



Networks and Organizations

網路與組織

Course # 265767001

Instructor	Jacob Reidhead	Class Time	T 2-5pm
Email	reidhead@g.nccu.edu.tw	Classroom	綜南270417
Office #	綜合 North Wing 13F	Office Hours	W & Th 12pm -2pm
Instructor Site	https://seouljake.com/	Course Site	Google Drive

1. Introduction

Content

This course provides a graduate-level introduction to the major theoretical traditions in organization theory and their integration with network perspectives. The seminar is organized canonically, tracing the historical development of organizational analysis from classical theories of bureaucracy and rational control to contemporary approaches that emphasize networks, fields, and relational governance. Rather than treating organizations as isolated, efficiency-seeking entities, the course highlights how organizational structures, behaviors, and outcomes are shaped by environments, institutions, power relations, and social networks.

Across the semester, students will engage with foundational paradigms including scientific management, contingency theory, organizational ecology, neo-institutionalism, resource dependence, and social network theory. Special attention is given to how these paradigms address enduring organizational problems—coordination, control, legitimacy, inequality, and change—at multiple levels of analysis, from individuals and teams to organizations, fields, and interorganizational systems. Network perspectives are introduced not as a substitute for organization theory, but as a unifying analytical lens that reveals informal structures, relational mechanisms, and patterns of interdependence that cut across formal organizational boundaries.

The course emphasizes close reading, critical discussion, and applied theoretical reasoning. Through seminars and case-based research focused on the Asia-Pacific region, students will learn to mobilize organizational paradigms analytically, compare competing explanations, and develop theoretically informed research questions suitable for advanced academic work.

Audience

This course was created with IDAS students in mind. PhD and MA students from other graduate programs are welcome to join.

Pre-requisites

No prerequisites are required.

2. Organization

Seminars

In class, students will actively participate in seminars and case study presentations.

Seminars will typically be divided into three sections:

- Student-led discussion
- Follow-up discussion (led by students or instructor)
- Lecture: Introduce the next week's paradigm

Out-of-class, students will prepare for seminars by:

- Reading assigned materials before class
- Preparing to lead classroom discussions at least three times over the semester
- Writing memos and discussion questions prior to the days they lead discussions

Case Studies and Panel Presentations

On case study presentation days, the seminar will be divided into conference-style panels. Every student should expect to present their case study on a panel. Each student will also serve as a panel discussant at least once during the semester.

Out of class, students will prepare for case study presentations by:

- Writing and submitting a case study one week in advance of the panel presentation day
- Preparing to present their own case studies on a conference-style panel
- When scheduled to serve as a panel discussant, reading the case studies submitted by students on the panel and preparing to discuss them

Course Google Folder

Students will be given access to a course Google Folder containing the course syllabus, grades, instructions, and assigned readings.

All course materials may be accessed in the Google Folder. Students will also submit all assignments via the course folder.

3. Assessments

Grades

Assessment	Details	Score
In-Class Discussions	Lead at least three in-class discussions (10 points x 3)	30%
	Write a memo prior to leading a discussion (5 points x 3 memos)	15%
Case Studies	Write three case studies (15 points x 3 cases)	45%
	Present each study in a panel presentation (5 points x 3 panels)	15%
	Serve as a panel discussant at least once (10 points x 1 time)	10%
Attendance	Subtract points for 2+ absences (see Attendance Policy)	≤ 0%

In-Class Discussions & Memos

Each student will co-lead an in-class discussion at least three times during the semester. We will schedule these the first day of class.

The day prior to leading a discussion, discussion leaders will submit a written memo, approximately 1500-2000 words, or 3-4 pages. Memos should identify the key research questions raised in the readings, the perspectives applied to answering those questions, and the types of research designs and data employed to empirically examine and test those arguments. Do students find those arguments convincing? What kind of evidence would convince you that the author's argument is right or wrong?

In addition, memos should include an appendix of 10 or more discussions questions which they may use to stimulate group discussion.

Co-leaders should talk prior to leading class discussion, share their questions with each other, and decide how to they will coordinate co-leading the discussion. Co-leaders will lead discussion for the first one to two hours of class. The third hour of class will be set aside for the instructor to introduce the paradigm and readings for the following seminar.

Case Studies and Panel Presentations

Students will write a case study at the end of each module, three case studies in total. Each case study will select at least one of the paradigms from that module and apply it to a case in the Asia-Pacific region. Each case study should be approximately 4000-5000 words, or 8-10 pages. Case studies will be submitted one week prior to panel presentation days.

