PHDBA 297T: RESEARCH IN MICRO-ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR
FALL 2015

Time: Mondays 2-5 PM
Location: CHEIT C0132

PROFESSORS

Dana Carney
dcarney@berkeley.edu
Office: F573

Laura Kray
kray@haas.berkeley.edu
Office: F591

Juliana Schroeder
jschroeder@haas.berkeley.edu
Office: F526

All office hours by appointment. Please email us to schedule office hours.

COURSE OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION

This course examines theory and empirical research in major topic areas of micro organizational behavior. The topics and reading list represent our attempt to balance a number of factors and to expose you to a variety of theoretical perspectives. Thus, we read broad overview articles, as well as position, theory, and empirical papers. There is a blend of classic articles, more recent cutting edge research, and articles drawn from social psychology. A number of methodological approaches are represented as well.

To enroll in this course, you should either be a Ph.D. student in Management of Organizations (MORS) at Haas or have taken an advanced seminar in social psychology or sociology and be familiar with theory and research. This is NOT an applied course and is not recommended for students interested in applied issues.

PREPARATION FOR CLASS SESSIONS

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 did the author(s) do well and do poorly?
Do you believe his or her 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?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

A. Class Participation: 25%
B. Opinion Papers (3): 25%
C. Final Paper/Research Proposal 25%
D. Final Presentation 25%

A. Class participation is worth 25% of your grade, based on: (1) active engagement in classroom discussions and (2) acting as a session leader.

Your primary assignment in this course is to be actively engaged in class discussions and to immerse yourself into the field of organizational behavior. Thus, vigorous seminar participation, including developing and articulating informed views on topics and constructively contributing to others’ thinking and work in the seminar, are central requirements of the course. More specifically:

1. Active engagement in classroom discussion. Each of you should complete and be 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 read each paper 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 did the author(s) do well and do poorly?
   - Do you believe his or her 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? What would that study look like?

And, for empirical papers, you might also consider:

   - Does the research design make sense given the research question?
   - Does the research design allow you to rule out alternative hypotheses?
   - How are the variables operationalized, and is this consistent with the theory?
• Are the data analyzed and interpreted effectively?

Finally, we have provided a set of preparation questions for each class. You should give serious thought to these questions prior to each class as well as any ideas for making theoretical and empirical contributions in the particular area.

2. **Session leader.** Students will act as class session leaders for each assigned paper (to be determined in the first week of the class). The role of the session leader is to lead the class through questions and discussions. The role is not merely to summarize readings, but rather, you should come to class prepared with discussion questions and observations that highlight the main issues, strengths, weaknesses, controversies, and gaps in your reading for that week.

**B. Three opinion papers are worth 25% of your grade.**

Please prepare three critical analyses about the readings. One analysis will be for Dr. Carney’s readings (Weeks 3 & 8), one for Dr. Kray’s readings (Weeks 4 & 6), and one for Dr. Schroeder’s readings (Weeks 5 & 7). You can choose which week you submit your paper.

Each paper should be 1-2 pages long (double-spaced). In these papers, you can address one or more of the following topics: 1) critique one or more of the weekly readings, 2) develop an important theme by integrating across readings, and/or 3) propose a novel hypothesis that could be empirically tested (something not already known or immediately obvious to researchers in OB or psychology). These papers are due on Monday by noon before Monday’s class. They may serve as foundations for your larger research paper but do not necessarily need to do so.

**C. Final paper is worth 25% of your grade.**

For this paper, you have two options: First, you could prepare a 5-10 page paper integrating a field of research and highlighting a new research question (e.g., adding new knowledge or bringing a new perspective to old findings within the field). You should include a set of formal propositions/hypotheses that lay out your theoretical predictions. Take the paper as far as possible in terms of developing a research design and possible empirical test of the ideas. If you choose this option, your paper is due on November 6th. You will be expected to incorporate the comments from your presentation (Oct. 26th).

Alternatively, you could consider writing a proposal for an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. The award application is due Oct. 29th. (Note: given the due date, this alternative requires getting started immediately!) These proposals involve two components: Personal, Relevant Background and Future Goals Statement (3 pages, single-spaced) and Graduate Research Plan Statement (2 pages, single-spaced). For more details about the instructions for each statement, please see: [https://www.nsfgrfp.org/](https://www.nsfgrfp.org/). We will review your materials. If you choose this option, we strongly encourage you to submit your application for an award. If you choose
this option, **your application is due to us on October 26** so that we can provide comments prior to the due date.

Please submit a detailed proposed outline of this paper on October 12 so that we can provide feedback.

**D. Final presentation is worth 25% of your grade.**

Please make a 10-15 minute final presentation that explains your proposal. You should prepare this talk as if you were giving it at a research conference such as the Academy of Management. Be prepared to answer questions after your talk.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Course Overview and Organization Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Power (Dana Carney)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Gender (Laura Kray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Motivation (Juliana Schroeder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Ethics/morality (Laura Kray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Person perception (Juliana Schroeder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Paper proposals due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Emotion/Affect (Dana Carney)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* NSF GRF applications must be submitted to instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>Final papers must be submitted to instructors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEEK 1: COURSE OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION SESSION**

No assigned readings.

