Psychologist program term 8
Department of Psychology
HT 2019

Course instructions

Arbete, organisation och grupp, 2: Konsultativt arbete i teori och praktik (PSPR26) 15 hp

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The course has both theoretical and practical components, and builds on both individual and work done in teams. A significant part of the course consists of a project carried out in teams of three people over the course of the whole term. The course instruction is comprehensive so that it can form the basis for planning and coordinating the work with other courses. *You should get answers to most of your questions about the work by reading these instructions carefully* .

The Course

The course and course overview is presented in the first scheduled class meeting (*Kursintro*). The course runs over the course of one whole term (*Terminsdel A – D*). The following days are set aside for the course during the term: the whole day on Monday and Friday, plus Thursday morning. In the beginning of the course, some scheduled time is dedicated to planning – *make active and effective use of this time!* Despite the Psychologist program requiring the participation in different courses at the same time, this particular course also includes individual and team work, and multiple deadlines. *Plan all the activities as far as possible, way ahead of time, and book time for all activities already at the beginning of the course.* The course members must set aside time for contacts with companies / organizations to plan the project work early in the course . *The course coordinator recommends that the students contact companies / organizations and make an appointment for a first study visit as soon as possible.*
For the current schedule: see Athena

Course content

The course builds forth on previous courses in work and organizational psychology within the Psychologist training program, through in-depth studies in theory and application of knowledge in a practical context. The course is based on the student learning a model for consultation and project methodology and applying it through the project work, to work and organizational psychological issues that a psychologist can face in public or private activities. The course gives an introduction to practical organizational psychological work by the students in small teams, through contact with an organization, arranging a study visit and, in collaboration with representatives of a company, identifying a problem, goal or focus for investigation of an organizational nature in a public sector organization or authority, or private organisation. This problem must then be theoretically clarified: first individually (divergent perspectives) and then through a convergent process to build shared understanding and forming one theoretical framework and a research model for the coming empirical work. The students then conduct a minor empirical study to analyze the problem and possible causes for this. The students will then return the results to the client and at a later stage give suggestions for an intervention to the client. Through the course, the students get to practice documenting the process in all its parts and present this in writing in report form.

Course structure

In the beginning of the course, the emphasis is on literature studies and theoretical aspects. The aim is that the students will receive knowledge of central theories and newer developments within organizational psychology, which can then be applied in the practical work at a company or in an organization. *Teachers assume that the literature is read before* *lectures.* The schedule is laid out so that there is time for reading the literature between the teaching sessions.

Project work

During the first weeks of the course, the students, *in a team*, conduct a study visit with accompanying data collection in the form of interviews with the client, and a focus group with the relevant staff to:

- create interest in implementing a small project whose purpose is to produce proposals on how an organizational problem can be understood, addressed, and how an organization can be developed for the benefit of employees from an organizational psychological perspective.
- identify interesting problems / opportunities / aspects that could be highlighted in a project.
- get different stakeholder's perspective on the problem and its causes.

Prior to the study visit, it may be appropriate to gather written material in the form of business plans, organizational or business descriptions, target documents, or activity or annual reports. Most businesses also have a website from which information can be retrieved. In connection with the study visit and the focus group and/or interview(s), it is advisable to discuss whether there is any question or phenomenon that the organization's representatives are particularly interested in getting clarified, or gaining a deeper understanding in. The students can already at the first contact and during the study visit orally describe what work they want to do at the company and during which time period. *It facilitates the continued work of the team to already at the first contacts with the organization discuss or even book in times for data collection/interviews and for reporting back.*

To facilitate contact with organizations and companies there is an introduction letter, see Athena: "*Resurser*": "*Introduktionsbrev till deltagande organisationer*". The letter is a basic template that may be used to start initiating contacts with potential organization partners. In Athena, under "*Resurser*", there is a document "*Vägledning inför studiebesöket*" with a model for a superficial so-called *screening* of how the organization functions as seen from the management's point of view, and which can give guidance to what should be highlighted during the study visit. The textbook (Woods & West , 2010/2014) describes Burke & Litwin's model for so-called organizational analysis and this should form the basis for the data collection during the study visit. The original Burke & Litwin article can also be found under "*Resurser*" on Athena.

