



Stockholm University
Department of Sociology

Course Plan SO7420

Sociological Perspectives on Organization and Leadership (7,5 ECTS)

Course Teacher: Linda Weidenstedt

Autumn term 2020 (2/11 2019 – 17/01 2021)

1. General information

The course is a 7.5 ECTS credits course in sociology at the advanced level. All lectures and seminars will be held in English and only **online via live Zoom meetings**.

This master's level course aims to introduce advanced students with a background in personnel, working life, and organizations studies to a range of sociological theories, concepts and empirical studies in the field of organizations, leadership and labor markets. We review, analyze, and discuss theories relating to the macro level (the labor market), the micro level (individuals, employers/employees, interaction, leadership), and the meso level (organizations), as well as how these different levels are interconnected. Students will also attend seminars in which the literature and its relevance for practice is discussed.

The course is organized as a sequence of lectures, held by experts in the different fields, and seminars in connection with each lecture.

Important:

Course communication will primarily happen via the online learning platform **Athena**. Please make sure you find your way to the course's Athena page at <https://athena.itslearning.com/>

2. Intended learning outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- describe and analyze the differences between common organizational theories and institutional perspectives;
- define and apply key terms and concepts of institutional-, network-, and organization theory to analyze phenomena and processes related to organizations, leadership and labor market;
- describe and critically analyze different leadership- and management models from a sociological point of view;
- explain how social stratification processes by dimensions such as gender, class, and ethnicity may arise within organizations and the labor market, and to analyze the impact these processes can have on organizations and society at large.

3. Teaching and learning activities

Teaching is conducted through online lectures and seminars. Students are expected to do the following:

- Complete assigned reading before each class meeting
- Complete written assignments 2 days before class meeting
- Participate actively in seminar discussions

The course consists of 11 lectures (á 90 minutes). Ten of the lectures are followed by a 60 minutes seminar. Students have to submit 7 written assignments (see below). In seminars, students will first discuss different questions in smaller groups and then reflect on their discussions, problems, and questions in the larger group.

Lecturers:

- On matters relating to the course in general, examination etc:

Linda Weidenstedt: linda.weidenstedt@sociology.su.se

- On matters regarding particular lectures:

Moa Bursell: moa.bursell@iffs.se

Andrea Geissinger: andrea.geissinger@oru.se

Hernan Mondani: hernan.mondani@sociology.su.se

Magnus Nermo: magnus.nermo@sociology.su.se

Åke Sandberg: ake.sandberg@sociology.su.se

Linda Weidenstedt: linda.weidenstedt@sociology.su.se

Rebecca Ye: rebecca.ye@edu.su.se

4. Schedule

#	Time & Place	Lecturer	Title of lecture	Literature
1	4 Nov 12:00 – 15:00	Linda Weidenstedt	· Introduction to the themes of the course, practical issues · Introduction organization theories · seminar	· Ahrne & Brunsson 2011 · Barley & Kunda 2001* · Rao et al. 2000* · Sandberg 2019, ch 11**
2	9 Nov 14:00 – 17:00	Linda Weidenstedt	· Organization theories I · seminar	· Tosi & Slocum 1984 · Williamson 1981
3	11 Nov 10:00 – 13:00	Andrea Geissinger Linda Weidenstedt	· Organization theories II · seminar	· DiMaggio & Powell 1983 · Hannan & Freeman 1977 · Kanter 1977 · Friedland & Alford 1991* · Meyer & Rowan 1977* · Sandberg 2019, ch 15**
4	16 Nov 9:00 – 12:00	Hernan Mondani	· Network analysis and organizational dynamics · seminar	· Cross et al. 2002 · Borgatti et al. 2003 · Uzzi & Dunlap 2005
5	16 Nov 13:00 – 16:00	Linda Weidenstedt	· Communication, employee voice, and power · seminar	· Hyman 2018 · Weidenstedt 2016 · Zhu et al. 2018 · Al-Fedaghi 2012* · Sandberg 2019, ch 23, 24**
6	27 Nov 12:00 – 15:00	Magnus Nermo	· Class in contemporary society · seminar	· Breen 2010 · Davis & Moore 1945 · Tåhlin 2007 · Sandberg 2019, ch 6, 7**
7	30 Nov 13:00 – 16:00	Moa Bursell	· Gender and ethnic stratification in the labor market · seminar	· Arai et al. 2016 · Bygren et al. 2017 · Ferguson 2013 · Heath et al. 2008 · Sandberg 2019, ch. 8**
8	3 Dec 8:00 – 11:00	Rebecca Ye	Emerging occupations	· Fayard et al. 2017 · Ye 2020
9	7 Dec 14:00 – 17:00	Åke Sandberg	· Conflicting institutional logics in organizations: the case of Volvo · seminar	· Boglind 2013 · Sandberg 2007 · Sandberg & Movitz 2013 · Sandberg 2019, ch 1, 16, 21**
10	11 Dec 9:00 – 12:00	Andrea Geissinger Linda Weidenstedt	· Gig economy · seminar	· Healy et al. 2017 · Kellogg et al. 2020 · Kenney & Zysman 2016 · Sandberg 2019, ch 9**
11	11 Dec 13:00 – 16:00	Linda Weidenstedt	· Summary, questions, and take-home exam	---

* optional reading

** optional reading for Swedish-speaking students

5. Assessment

To pass the course, students must:

- a) **attend** at least 7 of the 10 seminars;
- b) **submit a** written assignment for 7 of the 10 seminars;
- c) get **grade P** (see below) on 7 seminar-assignments;
- d) get **grade E** or higher (A-D) on the take-home exam.

5.1 Seminar-assignments

The course consists of 10 lectures with following seminars. All students have to submit a written assignment for 7 of the 10 seminars (more instructions below). Which of the lectures/seminars you choose to write your assignment on is up to you – that means you decide yourself for which 7 lectures/seminars you submit assignments.

Since you must attend 7 of the 10 lectures/seminars, I recommend attending those seminars for which you have written your assignments.

The assignments consist of the following tasks:

- **Read and examine** the obligatory course literature carefully (i.e. the assigned literature for a particular lecture/seminar)
- **Describe and analyze** the differences between the readings for this course (ca 500-1000 words):
 - 1) focus on important concepts/key terms that the authors use and/or introduce, as well as the most important findings and/or results of each reading.
 - 2) End this part with a critical argument on the readings – if possible from a sociological point of view.
- **Reflect** on:
(ca 500-1000 words)
 - 1) in how far and in which way you could apply your new knowledge from the literature on your current and/or future working life.
 - 2) where you see the literature's relevance for leadership and Human Resource Management in organizations?
- The assignment must be written in a coherent text, not in bullet points!

The assignment will be graded on the following scale: Fail (F), Pass (P) [equivalent to U, G in Swedish]. At the end of the course, you need to have 7 assignments with grade P. If you fail an assignment, you can repeat the same assignment or choose to write a different one.

Each assignment is due at least two days before the lecture/seminar and must be submitted on Athena under Resources >> Assignments >> respective assignment for each lecture.

5.2 Take-home exam

The course is additionally assessed through a written take-home exam, consisting of 3-4 questions, of which one or more will relate to a case study that students will receive together with the exam. The questions will be answered in the form of short essays. The total word-count of the essays should not exceed 3000 words, excluding references. Each essay is graded on a scale from A to F (see below for criteria). Component grades are summed up to a final grade.

The take-home exam must be uploaded on Athena no later than January 17, 2021 (that is 23:59 at the latest).

The take-home exam is evaluated according to the following standard reference criteria, based on how well students accomplish the **intended learning outcomes** (outlined above):

A= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a sophisticated, reflective, coherent, consistent, and logical way. The student can analyze both advantages and limitations of the selected theory. The student can accurately compare, contrast, and critically evaluate different theoretical approaches to the problem.

B= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent and consistent way but may lack a sophisticated or reflective understanding of the underlying principles. The student can analyze both advantages and limitations of the selected theory but may place more emphasis on one or the other. The student can accurately compare, contrast, and critically evaluate different theoretical approaches to the problem.

C= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent way but lacks a sophisticated or reflective understanding of the underlying principles. At a basic level, the student can explain the advantages and limitations of the selected theory but may place more emphasis on one or the other. The student can compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the problem but may show limits in terms of critical evaluation.

