Amsterdam Business Research Institute

Process Research Methods

Course Manual

Academic year 2020-2021
Course title: Process Research Methods

Coordinator(s): Prof.dr.ir. Hans Berends

Lecturer(s): Prof.dr. ir. Hans Berends, Prof.dr. Brian Pentland

Study period: February 2020 – March 2020

ECTS: 6 ECTS

Tuition: € 600

Course goals: After finishing this course, participants have developed their:

- Understanding of process theorizing and different approaches to process research in management and organization studies

- Ability to make and justify choices in the design of process research

- Ability to apply qualitative and quantitative methods of process analysis

- Insight in reporting and publishing process studies.

Course Content: Most of the phenomena investigated by management and organization scholars evolve over time. This includes processes at various levels, such as team development, innovation, organizational change, interorganizational collaboration, and institutionalization. Process research methods have been developed to capture the dynamics of how such phenomena unfold over time, without reducing them to dependent or independent variables. This course provides an introduction to these process research methods. It provides the philosophical and theoretical background to process thinking, methods for collecting process data, and qualitative and quantitative methods for analyzing process data. Four hours of classroom interaction per week. During each session, one team presents an assigned paper, and another team offers a discussion with critical questions. The teams’ debate will be open to the rest of the class. The focus of the discussions is not only on the content and theories, but also research methods applicable to test the theories.

Form of tuition: The course is organized around six full day sessions in February / March 2021 and individual assignments. Each session is dedicated to one aspect of process research methods, and will consist roughly of two parts: an interactive morning part in which a topic is introduced and an afternoon part in which participants engage in exercises and present and discuss process research methods in relation to their own work. Participants are expected to come well prepared to these
sessions. Assignments and evaluation criteria for grading will be explained separately.

Assessment

Attendance and active participation in the sessions is mandatory to pass this course. The requested readings mentioned above are assumed to have been read prior to class.

Participants receive two grades: one grade for class participation (including a presentation) (50%) and one grade for the final individual assignment (50%). The final score is the weighted average of these two grades. PhD candidates receive a pass/fail mark on the basis of their assignments. Participants receive 6 ECTS after successful completion of the course (or 3 ECTS when the ‘light’ version is selected, without final assignment).

Course structure

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Session 1: Process theorizing

Content • process philosophy • process theorizing in organization and management research • introduction to process research methods • process oriented research questions

is both a verb and a noun: Weick meets Whitehead. Organization Studies, 27(11), 1599–1616.


Session 2: Designing process research

Content • issues in the design of process research • alternative strategies for doing process research


Session 3: Qualitative analysis of process data

Content • different strategies for process analysis • identifying events and creating event sequences • coding events • developing process theory


Session 4: Quantitative methods for analyzing event sequences

Content • conceptualising occurrences, events and states (review) • n-grams & pattern recognition • narrative networks • synchronic and diachronic comparison


Session 5: Writing up process research studies

Content • reporting qualitative process studies • publishing process research • presentation of examples of process studies