Note that it is not possible to highlight ***all*** the aspects that may be relevant to the company or to a problem. The work must be delimited and at the first tutorial, problems, delimitations and the theoretical starting points for how a delimited problem can be illuminated are discussed. It is also important to manage the expectations of the chosen organization partner and be clear from very early on that the intention may not be to solve *all* problems, but rather, illuminate or describe a part of one problem for a deeper understanding.

The organization should be large enough to make it meaningful to highlight the dimensions that an organization consultation usually covers (refer again to Burke & Litwin, for example). A rule of thumb is that it must be a large enough work organization with different functions, groups or departments that need to be coordinated and managed. There is no rule of thumb for an absolute number, but this usually means at least about 20 employees. It is also required that there should be some formal relationship between the organization and its employees – for example, that they earn a salary. In other words, an organization where individuals do volunteer work on a part-time basis is not best suited for studying organizational dynamics (at least, as it is understood and taught in this course). It is also possible to carry out the project within a part of a larger organization, such as for example a production unit within a larger company, or a specific department in a hospital.

The project must have both practical and theoretical relevance. The focus is on integrating and applying theories on a problem of an organizational nature within a project that aims to identify alternative solutions to the problem under investigation and suggesting (an) intervention(s) to solve or start addressing the problem. The project should be carried out as an empirical study in a company or in an organization to give suggestions on how a practical problem can be solved.

The project work is presented in an organizational report consisting of a description of the problem, as defined by the organization (or their representative(s)), and the team themselves, identified during the study visit and partly a smaller data collection based on interviews if a qualitative study is chosen (what should be included is explained later in this document). The students delimit the problem and conduct a larger literature search to find relevant literature in the form of scientific articles. Individually, students write a theoretical analysis of the problem – this forms part of the individual examination. Thereafter, the students create a joint, team agreed upon theoretical frame of reference to subsequently empirically highlight the issue. Through the empirical data the chosen theme is investigated (reported, compared and discussed).

The practical work of gathering data to highlight the problems / opportunities / aspects that are included in the project can be done with the help of interviews that can be supplemented with focus groups (qualitatively). Justification and rationale for the selected method is required. Interviews are relatively time-consuming and every interview should take at least one hour. An hour and a half per interview is a realistic assessment. The students conduct interviews (discussed with supervisors based on the question and what is practically possible) with employees to gather data about how the employees view and experience the problem. There are no absolute number of interviews, and 12-15 interviews are a benchmark. If, for various reasons, it is not possible to carry out these interviews, the data collection should be supplemented by other methods, in agreement with the supervisor. Other methods might be used as well, depending on problem, and that will affect the design and the sample size. This is to be taken up in discussion with the supervisor.

Those individual employees who are included in the empirical work are determined in consultation with the supervisor, the organisation's management, or by the designated contact person. The principle for selection is that the persons are deemed to be able to provide material information on the relevant and identified issues.

After data collection and analysis of data (reported in the *method* and *result* section of the organizational report), the results are presented to the client. In order to give suggestions for intervention, the results of the reasons for the client's problems should be agreed upon with the client. After that, the project can proceed and one can start to discuss solutions to the problem and form interventions. Here, an individual report in the form of a typical *Discussion* is developed, before the teams proceed with a report on possible interventions. In terms of the project work, two organizational visits are therefore envisioned at this stage of the project work: one to test and agree the *results* of the investigation with the participating organization, and a second to give feedback on possible interventions, based on the agreed-upon results.

The report should ultimately give suggestions for interventions to solve the real problem. The proposals that are finally given should be well-founded, empirically-supported, and be sharp and concise in the sense that they should give concrete guidance on what needs to be *done* to develop the business or solve the identified problem. A useful tip here is to also search the literature on interventions as work progresses throughout the project. The supervisor may recommend a new literature search focused only on the intervention literature at this stage of the project. The work must have a practical benefit and will be assessed on the basis of this criterion for quality. Recommended interventions should also be included in the final report, and then presented to the client.

The team compiles a presentation of the entire project work and conducts a general rehearsal (*general repetition (Genrep)*) at a seminar before the final feedback to the organization. Teams will be assigned to different sessions with different examiners, which will also chair the session. All teams are expected to attend the entire day (morning), and also provide feedback to other teams. The presentation should be a PowerPoint presentation of approximately 20 - 25 minutes, followed by about 20 - 25 minutes time (45 minutes total) for the questions, which are answered by the team. *Teams are required to make use of their full allocated time!* The examiners in all or most cases are external to the university and in private practice; doing work and organizational psychological work. As such, they should provide a good sounding board for finalizing ideas.
The presentation should be designed so that it is addressed to the company (not other students on the course) and focus on results and proposals for organizational change and intervention(s). Feedback can be given on content and performance. The students finally carry out a consultative effort in the form of a longer and qualified feedback of the recommendations for intervention to the organization. The idea is that this will begin work on developing or changing relevant aspects of work and organization, with the help of proposed interventions.

The organizational report content should include *at least* ten pages and a *maximum* of 15 pages (single row spacing (1 - 1.5 points), and 12 point text). Additional material may be included as attachments (for example, interview guides or (examples of) data coding. The report should include at least 10 first degree refences to scientific articles, agreed with the supervisor. (See the point *Examination of the project work* below for more information regarding the report).

Teaching methods
During the course a lecture series is given, the purpose of which is to explain complex theories and concepts and to broaden the understanding of the literature by linking to other current research and practice in the field. The lectures run parallel to the teamwork. Practically active psychologists or practicing consultants illustrate commonly used methods and working methods within organizational psychological work. The purpose is for the students to gain knowledge of project methodology, good practice in the consulting role and gain knowledge of how organizational psychologists work.

The project work during the course is carried out under supervision. During the supervision, the collaboration will be the subject of discussion in order to streamline the work, strengthen the motivation and job satisfaction. The teams book time for four already-timed mandatory tutorials with the supervisor. Prior to each tutorial occasion, a draft of the various parts of the report is submitted and feedback is provided during the tutorial occasion, or by email/the course website. Where possible, and if feedback is provided before the supervision meeting, the students are expected to have read this *before* the supervision, as preparation. The teams may have access to more tutorials that are booked via e-mail to the supervisor. Experience shows that the teams need support during the work and the supervisor is available 14 hours per team for the entire project work.

Course Requirements
The teaching is mainly conducted in the form of teamwork under supervision. In support of the consultative work, lectures are given in methodology and relevant literature on the subject. The course includes contact with and tasks assigned to external organizations, where the students must act in a professional manner based on good practice in consultative work. Required attendance is indicated for parts of the teaching in the course schedule. In case of absence on compulsory elements of the course, opportunities for completion, its form and scope are assessed in each individual case.

Course requirements / compulsory parts:
a) attendance at the course compulsory lectures
b) Group submission of written PM before stated end times
c) Group verbal presentation of the PM at a seminar
d) Attendance at and participation in seminars
e) Participation in team work and engagement in consultative work with the organization, in order to meet b) and c) above

Compensation via written assignment(s) can be given in the absence of (a) or (d). The possibility of such compensation is assessed by the course responsible teacher. Compensation information must be submitted to the course coordinator according to the appointed deadline. If the student does not submit a compensation assignment in time, the student must redo this course part in the next course session.

The teaching can be done in both English and Swedish. For more detailed information, please refer to the course guide. It is available no later than one month before the course starts. For approved results, it is required that the course requirements are met, see below, and partly approved results on the examination. Compensation information is located on Athena .

Examination
The course is examined by:
a) An individual written home exam with focus on application of knowledge to analyze one organizational problem and methods of consultative work (4.5hp)
b) An individual written report on completed consultative work, consisting of the theoretical framework and the discussion (4.5hp)
c) Group written report based on the work done in the team conducted at the organization (4hp)
d) Group verbal report based on the teamwork conducted at the organization (2hp)

The two individual tasks (*a* and *b* above) are scored each with 0-5 points. When summing these two (where at least 1 point is required for each one passed), 1-2 points corresponds to the grade E, 3-4 points the grade D, 5-6 points the grade C, 7-8 points the grade B and 9-10 points grade A.
On the examinations of teamwork, the grade is passed/failed.

If the student has a certificate from Stockholm University with a recommendation for special support, the examiner is entitled to give a customized examination or let the student complete the examination in an alternative manner.

Grading scale
Grading of individual written work takes place according to a goal-related seven-point grading scale:
A = Excellent (5 points)
B = Very good (4 points)
C = Good (3 points)
D = Satisfactory (2 points)
E = Enough (1 point)
<u>Fail grades</u>
Fx = Fail, some more work is needed because learning objectives have not been met
F = Fail, new examination required

Grading criteria
Detailed information on the grading criteria for individual work is included in the course guide (see below) and is presented orally at the start of the course.

Final grade
To obtain an approved final grade for the course , a minimum grade of E is required for both the individual written home exam and written report. In addition , all required parts of the course must be approved.

Failure
For each course occasion, at least three examination opportunities must normally be offered within one year. Students who have received the lowest grade E must not undergo a renewed examination for higher grades. Students who have failed twice during the course or part of the course have the right to request that another teacher be appointed to determine the grade of the course. The request for this can be made to the department board or the official appointed by the board.

Complementary information
Complementing the grade Fx up to the approved grade is allowed if the student is close to the limit for approval in the examination tasks. Completion must be received within the time specified by the teacher responsible for the course. If the student does not submit a supplementary assignment in time, the student must redo this course part in the next course opportunity.
A student who has failed twice in a test of the course or part of the course has the right to request that another teacher be appointed to determine the grade of the course. The request for this can be made the department board or the official the board appoints.

Individual written examinations/reports
The examination takes the form of an individual written exam, so-called home exam on a maximum of eight pages with normal line spacing (1.5 pt). The re-examination is given in the form of a written examination. The exam is assessed according to the degree of independent problematisation and in-depth study. Results on this home exam provide the basis for grades on the seven-level goal-related scale according to the following criteria (see below).

Under the teamwork, students also develop 2 *individual* reports, dealing with the *theoretical framework* for the organizational problem, and a *discussion* of the results. These reports are also assessed using the following criteria:

Ratings	Criteria
A. *Excellent* (5 points)	The student can independently connect central concepts, theories and models to the case. Alternative models and theories to explain different organizational structures and processes (structure, strategy, work design, leadership, team, performance management, culture and climate, etc. - see Burke & Litwin's model) are described, compared and discussed. The student argues and discusses independently in relation to the course literature, and integrates in a meritorious manner relevant principles and problematizations on an overall theoretical plan. Concepts are defined and boundaries are theoretically and practically justified on the basis of the case. The student describes the relationships between different variables and the psychological reasons why these relationships exist. A number of relationships between conditions on micro-, meso- and macro level are described.
B. *Very good* (4 points)	The student can, in his or her own words, account for differences and similarities between central concepts, theories and models, and reasoning about the relevance of the central concepts, shortcomings and validity/relevance in connection with the case. Alternative models and theories to explain different organizational structures and processes (structure, strategy, work design, leadership, team, performance management, culture and climate, etc. - see Burke & Litwin's model) are described, compared and discussed. Concepts are defined and boundaries are motivated theoretically or practically based on the case. The student explains the relationship and clarifies in general terms why the connections exist. Some relationships between micro-, meso-, and macro-level conditions are described.
C. *Good* (3 points)	The student can, with his or her own words, describe differences between central concepts, theories and models, and apply central concepts to parts or aspects of the case. Some alternative models and theories for explaining different organizational structures and processes (structure, strategy, work design, leadership, team, performance management, culture and climate, etc. - see Burke & Litwin's model) are described, compared and discussed. Concepts are defined and boundaries are theoretically justified. The student describes the relationships between essential variables and in some cases also the relationship between the the micro-, meso-, and the macro level.
D. *Satisfactory* (2 points)	The student can account for central concepts, theories and models linked to some aspects of the case. Some alternative models and theories for explaining various organizational structures and processes (structure, strategy, work design, leadership, team, performance management, culture and climate, etc. - see Burke & Litwin's model) are described in their main features, and delimitations are justified. Concepts are defined. The student can describe certain relationships between variables.
E. *Enough* (1 point)	The student can define central concepts and describe the main features of relevant theories and models linked to some aspects of the case . Some alternative models and theories for explaining various organizational structures and processes (structure, strategy, work design, leadership, team, performance management, culture and climate, etc. - see Burke & Litwin's model) are described in their main features and delimitations are justified. Concepts are defined. The student can describe certain relationships.
Fx. *Additional information is required*	Complementary work is required in some sub-aspect in order for the expected study results to have been achieved. Other aspects meet the requirements for at least grade E.
F. *Insufficient*	The expected study results have not been achieved.

