EDH 7916: Contemporary Research in Higher Education

Course Meetings:
Thursdays: 5:10pm – 8:10pm

Course Location:
NRN 278

Instructors:
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Course Description
This is an advanced seminar in organization theory, with specific application to problems and issues in education. It is primarily intended for doctoral students, and will be particularly useful for students who intend to use organization theory as a conceptual framework for research studies and dissertations.

This course will cover the major strands of organization theory with application to education, including organizational structure, resource dependence, strategy, symbols, institutional theory, organizational culture, socialization, leadership and decision making. Although this course is housed in the School of Education, and educational issues will be a special focus, it is open to all students and a diversity of topical interests is welcomed.

Course Texts


Other readings will be posted on the class’s site or distributed via email.

Course Objectives:
The objectives of this course include:

1. Identify and understand the major strands of research in organization theory.
2. Application of organization theory to research on social problems and issues, particularly those in education.
3. Writing a major literature review or conducting a research study in organizations.
**Course Requirements:**

1) **Class Participation:** As in any doctoral course, students and faculty need to be co-owners of the class and collectively responsible for its quality and outcomes. I will take responsibility for the overall design and direction of the course and for the academic requirements, but the course will be facilitated as a seminar or inquiry in which all participants hold themselves and each other accountable for a strong and rich intellectual enterprise and dialogue.

Your attendance is essential to a successful collective experience. The format of the class requires that each person come prepared to take an active role in class. This means not only having read the assigned materials, but also being prepared to discuss the salient issues, questions, and problems emerging from the readings, to utilize your knowledge and professional experiences in addressing the readings and any class activities, case problems, etc. Class participation also involves opening oneself to challenge and to be challenged by the ideas and topics of the session. Please notify me by email in advance if you are unable to attend any class session. Students who miss four or more class sessions must withdraw from the course. The quality of your class participation is worth 25% of your final grade.

2) **Weekly Application of Theory:** Each week you will be responsible to read, review, and critically evaluate the theory based readings. You need produce weekly a two-page critical application of the theory to a higher education topic. These responses must be uploaded by 10am on Thursday each week. Two students will be selected at random each week to present their application of the discussed theory. The quality and depth of your week responses is worth 25% of your final grade.

3) **Research Paper:** The intent of this assignment is to give you a chance to prepare your own analysis of an issue in organizations. There are a number of possibilities for this paper, including a literature review, grant or research proposal, a dissertation prospectus/proposal, or an empirical project, quantitative or qualitative. This paper will be approximately 25 pages of text (double-spaced, not including appendices or bibliography). I will provide you with feedback throughout the process. (50% of grade).

Doctoral-level writing is an expectation for all written work. This includes grammar, punctuation, spelling, and clarity of expression. Collaborations with classmates or writing groups to critique and proofread assignments are encouraged. Each of you is likely to submit better papers and projects as a result of that process.

Course grades will be determined by the quality of your class participation, by the reaction papers, and by the final exam. Your final paper will account for 50% of your grade, reactions to the weekly readings and participation will account for the other 50%.

Final course grades will be assigned using the following:

- A = 93-100;
- A- = 90-92;
- B+ = 88-89;
- B = 83-87;
- B- = 80-82;
- C+ = 78-79;
- C = 73-77;
- C- = 70-72;
- D+ = 68-69;
- D = 63-67;
- D- = 60-62;
- F = 59 and lower.

**Student Responsibilities:**

**Attendance:** Class attendance is expected and is included in the class participation grade. Nevertheless, students may occasionally need to be absent due to illness, family, or work; in those cases please contact an instructor in advance. More than two absences will affect the final course grade. This also hold trues for weekly responses to the readings.
Computers, Cell Phones, etc.: Use of computers/tablets should be limited to note-taking, assigned readings, and in-class exercises. Emailing, texting, Facebook and other social media should be limited to before and after class and during breaks during in-class sessions. During peer or guest presentations all computers/tablets are to be put away. Computers may contribute to active learning, and may serve as a distraction. Similarly, there are legitimate reasons to have a cell phone in the classroom (work, family emergencies, etc.) and they may also serve as a distraction. Please balance these needs appropriately.

University Email Policy:
Students are expected to activate and then check their official UF email addresses on a frequent and consistent basis to remain informed of University communications, as certain communications may be time sensitive. Students who fail to check their email on a regular basis are responsible for any resulting consequences.

University of Florida Honor Code:
It is expected that all students will support and adhere to the University of Florida Honor Code: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” The plagiarism policy should also be noted.

ADA and Persons with Disabilities:
Persons with disabilities may request and, if necessary, receive appropriate academic accommodations from the University of Florida. Students must first register with and provide the needed documentation to the Disability Resource Center in the basement of Reid Residence Hall (392-8565). Second, students must bring a letter to the instructor originating from the DRC indicating the needed academic accommodations. As the student, you are responsible for initiating and completing these steps prior to receiving such accommodations.
Tentative Course Outline

Read both the required texts – Scott & Davis (2006) and Bastedo (2013) – over winter break and throughout the course

Week #1 (1/8): Thinking about Theory
Week #2 (1/15): Institutionalism: Old and New
Week #3 (1/22): Meyer-School Institutional Theory
Week #4 (1/29): Neo-Institutional Theory
Week #5 (2/5): Institutional Logics & Entrepreneurs
Week #6 (2/12): Boundaries and Classifications
Week #7 (2/19): Social Movements
Week #8 (2/26): Resource Dependence
Week #9 (3/5): Organizational Identity
Week #10 (3/12): **No Class: Spring Break**
Week #11 (3/19): Social Networks
Week #12 (3/26): Workplace Diversity
Week #13 (4/2): Sensemaking
Week #14 (4/9): Work, Routines, and Emotions
Week #15 (4/16): Publishing Management Work
Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1:

Thinking about Theory

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


**Week 2:**

*Institutionalism: Old and New*

**Primary Readings:**


**Secondary Readings:**


Week 3:

Meyer-School Institutional Theory

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 4:

**Neo-Institutional Theory**

**Primary Readings:**


**Secondary Readings:**


Week 5:

Institutional Logics & Entrepreneurs

Primary Readings


Secondary Readings:


Week 6:

Boundaries and Classifications

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 7:

Social Movements

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 8:

Resource Dependence

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 9:

Organizational Identity

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:
On Method:


Organizational Identity


Week 11:

Social Networks

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 12:

Workplace Diversity

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 13:

Sensemaking

**Primary Readings:**


**Secondary Readings:**


Week 14:

Work, Routines, and Emotions

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Week 15:

Publishing Management Work

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:

