

Managing Human Resources

Course guide spring 2023

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Welcome to this course, what follows is an operational course guide. Make sure you also read the formal document for this course – *the course syllabus* (which could be found on the course web site).

This course is a 100 % campus course!

In this course you will work with the topic of managing human resources, specifically regarding individual responsibility in organizations. The course consists of **two** main themes:

- 1) Organizational programs for controlling human character and behaviour (home exam)
- 2) Aestheticization of society, organizations and individuals (group work)

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1. Overview of the course

Order to be pursued about inquiries and questions arising during this course:

- First: Consult course website
- Second: Consult with peers
- Third: Bring up in class
- Fourth: Mail teacher

All readings is on Athena.

All assignments will be uploaded to Athena.

Mandatory tasks:

1. There are 4 group tutorials, which are mandatory to participate in.
2. An interview study and written report of that study. Group work: corresponds to 30% of the grade of this course.
3. Home exam. Individual exam corresponds to 70% of the grade of this course.

Important deadlines!

January 18. Deadline for handing in the group constellation, latest at 16, upload to Athena.

February 10. Deadline for uploading group work, no later than 16.00. Upload to Athena.

February 10-15: Home exam. Deadline for uploading the home exam is February 15, no later than 16.00. Upload to Athena. Home exam starts at 13.00. Please note: You are not expect to work on the home exam during the weekend.

2. Lectures

The course starts off with a course introduction. The introduction is important – it is here it is explained in detail how the course will run, what will be expected from you and what you can expect from the teacher. So see you there!

On the lectures the teacher will contextualize and further specify different themes and topics given in the course literature. The lectures will also assist in carrying out the group work. The lectures will not be recorded.

Lecture 2: On control

Literature:

1. *Management control*

Peter Fleming and Andrew Spicer (2003), Working at a cynical distance, Organization.

2. Mats Alvesson and Hugh Willmott (2002), Identity regulation as organizational control, Journal of Management Studies.

3. Alexandra Michel (2011) Transcending Socialization, Administrative Science Quarterly.

4. Peter Fleming and Andrew Sturdy (2009), Just be yourself, Employee Relations.

5. Delbridge, R and Keenoy, T. (2010), Beyond managerialism? The International Journal of Human Resource Management. 21(6): 799-817.

Lecture 3: On control and ethics

Literature:

1. Michelle Greenwood, (2012), Ethical analyses of HRM, Journal of Business Ethics.

2. Sven Helin, Tommy Jensen, Johan Sandström, Stewart Clegg (2010), On the dark side of codes, Scandinavian Journal of Management.

3. Jason Stansbury and Bruce Barry (2007), Ethics programs and the paradox of control, Business Ethics Quarterly.

4. Patrick MacLagan (2007), Hierarchical control or individuals' moral autonomy? Addressing a fundamental tension in the management of business ethics, Business Ethics: A European Review.

5. Andrew Sayer (2007), Dignity at Work: Broadening the Agenda, Organization.

3. Group work.

The group work will be carried out in groups of 5.

You form groups yourselves. Deadline January 18, latest at 16, upload to Athena.

The overall problematization that all groups share for the group work task is as follows:

In all organizations, the management of human resources is an essential and complex phenomenon and is directed at controlling human character, conduct and behaviour. Control is needed for the organization to reach its goals (internal efficiency) but also to check balance with the surrounding milieu (external efficiency). Fail in control means that organizations fail.

It is the internal aspect of efficiency that you shall deal with in your group memo.

To gain internal efficiency then control, as is the focus on this course, is needed to make sure that individual organizational members are thinking and behaving ethically 'right' or correct. As digital technology 'progresses' and as the 'new' work force is entering the labour market and the organizational ranks implies that new forms of control is needed, and maybe also wanted.

The main part of the problematization is as follows:

What if, or so the main argument goes, old work ethics are under pressure from a new, aesthetically radically different, consumer driven work ethics?

There are two central issues arising out of this is:

- *Does this consumer driven, aesthetical, work ethics imply that organizations need to change how they think about and conduct organizational control?*
- *Does this consumer driven, aesthetical, work ethics support or obstruct individual and organizational responsibility?*

In your study you should target 'young' adults, that is ranging between 18-29.

They should live in Stockholm City and they also have to work in Stockholm City. The working idea is that the inner-city of Stockholm might be a forerunner to what will be adopted more broadly elsewhere; if we can see this, the modern, urban, capital is the place.

Since this is a campus course, in Stockholm, it is absolutely necessary to conduct the field work in Stockholm.

