

Seminar Advanced Topics in Management

Summer Term 2021– Syllabus – Version: 14/Jan/21

Read this syllabus carefully. It is an informal contract between teacher and student and lays out the plan for the seminar. The syllabus should help you determine whether this seminar meets your expectations and is something that you would like to attend. Your motivation and a genuine interest in the topic are essential for this seminar.

Course content

One of the drivers of firm performance is an understanding of the behavior and motivation of its employees. This course is for advanced Master and Ph.D. students interested in deepening their knowledge of managerial and personnel economics. It continues the discussion from the Personnel Economics and Incentives in Organization courses. It focuses on the intersection of behavioral, experimental, and empirical studies about the impact of organizational practices (e.g., incentives, leadership, hierarchy, communication) on employee behavior. In particular, this course is about the HR and behavioral determinants of firm performance.

One of the key elements of successful management is asking and answering the right questions. In this seminar, students read selected economic papers, identify their research questions, critically examine them, and engage in scientific discourse with fellow course participants. The students elaborate their ideas in a group, develop them further into research proposals, write an essay, and hold a presentation in front of the course audience.

The seminar aims to develop students in three specific ways. First, students will learn about state-of-the-art research results from personnel economics and acquire knowledge helpful in their prospective management career. Second, the students will deepen their skills of critical thinking and thoughtful evaluation of (i) management practices; and (ii) empirical evidence from the field of personnel management. Third, the seminar will provide guidance and practice in conducting research and writing a research paper.

The students pursue these goals through a mixture of lectures, discussions, hands-on exercises, individual and group work, and student presentations.

Course roadmap

The course takes place in a seminar format. It is divided into three parts. First, students are introduced to scientific research fundamentals and techniques of academic paper writing. Then, the students are assigned one academic paper from the literature list. The tasks are 1) to examine and criticize/defend the research article regarding its research question, relevance, the robustness of results, causal inferences, practical implications, etc.; 2) to summarize their analysis and present it to the course audience. Finally, the students continue developing their own research questions and design a research proposal to advance their research question. The research proposal composes the final assignment for the course.

Thus, the course contains two **individual assignments/deliverables**:

1. The presentation on the assigned paper (max. 20 min.).
2. The research proposal for the own research question (max. 10 pages).

The deadline for the submission will be discussed in the class.

Class hours and place

On Fridays: 16.4.2021, 30.4.2021, 28.5.2021, 11.6.2021, 25.6.2021, and 9.7.2021

Always from 8:15 am till 11:45 am.

Because the course is cumulative and builds on the content discussed in the first sessions, joining the seminar will not be allowed after the first class on 16th of April.

Registered participants are expected to attend all sessions and participate in all group activities!

The seminar takes place in the seminar room ****tba**** or online.

In the case of a 'digital semester' due to the pandemic, all meetings will take place via zoom during the same time slots.

Grading

Evaluation criteria for the presentations and seminar paper are based on the following dimensions:

- a) The student demonstrates a general understanding of the topic and its relevance.
- b) The student demonstrates the understanding of the design and the method of the assigned study, its practical implications, its strengths and weaknesses.
- c) The student relates the results of the study to the topics of other students in a meaningful way.
- d) Additionally, for PhD students: The student demonstrates the scientific research skills in creating of a research proposal.

The final grade is based only on the research proposal according. However, active participation in the seminar and accomplishing the presentation assignment are the necessary conditions for receiving a grade.

Literature list

The underlying empirical studies can be selected from the reading list (provided separately). Every participant will be assigned to one paper. Students will be asked to name three preferences.

Course materials

Additionally to the papers from the literature list, course materials include articles, notes, handouts, video snippets, etc. They will be uploaded in moodle.

Homework

From time to time, I will ask you to think about ideas, give examples, read some papers, practice scientific reading. A few questions might also require some hands-on writing. Even if they are not graded, I strongly encourage you to take time and work on them. They will help to produce fruitful in-class discussions and improve your learning outcome.

Prerequisites

This seminar is recommended to advanced Master students who have accomplished courses "Incentives in Organizations" and "Personnel Economics" (or similar) or to Ph.D. students.

Any knowledge of empirical and experimental methodological concepts is highly valuable.

Students will not be able to get any credit for this seminar if they have already accomplished, or are recently attending, or going to participate in the seminar Advanced Topics in Management by Prof. Dr. Anja Schöttner (or Dr. Gari Walkowitz).

Registration

Please register to the seminar by sending an email to Christine Jahnke mktg@wiwi.hu-berlin.de expressing your interest. The registration deadline is 22nd of March, 2021. The exam registration will take place via Agnes.

Classroom policies

This seminar crucially relies on the vivid exchange of ideas and thoughts among its participants in discussions and presentations. Therefore, the participants should be motivated to attend all sessions, participate in group discussions, present their ideas in front of the group, and write a seminar paper.

I may adjust the pace of the seminar, depending on the participants' progress.