Education 867: Seminar in Organization Theory (Winter 2016)

Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education
University of Michigan School of Education

Professor: Michael N. Bastedo
Office: 2117 SEB
Email: bastedo@umich.edu
Class: Thursday, 1-4pm, 2216 SEB

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.

An introductory course in organizations, such as ED761 or 752, is required prior to taking the course. It is also recommended that students participate in the ICOS seminar (Business Administration 840 or Information 702; Friday, 1:30-3:00) to become increasingly familiar with cutting-edge research in organizations, but this is not a requirement.

Objectives:

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:

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 50% of your final grade.

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, mini-qualifying paper, 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).

Course Schedule

January 7: Introduction


January 14: Institutionalism: Old and Neo-Old


**January 21: New Institutional Theory**


*Meyer, John and Brian Rowan. 1978. "The Structure of Educational Organizations." In


**January 28: Institutional Logics & Entrepreneurs**


**February 4: Institutional Work & Inhabited Institutions**


**February 11: Social Movements**


February 18: Building Theory: The Case of Strategic Action Fields

On Theory:


Strategic Action Fields


February 25: Organizations and Identity

On Method:


Organizational Identity and Identities


March 10: Social Networks


March 17: Organizational Status and Inequality


March 24: Organizational Discrimination


**March 31: Resource Dependence**


April 7: Organizational Learning and Teams


**April 14: Publishing Management Work**


Revised: February 26, 2016