**WEEK 2: LABOR DAY—NO CLASS!**

**WEEK 3: POWER (LED BY DANA CARNEY)**

Required Reading: (please read in order listed)


**Questions to Consider:**
1. Do you see a difference between power, status, dominance, SES?
2. Are there any parallels between verticality and social categories such as race and gender?
3. Is power in organizational contexts different than power in one’s social life (or in politics)?
4. What do you *think* about power- does it make you feel yucky? Do you like it? Do you want it? Why? Do you prefer respect over power? Or do you want it all?

**Recommended Reading:**

*Books:*
1. Leadership BS (Jeff Pfeffer’s new book coming soon- pre-order available on Amazon)
2. Power (Jeff Pfeffer’s canonical book- available everywhere)
3. Will to Power (Nietzsche’s core philosophy- available everywhere)

*Key researchers in the area (insufficiently represented on the required list):*
1. Cameron Anderson’s work
2. Pam Smith’s work
3. Adam Galinsky’s work
4. Judy Hall’s work
5. Serena Chen’s work
6. Dacher Keltner’s work
7. Frank Flynn’s work
8. Deborah Gruenfeld’s work

*Good papers to broaden thinking:*


**WEEK 4: GENDER (LED BY LAURA KRAY)**

**Required Reading:**


**Questions to Consider:**

1. What are the primary barriers to gender equality in the workplace?
2. What are the inherent challenges to studying gender and/or sex?
3. What does this literature have to say about the nature versus nurture debate?
4. Which is greater, differences in how women and men behave (actor effects) or how they are treated (target effects)? How can these different sources of difference be teased apart?

**Recommended Reading:**


**WEEK 5: MOTIVATION (LED BY JULIANA SCHROEDER)**

**Required Reading:**

Questions to Consider:

1. Think about the different strategies to motivate someone. How would you pick a particular strategy? What factors would you need to take into account to choose an effective strategy?
2. When do motivational tools backfire? How can we avoid this?
3. How does one’s social environment affect motivation? How do relationships with coworkers, friends, and family influence one’s motivational trajectory?
4. What’s the time course of motivation? How can being at the beginning, middle, or end of goal pursuit affect motivation?

Recommended Reading:


**WEEK 6: JUSTICE, ETHICS & MORALITY (LED BY LAURA KRAY)**

**Required Reading:**


**Questions to Consider:**

1. What are the differing perspectives on studying morality? What do we know about people who are immoral versus situations that elicit immorality? What about the interaction between the person and the situation?
2. What are the different ways that morality is measured? Do we understand certain aspects of morality (i.e. attitudes, identity) more than ethical behavior? How closely linked are they?
3. Returning to the distinction between actor-driven and target-driven effects, do we know more about morality and ethics from one perspective than the other?
4. How is the study of justice distinct from the study of moral psychology?

**Recommended Reading:**


**WEEK 7: PERSON PERCEPTION**
**(LED BY JULIANA SCHROEDER)**

**Required Reading:**


Questions to Consider:

1. When do people care about others’ perspectives and when do they overlook others’ perspectives? When does perspective-taking decrease accuracy?
2. How are people “triggered” to think about others’ minds? What happens when these triggers are absent?
3. What are the different methods people can use to try to understand the thoughts and feelings of those around them? How successful, generally, are these methods?
4. How does language affect the way we perceive others?

Recommended Reading:


WEEK 8: EMOTION & AFFECT (LED BY DANA CARNEY)

Required Reading: (read in order listed, please)

James, W. (1884). What is an emotion? Mind, 9, 188-205. [found here: http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/emotion.htm]


Questions to Consider:

1. How have definitions and measurement of emotion evolved over time, from James to Keltner?
2. What are the tricky empirical issues inherent in studying emotions?
3. How can I create a mental map of the many dimensions and theories of emotion?
4. What do we still not know about human emotion - what interesting research questions persist?
5. What are relevant organizational implications and questions that you can think of related to emotion and why are there so few OB papers on this required list?

**Recommended Reading:**

**Books:**
The Feeling of What Happens (Demasio- available anywhere)
Descartes’ Error (Demasio- available anywhere)
What is an Emotion? (Ekman- edited book available anywhere)
The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals (Darwin- available everywhere)

**Key researchers in the area (insufficiently represented on the required list):**
Ekman’s (and colleagues: Wally Friesen, Jerry Boucher, Maureen O’Sullivan) work
Keltner’s work
Haidt’s work
Izard’s work
Fredrickson’s work
Oschner’s and Gross’ work

**Good papers to broaden thinking:**
Plutchik, R. (2001). The Nature of Emotions Human emotions have deep evolutionary roots, a fact that may explain their complexity and provide tools for clinical practice. *American Scientist.*

**WEEK 9: FINAL PRESENTATIONS**