COURSE SYLLABUS
HSA 7930
Special Issues in Health Services Administration:
Theories in Healthcare Management
Ph.D. Program in Public Affairs
College of Health & Public Affairs
University of Central Florida
Fall 2010

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Office Hours: M, W 3:00 -6:00 p.m.

Time and Place: Wednesday 6:00pm-8:50pm, HPA II, Room 247

Required Text:


Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to develop the student’s ability to conduct theory-based research on healthcare organizations. The course will cover the major theoretical perspectives on organizations and will link these to contemporary empirical studies of healthcare organizations. Special focus is placed on exploring in-depth the link between theory and research exhibited in this empirical work to enable students to develop the capability of using theory to guide their own research.

The course will be taught in a seminar format. Reading assignments are substantial, and they must be completed before class. Students will assume responsibility for critiquing each other’s work as well as the required course readings.

Course Objectives:
1. To articulate the rationale for using theory when conducting applied research.
2. To analyze and compare the important theoretical schools relevant to the field of healthcare management.
3. To analyze the major “macro” theories of organizations and their inter-relationships including resource dependency theory, population ecology theory, institutional theory, organizational design perspectives, innovation theory, economic approaches to organizations, and network theory.
4. To analyze the major “micro” theories of organizations and their inter-relationships including employee motivation and commitment theory, stakeholder management theory, decision making theory, chaos theory, prospect theory, and consumer choice theory.
5. To apply the major theories above to the study of healthcare organizations by exploring and evaluating how various theories are employed and operationalized in the conduct of empirical research.
6. To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various applied theories when conducting applied research.
7. To critically and systematically assess recent research applications of theory.
8. To develop the students’ analytical abilities in selecting and using existing theory in designing their own research involving healthcare organizations and the healthcare sector at large.
9. To develop the students’ ability to write a critical theoretical review as part of a research proposal.
10. To allow students to identify theoretical perspectives most relevant and attractive for their own future research.
11. To develop the students’ ability to prepare a critical comparative analysis of major theories for submission to a scholarly journal.
12. To develop the students’ ability to organize and orally present a critical analysis of theories to an academic audience.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Paper:</th>
<th>60 %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Class Presentations:</td>
<td>30 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Attendance:</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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90 to 100 = A  
80 to 89  = B  
70 to 79  = C

**Course Requirements:**

1. Complete required readings before class, make two presentations covering four readings to the class over the course of the semester, and participate in discussion of all readings during class sessions.
2. Submit a written paper, of approximately 25 typed pages, on a topic mutually agreed upon by the student and instructor, at the end of the semester. This paper should be related to a possible dissertation topic.

3. Present the paper, mentioned in number 2 above, to the class.

**Class Presentations:**

1. Choose three theories you would like to discuss during the semester. For each theory discuss a theoretical paper and an empirical paper. You may select from the suggested readings on the topic in this syllabus or any other two papers on the same topic.

2. What does this reading/theoretical framework have to say about each of the following?
   - The external environment
   - Organizational mission/purpose/goals
   - Organizational structure and design
   - Change and innovation
   - Organizational performance/survival

3. What do you see as the overall strength of the article (or set of articles)? What do you see as the weaknesses, limitations, or oversights?

4. What are the implications for study of health-care organizations or the health-care sector at large? For example, does the empirical work on health-care organizations support or fail to support the hypotheses derived from this approach?

5. What are the implications for future research? What are examples of additional research that would be useful? What are some dissertation topics related to this theory?

6. Prepare a summary of each of the four readings for the two presentations which you will present over the two class sessions utilizing the above questions.

**Written Paper:**

Students will choose one theoretical framework which may possibility be related to their future dissertation topic. They will then examine all the theoretical papers which describe this theory as well as empirical research which utilize the theory. Finally, they will apply the theoretical and empirical papers to their own possible dissertation topic. The paper will be approximately 25 pages in length and will form the basis for a Literature Review chapter for a possible future dissertation. The paper should be prepared in the style required for the final dissertation here at UCF. For example, use the APA reference format.

**Course Schedule:**

**Aug. 25 – Introduction and Overview**
Each student in the class will select two theories he or she will investigate, and present to the class. In addition, each student will write a 25 page paper on one of these two theoretical frameworks utilizing the above guidelines to be due by the last class session. As a result of these selections, this syllabus will be modified to reflect student interests.

Sep. 1 –Overviews and Theories/Approaches/Debates (Abiy)


Sep. 8 – Resource Dependence, Power, Politics Theory and Applications (Chunting)


**Sep. 15 – Coordination, Communication, and Stakeholder Management Theory and Applications (Cherie)**


**Sep.22– Institutional Theory and Applications (Kari)**


**Sept. 29 — Organizational Structure and Innovation Theory and Applications (Orville)**


**Oct. 6 — Organizational Performance Theory and Applications (Abiy)**


and Wytenbach: 289-323.

**Oct. 13– Decision/Complexity/Chaos Theory and Application (Kanchan)**


**Oct. 20--Network Theories and Applications (Orville)**


Oct. 27 – Motivation/Decision Theory and Applications (Kari)


Nov. 3— Human Resource Theories and Applications (Cherie)


Nov. 10- Entrepreneurship Theory and Applications (Fottler)


**Nov. 17- Population Ecology Theory and Applications Health Belief Model (Kanchan)**


**Dec. 1 – Student Oral Presentations of Final Papers (Final Student Papers Due)**