At the beginning of each module, panels will be formed and students will volunteer to serve as a panel discussant. Every student should serve as discussant at least once. One week before case

study panel presentations, discussants should review the case studies written for their panel and prepare comments and questions in advance.

On case study panel presentation days, students will present their studies in conference-style panels. Panel presentation days will be divided into three fifty-minute panels. Depending on the size of the class, 2-4 students will present on each panel. Students should present no more than 10 minutes each, leaving time for discussion.

Following each panel's case presentations, the discussant will spend at least 10 minutes commenting on the presentations. Discussants will highlight strengths and weaknesses of each case study and will direct at least two questions to each panelist. Once panelists respond to all discussant questions, other class members may also ask questions for the duration of each panel's fifty minutes.

4. Policies

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Students receive two *free* unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 5-point deduction from the overall semester grade.

Arriving more than 15 minutes late to class, or leaving class more than 15 minutes early, constitutes 50% of an unexcused absence and will result in a 2.5-point deduction, once a student has exceeded the two *free* unexcused absences.

Absences may be excused for medical emergencies or participation in approved school or academic events. In either case, students must provide documentation and receive instructor approval. Excused absences do not count as *free* unexcused absences or result in deductions.

Grading Scale

The grading scale for this course follows the system typically used at NCCU.

Extra Credit & Revisions

I rarely offer extra credit. However, if extra credit is offered, it will not be arbitrarily offered to individual students, but systematically offered to all students equally.

If a class collectively performs poorly on a particular assignment, I may extend the deadline and offer students the opportunity to revise and resubmit their assignments.

Academic Integrity

NCCU requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. No type of academic misconduct (including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, or lying to the professor) will be tolerated in this class and may result in penalties including but not limited to scores of 0 on assignments and forfeiture of extra credit points. Instances of academic

misconduct will be referred directly to the appropriate disciplinary committee. For full information on these matters, please refer to the NCCU catalog or official website.

Generative AI

Students are encouraged to use generative AI to augment any aspects of all assignments including literature reviews, coding, team videos and the research poster. If AI-generated results do not fully satisfy assignment criteria, some human intervention may be required in order to complete the assignment and receive full credit.

5. Materials

Module 1: Inward-facing Paradigms

Week 2. Rational Bureaucracy and Scientific Management

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weberian Bureaucracy ● Classical Administrative Theory ● Scientific Management ● Rational Systems
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weber, M. (1978). Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology. University of California Press. ● Taylor, F. W. (1911). The principles of scientific management. Harper & Brothers. ● Barnard, C. I. (1938). The functions of the executive. Harvard University Press.
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Everett. Institutions. ● Fayol, H. (1949). General and industrial management. Pitman. ● Simon, H. A. (1947). Administrative behavior. Macmillan. ● Merton, R. K. (1940). Bureaucratic structure and personality. Social Forces, 18(4), 560–568. ● Gouldner, A. W. (1954). Patterns of industrial bureaucracy. Free Press. ● Blau, P. M. (1955). The dynamics of bureaucracy. University of Chicago Press. ● Selznick, P. (1948). Foundations of the theory of organization. American Sociological Review, 13(1), 25–35. ● Selznick. ● Scott, W. R. (1981). Organizations: Rational, natural, and open systems. Prentice Hall.

Week 3. Informal Organization and Power

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human Relations ● Informal Organization ● Political Models ● Conflict Theory ● Informal Organization ● Corporate Control
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Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thompson, J. D. (1956). Authority and power in identical organizations. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 62(3), 290–301.

Week 4. Decision-Making and Uncertainty

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-Making Tradition • Carnegie School • Bounded Rationality • Behavioral Theory of Firm • Organizational Learning
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thompson, J. D. (1956). Authority and power in identical organizations. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 62(3), 290–301.

Module 2: Outward-facing Paradigms

Week 6. Contingency Theory and Resource Dependence

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency Theory • Resource Dependence • Structural Contingency • Socio-Technical Systems • Imprinting • Strategic Choice
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). <i>The external control of organizations</i>. Harper & Row. • Emerson, R. M. (1962). <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 27(1), 31–41.

Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pfeffer, J. (1981). Power in organizations. Pitman. ● Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1974). Administrative Science Quarterly, 19(4), 453–473. ● Mintzberg, H. (1983). Power in and around organizations. Prentice Hall. ● Perrow, C. (1981). Theory and Society, 10(1), 1–39. ● Fligstein, N. (1990). The transformation of corporate control. Harvard University Press. ● Useem, M. (1984). The inner circle. Oxford University Press. ● Mizuchi, M. S. (1989). American Journal of Sociology, 95(2), 401–425. ● Davis, G. F. (1991). Administrative Science Quarterly, 36(4), 547–570. ● Krackhardt, D. (1990). Administrative Science Quarterly, 35(2), 342–369. ● Brass, D. J. (1984). Administrative Science Quarterly, 29(4), 518–539.
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Week 7. Organization Ecology and Community Ecology

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organizational Ecology ● Community Ecology ● Open Systems
Applied Readings	
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organizational Ecology reading. Hannah ● Microbreweries
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1966). The social psychology of organizations. Wiley. ● Lawrence, P. R., & Lorsch, J. W. (1967). Organization and environment. Harvard University Press. ● Stinchcombe, A. L. (1965). Social structure and organizations. In J. G. March (Ed.), Handbook of organizations (pp. 142–193). Rand McNally. ● Thompson, J. D. (1967). Organizations in action. McGraw-Hill. ● Galbraith, J. R. (1973). Designing complex organizations. Addison-Wesley. ● Burns, T., & Stalker, G. M. (1961). The management of innovation. Tavistock. ● Emery, F. E., & Trist, E. L. (1965). Human Relations, 18(1), 21–32. ● Hannan, M. T., & Freeman, J. (1977). American Journal of Sociology, 82(5), 929–964. ● Aldrich, H. (1979). Organizations and environments. Prentice-Hall. ● Scott, W. R. (1992). Annual Review of Sociology, 18, 493–519. ● Child, J. (1972). Sociology, 6(1), 1–22.

Week 8 & 9. Neoinstitutional Theory

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Neoinstitutionalism ● World Society ● Institutional Logics
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). American Journal of Sociology, 83(2), 340–363. ● DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). American Sociological Review, 48(2), 147–160.
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1984). American Political Science Review, 78(3), 734–749. ● March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1989). Rediscovering institutions. Free Press. ● Three New Institutionalisms ● Zucker, L. G. (1977). American Sociological Review, 42(5), 726–743. ● Tolbert, P. S., & Zucker, L. G. (1983). Administrative Science Quarterly, 28(1), 22–39. ● Greenwood, R., & Hinings, C. R. (1996). Academy of Management Journal, 39(4), 1022–1054. ● Suchman, M. C. (1995). Academy of Management Review, 20(3), 571–610. ● Oliver, C. (1991). Academy of Management Review, 16(1), 145–179. ● Meyer, J. W., et al. (1997). American Journal of Sociology, 103(1), 144–181. ● Scott, W. R. (2014). Institutions and organizations. Sage.

Module 3: Network Paradigms

Week 11. Organizational Economics

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network Forms ● Organizational Economics ● Hierarchies and Markets ● Principal Agent Problems ● Business Groups ● Decentralized Orgs
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Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podolny, J. M., & Page, K. L. (1998). Annual Review of Sociology, 24, 57–76. • Business Groups
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oliver Williamson • Hamilton. Emergent Economies, Divergent Paths • Spiders and Starfish • Business Groups in Asia. Hamilton article

