Syllabus
Course Program

Theory of Organization

Specialty
D3 – Management

Institute
Institute of Education and Science in Economics, Management and International Business

Specialization
-

Department
Department of Management (204)

Educational program
Business Administration (in English)
International Business

Course type
Mandatory

Level of education
First (bachelor's level)

Form of study
Full-time

Semester
1

Language of instruction
English

Lecturers and course developers



Olga Nashchekina
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PhD in Physics & Mathematics, Master's degree in Management, associate professor, associate professor of Management department

Authored and co-authored over 130 scientific publications. Teaches courses: «Theory of organization», «Managerial decisions», «Marketing management», «Social responsibility and business ethics », «Methodology of scientific research»

More about the lecturer on the department's website
https://web.kpi.kharkov.ua/mto/about/staff/nashchekina-2/

General information

Summary

Theory of organization is a multidisciplinary field of study that draws inspiration from a variety of other fields, such as economics, sociology, psychology, political science, biology etc. The reason for that is that organizations are too complex and changeable to ever be described by a single theory. This course will provide an overview of the most important perspectives on organizations and theoretical frameworks that help understand why organizations emerge, how they function and develop, why they choose certain structures, what internal and external factors shape their behavior.

Course objectives and goals

- to introduce students to a multidimensional approach to understanding and studying organizations;
- to provide students with knowledge of the regularities and laws underlying the functioning and development of organizations;
- to familiarize students with the principles of organizational structure and design;

-t o develop students' ability to bridge theory and practice through the application of organizational concepts to real-world situations

Format of classes

Lectures, practical classes (workshops), consultations, self-study. Final control in the form of an exam

Competencies

GC09. The ability to learn and to master modern knowledge.
GC15. The ability to act on the basis of ethical grounds (reasons).
SC01. The ability to identify and describe the characteristics of organizations.
SC02. The ability to analyze the results of an organization's activity, to compare them with the factors of the external and internal environment.
SC03. The ability to identify prospects of organization development.
SC04. The ability to determine the functional areas of the organization and the relationships between them.

Learning outcomes

LO 05. To describe the content of the functional areas of the organization
LO 07. To show skills of organizational planning.
LO 12. To evaluate the legal, social, and economic implications of an organization's functioning.
LO 16. To demonstrate skills of independent work, flexible thinking, openness to new knowledge, to be critical and self-critical.

Student workload

The total volume of the course is 150 hours (5 ECTS credits): lectures - 32 hours, workshops - 32 hours, self-study - 86 hours.

Course prerequisites

No prerequisites for this course

Features of the course, teaching and learning methods, and technologies

Interactive lectures with presentations, discussion-based learning, quizzes, multiple choice tests, a paper (essay) on a topic either not covered or only partially covered in the course, presentation of the paper in class, student-peer feedback

Program of the course

Academic classes

Lectures

Topics of the lectures	Hours
Topic 1. Introduction to Organization Theory 1. Concepts and abstraction in theory development. 2. Organization theory as a field of studies. 3. Multiple perspectives of organization theory. 4. The essence of the concept of "organization".	2
Topic 2. Classical and neoclassical organizational theory 1. Classical organizational theory and its origins. 2. Scientific management theory. 3. Bureaucratic management theory. 4. Administrative management theory. 5. Neoclassical approach: origins, ideas, contributors. 6. Human relations movement and behavioral science approach.	4

Topic 3. Systems approach to organizations 1. General systems theory: origins, basic concepts and ideas. 2. Classification of systems. 3. Organization as a system. 4. Laws of organization	4
Topic 4. Self-organization 1. Characteristics of systems studied by chaos theory, complexity theory, and synergetics. 2. Chaos theory. 3. Self-organization: basic concepts and ideas. 4. Complexity theory. 5. Synergetics	2
Topic 5. The biological approach to organizations 1. The organizational life cycle. 2. The Greiner's model of organizational growth 3. Population ecology of organizations. 4. Resource dependence theory.	4
Topic 6. External environment of an organization 1. The macro- and microenvironment of an organization. 2. The monitoring of the organizational environment. 3. Integral characteristics of the organizational environment. 4. The stakeholder approach to organizations. 5. Classifications of stakeholders	4
Topic 7. Organizational design 1. The main concepts and elements of organizational structure design. 2. Factors affecting the choice of organizational structure. 3. Mechanistic vs. organic structures. 4. Efficiency and effectiveness of organizational structures	4
Topic 8. Economic theories of organization 1. Technological approach (neoclassical economic theory). 2. Market and hierarchy as two mechanisms of coordinating economic activities. 3. Origin of the firm – transaction cost approach. 4. Agency theory (principal-agent problem). 5. The institutional approach to organizations.	4
Topic 9. Organizational culture 1. Concepts of culture and organizational culture. 2. Hofstede's classification of national cultures. 3. Schein's model of organizational culture. 4. Typologies of organizational cultures.	4
Total hours	**32**

