



**HPM 415
Organizational Analysis in Health Care
Spring Quarter 2019
4 units**

Course Syllabus

Course Day/Time Mondays 9am-11:50am
Course Location 31-262 Roemer Library
Instructors Emmeline Chuang, PhD
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Course Prerequisites:

Introductory research methods course and graduate standing. The seminar is open to all doctoral students, but is most relevant to students of public health, sociology, organizational behavior, management, nursing, and health informatics. MS students in the department of Health Policy and Management are also welcome.

Doctoral Seminar in Organizational Analysis

With few exceptions, health care in the U.S. is provided by or through health care organizations (HCOs). The structure, behavior, and performance of these organizations therefore warrant close attention from those interested in understanding accessibility, quality, safety, and costs of health care, as well as the allocation of health resources. Increasingly, HCOs are undergoing fundamental changes in their organizational structure, financial arrangements, and inter-organizational relationships. The growing organizational complexity of care and the continuation of regulatory pressures and economic competition have dramatically changed the structure and behavior of health care organizations, making these organizations particularly interesting and dynamic subjects for research.

The objective of this seminar is to review and apply various theoretical perspectives to research on organizations in the health, public health, and human service sectors. The course will cover the active paradigms in organizational theory with special emphasis on research issues and perspectives related to selected aspects of organizational performance,

structure, process, and environment. Empirical research will be examined to clarify how important organizational constructs have been operationalized and to highlight the methodology-related challenges of studying organizations in health care/public health.

The seminar will attempt to accomplish three objectives with respect to the study of organizations in health care/public health:

	Course Objective	PhD Program in Health Services Research Competencies
1	To compare and critique the active organizational theories , perspectives and debates in health delivery systems and public health systems research.	<p><u>Conceptual Knowledge:</u> Apply or develop theoretical and conceptual models and skills relevant to health services research</p> <p><u>Relevant and Important Question Development:</u> Pose important research questions informed by structured evidence assessment, stakeholder positions, and pertinent theoretical and conceptual models and formulate solutions to health problems, practice and policy</p>
2	To describe the study designs and analytic methods used in organizational research, with attention to identifying the strengths and limitations of particular approaches.	<p><u>Study Designs:</u> Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of study designs to appropriately address specific health services research questions</p>
3	To integrate the perspectives presented in the seminar through the development of a research paper .	<p><u>Conceptual Models and Operational Methods:</u> Use or develop a conceptual model to specify study constructs for a health services research question and develop variables that reliably and validly measure these constructs</p> <p><u>Data Collection and Management Methods:</u> Assemble and manage existing data from public and private sources</p>

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is conducted in seminar format. Each session of the course will address a central issue or perspective in organizational research. Assigned readings will illustrate the conceptual, applied, and empirical aspects of the issue or perspective being discussed, and serve as the basis for class discussion. To make the discussion effective and stimulating, you must come to class prepared by completing all the readings and forming your own interpretations and questions about them.

Each session will consist of a combination of (brief) lecture and (lengthier) discussion, focused on the following:

Theory

- ✓ How organizational theory is operationalized in empirical research
- ✓ The benefits and limitations of the theoretical perspectives
- ✓ Assumptions about organizational behavior made in empirical investigations
- ✓ Connections and contradictions between theoretical perspectives
- ✓ Contextual factors for which the perspective might be more or less relevant

Research Methods

- ✓ How empirical research might be advanced/enhanced
- ✓ Measurement challenges and innovations in delivery systems and public health organizations, including sampling techniques, boundary definitions/unit of analysis, construct validity (i.e., how well do the variables used in the analysis capture important concepts), temporal ordering/causal inference issues, correlated measurement/clustering of observations/multilevel modeling
- ✓ Potential for methods to advance understanding organizational behavior and change in health care/public health

Course Requirements

Discussion Leadership	35%
Class Participation	15%
Proposed Topic and Outline (3-4 pages)	10%
Final Research Paper	40%

GradeStructure

98-100 = A+, 93-97 = A, 90-92 = A-
88-89 = B+, 83-87 = B, 80-82 = B-
78-79 = C+, 73-78 = C, 70-72 = C-
69 or less = F

Discussion Leadership and Reflection

A significant part of learning at the doctoral level includes developing the ability to critically and constructively reflect on and critique materials, and engage in dialogue about them. For this reason, all students will be required to sign up to lead or co-lead class discussion at least once over the course of the quarter. Discussion leadership will involve providing a brief summary of the major ideas/themes and theories/conceptual frameworks in the assigned readings and then leading discussion based on questions, thoughts, and reactions the readings provoke. To receive full points, **do not simply summarize assigned articles but instead facilitate discussion by focusing on theoretical, methodological, and/or practical implications or concerns raised by the papers.** As appropriate, visual aids, handouts, or any other media may be used to help illustrate your points. If utilizing Powerpoint, please limit to a maximum of 4-5 slides.

All students not presenting should still prepare to engage in discussion of the assigned readings by submitting their own reflections and questions. **Reflections should collectively respond to the questions below, and should be sent to the instructor(s) by 8pm the night before class:**

- ✓ Taken together, what are the big ideas/major themes in the assigned readings? (max 1 paragraph)
- ✓ Do the papers complement or contradict one another? (max 1 paragraph)
- ✓ Can you think of anything that is missing or wrong? (max 1 paragraph)
- ✓ Relevance/implications for your research and/or for health or public health services research, policy, and practice? (max 1 paragraph)
- ✓ Any questions you have from the reading.

