# Work and Organizational Psychology

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course provides students with an overview of both the science and practice of work and organizational psychology. Aim of the course is, firstly, to highlight how psychology can be used to understand different workplace dynamics and working experiences. Secondly, the course will discuss the latest changes in the global workplace and their effect on organizations and personnel; issues such as working in a multicultural environment, the impact of technological innovation on people at work, the management of employees’ diversity, health and well-being, will be explored. Thirdly, the course will provide an overview of how psychologists can help individuals, groups, and organizations be more effective and healthy.

**Intended learning outcomes**

*Knowledge and understanding*

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the historical roots of WOP and relate them to the main theoretical perspectives of the discipline (classical, modern, symbolic, post modern) and to its recent developments

- Compare and contrast the most relevant theories of motivation, job satisfaction, work engagement, commitment and psychological wellbeing, and discuss the possible relations among these phenomena and organizational/people performance and health

- Describe the main aspects of job analysis, job performance, training and selection from a psychological perspective

- Discuss the various theories of leadership, their respective strengths and weaknesses, their relations to power and influence dynamics

- Define organizational culture, social structure and technology and discuss their relations and their main theoretical approaches

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

After completing this course, students will be also able to:

- Analyze specific cases and work situations through WOP theories (specific attention will be devoted to topics, such as: stress and wellbeing at work; leadership dynamics; working in multicultural environments).

*Learning & communication skills*

- Critically reflect on the current transformations of work/organizations, and on their implications on students’ own professional project

- Work in groups and integrate each contribution into a common product; present the results of a group assignment and engage into a peer-review process; reflect on the role of culture in teamworking.

***COURSE CONTENT***

MODULE 1: FOUNDATIONS

Unit 1: History of Work and Organizational Psychology (WOP)

the history of WOP and its main theoretical perspectives (classical, modern, symbolic, postmodern);

an international overview of authors and schools that founded the discipline;

recent developments.

MODULE 2: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORKING

Unit 2: People at work

work in contemporary organisations;

motivation, job satisfaction, work engagement, commitment;

stress and well-being;

job analysis, job performance, training and selection

leadership and power

Unit 3: Emerging trends

21 century skills

GIG economy and its impact on work

Worker quality management

MODULE 3: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ORGANIZING

Unit 4: Organisations

The organisational forms of contemporary work;

Organisational culture, technology, structure;

Working and organizing multicultural teams

Unit 5: Emerging trends

Diversity in organizations

Technological innovation and its impact on people and organization

***READING LIST***

Hatch M. (2018), *Organization Theory, 4th Edition*, Oxford University Press Academic UK [Part I and II].

Bulger, C., Schultz, D. and Schultz, S. (2020), *Psychology and Work Today, 11th Edition*, Routledge [Capp. 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13].

For further readings, additional references will be provided during the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be primarily lecture-based, with as many opportunities for discussion and small-group exercises as the class size allows. Lectures will be integrated with small-group presentations of assigned readings and case histories. Talks from experts and visiting professors coming from different fields will be also given, in order to integrate academic lectures with a practitioner-based and international perspective.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

***Assessment based on the texts and lectures / small-group activities***

Students’ final grade will be determined by their performance on 1) a group project 2) an individual essay and 3) an oral examination.

1. The group project will consist in (a) a group presentation and in (b) a peer-review exercise. (a)The group presentation will consist in a theoretical elaboration on a given topic and on the application of psychological theories to concrete situations/cases, based on students’ experiences. Suggested readings and possible topics will be provided and published in Blackboard. The group presentation will be assessed according to the quality of the theoretical elaboration and practical applications discussed; to the clarity of the group communication; to the level of integration of each member’ contribution in the final communication. (b)The peer-review activity will consist in providing written constructive feedback to the other groups’ presentations. The group project (presentation + feedbacks) will be weighted 20% of the final mark (10% group presentation + 10% written feedbacks).
2. The individual essay will consist in a short text (max 2 pages) in which students will be requested to write their personal reflections on their learning, with specific regards to the group presentations’ topics. The essay should be sent to the teachers at least one week before the date of the oral examination. The individual essay will be assessed by taking into account students’ critical thinking abilities in developing reflections around the chosen topics. The individual essay will be weighted 20% of the final mark.
3. The oral exam will consist of three open questions. The first question will be related to the individual essay. Students will receive a feedback on their essay, and they will be required to reply and to discuss the feedback provided. The other two questions will be related to the textbooks, and will be focussed on Organizational Psychology (Hatch, M. *Organization*); Work psychology (Bulger et al., *Psychology and Work Today*), respectively. The oral exam will be assessed according to students’ knowledge quality and accuracy; to students’ ability to link different topics; to analyse work and organizational topics through a psychological lens and to elaborate on the feedback provided on their individual assignment. The oral exam will be weighted 60% of the final mark.

***Assessment based on the texts only***

Students’ final grade will be determined by their performance on 1) an individual essay and 2) an oral examination.

1. The individual essay will consist in a short text (from 2 to 4 pages) in which students will be requested to elaborate on a given topic and discuss their personal reflections (a list of possible topics will be provided and published in Blackboard). The individual essay will be assessed by considering students’ ability to elaborate on different theories and to develop critical reflections around the chosen topics. The individual essay will be weighted 30% of the final mark.
2. The oral exam will consist of three open questions. The first question will be related to the individual essay. Students will receive a feedback on their essay, and they will be required to reply and to discuss the feedback provided. The other two questions will be related to the textbooks, and will be focussed on Organizational Psychology (Hatch, M. *Organization*); Work psychology (Bulger et al., *Psychology and Work Today*), respectively. The oral exam will be assessed according to students’ knowledge quality and accuracy; to students’ ability to link different topics; to analyse work and organizational topics through a psychological lens and to elaborate on the feedback provided on their individual assignment. The oral exam will be weighted 70% of the final mark.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should be familiar with the basic concepts and categories covered during Social Psychology courses.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.