-technical perspective: Review of theoretical foundations and main studies  

HPWS review:  

Research applications:


**Optional reading on the STP and job design application:**

**Application:** Team 1 develops and presents an application in an area of own interest

**Suggested readings**

**Classics**
Touraine A.,*L'évolution du travail ouvrier aux usines Renault*, CNRS Parigi
Friedmann G.,
1947  *Problèmes humaines du machinisme industriel*, Gallimard, Parigi
1963  *Où va le travail humain?*, Gallimard, Parigi, p. 374 (1ª ed. 1950)

**Developments and crossroads:**
Mumford E. 2000 ‘A Socio-Technical Approach to Systems Design’ *Requirements Engineering* Volume 5, Number 2, 125-133

**5-6 Marco-organization: From ‘universalistic’ theories to Structural Contingency Theory to Configurationism**

**Required readings**
Theoretical foundations:
Excerpts from Weber, Merton, Thompson

Main research programs – Harvard & Aston

Review of research/Discussion paper:

Configurational Developments:

Optional reading on SCT applied to organizational design:

Application: Team 2 develops and presents an application in an area of own interest

Suggested readings:
Classics in structural contingency theory:
Pugh D.S., Hickson D.J., Hinigs C.R. e Turner C.,
Mintzberg, H. 1979 The Structuring of Organizations, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall

Developments and crossroads:


**Session 7-8 - From information to resources: Power and the Resource Dependence perspective**

**Required readings**

**Theoretical foundations:**

Crozier M., Friedberg E., 1977 *L’acteur et le système* (tr.engl: *Systems and actors*) (Excerpts)

The RD research program:

Pfeffer J., Salancik Gerald R., 1978 *The external control of organizations: a resource dependence perspective*. Harper and Row. (Excerpts from Ch. 3, 6, 7)

**Review articles on RD & power research:**

AJ Hillman, MC Withers 2009 ‘Resource dependence theory: A review’ *Journal of management*

Clegg S. 2002 'Power' in A.Sorge (ed) *Organization*. Thompson Learning

**Research application:**


**Optional reading on the RD perspective:**

Grandori A: ‘The RD perspective’ in *Perspectives in Organization Theory* p. 58

**Application:** Team 3 presents an application in an area of own interest

**Suggested readings**

**Classics:**


Thompson J.D. 1956 ‘Authority and power in identical organizations’ *American Journal of Sociology* 62:290-301


*Developments & cross-roads:*
Grandori A. 1993 "Notes on the use of power and efficiency constructs in the economics and sociology of organization", in S. Lindenberg, H. Schreuder (eds.), *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Organization Studies*, Pergamon Press.

**9-10 – Organizational Economics and the Transaction Cost Approach**

**Required Readings**

*Foundational papers*

*Review papers:*

*Optional readings:*
- on the TCA and its relations with other perspectives:
  Grandori Ch 2 ‘Organization design with a single objective’ in *Perspectives in OT* p.25-51
- on OE in the PA

**Application:** Team 4 presents an application in an area of own interest

**Suggested readings:**
*Classics:*
Williamson O.E.

**Overviews & Developments**


Goldberg V.P. 1980 "Bridges over contested terrain: Exploring the radical account of the employment relationship", *Journal of Economic Behavior Organization*, 1, 249-274.


Foss N. , Michailova S. (eds) 2009 *Knowledge governance*. Oxford University Press


Williamson O.E. 1993 *Calculativeness, Trust, and Economic Organization* *The Journal of Law and Economics*, vol. 36, April


From organizations to organizational populations and fields: Organizational Ecology & Neo-institutionalism in organizational sociology

**Required readings**

**Foundational papers:**
Hannan M.T., & Freeman J. 1977. The population ecology of organizations. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82, 929-964


**Review papers**

JV Singh, CJ Lumsden 1990 Theory and research in organizational ecology *Annual review of sociology* 16:1, 161-195


**Research application (integrating selection and adaptation perspectives):**


**Application:** Team 5 presents an application in an area of own interest

**Suggested readings**

**Classics on organizations as institutions**

**Classics on organizational selection processes**
Campbell D.T., 1960 "Blind Variation and Selective Retention in Creative Thought as in Other Knowledge Processes", *Psychological Review*, n. 67, 380-400.

**Developments and discussions in the Neo-institutionalist perspective**


Oliver C. 1991 ‘Strategic responses to institutional pressures’ Academy of Management Review 16/1:145-79


MS Kraatz, EJ Zajac 1996 Exploring the limits of the new institutionalism: The causes and consequences of illegitimate organizational change American sociological review

PM Hirsch, M Lounsbury 1997 Putting the organization back into organization theory: Action, change, and the" new" institutionalism Journal of Management Inquiry


MJ Gorges 2001 New institutionalist explanations for institutional change: A note of caution Politics 21/2: 137-45 - Wiley Online Library

Suddaby R. 2010 ‘Challenges to Institutional Theory’ Journal of Management Inquiry 19/1: 14-20

Gray B, Purdy JM, Ansari Shahzad (Shaz) 2015 ‘From Interactions to Institutions: Microprocesses of Framing and Mechanisms for the Structuring of Institutional Fields’ Academy of Management Review 40:1, 115-143

Developments and discussions in the population ecology perspective:

Hannan M T Freeman J 1989 Organizational ecology Cambridge : HUP.

Carroll G.R., 1985 ‘Concentration and specialization: Dynamics of niche width in populations of organizations’ American Journal of Sociology 90, pp. 1262-1283


Young R.C., 1988, 'Is population ecology a useful paradigm for the study of organizations?' American Journal of Sociology, n. 24, pp. 1-24


OM Khessina, GR Carroll 2008 Product Demography of De Novo and De Alio Firms in the Optical Disk Drive Industry, 1983–1999 Organization Science

On converge among the two perspectives:
Hannan M., Freeman J. 1984 'Structural inertia and organizational change' American Sociological review 49:149-64
MT Hannan, GR Carroll Theory building and cheap talk about legitimation: Reply to Baum and Powell American Sociological Review, 1995