



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/2013

## **DRE 6005 The Theory and Practice of Conducting Process Research in Organisational Settings**

### **Programme**

Leadership and Organization

### **Responsible for the course**

Andrew Pettigrew

### **Department**

Department of Leadership and Organizational Behaviour

### **Term**

According to study plan

### **ECTS Credits**

6

### **Language of instruction**

English

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of the key theoretical and practical challenges of conducting process research in organisational settings. A process here is taken to mean “a sequence of individual and collective events, actions and activities unfolding over time in context”. Pettigrew (1997:338). The organisational processes explored in the course include decision making, change, innovation and strategy making.

The course readings will be organised around the research practices and writing of a limited number of key process scholars. The scholars are Robert Burgelman, Kathy Eisenhardt, Ann Langley, Henry Mintzberg, Andrew Pettigrew and Andrew Van de Ven. Since a process analysis needs to deal with past, present and future time, the course will “give time for time”. We will explore the challenges of analysing processes in real time and retrospective time and the combination of the two. One day in the course will be devoted to the power of the historical perspective and method. In that day we will benefit from the experience of two members of the Business History group at BI, Associate Professor Sverre Christensen and Dr Eirinn Larsen.

### **Learning outcome**

At the end of the course students will be in a better position to appreciate:

1. The varieties of research practice now available in process scholarship. Practice will include the meaning and significance of key terms such as process and process analysis, the role of temporality in social science, and the relationship between context and action in studying core organisational processes.
2. The power of diachronic analysis and the policy significance of knowing how things happen and not just what is happening.
3. The data collection and data analysis challenges in process work.
4. The challenges of holism and analysing phenomena across multiple levels of analysis.
5. The potential of the historical perspective and method for analysing organisational processes.
6. And finally, the special challenges of writing and publishing for process scholars.

### **Prerequisites**

Admission to a PhD programme is a general requirement for participation in PhD courses at BI Norwegian Business School.

External candidates are kindly asked to attach confirmation of admission to a PhD programme when signing up for a course with the doctoral administration.

Students will not be permitted to “sit in” on this course. Active participation will be critical to the educational experience and all enrolled students must engage in the sequence of classroom presentations and end of course assignment.

## **Compulsory reading**

### **Collection of articles:**

A compendium will be made available to the PhD candidates taking the course

## **Recommended reading**

### **Course outline**

The course consists of six sessions each of 5 hours each.

Session 1: What is process and what is a processual analysis?

Session 2: The Pettigrew et al approach to process scholarship

Session 3: The process scholarship of Ann Langley and Henry Mintzberg

Session 4: The historical perspective and method

Session 5: The process scholarship of Robert Burgelman and Kathy Eisenhardt

Session 6: The process scholarship of Andrew Van de Ven. Review, synthesis and critique

To a large extent, the value of this course will depend on the level and quality of student preparation and participation in classroom discussion.

Course credit will be given based upon the quality of student class presentation and participation (30%), and a course paper prepared after the course (70%) (See below).

## **Computer-based tools**

### **Learning process and workload**

For each session a limited number of assigned readings are indicated. Each participant is expected to read all the required reading prior to each session and to be able to comment upon them during the discussion. Additional articles may be added or substituted during the course.

During each session two or three students will offer powerpoint presentations around the essential readings for that week. The purpose of the presentation is:

- (a) To explain the main ideas and empirical results in the readings.
- (b) To discuss how the readings contribute to the appreciation of process scholarship, and
- (c) To discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the readings.

The presentations should be no more than 30 minutes. The presentations will be graded on whether the student has understood the essence of the readings, and how effectively the student fulfils the three purposes of the presentations mentioned above.

30% of the course grade will be allocated based on student presentation and discussion in the 6 sessions.

Lectures and seminars 30 hours  
Reading and seminar preparation 100 hours  
Writing course paper 45 hours  
Total 175 hours

### **Examination**

Students will write a 4,000 – 5,000 word paper. The purpose of the paper is to develop a research idea based on the literature in the course and to explore the implications of this idea. Full guidance on the aims, objectives and grading criteria for the paper will be provided by the course lecturer in the first session of the course.

The course assignment is due according to the deadline set in the Student Portal. The paper should be original work completed specifically for the course.

Course credit will be given based upon the quality of student class presentation and participation (30%), and a course paper prepared after the course (70%)

The grade is given as pass or fail. All parts of the evaluation need to be passed in order to get a grade in the course.

**Examination code(s)**

DRE 60051 accounts for 100% of the final grade

**Examination support materials****Re-sit examination**

Next time the course is offered.

**Additional information****Honour Code**

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

Any violation of the honour 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 academy integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honour code, please ask.