Workshops

Topics for workshops/seminars	Hours	Weighting coefficients *a*
Topic 1. Organization theory as a multidisciplinary field 1. The basic concepts of organization theory 2. The subject matter of organization theory. 3. Organizational metahors.	2	0,06
Topic 2. Organizations as machines. The classical organization theory	2	0,06

1. Scientific management theory 3. Bureaucratic management theory. 4. Administrative management theory.		
Topic 3. Organizations as social systems. The neoclassical organization theory 1. Mary Parket Follett's contributions to the neoclassical organizational theory 2. The Hawthorne studies 3. The human relations movement.	2	0,06
Topic 4. Main concepts and ideas of general systems theory 1. Definition of a system 2. The concepts of synergy, equifinality, emergent properties, positive and negative feedback.	2	0,06
Topic 5 Application of ideas and concepts of general systems theory to social organizations 1. Models representing the internal environment of an organization as a system. 2. Classifications of organizations	2	0,08
Topic 6. Main ideas and concepts of chaos theory, complexity theory, self-organization. Application of ideas and concepts of self-organization to social organizations. 1. Nonlinear behavior of systems and its implications 2. Deterministic chaos. The Butterfly effect. 3. Bifurcation points. Attractors. 4. Self-organization in nature and society.	2	0,06
Topic 7. Organizational lifecycle. 1 A traditional model of organizational lifecycle. 2. Causes of organizational decline. 3. L. Greiner's model of organizational growth	2	0,06
Topic 8. Population ecology theory. Resource dependence theory. 1. The main concepts and ideas of population ecology theory. 2. The internal and external constraints on organizational change 3. The main ideas of resource dependence theory 4. Organizational ecosystems.	2	0,06
Topic 9. Macro- and microenvironment of an organization 1. Components of organizational microenvironment 2. Components of organizational macroenvironment. 3. Organizations in a VUCA world: challenges and responses	2	0,06
Topic 10. Stakeholder approach to managing organizations 1. The difference between a stockholder and stakeholder management 2. Classifications of stakeholders 3. Prioritizing stakeholders	2	0,06
Topic 11. The main concepts of organizational structure design 1. Division of labor. Departmentalization. 2. Coordination mechanisms. Teamwork. 3. Factors influencing the span of control and the degree of centralization	2	0,08
Topic 12. Mechanistic and organic organizational structures. Modern organizational forms 1. Characteristics of traditional mechanistic structures. 2. Characteristics of organic structures.	2	0,06

3. Factors shaping organizational structure.
4. Modern organizational forms. Virtual organizations. Holacracy
5. The effect of business digitalization on organizational structure.

Topic 13. Economic dimensions of organizations. Transaction cost theory. 1. The essence of an economic approach to organizations. 2. Market and hierarchy as two forms of coordinating economic activities. 3. Transaction cost explanation of the origin of a firm	2	0,06
Topic 14. Agency theory. Institutional approach. 1. The principal-agent relationship. Dealing with the principal-agent problem in organizations 2. The institutional theory explaination of the emergence and development of organizations. 3. Organizational isomorphism: forms, causes, and mechanisms	2	0,06
Topic 15. The concept of organizational culture. The effect of the national culture on the organizational culture. 1. The impact of organizational culture on organizational success. 2. The difference between organizational and corporate culture. 3. The dimensions of national cultures in G. Hofstede's classification	2	0,06
Topic 16. Typologies of organizational cultures. 1. Weak and strong organizational cultures. 2. An adaptive organizational culture. 3. K. Cameron's and R. Quinn's "competing values" model of organizational culture	2	0,06
Total hours	**32**	$\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_i = 1$

Laboratory classes

no laboratory classes

Control works

Students are expected to pass two multiple choice tests containing 70 and 80 questions respectively. Each question contains only one correct answer.

