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## Organizational Sociology

**Period:** a.y. 2025/26

Monday-

**Instructor:**

Prof. Fabrizio Castellucci

Dept. of Mgmt. & Tech. - Room 4-E2-01

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### Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to selected topics in Organizational Sociology. The objectives of this course are 1) to provide students with a relatively detailed understanding of some of the major theoretical perspectives and recent developments of organizational sociology, 2) to illustrate how these perspectives are tested, 3) to develop an ability to critique, improve upon, and/or extend the execution of an organizational research program, and 4) to present and discuss research ideas.

### Course Format

This course is organized as a seminar. This means that you are primarily responsible for discussing the readings. You are expected to do all of the readings for each session and to be prepared to discuss and comment on the readings. To facilitate adequate preparation, the number of readings for each course session has purposely been kept small.

As you read the materials, you will undoubtedly find many flaws and things that could be improved. While noting these is important, you also should make sure that you can answer the following questions about each reading:

- What question is the author trying to address? How important is this question?
- What assumptions does the author make? How valid are these assumptions?
- How does the author address the research question? If this is an empirical piece, is the methodology appropriate?
- What conclusions does the author draw? Are these conclusions justified in light of the empirical evidence presented by the author? How important are these conclusions?
- How could this work be extended or refined?
- How is this work related to other readings assigned for the same class session and/or with other topics covered in the course?

## Course Requirements

### **1. Leading Discussions and discussion questions**

Each session, students will be selected ahead of time to lead the discussion about the readings. The assigned students will present a summary of the class materials with questions and comments from others. The summary for each paper should not take more than 10 minutes. The role of the discussion leader is to both encourage discussion and sparkle debate.

In addition, each student is expected to write a “discussion question” for each paper discussed in class. These questions will be shared among participants the day before class no later than 5pm to give everyone a chance to read them. Questions should be thought provoking and not a simple summary of the paper.

### **2. Final Paper**

This paper should identify a researchable question in the field of Organization Theory or Organization Sociology, review the relevant literature, specify a set of hypotheses, and propose a study to test those hypotheses. The paper should either reconcile some aspects of conflicting theories or advance a new theory drawing on one or several of the topics covered in class. The paper should be 10-15 pages long.

### **Grading**

Class Participation, leading discussions, and discussion questions 40%

Term Paper 60%



## Session 1: Organizational Learning

### *Required readings*

- March, J. G. 1991. Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning. Organization Science, 2: 71-87.
- Haunschild, P. R. & Sullivan, B. N. 2002. Learning from Complexity: Effects of Prior Accidents and Incidents on Airlines' Learning. Administrative Science Quarterly, 47(4): 609.
- Madsen PM, Desai V. 2010. Failing to learn? The effects of failure and success on organizational learning in the global orbital launch vehicle industry. Academy of Management Journal 53(3): 451-476.
- Gaba V, Joseph J (2013) Corporate Structure and Performance Feedback: Aspirations and Adaptation in M-Form Firms. Organization Science 24(4):1102-1119.
- Sobrepere i Profitós X, Keil T, Kuusela P (2022) The Two Blades of the Scissors: Performance Feedback and Intrinsic Attributes in Organizational Risk Taking. Administrative Science Quarterly, 67(4):1012-1048.

### *Additional readings*

- Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. 1972. A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. Administrative Science Quarterly, 17: 1-25.
- Padgett, J. F. 1980. Managing Garbage Can Hierarchies. Administrative Science Quarterly, 25: 583-604.
- March, J.G., Sproull, L.S. & Tamuz, M. 1991. Learning from samples of one or fewer. Organization Science, 2: 1-14.
- Barnett, W. P., Greve, H. R., & Park, D. Y. 1994. An Evolutionary Model of Organizational Performance. Strategic Management Journal, 15: 11-28.
- Powell, W. W., Koput, K. W., & Smith-Doerr, L. 1996. Interorganizational Collaboration and the Locus of Innovation: Networks of Learning in Biotechnology. Administrative Science Quarterly, 41: 116-145.
- Kraatz, M. S. 1998. Learning by Association? Interorganizational Networks and Adaptation to Environmental Change. Academy of Management Journal, 41: 621-643.
- Greve, H. R. 2003. Organizational learning from performance feedback : a behavioral perspective on innovation and change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Khanna, R., Guler, I., & Nerkar, A. 2016. Fail Often, Fail Big, and Fail Fast? Learning from Small Failures and R&D Performance in the Pharmaceutical Industry. Academy of Management Journal, 59(2): 436-459.