Week 12 & 13. Networks in Organizations

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Network Theory • Embeddedness • Relational Sociology • Structuralism • Structural Holes • Social Capital • Status Theory • Homophily • Elite Networks • Brokerage • Centrality • Strategic Networks
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Core Theory: Embeddedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granovetter, M. (1973). American Journal of Sociology, 78(6), 1360–1380. • Granovetter, M. (1985). American Journal of Sociology, 91(3), 481–510. • Strength of Strong Ties
Core Theory: Brokerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burt, R. S. (1992). Structural holes. Harvard University Press. • Stovel. Vulnerability of Brokerage • Podolny & Page. 1997.
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hernandez & Gould. Five Types of Brokerage. • Ansel & Padgett • Matt Jackson. Strategic Networks • White, H. C. (2008). Identity and control. Princeton University Press. • Burt, R. S. (1982). Toward a structural theory of action. Academic Press.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nohria, N., & Eccles, R. (1992). Networks and organizations. HBS Press. ● Uzzi, B. (1996). American Sociological Review, 61(4), 674–698. ● Emirbayer, M. (1997). American Journal of Sociology, 103(2), 281–317. ● Baker, W. E. (1984). American Journal of Sociology, 89(4), 775–811. ● Coleman, J. S. (1988). American Journal of Sociology, 94, S95–S120. ● Podolny, J. M. (1993). American Journal of Sociology, 98(4), 829–872. ● Lin, N. (2001). Social capital. Cambridge University Press. ● McPherson, M., et al. (2001). Annual Review of Sociology, 27, 415–444. ● Fernandez, R. M., & Castilla, E. J. (2001). Administrative Science Quarterly, 46(3), 459–491. ● Marsden, P. V., & Hurlbert, J. S. (1988). Social Forces, 66(4), 1038–1059. ● Kossinets, G., & Watts, D. J. (2009). American Journal of Sociology, 115(2), 405–450. ● Gould, R. V. (2002). American Journal of Sociology, 107(5), 1143–1178. ● Lazega, E. (2001). The collegial phenomenon. Oxford University Press. ● Rivera, L. A. (2012). American Sociological Review, 77(6), 999–1022.
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Week 14. Network Forms of Organization

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network Forms ● Organizational Economics ● Hierarchies and Markets ● Principal Agent Problems ● Business Groups ● Decentralized Orgs
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Podolny, J. M., & Page, K. L. (1998). Annual Review of Sociology, 24, 57–76. ● Business Groups
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oliver Williamson ● Hamilton. Emergent Economies, Divergent Paths ● Spiders and Starfish

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business Groups in Asia. Hamilton article
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Week 15. Organizational Networks and Fields

Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organizational Fields ● Strategic Action Fields ● Network Governance ● Institutional-Network Synthesis
Applied Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
Core Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fligstein, N., & McAdam, D. (2012). A theory of fields. Oxford University Press. ● Powell, W. W., et al. (2005). American Journal of Sociology, 110(4), 1132–1205.
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Powell, W. W. (1990). Research in Organizational Behavior, 12, 295–336. ● Padgett, J. F., & Powell, W. W. (2012). The emergence of organizations and markets. Princeton University Press. ● Davis, G. F. (2009). Managed by the markets. Oxford University Press. ● Ahuja, G. (2000). Administrative Science Quarterly, 45(3), 425–455. ● Gulati, R. (1998). Strategic Management Journal, 19(4), 293–317. ● Uzzi, B., & Spiro, J. (2005). American Journal of Sociology, 111(2), 447–504. ● Provan, K. G., & Kenis, P. (2008). Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 18(2), 229–252. ● Shipilov, A. V., et al. (2014). Academy of Management Journal, 57(2), 449–481. ● Borgatti, S. P., et al. (2009). Science, 323(5916), 892–895. ● Powell, W. W., & Oberg, A. (2017). Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism. ● Davis, J. P., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2011). Academy of Management Review, 36(4), 743–766. ● Hannan. Organizational ecology

6. Spring 2026 Schedule

W	D	Module	Paradigms	Deadlines
1	2/24	Introduction	Pre-Bureaucratic Forms	
2	3/3	Module 1 Inward-Facing Paradigms	Rational Bureaucracy & Scientific Management	
3	3/10		Informal Organization & Power	
4	3/17		Decision-Making & Uncertainty	Case Due Tues 3/17 23:59
5	3/24		Panel Presentations: Asia-Pacific Case Studies	Present and Discuss Cases
6	3/31		Contingency Theory & Resource Dependency	Memo & Discussion: Katie
7	4/7	Module 2 Outward-Facing Paradigms	Organization Ecology & Community Ecology	
8	4/14		Institutional Theory I: Isomorphism	Memo & Discussion: Jason
9	4/21		Institutional Theory II: Institutional Logics	Case Due Tues 4/21 23:59
10	4/28		Panel Presentations: Asia-Pacific Case Studies	Present and Discuss Cases
11	5/5		Organizational Econ: Markets, Hierarchies, TCE	Memo & Discussion: Katie
12	5/12	Module 3 Relational Paradigms	Networks in Organizations I: Embeddedness	Memo & Discussion: Jason
13	5/19		Networks in Organizations II: Brokerage	Memo & Discussion: Katie
14	5/26		Network Forms of Organization	Memo & Discussion: Jason
15	6/2		Organizational Networks and Fields	Case Due Tues 6/2 23:59
16	6/9		Panel Presentations: Asia-Pacific Case Studies	Present and Discuss Cases