Topics for control works	Weighting coefficients *b*
Test 1 (covering topics 1 through 4)	0,5
Test 2 (covering topics 5 through 9)	0,5
Total	$\sum_{i=1}^{m} b_i = 1$

Self-study

Self-study includes the processing of materials provided by the course instructor (lecture notes and presentations, videos, articles) (25 h), self-study of selected questions (25 h), completion of the individual assignment (a paper) (24 h), preparation for the in-class presentation (4 h), as well as and preparation for the final assessment (8 h).

Topics for self-study	Hours
Topic 1. Introduction to Organization Theory 1. Types of models used in social sciences 2. Organizational metaphors.	3
Topic 2. Classical and neoclassical organizational theory 1. Henry Fayol's 14 principles of panagement 2. Douglas McGregor's theory X and theory Y	3
Topic 3. Systems approach to organizations 1. Loosely coupled systems: loose and tight coupling (a video-based assignment) 2. Socio-technical systems theory	3
Topic 4. Self-organization 1. The Butterfly effect (a video-based assignment) 2. Fractals (a video-based assignment)	2
Topic 5. The biological approach to organizations 1. Greiner´s model of organizational growth 2. Organizational ecosystems	3
Topic 6. External environment of an organization 1. Mitchell, Agle, and Wood's classification of organizational stakeholders 2. VUCA environments	3
Topic 7. Organizational design 1. Virtual organizations 2. Reading the article by Oncken William, Jr. and Wass Donald L. Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey?	3
Topic 8. Economic theories of organization 1. Agency theory (a video-based assignment) 2. Organizational isomorphism (a video-based assignment)	3
Topic 9. Organizational culture 1. The 6-D model of national culture proposed by G. Hofstede (exploring the website)	2
Total hours	**25**

Individual assignment

The individual assignment for the course "Theory of Organization" involves writing a paper (essay) on a topic that is either not covered or only partially addressed in the course. Students can select a topic from the list provided by the course instructor. They may also propose their own topic related to organizational theory, subject to approval from the instructor.

The paper should be between 15 and 20 full pages in length, not counting the title page, table of contents, and references. It should be clearly structured into sections (chapters), each numbered and titled.

A minimum of seven different sources should be used, which may include textbooks, academic journal articles, analytical reports, articles from professional blogs, and thematic websites. While the paper should draw on a variety of sources, it must also demonstrate the author's intellectual contribution. This includes organizing information, designing a logical structure, providing logical transitions between sections, and presenting generalizations, comparisons, and summaries.

The assignment contains a challenge question related to the topic. The answer should follow from the ideas and arguments developed in the paper rather than being a personal opinion unsupported by the preceding discussion.

In the Conclusions, it is necessary to provide a list of five main ideas or insights that should be learned from the paper.

The individual assignment should be presented in class during a seminar. The presentation should not exceed 12 minutes in length and should be accompanied by a PowerPoint slideshow.

Examples of paper topics

1. Organization as a socio-technical system
2. The stakeholder theory and its application to modern organizations
3. Organizational ecosystem
4. Types of power and authority in organizations
5. Typologies of organizational technologies
6. Business processes in an organization
7. Organizational resilience and how to build it
8. The Adizes organizational lifecycle
9. Remote work and hybrid organizations
10. Holacracy. Organizations without bosses
11. Outsourcing and its role in modern organizations
12. Mergers and acquisitions as forms of organizational growth
13. The impact of digital transformation on business organizations
14. Platform organizations
Total hours **24+4=28**

Non-formal education

Non-formal education includes professional courses/training, civic education, online education, professional internships, etc. The recognition of learning outcomes acquired in non-formal education applies to both mandatory and elective academic courses/educational components. The elements of non-formal education recommended in the syllabus can be recognized through a simplified procedure without additional validation of the results (without creation of a subject committee).

Recommended training courses, internships

1. Designing the Organization
https://www.coursera.org/learn/designing-organization
2. Organisational design: Know your organisation
https://www.coursera.org/learn/organisational-design-know-your-organisation
3. Fundamentals of Organization
https://www.coursera.org/learn/organization
4. Organizational Analysis
https://www.coursera.org/learn/organizational-analysis