You will conduct an empirical study. Interviews shall be carried out with blue- or white-collar workers (*no managers allowed*).

At least 5 interviews should be carried out. Each interview should last longer than 40 minutes.

Talk with the persons about their experience, expectations, and how they interpret their ‘world of work’ and what they think of career. The backdrop is of course the problematization and the two central issues as per above.

Consequently, strive for having conversations – dialogues – rather than running a question-answer session. This was a methodological guidance – and direction on *how* to conduct the interview. You are expected to read into qualitative journal articles (peer reviewed) that are designed to understand and interpret. Consequently, this part of the course requires you to search for method literature.

Of course you also have to read into the course literature to be prepared about *what* to talk about with the interviewees (you will thus conduct theoretically informed conversations but that does not equal it do a deductive study).

Here is the literature list for the group work; serving more as a starting point than a finalized selection:

1. Zygmunt Bauman (2001) Consuming life, Journal of Consumer Culture.
2. Karen Dale (2012) The employee as the dish of the day, Journal of Business Ethics
3. Andrea Hershatter and Molly Epstein (2010) Millennials and the world of work, Journal of business psychology.
4. Lindsey, Farrell and Andrew Hurt (2014), Training the Millennial generation, Journal of Organizational Learning and Leadership.
5. Tommy Jensen (2014), On adiaphoric organizations and adiaphoric organizational members, in Jerzy Kociatkiewicz and Monika Kostera (eds.), Liquid Organization.
6. Tommy Jensen (2018), Interregnum and critical management studies, Scandinavian Journal of Management.

Note: You are more than welcome to find and use other management articles on aesthetics (only peer reviewed scientific articles allowed). I do, however, expect that you find the course literature useful. (and thus should be part of your reference list)

You can of course also use the course literature on control and on control and ethics. But it cannot dominate the reference list.

No literature from previous courses are allowed! (I grade you on your understanding and usage of the literature on this course only).

The interviews you make have to be recorded. The files with interviews have to be sent to the teacher (use e.g. We Transfer). If you do not send the interview files then you will not have a grade on the memo.

Specific instructions for memo writing

The aim of writing this essay is to develop your ability to write in a direct, engaging, and persuasive manner. How then to write this essay?

The format of the text is ‘free’ with regards to headings and the way in which the story and the plot are constructed.

1. The two central themes depicted above have to be part of your memo, but for your study – interviews – you can chose certain aspects within these two central themes. The literature provided is where you can find different ‘sub-plots’ to the two central themes. Phrased differently: the two central issues can be thought of as the two main research questions out of which you can formulate sub-questions.
2. *Second*, you need to make a clear argument on what you study, and why. Something which is original, but also plausible. Key to be successful in this stage is to read the assigned articles for this course. But you are expected to find and use additional readings to perform this group task. Note: Only peer-reviewed scientific journals are allowed for making main points/arguments.
3. *Third*, use scientific investigations and theoretical knowledge for your arguments, problematization, analysis – this you gather from peer reviewed articles. Your argument is not stronger than the ‘academic’ evidence you develop. You are not any random person who ‘believes something’ or ‘have an opinion’. You are ‘academics-in-becoming’, and thus are ‘obliged’ to use scientific sources.
4. *Fourth*, the empirical material you gather – the interviews – is of course your ‘evidence’ for the problem statement that you craft for this group work.
5. *Fifth*, you will write in a clear and engaging manner. A strong text is a text that the reader cannot stop reading. Craft a ‘story’ in the paper rather than use the traditional

way of splitting up scientific work (e.g. introduction-problem-theory-method-empirics-analysis-discussion).

- a. Don't use 'convoluted sentences'; it is a bad excuse for the shortcomings of the author!
- b. Be careful with how many 'tricky' academic words you use – the text do not become more scientific the more 'tricky' words you use (it becomes more riddled with jargon).
- c. Remember to define and explain key-words (those theoretical concepts that are really essential in your study).
- d. A tip (for style of writing) is to look at longer investigating reportages (as essays) in popular journals/press, or classic academic 'books' (e.g. Howard Beckers study on musicians and marijuana smokers, or Alice Goffmans On the Run, or return to Zygmunt Bauman's first chapter on the Holocaust, which I believe you have read on a previous course).

There will be supervision attached to this activity. See schedule for tutoring activity.

Participation on supervision is *mandatory for all members of the group*.

In order to receive your credits for the group work, each group has to compile a report, indicating how the work has been divided between the members of the group. Following details should be included:

1. Core task for each student (writing, research, editing, etc.).
2. Student's contribution (in percent)

For a group of 5 students, no student should contribute less than 15%. *Less than 15% of an individual group member might result in that points are taken away from the home exam result.*

It is also mandatory to construct a 'labour contract' for the group. This should be done at the start of the group work.