D= This grade is earned when the student has some difficulty demonstrating his/her ability to apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent way. The student can explain some of the advantages and limitations of the selected theory but may also include inaccuracies and weak understanding. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the problem and cannot sufficiently evaluate them critically.

E= This grade is earned when the student has considerable difficulty demonstrating his/her ability to apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent way. The student can explain some of the advantages and limitations of the selected theory but may also include inaccuracies and weak understanding. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the problem and cannot sufficiently evaluate them critically.

Fx= This grade is earned when the student cannot complete the work assigned for the course. The student cannot apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent way. The student cannot explain the advantages and limitations of the selected theory without inaccuracies. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the problem and cannot sufficiently evaluate them critically.

F= This grade is earned when the student cannot complete the work assigned for the course. The student cannot apply a specific theory to a particular problem in a coherent way. The student cannot explain the advantages and limitations of the selected theory without inaccuracies. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the problem and cannot sufficiently evaluate them critically.

Note: Grade E is needed to pass the course. Fx indicates that the student is offered the opportunity to upgrade his/her course work as long as the course is provided in order to achieve at least grade E. A student with grade E is not entitled to redo course work to raise his/her grade. Students who receive Fx or F on course work twice from the same instructor can request to be evaluated by another instructor. Such a request should be sent to the Director of Studies. Students can request to have course work according to this syllabus up to three semesters after it ceases to be valid. Such a request should also be sent to the Director of Studies.

6. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is strictly prohibited and may result in suspension from the University. The Department of Sociology reports all suspected cases of plagiarism to the University's disciplinary committee. Plagiarism means that you copy someone else's text or ideas without referring to the source. In an academic text, it is very important to be able to distinguish the author's own ideas from someone else's. There is nothing wrong in telling what others have written on the subject—quite the contrary—but you must make it clear to the reader whose ideas you are referring to. To avoid plagiarism, it is better that you refer too much than too little.

7. Course literature (required and optional reading)

Articles can be downloaded with an SU-account. If you encounter problems with downloading articles, please see this instruction:

<https://www.su.se/english/library/tutorials/tutorials/search-for-scholarly-articles-1.315589>

Ahrne G. & N. Brunsson. 2011. "Organization Outside Organizations. The Significance of Partial Organization." *Organization* 18:83-104.

<http://org.sagepub.com/content/18/1/83.full.pdf+html>

Al-Fedaghi, S. 2012. "A Conceptual FOundation for the Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication." *International Journal of Soft Computing* 7:12-19.

<http://docsdrive.com/pdfs/medwelljournals/ijscmp/2012/12-19.pdf>

Arai, M., Bursell, M. & L. Nekby. 2016. "The Reverse Gender Gap in Ethnic Discrimination: Employer Stereotypes of Men and Women with Arabic Names." *International Migration Review* 50:385-412. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/imre.12170>

Barley S. & G. Kunda. 2001. "Bringing Work Back in." *Organization Science* 12:75-94. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2640398.pdf?acceptTC=true>

Boglund, A. 2013. "Volvo and a Swedish Organisation and Management Model." in *Nordic Lights*, Stockholm: SNS Förlag. **Available on Athena.**

- Borgatti, S. P. & P. C. Foster. 2003. "The Network Paradigm in Organizational Research: A Review and Typology." *Journal of Management* 29:991-1013.
<http://jom.sagepub.com/content/29/6/991.abstract>
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<https://academic.oup.com/esr/article/33/3/337/3852477>
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- Fayard, A. L., Stigliani, I., & B.A. Bechky. 2017. "How nascent occupations construct a mandate: The case of service designers' ethos." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 62(2):270-303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839216665805>
- Ferguson, L. 2013. "Gender, Work, and the Sexual Division of Labor." *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*, Oxford Handbooks Online.
<http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199751457.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199751457-e-13?print=pdf>
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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238198697_Bringing_Society_Back_In_Symbols_Practices_and_Institutional_Contradictions
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<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2777808?seq=1>

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<https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/annals.2018.0174>
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http://www.akesandberg.se/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/05/Enriching-Production_Ake-SANDBERG-ed.-1995-2007.pdf
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