

**The Psychology of Work**  
The Swedish Program  
Stockholm School of Economics  
Fall, 2018

**Time:** Mondays 15:15-18:15

**Location:** Room 328, 350 and 538

**Instructor:** Helena Schiller

**Email:** mail@hschiller.se (easiest way to reach me)

**Office hours:** appointment

### **Course description**

During this course we will talk about selected topics in social psychology with a main focus (and application to) work and organizational psychology. In our discussions throughout the course we will be moving from a person-oriented to a structural-oriented perspective. The course consists of two modules:

- I. *A person and a situation:* well-being, stress, burnout, motivation and goals of an individual, and how are these influenced by a work environment.
- II. *A team and an organization:* power, leadership, climate, culture, organizational processes, and how to initiate a change.

The goal of this course is to give you a possibility to reflect on selected questions about human behavior at work and in the organizational context. You will get familiar with current research findings on selected topics, and based on this knowledge you will be asked to form your own opinions and recommendations for solving real-life problems. We will work with case studies and practical examples that will give you an opportunity to find an immediate application of your knowledge.

### **Learning outcomes**

During this course you will learn how to:

- characterize a work environment in terms of risk factors and protective factors for workers' well-being;
- understand basic mechanisms of work related motivation and well-being;
- define and apply key concepts of organizational science (information sharing, power, culture, climate, intervention) to describe organizational processes;
- outline a change process taking into consideration the multilevel complexity of an organization;
- present an evidence-based argument in a clear and concise way.

### **Course requirements and examinations**

The final grade for the course is based on the following:

Active participation                      20%

Midterm paper and presentation      30%

Final paper and presentation        50%

### *Grading*

You will be required to present your work in front of the class for both midterm and final exam. Papers will be peer-reviewed. You will review at least two papers written by your classmates. You will be able to respond to the comments raised by your reviewers in your presentation.

Your paper and presentation will be graded with one grade according to the following criteria:

A = excellent work reflecting a mastery of assigned task (90-100% achievement of learning outcomes)

B = very good work but still lacking something (80-90% achievement of learning outcomes)

C = average work reflecting the minimal effort/competence/knowledge (70-80% achievement of learning outcomes)

D = below average work showing little effort/competence/knowledge (65-70% achievement of learning outcomes)

F = poor and unacceptable level of effort/competence/knowledge (less than 65% achievement of learning outcomes)

### *Attendance*

This course assumes an interactive approach which requires engaged participation from all members of the class. Your presence is essential to the liveliness of this course; therefore regular attendance is expected and considered mandatory. You are allowed one absence from class for the entire semester in case of a (documented) emergency situation or in case of an important family or personal event. In the latter case the notice should be given to the instructor at least one week in advance. If you will miss two classes, or fail to inform the instructor about your absence in advance (i.e. unexcused absence), your final grade will be decreased by one point (e.g., A will become A-). If you will miss three classes, you will still have a chance to pass the course, but the highest grade you will be able to receive from the course will be D. If you will miss four or more classes, you will not pass the course. All these rules are subjects to negotiations in case of serious medical or family emergency.

### *Active participation*

The course requires not only attendance, but also an active and constructive participation in discussions. To facilitate active participation, you will be given a small homework prior to each class. Homework assignments will be related to course literature, and their aim is to help you prepare for class and facilitate our discussion during class. Homework is obligatory (even when a student will not be present during class!). Every time you will come to class unprepared, your active participation grade will be decreased by one point (e.g., A will become A-).

### *Midterm paper and presentation*

This assignment requires conducting a short interview with a working adult of your choice. You will combine the information you gained from the interview into a paper and a presentation. Any form of presentation is allowed as long as it will respect the time limit and involve legal activities.

### *Final paper and presentation*

This assignment requires reading and critically reviewing a popular psychology book chapter or an article (from the list provided by the instructor or of your own choice). Each student should review different text. The review should include a short summary of the text's content together with your reflections and comments about it. You should focus on reviewing an intervention or a "prescription" suggested by your chosen text. Discuss possible short and long term consequences of such intervention taking into consideration multilevel structure of organizations and dynamic organizational processes. You will have to present the review as a paper and as a presentation.

### *Classroom rules*

We are all expected to behave respectfully in the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, coming to class on time, giving speakers your undivided attention, addressing your classmates and the instructor with respect, and refraining from academic dishonesty (e.g.,

plagiarism, taking credit for the work of others, etc.). At the first session you will be given a chance to propose other rules and recommendations that will facilitate your work during the course.