Literature, training materials, and information resources

Main literature

1. Daft R. L. Organization Theory and Design, 13th Ed. Cengage Learning, 2020. - -688 p.
2. Lægaard J., Bindslev M. Organizational theory / Ventus Publishing ApS, 2006.
3. Miles J. A. Management and organization theory : a Jossey-Bass reader / San Francisco, CA : Jossey-Bass, 2012, 480 p.
4. Jones G. R. Organizational Theory, Design, and Change. - Seventh edition/ Pearson, 2013. –514 p.
5. Dipak Kumar Bhattacharyya. Organizational Structure and Design: Text and Cases / RoutledgeFalmer, 2024. - 248 p. URL: https://tinyurl.com/bp54ddjr

6. Principles of Management/ OpenStax: Rice University, 2019. – 673 p. Web Version Last Updated:March 26, 2021 (chapters 4, 10)
7. Principles of Management/ University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing Edition, 2015. – p.709. (chapters 7-8)
8. Cunliffe A.L. Organization Theory / London, SAGE Publications, 2008. – 178 p.

Additional materials

9. Organizational Behavior / University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing Edition, 2017 (chapters 13-15)
10. Organizational Behavior / OpenStax: Rice University, 2019. – 704 p. Web Version Last Updated: Feb 23, 2021. Ch.15-16.
11.Blomberg J. Organization Theory: Management and Leadership Analysis / SAGE Publications, 2023. URL: https://tinyurl.com/4haznafp
12. Vantrappen H., Wirtz F. The Organization Design Guide A Pragmatic Framework for Thoughtful, Efficient and Successful Redesigns, 1st Edition / Routledge, 2023. URL: https://tinyurl.com/4hare8az
11.
13. Mitchell R. K., Agle B. R., Wood D. J. Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts // The Academy of Management Review. – 1997. - Vol. 22, # 4- P. 853-886.
14. Менеджмент : Навчальний посібник / Н.С. Краснокутська, О.М. Нащекіна, О.В. Замула та ін. – Харків : «Друкарня Мадрид», 2019. – 231 с. (стор. 5-53)

Grading system

The final grade for the educational component is an integrated assessment of the results of all types of student learning activities. The final grade reflects all the grades for the different parts of the educational process, taking into account their weighting coefficients k:

Continuous assessment (during workshops), k_1	Control works, k_2,	Individual assignment, k_3	Presentation, k_4	Final assessment k_5
0,1	0,5	0,2	0,1	0,1

The weighting coefficients for the final assessment are shown in the table above. The sum of the coefficients: $k_1 + k_2 + k_3 + k_4 + k_5 = 1$.

The final grade is calculated using the following formula:

$$G = C \cdot k_1 + K \cdot k_2 + I \cdot k_3 + P \cdot k_4 + E \cdot k_5$$

where: C – weighted average score for the continuous assessment
K – weighted average score for control works
I – individual assignment grade
P –grade for the presentation
E – final assessment (exam) grade

$$C = \frac{C_1 \cdot a_1 + C_2 \cdot a_2 + \ldots + C_n \cdot a_n}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_i}$$

where: a_i - weighting coefficient for each workshop.

$$K = \frac{K_1 \cdot b_1 + K_2 \cdot b_2}{\sum_{i=1}^{m} b_i}$$

where: b_i - weighting coefficient for each control work (test).

The assessments for each component (C, K, I, P, E.) are based on a 100-point scale in line with the provisions of the "Criteria and System for Assessing Knowledge and Skills, and Rating of Higher Education Students" of the National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute."

The final grade is finalized as the calculated value of *G*, rounded up to the nearest integer.

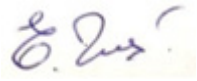
Grading scale

Total points	National	ECTS
90–100	Excellent	A
82–89	Good	B
75–81	Good	C
64–74	Satisfactory	D
60–63	Satisfactory	E
35–59	Unsatisfactory (requires additional learning)	FX
1–34	Unsatisfactory (requires repetition of the course)	F

Norms of academic integrity and course policy

Students must adhere to the Code of Ethics of Academic Relations and Integrity of NTU "KhPI": to demonstrate discipline, good manners, kindness, honesty, and responsibility. Conflict situations should be openly discussed in academic groups with a lecturer, and if it is impossible to resolve the conflict, they should be brought to the attention of the Institute's management.
Regulatory and legal documents related to the implementation of the principles of academic integrity at NTU "KhPI" are available on the website: http://blogs.kpi.kharkov.ua/v2/nv/akademichna-dobrochesnist/

Approval

Approved by	31.08.2026		Head of the department Nataliia SHMATKO
	31.08.2026		Guarantor of the educational program Olena PROKHORENKO
	31.08.2026		Guarantor of the educational program Olena Chaikova