



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/2010

GRA 2427 Groups and Teams: Dynamics and Effectiveness

Programme

Advanced Specialization Course (MSc), Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Psychology

Responsible for the course

Department

Department of Leadership and Organizational Behaviour

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

6

Language of instruction

English

Introduction

Organizations frequently use groups and teams to accomplish tasks, and several psychological processes may affect groups' performance. This course will provide an overview of some of the major theories and studies that may help understand psychological processes in groups and teams. The theories are related to issues such as group composition, group development, group dynamics, and group effectiveness. The theories and the scientific evidence will be examined and discussed. Students will work in groups during the course, presenting and discussing literature, and participate in various exercises related to groups and team processes described in the literature.

Learning outcome

The course will provide an overview of major theories and studies related to psychological processes in and between groups, affecting their performance. Some of these processes will be demonstrated by group exercises. The course will provide students with knowledge of major theories related to group processes and group effectiveness, and enhance their ability to critically assess the empirical evidence for such theories. The course will also provide the opportunity to learn about group and team dynamics through practical exercises. The students will be better able to recognize and identify processes in groups, and use psychological theories to understand such processes.

Students should also be able to critically examine theories explaining why some groups are more effective than others. They will get experience with working in groups, and present and discuss theories and studies about group processes and group effectiveness. The students will learn how to reflect on issues related to group processes and studies explaining psychological processes in groups. They should be able to be critical toward theories of group performance, and use this knowledge to guide their approach when working with groups. Participants will also be provided an opportunity to reflect upon their own behaviour in groups.

Prerequisites

GRA2205 Organizational Behaviour or equivalent.

Compulsory reading

Books:

Forsyth, Donelson R. 2009. Group dynamics. 5th ed. Belmont, CA : Wadsworth Publishing Company

Other:

A collection of research articles will be made available before the course starts. During the course there may be hand-outs and other material on additional topics relevant for the course and the examination.

Recommended reading

Course outline

- Important factors that influence effectiveness in groups
- Group effectiveness, group composition, and group processes
- Creativity in groups

- Conflict and groups
- Leadership in groups
- Assessment of groups and teams
- Team interventions

Computer-based tools

Blackboard

Learning process and workload

The course is structured as a combination of lectures, group exercises, group presentations and group discussions. Students will work in groups most of the time. The course requires a substantial amount of preparation by the students and active involvement in the groups. 36 hours.

Please note that while attendance is not compulsory in all courses, it is the student's own responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/Blackboard or text book.

Examination

20% class contribution (graded individually)

30% student presentations of relevant theories and studies (group)

50% term paper (group).

Specific information regarding student evaluation beyond the information given in the course description will be provided in class. This information may be relevant for requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several elements of the overall evaluation.

Exam code(s)

GRA 24271

Examination support materials

Exam aids at written examinations are explained under exam information in our web-based Student handbook. Please note use of calculator and dictionary.

<http://www.bi.edu/studenthandbook/examaids>

Re-sit examination

Re-takes are only possible at the next time a course will be held. When the course evaluation has a separate exam code for each part of the evaluation it is possible to retake parts of the evaluation. Otherwise, the whole course must be re-evaluated when a student wants to retake an exam. Retake examinations entail an extra examination fee

Additional information

Honor Code

Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and represent values that are encouraged and promoted by the honor code system. This is a most significant university tradition. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the ideals of the honor code system, to which the faculty are also deeply committed.

Any violation of the honor code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the programs at BI and are at the heart of the honor code and academic integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.