Examination of the project work
On the organizational report, the same requirements are placed on content and form as on a customary academic report within psychology, i.e. APA format is applied. The report should consist of the following headings: Problem description (by the organization), Problem understanding (by the team), Goal and Research question, Model for the investigation, Method (consisting of a description of the Process, Participants, Data collection and Data analysis), Results, and Recommendations (in the form of suggestions for Intervention(s).

The *presentation* of the organizational work is assessed by the examiner at the General Repetition (GenRep).

All team work is assessed as G/U (*godkänd* eller *underkänd*).

Plagiarism, cheating and unauthorized cooperation
As part of your responsibility as a student, you must know the rules that exist for examination. Detailed information can be found both at the department's and Stockholm University's website www.su.se/regelboken. Teachers are obliged to report suspicion of cheating and plagiarism to the principal and the disciplinary committee. Plagiarism and cheating are always disciplinary matters and can lead to suspension. An example of plagiarism is to write a text in a verbatim or almost verbatim manner (applies to single sentences) and not to indicate where this comes from. This also applies to texts you have previously written (self-plagiarism). For example, cheating is counted as having access to unauthorized means, such as mobile phone, during examinations. Having study groups together is developing and time-saving, but when it comes to examination tasks, you must be careful to work yourself (unless otherwise clearly stated) in order not to risk it being counted as unauthorized cooperation.

Teachers on the course
Jacobus Pienaar, Department of Psychology, SU
Annika Lantz, Department of Psychology, SU
Magnus Sverke, Department of Psychology, SU
Helena Schiller, Deparment of Psychology, SU

Sara Henrysson Eidvall, Independent practice
Ulf Åkerström, Independent practice
Helena Tronner, Knowit AB
Joakim Jonassen, Knowit AB
Maria Åkerlund, Henrysson, Åkerlund & Sjöberg AB

Literature

- Woods, S. A., & West, M. A. (2010). *The psychology of work and organizations*. Hampshire, UK: Cengage Learning.
- Scientific articles relevant for the organisational project work must be selected in discussion with the relevant superviser (at least 10 articles).
- Gillberg G och Lindgren H. Distribution av förändringsintentioner: om styrning och handlingsutrymme i fyra förändringsarbeten. *Arbetsliv i omvandling*, 2017; 1. Sid 1-40. Den går att ladda ner på följande adress. http://journals.lub.lu.se/index.php/aio/article/view/16465

- Kelloway, Hurrell & Day, Workplace interventions for occupational stress. Kapitel 20 i Näswall, K., Hellgren, J., & Sverke, M. (2008) (Eds.). *The individual in the changing working life.* Cambridge. Boken finns som e-bok
- Oeij P. R.A., Dhondt S., Žiauberytė-Jakštienė R., Corral A., Totterdill P. (2016). Implementing Workplace Innovation across Europe; why, how and what? *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast, 5*(47), 195-218, 2016 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311844267_Implementing_Workplace_Innovation_across_Europe_why_how_and_what

NOTE!
Other literature from course 24 on semester 7, and literature that has been read during previous courses constitutes prior knowledge.

Teachers also give suggestions on literature in connection with lectures (if you are interested):

Genus
Wahl, Holgersson, Höök, Linghag (2011). ”Det ordnar sig”. Studentlitteratur.

Arbete, motivation och arbetsrelaterade attityder
Kanfer, R., Frese, M., & Johnson, R. E. (2017). Motivation related to work: A century of progress. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(3), 338 – 355.

Styrning och performance management
Burke, W. W., & Litwin, G. H. (1992). A causal model of organizational performance and change. *Journal of Management, 18*(3), 523 – 545.
DeNisi, A. S., & Murphy, K. R. (2017). Performance appraisal and performance management: 100 years of progress? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(3), 421 – 433.
Latham, G. P. (2017). What am I supposed to do in my job? Set goals and appraise your people. In Chmiel, N., Fraccaroli, F., & Sverke, M. (Eds). *An introduction to work and organizational psychology* (pp. 64 – 80). Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Course coordinator

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