### Required readings

We will not follow any textbook during this course. Instead, we will analyze recent publications that review topics of our interest and present important studies. The selected research articles and other scientific resources will be distributed during the course. The articles are listed in the syllabus, but they might be subject to change.

### Course schedule

You will be provided with the assigned readings before every session (note that hard copies will not be distributed). Students are expected to read course materials before each session and prepare for active involvement. You are welcomed to look for, and present during class, any additional information that will help you discuss the topic. Total time for each session is expected to be 3 hours including breaks. The course consists of three types of in-class activities:

1. **Thematic seminars** which cover specific topics (8 sessions). Reading course materials and preparation for discussion is required before the seminars. Each seminar is structured as follows:
  - a. Reflection on homework assignments and discussion based on the course materials;
  - b. Experimental assignment (solve a problem, play a role etc.) or practical assignment (case study, real world example etc.);
  - c. Summary and feedback.
2. **Students' presentations** (2 sessions). Students' work will be presented, discussed and graded twice during the course. Participation is required.
3. **Integration seminars** (2 sessions). During these sessions you will work on integrating the knowledge you've acquired in the first and second parts of the course.

<i>Syllabus</i>	<i>Topics and Readings</i>
<b>Session 1</b> 2018-08-27 Room 538	<i>Seminar: Setting the stage</i> Individual. Psychosocial context. + discussing the rules of participation in the course
<b>Session 2</b> 2018-09-03 Room 538	<i>Seminar: Stress at work</i> Stressor. Strain. Well-being. Bliese, P. D., Edwards, J. R., & Sonnentag, S. (2017). Stress and well-being at work: A century of empirical trends reflecting theoretical and societal influences. <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> , 102(3), 389–402. <a href="http://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000109">http://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000109</a> Eurofound and EU-OSHA. (2014). <i>Psychosocial risks in Europe: Prevalence and strategies for prevention (Chapter 1)</i> . Luxembourg. doi:10.2806/70971

<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Seminar: Work environment</b>
2018-09-10	Engagement. Burnout. Demands. Resources.
Room 538	Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. I. (2014). Burnout and Work Engagement: The JD–R Approach. <i>Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior</i> , 1(1), 389–411. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Seminar: Needs and motives</b>
2018-09-17	Basic needs. Work motivation.
Room 538	Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-Determination Theory in Work Organizations: The State of a Science. <i>Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior</i> , 4(1), 19–43. http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108
<b>2018-09-19</b> midterm paper submission deadline	
<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Integration seminar and midterm presentation workshop</b>
2018-09-24	Career planning. Sustainable career.
Room 538	
peer review deadline	
<b>Session 6</b>	<b>Midterm presentations</b>
2018-10-01	final version submission deadline: 2018-10-08
Room 328	
<b>Session 7</b>	<b>Seminar: Teams</b>
2018-10-08	Groups. Information sharing. Decision making.
Room 350	Mesmer-Magnus, J. R., & DeChurch, L. (2009). Information sharing and team performance: a meta-analysis. <i>The Journal of Applied Psychology</i> , 94(2), 535–46. http://doi.org/10.1037/a0013773
<b>Session 8</b>	<b>Seminar: Leaders</b>
2018-10-15	Leadership. Status. Influence.
Room 350	Lord, R. G., Day, D. V., Zaccaro, S. J., Avolio, B. J., & Eagly, A. H. (2017). Leadership in applied psychology: Three waves of theory and research. <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> , 102(3), 434–451. http://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000089
<b>Session 9</b>	<b>Seminar: Organization</b>
2018-10-22	Climate. Culture. Structure.
Room 350	Schneider, B., Ehrhart, M. G., & Macey, W. H. (2013). Organizational Climate and Culture. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 64(1), 361–388. http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-113011-143809
Week 44	NO CLASS
Week 45	NO CLASS

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**Session 10**      **Interventions**  
2018-11-12      Interventions. Targeting. Implementation. .  
Room 328      Nielsen, K., Randall, R., Holten, A.-L., & González, E. R. (2010).  
Conducting organizational-level occupational health interventions: What  
works? *Work & Stress*, 24(3), 234–259.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2010.515393>

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**Session 11**      **Seminar: Integration seminar and final presentation workshop**  
2018-11-19      Change in organizations.  
Room 328  
*final paper  
submission  
deadline*

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**Session 12**      **Final presentations**  
2018-11-26      *final version submission deadline: 2018-12-07*  
Room 538  
*peer review  
deadline*

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