Guidance on Reading the Articles:

In preparing for class, keep in mind the following guiding questions when reading any given article:

General

- ✓ What is the main message or major themes highlighted in the article? In other words, what are the primary one or two points the author(s) want you to know/believe by the end?
- ✓ What is the key take-away(s) you got from the article?
- ✓ What questions did the reading raise for you?
- ✓ How does it relate to your own research interests?

Conceptual / Theoretical Work

- ✓ What is the theory supposed to explain? What are the key concepts, premises, and assumptions?
- ✓ How or why might this theory be of interest to academics? Practitioners? Policymakers?
- ✓ Can the theory be empirically tested? If so, how might this be done? What are the appropriate units and levels of analysis?
- ✓ How does the theory relate to other(s) you may be familiar with? Are there any contradictions? How might the differences be reconciled or integrated?

Empirical Work

- ✓ What are the research question(s) being examined? Is the significance of the research problem clearly justified? What literature is it drawn from?
- ✓ What is the research design? What is the target population and sample? What methods were used? In other words, what are the strengths and limitations of the selected approach?
- ✓ What are the main results, and did they support the hypotheses, arguments, and/or main points being made in the article?

Class Participation

All students are expected to complete assigned “Core Readings” before coming to class and to contribute meaningfully to in-class discussions. Being part of the discussion (verbally and in writing) is critical for success as a doctoral student. Be prepared to ask and answer questions, offer critiques and extensions of what you have read, and join in actively in the discussion. Your participation will be evaluated on depth of analysis as well as how well you communicate your ideas to others. If discussion is limited, instructors may also “cold-call” on

students to gauge their general reactions to the readings for the week. (If you strongly prefer not to be cold-called, please notify instructors before the start of class).

Class attendance is also an important component of class participation. One absence may be excused, provided the instructor is notified in advance. Additional absences will result in a reduction of your class participation grade.

Research Paper

The final paper is due no later than **Friday June 14th, 2019 at 5:00pm**. Students can choose one of three approaches to this paper:

- Systematic or structured literature review of what is known regarding a specific organizational theory or construct, or of ways of measuring a specific organizational construct.
- Empirical paper that explicates and applies a selected aspect of organizational theory (i.e., one of the theories or theoretical perspectives covered in the course, or another macro- or micro-organizational theory) to a current phenomenon or issue in the health care sector, develops hypotheses or research propositions based on the particular theory, and empirically tests them using qualitative or quantitative data
- Develop a research proposal that states one or more research questions, reviews the evidence available to answer these questions (focusing on competing theories and perspectives presented in the course) and proposes in detail how to investigate the questions.

A brief oral update and associated 3-4 page prospectus outlining your paper topic and approach should be submitted no later than **Session 5 (04/29/19)**. The final paper should be a *maximum* of 20 double-spaced pages (excluding references), using a 12-pt font with 1" margins. (Papers shorter in length are acceptable, provided they cover all relevant points).

The instructor(s) are available to review and provide feedback on ideas, outlines, or drafts of the paper at any point before the final due date. Please directly email the instructor(s) for feedback and expect at least 72 hours turnaround time, particularly for lengthier drafts, and plan accordingly.

Additional Research Paper Guidance

Regardless of which approach you choose, papers should include the following sections:

1. **Background/Significance**
 - Description of the organizational issue you aim to explore.
 - Why this issue matters
 - What is currently known?
 - What are the gaps in knowledge?
 - How will your study contribute, and why does that contribution matter (to theory, practice, and/or policy)?
2. **Conceptual Framework and (for empirical papers and proposals) Hypotheses**

- What is your primary research question(s)?
 - Describe the conceptual model guiding your work and (as appropriate) the organizational theory or theories it draws on.
 - What do you hypothesize? Which organizational theories support your hypotheses and how? Be specific.
3. **Methods** (Content of this section will vary based on the approach you select; criteria for systematic lit review will be different than for empirical paper or research proposal)
- **Study Population.** Define and describe your study population. Justify your unit of analysis.
 - **Sample.** What sampling criteria are you using and what is the justification for it? If you are restricting your sample, why? What will you gain or lose by restricting your sample in this way? How will you know that you have acquired an adequate sample to examine your hypotheses, e.g., what literature supports your approach?
 - **Data Collection.** What is your primary research method (e.g., secondary data analysis, interviews, archival research, other)? Why is this method appropriate? What are the strengths and limitations of this particular method? What tools will you use during the data collection process? For example, if you are conducting interviews, please provide a sample interview guide (set of questions organized by content area) in an Appendix.
 - **Measures.** What measures will you use to examine the hypotheses? Justify using relevant literature (e.g., how have other studies measured your construct of interest? If no study has examined the construct using the variable you propose, provide a rationale for it).
 - **Analysis Plan.** How do you plan to analyze your data? As appropriate, what criteria will you use to support or refute your hypotheses? How will you handle correlated measurement error/ clustering of observations analytically?
4. **Results and Discussion** (for systematic lit review and empirical papers only)
- What did you find? What are the implications for theory, research, practice, or policy? What are the limitations and next steps?

Supplementary Resources to Consider (available on CCLE)

- ✓ AMJ Editorial 1: Topic Choice
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 2: Research Design
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 3: Setting the Hook
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 4: Grounding Hypotheses
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 5: Methods and Results
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 6: Discussing Implications
- ✓ AMJ Editorial 7: Qualitative Research
- ✓ AMJ Editorial: Integrating Theory

Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation is an integral part of your learning experience. Please contact me *prior* to a meeting if you are not able to attend a seminar session. Excessive absences will result in the reduction of the final grade by one grade point, e.g., A- to B-.

Late Assignments

For every day an assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 20% of the total possible points, e.g., you can only earn a maximum of 16 points for an assignment worth 20 points if one day late. No exceptions will be made to this policy.