MANAGEMENT 9330 – Foundations of Organizational Behavior
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Fall 2022 – Q1
Friday: 9:00 am-12 pm
Location: SHDH 2034 (unless otherwise noted)

Taught By:
Professors Andrew Carton, Samir Nurmohamed, Michael Parke, and Phil Tetlock

Course Lead:
Professor Samir Nurmohamed

Course Description
This course aims to examine and understand the basics of theory and empirical research in micro-organizational behavior and to increase our understanding of individuals’ behavior in organizations. To do so, we will cover a blend of classic and contemporary literature to learn and build on the prevailing theories and findings in various areas of micro-organizational behavior.

Course Outline

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Course Requirements

1. "Reaction" papers for each session (50% of final grade) discussing: (a) the central insights in the readings and (b) some research questions in your specific area of interest within management that uses the insights. Papers are due by 9 am the day before class on Canvas and should be no longer than 1-2 single-spaced pages.

2. An "innovation" paper (20% of final grade) that builds on the theories and empirical research you have learned in the course to present novel hypotheses (i.e., something not already known or immediately understood by organizational behavior researchers).

The hypotheses should draw on research papers from the course but may also be inspired by your observations, experiences, and/or the experiences of others in organizations. In these papers, please provide at least two hypotheses and present a justification on why it is likely to be supported, drawing on concepts and ideas from the course (you may choose to tie concepts across topics). Lastly, explain why your hypotheses are likely interesting and
important to others.

**Your paper is due by October 21** and should be no longer than 2-3 single-spaced pages. It may be useful—but it is not required—to include a “boxes-and-arrows” in an Appendix at the end to illustrate your theory and hypotheses (it does not count against your page limit). Please also ensure that you include citations and references (you can use APA or another style that is typically featured in management journals).

3. Participation (30% of final grade):
   a. As "primary reader," you will lead a discussion on subtopics and issues within the seminar through responsibility for a particular set of articles or sub-areas. In the "primary" reader role, first, summarize the article briefly (no more than 2 or 3 minutes at most – assume people have read the article), then present (briefly) what you think are the major strengths and weaknesses of a paper. It is important to be sure to also focus on strengths. Then, state what you think are interesting statements or questions (stimulated by the paper) that our class should discuss.
   b. Be an active (constructive) participant throughout the course.

**Preparation for Class Session**

Each student is expected to come to class prepared to discuss all the required readings for each class session. The essence of this seminar is contained in the quality of the classroom discussion. As you review each reading, you might want to consider the following issues:

- What is the basic formulation of the theory (constructs and relationships among them), and what drives the theory?
- What are the underlying assumptions?
- What is the main contribution of this paper? What are the interesting ideas?
- What is your analysis of the methods?
- What was done well, and what could have been improved?
- Do you believe their arguments? What would it take to convince you?
- What are the boundary conditions of the argument? In other words, under what circumstances does the argument apply and not apply?
- What are the critical differences between this author’s argument and others you have read? Can these differences be resolved through an empirical test?
Class 1 – What Is Organizational Behavior?

Required Readings (Read in the Order Listed Below):


Examples of Articles Related to the Perspectives Conveyed in the Above Articles:


Class 2 - Affect

**Required Readings:**


**Other articles of interest (but not required):**

Reviews


Foundational Articles & Models


Other Articles & Applications


Class 3 – Cognition: Clashing Views of Human Rationality

**Required Readings:**

1. Human judgment is noisy (with implications for fairness and efficiency in organizations).
   

2. Humans over-rely on simple heuristics that render them vulnerable to systematic biases (with implications for fairness and efficiency, again).


3. A reconciliation of the error-and-bias view of human judgment and the “people can be pretty clever” view (with implications for distinguishing real from pseudo-expertise)


4. Cognition and Affect/Motivation Are Intertwined (with implications for understanding why people often disagree about what counts as a bias versus an adaptive response).


5. Cognition and Politics Are Also Intertwined (with implications for understanding why managers often harbor different view on how to organize and how to lead)


**Other articles of interest (but not required):**

Note: Positions you take on micro-cognitive issues shape positions you take on an array of meso and macro issues

Bargh, J & Chartrand, T. (1999). The unbearable automaticity of being. *American Psychologist.* (note both recent controversies over the replicability of famous priming effects (Simmons et al. 2011, below) and the robustness of the underlying cognitive theory of “spreading semantic activation”)


Gilbert, D. T. (1991). How mental systems believe. *American psychologist, 46*(2), 107-120. (makes a strong psychological case is that our first reaction to what we hear is to believe it—and cognitive
effort is required to check our vulnerability to manipulation—more relevant than ever in our era of clashing claims of “fake news”


Kahneman, D., & Frederick, S. (2002). Representativeness revisited: Attribute substitution in intuitive judgment. Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment, 49-81. (an incisive analysis of how seamlessly people replace hard questions with easier ones, answer the easier one and convince themselves that they have also answered the hard question)


March, J. (1990). Learning through replicating success. Chapter 2 and 3 from “The ambiguities of experience.” (a brilliant analysis of why learning from experience is a lot harder than it sounds)


McGuire, W. J. (1997). Creative hypothesis generating in psychology: Some useful heuristics. In Annual Review of Psychology. (take these creativity heuristics for a test drive when you design studies and preregister hypotheses)


Peng & Nisbett (1999). Culture, dialectics and reasoning about contradiction. American Psychologist. (like Markus article, a powerful case for viewing culture and cognition as deeply intertwined)
Ross, L., et al. (1977). Social roles, social control and social perception processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* (still the most compelling demonstration of the “fundamental attribution error”—and as relevant as ever to how managers, teachers,… should run meetings to avoid the error)

Simmons, J., Nelson, L. & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. *Psychological Science* (an extremely high-impact article that challenged how researchers were testing hypotheses—and led to the debunking of a wide range of empirical claims in social-cognition, marketing and micro-OB)


Class 4 – Leadership

Required Readings:


- Please examine the figures in this article, as we will discuss the (important) role of figures and tables in communicating ideas and how my thoughts on them have evolved over time.

Other articles of interest (but not required):


Class 5 - Motivation

Required Readings (read them in this order):


Review Articles (not required):


Other articles of interest (but not required):


Class 6 - Teams

**Required Readings:**


**Other articles of interest (but not required):**


