The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Organizational Memory - 55503

Last update 23-08-2022

HU Credits: 3

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Business Administration

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr Micki Eisenman

Coordinator Email: mickie@huji.mail.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Micki Eisenman

Course/Module description:
  The field of organizational memory is a relatively new field of research that examines how organizations use their past to better understand the present and to understand what is possible for the organization in the future. The memory in this case is not the personal memory of each member of the organization but a collective memory that refers to the perception of the past as a dimension created as a result of interpretation and social construction. When a group of people in an organization interpret the past in the same way, this interpretation creates organizational memory.
The course is relevant for MBA students majoring in strategy, organizational behavior and marketing because organizational memory studies examine the use of the past as a resource. An organization can use the past to understand itself as authentic or legitimate and to present itself as such to other stakeholders. The past can serve as a source of information regarding How the management of the organization makes decisions in the sense that the past is often taken for granted and therefore more accurate. Organizational memory also affects the organizational identity. To the extent that the organization's identity refers to the unique, central and permanent characteristics of the organization, this characterization is based on an understanding of what characterized the organization in the past. An understanding of identity allows managers to direct processes within the organization and create extra-organizational communication that is perceived as authentic (for example, branding that is perceived as authentic). Another aspect of memory is forgetting: the organization can shape its identity towards internal stakeholders and towards external stakeholders through the conscious forgetting of aspects of the past that are inconsistent with the current identity or strategies.
Course description: The course will combine reading and discussions in key literature on interpretive approaches to memory in organizations. The approaches are interpretive in the sense that groups of stakeholders are characterized by the different ways in which they relate to the past and interpret it. We will learn together about studies that examined the ways in which the past is used by the people of the organization in the present. It is important to note that while the case studies offer a way to understand design as a practical management tool, the main emphasis of the course is theoretical.

Course/Module aims:
  The purpose of the course is to present to the students the contemporary research in the field of organizational memory and the implications of this research for managers and organizations. The course will provide opportunities to ask questions about the ways in which the past can be harnessed to the organization's needs strategically and the ways in which the organization can be understood, about its identity, culture, and goals by understanding the way in which the past is present in the present and shapes the future.

<u>Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:</u>
  Learning outcomes: After completing the course you will have: 1) a more comprehensive understanding of how researchers approach questions related to organizational memory; 2) an understanding of the importance of characterizing organizational memory and harnessing it to the strategic goals of the organization and its managers; 3) A deeper acquaintance with research concepts of construction and interpretation.

<u>Attendance requirements(%):</u>
  80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The course is conducted as a seminar in the sense that knowledge about organizational memory is shared. This means that we learn using the "flipped classroom" method. You will read before the lesson and in class we will discuss the articles and their implications. In addition to discussing these articles, we will engage in interactive tasks during class, sometimes I will ask you to wander around the campus and apply the material to things you see there or recognize in your workplace in the week between class meetings and sometimes I will ask you to search the Internet, during class, for information that will help us ask a question about a certain organization and see how the subject of organizational memory is relevant to it.
During the semester you will be asked to write responses to academic articles. Although there is on average one required reading article for each class, I recommend that you also read articles from the "recommended" reading list. In addition, you will be asked to prepare short papers linking the interactive tasks during class with the readings and conversations in class. As a final project, you will be asked to apply the course material to your own research question and present the work in class. This is actually an extension of one of the interactive class assignments given during the semester. During the semester I will meet with everyone to discuss their work and how it is progressing. I will give more detailed instructions for these requirements during the course and they will be posted on the model website. As you can understand, the course requires continuous work throughout the semester, but there is no exam or work at the end of the course.

<u>Course/Module Content:</u>
  Lesson 1: Introduction. Definition of organizational memory and organizational memory. Why is it important to understand the past in the study of organizations?
Lesson 2: Continuation of the introduction. Definition of organizational memory.

Why is it important to understand the past in the study of organizations?
Lesson 3: Continuation of the introduction. Definition of organizational memory.
Why is it important to understand the past in the study of organizations?
Lesson 4: Memory as a strategic resource: the use of corporate museums
Lesson 5: Memory as a strategic resource: the use of memory as a tool for making decisions in the present
Lesson 6: Memory as a strategic resource: the use of memory as a tool for directing organizational changes
Lesson 7: Memory as a strategic resource: strategic forgetting
Lesson 8: The effect of collective memory on the relations of the organization and its environment?
Lesson 9: Can the organization evoke memory to achieve goals?
Lesson 10: Meetings on the final project
Lesson 11: Political aspects of memory: who determines what is remembered?
Lesson 12 & 13: Presentations of the final projects

Required Reading:
The required reading list is based on academic articles and will be published in a model at the beginning of the course

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 30 %
Assignments 10 %
Reports 60 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: