Instructor Information

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Office hours by appointment

Course Overview

Health care is provided by or through health care organizations. As such, the structure and behavior of these organizations can have a major impact on the access, quality, safety, and cost of health care. In this course we will review and apply the major “macro” theoretical perspectives to the study of health care organizations. Particular attention is given to the application of theory to the study of how organizations function in their environments, and in developing the student’s ability to conduct theory-based research on health care organizations.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. distinguish among the major theoretical frameworks associated with the study of organizations and interorganizational relations;
2. identify theoretical perspectives that are useful for analyzing key structures and processes that shape the organization and delivery of health services;
3. describe research methodology issues commonly encountered in the study of organizations;
4. critically review current research that applies organizational theory to health services;
5. begin the process of articulating their own research agendas by developing, organizing and presenting a research proposal.

Required Readings

See Appendix A for list of additional required readings.

**Suggested Readings**


**Course Requirements/Evaluation/Grading**

**Topic Teaching (30%)**

The course is in seminar format. Part of the learning at the doctoral level is to develop the ability to conduct a seminar. For this reason, each of you will be assigned to moderate one or more class sessions during the semester. As a moderator, you are expected to make a presentation at the beginning of the seminar and to facilitate class discussion. As appropriate, you should facilitate your presentation with visual aids, handouts, or any other media you think will make your points effectively. The following guides may help you prepare for moderating your session.

(1) Review the assigned readings and identify key premises, assumptions, theoretical arguments, research questions, and methods.

(2) Constructively critique the material you read by considering what the material tells you, what does the theory predict and explain, what questions remain unanswered, and where the particular study/theory might go from here (particularly for the examination of health care organizations).

(3) When considering theoretical work, you may want to consider the following as you evaluate the material and prepare your presentation and discussion:

   (a) Describe the theory—What is the theory supposed to explain? What are the key concepts (antecedents, consequences, moderators, etc.)? What is the scope of the theory? What are the appropriate units and levels of the theory?

   (b) Is the theory logically consistent? Can it be empirically tested? If so, how might this be done?

   (c) What are the predictions made by the theory? Are any of the predictions non-obvious or surprising? How or why might these be of interest to academicians? To practitioners?

   (d) How is the theory related to those that we have discussed in the class? Are there any contradictions? How could we reconcile or integrate the differences?

   (e) In what ways do you think this theory could/should be extended, if at all?

(4) When considering empirical work assigned for the session, consider the following as you evaluate the material and prepare your presentation and discussion:

   (a) What are the research questions examined in the study? Is the significance of the research problem clearly justified?
(b) Is the theoretical perspective or framework clearly explained? Is it appropriate for addressing the research problem?
(c) Are there specific hypotheses? Are they clearly justified according to the theoretical perspective or framework?
(d) How are the theoretical constructs operationalized? To what extent do you agree that the operationalizations are appropriate?
(e) What is the research design? Is it appropriate? What are the target population and the sample? Is the sample properly selected? Is the sample large enough for the analysis?
(f) What is the statistical analysis? Is it appropriate for the purpose of the study?
(g) What are the conclusions of the study? Do you agree with the authors’ interpretation? Are there alternative explanations? What might be an appropriate follow-up or extension of the work reported?

Review Exercises (20%)
Students will submit two article critiques as written assignments. The first critique for the Banaszak-Holl et al. (1996) article is due on September 24, while the second critique for the Castle (2003) article is due on October 22. In writing their critiques, students can follow the guidelines previously given (see point 4 under Topic Teaching). The following structure is suggested for the written critiques:

1. Author, title, journal, year
2. Research question(s)
3. Theoretical framework
4. Hypotheses
5. Methods
   a. Data
   b. Variables
   c. Analysis
6. Results and Conclusion

Brief Research Proposal (30%)
The purpose of the proposal is to apply one or more organizational theories (from those covered in this course) to a current phenomenon or issue in the health care sector and develop hypotheses based on the particular theory. The final paper should be approximately 8-10 pages in length (excluding references), double-spaced, and use a 12-point font. See suggested format for the proposal in Appendix B, but limit the proposal writing to the introduction and conceptual framework. A hard copy of the proposal should be placed in the instructor’s mailbox by Wednesday, December 10 at 4 pm.

In addition, students will present using PowerPoint a draft of the proposal to the group on November 26. A handout of the presentation should be distributed to the instructor and students. This session will provide an opportunity for feedback from the instructor and other students.

Class Participation (20%)
The course is designed as a graduate seminar. This approach allows for substantial exchange and debate. Each student’s preparation and contribution is essential to the success of the course.
Students are expected to attend every class meeting. Further, students are expected to read all
assigned readings prior to class and be prepared for class discussion. Students will be evaluated
on both the quantity and quality of their participation in class discussions.