## Session 2: Organizational Transformation

### *Required readings*

- Hannan, M. T. & Freeman, J. 1984. Structural Inertia and Organizational Change. American Sociological Review, 49: 149-164.
- Amburgey, T. L., Kelley, D. & Barnett, W. P. 1993. Resetting the Clock: The Dynamics of Organizational Change and Failure. Administrative Science Quarterly. 38: 51-73.
- Greve, H. R. 1998. Performance, Aspirations, and Risky Organizational Change. Administrative Science Quarterly. 43: 58-86.
- Beck, N., J. Bruderl, M. Woywode. 2008. Momentum or Deceleration? Theoretical and Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Organizational Change. Academy of Management Journal. 51(3): 23p.
- Kacperczyk, A., Beckman, C. M., & Moliterno, T. P. 2014. Disentangling Risk and Change. Administrative Science Quarterly, 60(2), 228-262.

#### *Additional readings*

- Singh, J. V., House, R. J., & Tucker, D. J. 1986. Organizational Change and Organizational Mortality. Administrative Science Quarterly, 31(4): 587-611.
- Barnett, W. P. & Carrol, G. R. 1995. Modeling Internal Organizational Change. Annual Review of Sociology, 21: 217-236.
- Feldman, M. S. & Pentland, B. T. 2003. Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines as a Source of Flexibility and Change. Administrative Science Quarterly, 48(1): 25p.
- Greve, H. R. 1999. The effect of core change on performance. Administrative Science Quarterly, 44: 590-614.
- Nigam A, Huising R, Golden B. 2016. Explaining the Selection of Routines for Change during Organizational Search. Administrative Science Quarterly 61(4): 551-583.

#### *Session 3: Neo Institutionalism*

##### *Required readings*

- Meyer, J. W. & Rowan, B. 1977. Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony. American Journal of Sociology, 83: 340-363.
- Zajac E. J., Westphal J. D. 2004. The Social Construction of Market Value: Institutionalization and Learning Perspectives on Stock Market Reactions. American Sociological Review, 69: 433-457.
- Durand R, Vergne JP. 2015. Asset divestment as a response to media attacks in stigmatized industries. Strategic Management Journal 36(8): 1205-1223.
- Cox, EP., Riitta, K. & Kathleen, ME. 2015. Who Takes You to the Dance? How Partners' Institutional Logics Influence Innovation in Young Firms. Administrative Science Quarterly, 60, 596-633.
- Hsu, G., & Grodal, S. 2015. Category Taken-for-Grantedness as a Strategic Opportunity. American Sociological Review, 80(1), 28-62

##### *Additional readings*

- DiMaggio, P. J. and W. W. Powell. 1983. The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational, American Sociological Review, 48: 147-160.
- Tolbert, P.S., L.G. Zucker. 1983. Institutional Sources of Change in the Formal Structure of Organizations. Administrative Science Quarterly, 28: 22-39.
- Davis, G. F., K. A. Diekmann, and C. H. Tinsley. 1994. The decline and fall of the conglomerate firm in the 1980s: a study in the de-institutionalization of an organizational form. American Sociological Review, 59: 547-570.
- Kraatz, M. S. and E. J. Zajac. 1996. Causes and consequences of illegitimate organizational change. American Sociological Review, 61: 812-836
- Scott, W. R. (2001). Institutions and organizations . Second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kraatz, M.S., J.H. Moore. 2002. Executive Migration and Institutional Change. Academy of Management Journal. 45(1): 120.
- Battilana, J. & Dorado, S. 2010. Building Sustainable Hybrid Organizations: The Case of Commercial Microfinance Organizations. Academy of Management Journal, 53(6): 1419-1440.
- Durand, R. & Jourdan, J. 2012. Jules or Jim: Alternative Conformity to Minority Logics. Academy of Management Journal, 55(6): 1295-1315.

#### Session 4: Contagion and Influence

##### *Required readings*

- Burt, R. S. 1987. Social Contagion and Innovation: Cohesion versus Structural Equivalence. American Journal of Sociology, 92: 1287-1335.
- Haunschild, P. 1993. Interorganizational Imitation: The Impact of Interlocks on Corporate Acquisition Activity. Administrative Science Quarterly, 38: 564-592.
- Rao, H., Greve, H. R., & Davis, G. F. 2001. Fool's Gold: Social Proof in the Initiation and Abandonment of Coverage by Wall Street Analysts. Administrative Science Quarterly, 46(3): 502.
- Jonsson, S., Greve, H. R., & Fujiwara-Greve, T. 2009. Undeserved Loss: The Spread of Legitimacy Loss to Innocent Organizations in Response to Reported Corporate Deviance. Administrative Science Quarterly, 54(2): 195-228.
- Sharkey, A. J., & Bromley, P. 2014. Can Ratings Have Indirect Effects? Evidence from the Organizational Response to Peers' Environmental Ratings. American Sociological Review, 80(1), 63-91.

