Organizational Theory and Design: how to design a company of strangers
ECON S-1649

Course description
We spend a large part of our life in several different types of organizations. Some organization theorists state that organizational identity is [or structures are] a collective result of personal interactions, strongly affected by cultural and cognitive differences. It seems almost impossible to design organizational structures because they emerge naturally as a collective set of shared beliefs. It follows that a “company of strangers” is an indefinite product, an amalgam of experiences, beliefs, cultural values and personal attitudes. This course explains why organizational forms can or must be designed, how to use organizational rationality to structure activities and processes, how to get the most from our competences and skills following design methods, and how it is possible to deal with individual and collective intentions and goals. Members of a “company” are still strangers and their individual efforts and aspirations can be connected through a common design process. The art of conceiving of and producing a design plan is presented, using the experiences of international firms and new management practices.

Prerequisites
No formal requirements are requested.

Required readings
A work package contains all the readings will be available to students. Readings are organized by session. The articles in the work package are the following:


Recommended Readings
The following text books offer an overview of main topics:
Daft R., Organization Theory and design, South Western College Publishing, 2004

Grading
Participation 30%
This part of the grading will be evaluated based on the demonstration of having done the readings, willingness to answer questions, and attention and response to classmates.

Assignment 20%
Short paper: case analysis

Final Examination 50%
Written exam: open questions based on theories and cases

NB: Master’s students (studenti a livello magistrale) and all other students at graduate level will be given extra work for grading purposes.
Policies and procedures
Attendance is required and considered as part of the grading. Any absence must be registered by the CFHSS office (email cafoscari-harvard@unive.it). All work submitted for this course must be the student’s own and must follow proper citation procedures. All students are required to read in advance the policies on “Plagiarism and Collaboration” in the Handbook for Students at http://hvrd.me/iXiaLD. Please familiarize yourself with the Guidelines for Using Sources: http://bit.ly/cQK9A3

Other guides to reading, writing, and research are available on the course website: http://hvrd.me/yYGeJy

Office location, contact information:
Professor Pontiggia’s office is on the 1st floor of the Business Economics and Management Department, Fondamenta San Giobbe, Cannaregio.
Office hour, Wednesday 11.00 am – 1.00 pm

Seminars

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<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Title and Description</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>How cooperation affects our daily experiences? What economists says about collective and individual behavior?</td>
<td>Mon 26 June</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Why a gift may not be considered an economic exchange?</td>
<td>Wed 28 June</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>We live and survive into very complex organization: relationships and motivations.</td>
<td>Mon 3 July</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>A managerial point of view (1) : the “heritage” of last century.</td>
<td>Wed 5 July</td>
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<td>5-6</td>
<td>A managerial point of view (2): the new organizational forms.</td>
<td>Mon 10 July Wed 12 July</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Efficiency of individual and organized behavior.</td>
<td>Mon 24 July Wed 26 July</td>
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<td>8-9</td>
<td>Innovation and organization: How to organize and improve innovation capabilities?</td>
<td>Mon 31 July</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Knowledge creation and diffusion.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Collective learning: how strangers (may) collaborate.</td>
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