**Statement of University’s Honesty Policy (cheating and use of copyrighted materials)**
Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic
integrity (see Graduate Student Handbook for details). Cheating or plagiarism in any form is
unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

*We, the members of the University of Florida community,
pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the
highest standards of honesty and integrity.*

**Policy Related to Class Attendance or Other Work**
You will not obtain a good grade in this course if you do not attend and actively participate in
class discussions. Personal issues with respect to class attendance or fulfillment of course
requirements will be handled on an individual basis.

**Statement Related to Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students
Office, which will provide documentation to the student. The student should then provide this
documentation to me.

**Phone Numbers and Contact Sites for University Counseling Services and Mental Health
Services**
University Counseling Services Student     Mental Health Services
[http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/services.asp](http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/services.asp)     [http://www.health.ufl.edu/shcc](http://www.health.ufl.edu/shcc)
P301 Peabody Hall – 392-1575     Room 245, Infirmary Bldg.- 392-1171
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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Overview of Organizational Theory</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>Contingency Theory</td>
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<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>Economic Theories</td>
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<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Resource Dependence Theory</td>
<td>First article review due</td>
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<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Population Ecology</td>
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<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>Institutional Theory</td>
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<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>Market Structure and Performance/</td>
<td>Second article review due</td>
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<td>Industrial Organization Economics</td>
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<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Strategy and Performance</td>
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<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>Resource Based View of the Firm</td>
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<td>Nov. 5</td>
<td>Integrating Multiple Theoretical Perspectives</td>
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<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Nov. 19</td>
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<td>Nov. 26</td>
<td>Interorganizational Relationships/ Network Theory</td>
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<td>Dec. 3</td>
<td>Intraorganizational Processes/ Power and Organizational Culture</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Final Paper Due</td>
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Appendix A

Session 1  Introduction


Session 2  Overview of Organizational Theory


Session 3  Contingency Theory


Session 4 Economic Theories


Session 5 Resource Dependence Theory


Session 6 Population Ecology


**Session 7  Institutional Theory**


**Session 8  Market Structure and Performance/ Industrial Organization Economics**


**Session 9  Strategy and Performance**


**Session 10  Resource Based View of the Firm**


**Session 11 Integrating Multiple Theoretical Perspectives**


**Session 12 Interorganizational Relationships/ Network Theory**


Session 13  **Intraorganizational Processes/ Power and Organizational Culture**


Appendix B
COMPONENTS OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Introduction
• You have to be specific. Don’t just say what you are going to study. Why are you going to study them? What theory are you going to apply to them? This is also the "hook" to get the reader interested in the rest of your paper. Try to answer the inevitable "so what?" question. Make your reader understand why we should care about the question that you are examining. You might also want to add an "organizational preview" at the end of this section.

Conceptual Framework
• Literature Review — Tell us what other people have argued and found regarding your topic. Tell us what’s not in the literature and how your study is going to fill this hole. Remember that you need to show how your work will add to the body of literature. Do not make this a "book review/article review" section. Try thinking in terms of clustering your writing by ideas, not by authors. Be sure to discuss both relevant theoretical arguments and empirical findings. Use subject headings to help you organize the literature and the elements of your argument.
• Theoretical/Conceptual Framework — Develop your theoretical argument about the way the world works (with regard to your particular phenomenon of interest), either stemming from someone else's theory, or in contrast to an existing theoretical argument. It is helpful to have a model of the hypothesized relationships between the constructs. This should be a logical extension from your literature review.
• Hypotheses — Finally, develop your more specific, testable and falsifiable hypothesis from your theoretical argument. What kind of evidence will you need to find for you to reject your hypothesis, or to find support for your hypothesis?

Methodology Section / Research Design
• Data Collection — Who or what are you going to study? Will you take a sample? How are you going to collect the information (data, facts, observations) you need? Over what time frame? Where does this data come from? Will you use an existing data set, or collect your own? Why? Be specific and explain why you are making these choices.
• Operationalization (Variables and Measurement Issues) — What variables will you be looking at? What are your independent and dependent variables? Control variables? How will you define these variables? How do your definitions and variables differ from other researchers who have looked at the same topic? If you are using the same definitions or variables why have you made this choice? If you are using different ones, why are yours better? How might you measure or operationalize these variables?
• Method of Analysis — How will you analyze the data that you will collect and/or examine? Will your study be cross sectional or longitudinal? Describe in detail the research design that you propose for this study, and explain why it is the most appropriate design for your study.

Source: Adapted from Matthew Krain (2004), Guideline for Research Proposal Paper
http://www.wooster.edu/polisci/mkrait/rm/rm04-paper.pdf