##### *Additional readings*

- Coleman, J., Katz, E., & Menzel, H. 1957. The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Physicians. Sociometry, 20(4): 253-270.
- Galaskiewicz, J. & Burt, R. S. 1991. Interorganization Contagion in Corporate Philanthropy. Administrative Science Quarterly, 36: 88-105.
- Greve, H. R. 1996. Patterns of Competition: The Diffusion of a Market Position in Radio Broadcasting. Administrative Science Quarterly, 41: 29-60.
- Davis, G. F. & Greve, H. R. 1997. Corporate Elite Networks and Governance Changes in the 1980s. American Journal of Sociology, 103: 1-37.
- Haunschild, P. R. & Miner, A. S. 1997. Modes of Interorganizational Imitation: The Effects of Outcome Salience and Uncertainty. Administrative Science Quarterly, 42: 472-500.

#### Session 5: Sociology of markets

- Granovetter, M. 1985. Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness. American Journal of Sociology, 91: 481-510.
- Podolny, J. 2001. Networks as the Pipes and Prisms of the Market. American Journal of Sociology 107(1): 33-60.
- Uzzi, B. & Lancaster, R. 2004. Embeddedness and Price Formation in the Corporate Law Market. American Sociological Review, 69(3): 319.
- Hsu G. 2006. Jacks of All Trades and Masters of None: Audiences' Reactions to Spanning Genres in Feature Film Production. Administrative Science Quarterly 51(3): 420.
- Cattani G., Ferriani S., & Allison P.D. 2014. Insiders, Outsiders, and the Struggle for Consecration in Cultural Fields: A Core-Periphery Perspective. American Sociological Review. 1-24

##### *Additional Readings*

- White, H. C. 1981. Where Do Markets Come From? American Journal of Sociology, 87: 517-547.
- Baker, W. E. 1984. The Social Structure of a National Securities Market. The American Journal of Sociology, 89(4): 775-811.
- Fligstein, N. 1996. Markets as Politics: A Political-Cultural Approach to Market Institutions. American Sociological Review, 61(4): 656.
- Callon, M. 1998. The laws of the markets: Blackwell. Blackwell publishers.

Slavich B., Castellucci F., 2016. Wishing upon a star: How apprentice-master similarity, status and career stage affect critics' evaluations of former apprentices in the haute cuisine industry. Organization Studies

#### Session 6: Organizational Status

##### *Required readings*

Podolny, J. M. 1993. A Status-based Model Model of Market Competition. American Journal of Sociology, 98: 828-872.

Castellucci, F. & Ertug, G. 2010. What's in It for Them? Advantages of Higher-Status Partners in Exchange Relationships. Academy of Management Journal, 53(1): 149-166.

Ertug, G. & Castellucci, F. 2013. Getting What You Need: How Reputation and Status Affect Team Performance, Hiring, and Salaries in the NBA. Academy of Management Journal, 56(2): 407-431

Kovács, B., & Sharkey, A. 2014. The Paradox of Publicity: How Awards Can Negatively Impact the Evaluation of Quality. Administrative Science Quarterly, 59, 1-33.

Jensen M., Kim H. 2015. The Real Oscar Curse: The Negative Consequences of Positive Status Shifts. Organization Science, 26(1): 1-21.

##### *Additional readings*

Weber, M. 1964. Social Stratification and Class Structure, The Theory of social and economic organization: 424-429: Macmillan.

Merton, R. K. 1968. The Matthew Effect in Science. Science, 159: 56-63.

Podolny, J. M. & Stuart, T. E. 1995. A Role-Based Ecology of Technological Change. American Journal of Sociology, 100: 1224-1260.

Podolny, J. M. & Phillips, D. J. 1996. The Dynamics of Organizational Status. Industrial and Corporate Change, 5: 453-471.

Gould, R. V. 2002. The Origins of Status Hierarchies: A Formal Theory and Empirical Test. American Journal of Sociology, 107(5): 1143.

Podolny, J. M. 2005. Status signal: a sociological study of market competition: Princeton University Press.

Baum, J. A. C., Rowley, T. J., Shipilov, A. V., & Chuang, Y.-T. 2005. Dancing with Strangers: Aspiration Performance and the Search for Underwriting Syndicate Partners. Administrative Science Quarterly, 50(4): 536.

Washington, M. & Zajac, E. J. 2005. Status Evolution and Competition: Theory and Evidence. Academy of Management Journal, 48(2): 282.

Ertug, G. & Castellucci, F. 2013. Getting What You Need: How Reputation and Status Affect Team Performance, Hiring, and Salaries in the NBA. Academy of Management Journal, 56(2): 407-431

Ertug, G. & Castellucci, F. 2014. Who shall get more? How intangible assets and aspiration levels affect the valuation of resource providers. Strategic Organization, 13(1): 6-31.

#### **Faculty Bio.**

Fabrizio received his PhD in Organizational Behavior from the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University. His research interests focus on Social Status, Reputation, Social Networks, and Organizational Learning. He has published in various journals such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organization Science*, *Organization Studies*, *Journal of Management*, *Strategic Organization*, *Labour Economics*, *Long Range Planning*, and *Industrial and Corporate Change*. He is also a member of the editorial board of *Strategic Management Journal*