The labour contract could look something like this:

Group work labour contract

1. Ambition/availability to work with the task

2. Planning (time, effort, perhaps measured in hours)
3. How we respond, behave, towards each other (meeting policies)
4. When to meet (how often, how long)
5. When to do what, and by whom, or expressed differently: How much joint group work, how much division of labor.
6. Signatures (by all members of the group)

Tip: Do not perform a hard version of division of labour, e.g. you conduct one-two interviews each, write different sections of the group work. Division of labour is time and task efficient but good academic group work takes a lot of joint group effort. Hard division of labour is a recipe for bad grade because your work will simply “not hang together”.

Maximum length of memo: 4000 words (first page with author details and reference list excluded)

The group memo constitutes 30% of total course points

When uploading memo, make sure

- 1) that your file does not contain any strange ‘letters’ (as ä, ö, ; %) and the file name should be your groups digit number
- 2) Make sure that you write number of words used for the group work (on cover page)
- 3) Make sure that each member’s personal number is included (on cover page)
- 4) Make sure to attach the individual account of each members ‘work load’.

Grading criteria for group work

To receive a high mark, you as a group need to demonstrate your ability to

- construct a strong and coherent argument (which should also be reflected in your title)
- draw on relevant evidence and sources
- connect your point to aspects of the given theme
- write engagingly and clearly
- structure the memo in a coherent manner

Revision and resubmission in the event of F(x)

In the event of your group assignment being graded as F(x), you have one opportunity to revise it for the possible achievement of a pass grade (E). If your revised and resubmitted assignment is not achieving a pass grade, it will be graded as F.

In the event of F or failure to submit on time

In the event of your final assignment being graded as F or failing to submit on time, you will need to retake the entire course for the possible achievement of a pass grade.

4. Home exam

At the end of this course there is a home exam. On the home exam, you will deal with readings attached to the themes of control and control and ethics. Additional material will be added (uploaded in connection to the home exam). There is also an assigned lecture to the home exam. Literature on aesthetics is not part of the home exam (only for the group work).

Maximum length of home exam: 1800 words (first page with author details and reference list excluded)

This assignment is a mandatory individual assignment

The home exam constitutes 70% of total course points

Criteria

To receive a high mark you need to demonstrate your ability to

- Engage analytically and critically with the subject
- Engage closely with the assigned course literature
- Make interesting, creative and thoughtful connections between the different literatures assigned
- Develop an argument that is distinct and original
- Use evidence and sources in a way that your claims become persuasive and scientifically solid
- Structure your text in a way that it reads as a whole (clear connection between beginning, middle and end, but you don't have to follow the traditional structure for a 'scientific' text)
- Write in an academically sophisticated manner (avoid opinionated and normative statements)
- Reference the literature in a correct manner

In the event of F or failure to submit on time

In the event of your final assignment being graded as F or failing to submit on time, you will need to do the re-home exam. In the event of F(x) you can choose to work further with the home exam, and then achieve the grade E.

5. Cheating, prohibited cooperation and plagiarism

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 10, section 1), disciplinary action may be invoked against students who “by the use of prohibited aids or other means attempt to deceive during examinations or other forms of assessment of student performance”.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or deceit. The ordinance covers all types of graded work, such as written examinations, take-home examinations, quizzes and written assignments, as well as unauthorized collaboration in connection with such work.

Plagiarism refers to the deliberate use of someone else’s work, regardless of whether this work has been published, and passing it off as your own without marking quotations or indicating the source. Self-plagiarism refers to the deliberate use of self-written text for another course without marking quotations or indicating the source.

Plagiarism involves:

- paraphrasing (a restatement of the meaning of a text or passage using other words) someone else’s text without referencing the original
- paraphrasing or rewriting someone else’s text and referencing the original, but where the rewrite is non-existent or too close to the original
- reusing other students’ work, e.g. seminar assignments, take-home examinations, essays or papers without referencing the original
- reusing self-written text, so called “self-plagiarism”, without referencing the original
- using text from articles, books, websites or other types of documents available on the Internet without referencing the original
- translating a text from one language to another without referencing the original.

Stockholm Business School uses the text comparison tool Urkund to verify the originality of graded texts. Because of this, students should regularly and according to academic practice carefully reference their use of their own and other people’s sources. The mandatory

originality check is performed by the student, by running the last version of the thesis in Urkund, before the thesis is uploaded for final examination.