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

Fall 2023 – Q1  
Friday: 9:00 am-12 pm  
Location: SHDH 2034 (unless otherwise noted)  

Taught By:  
Professors 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  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Taught By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 September 1</td>
<td>What is Organizational Behavior?</td>
<td>Samir Nurmohamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 September 8</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Phil Tetlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September 15</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Samir Nurmohamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September 22</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Samir Nurmohamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 September 29</td>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>Michael Parke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 October 6</td>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>Michael Parke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Requirements  

1.  "Reaction" papers for each session (50% of final grade) discussing: (a) the central insights across the readings and (b) some research questions in your specific area of interest within management that draw on these 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 (5% of final grade for proposal and 20% of final grade for your paper) 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 innovation paper is due by October 22.** It 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).

To prepare for your final innovation paper, you will present an innovation paper proposal (PowerPoint slide deck) on September 22 (5% of the final grade). Please ensure that your slide deck has the following information:

Slide 1: Your name, research interests, and a description of how the idea relates to your interests
Slide 2: The core research question you are thinking about
Slide 3: Concepts from the course that relate to your research questions
Slide 4: Preliminary hypotheses that you are developing

3. Participation (25% of final grade): We expect each student to come to class prepared to discuss all the required readings for each class session. The quality of the classroom discussion is essential for the success of this course. 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?

In addition to your role as an active participant in class, we will have you sign-up for 1-2 sessions to summarize the key learnings and questions that arose from the class discussion for the rest of the group. More details will be provided on this in class.
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 – 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 3 - Motivation

Required Readings (read them in this order):


Review Articles (not required):


Other articles of interest (but not required):


Class 4 – Leadership

Required Readings:


Other articles of interest (but not required):


Class 5 - Affect

Required Readings:


Other articles of interest (but not required):

Reviews


Foundational Articles & Models


Other Articles & Applications


Class 6 - Teams

Required Readings:


Other articles of interest (but not required):


