



Culture, Organization and Management (MSc)

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen - M Culture, Organization and Management - 2013-2014

In the one-year Master's programme in Culture, Organization and Management (COM), students develop an overview of the Organizational Sciences, and more particularly acquire the knowledge and skills to research, describe and explain the cultural dimension of management within organizations. Central themes are Globalization, Transnational Entrepreneurship, Organizational Culture Change, and Identity in Organizations. These themes are studied with the help of qualitative research methods with a special emphasis on ethnography. COM students can do field research in the Netherlands, but they are also encouraged to choose fieldwork sites in other world regions, such as Southeast Asia, Southern Africa and the Caribbean.

[Objective and attainment levels](#)

[Year schedule](#)

Inhoudsopgave

Master Culture, Organization and Management	1
Master Culture, Organization and Management keuzevakken	1
Master Culture, Organization and Management verplichte vakken	1
Vak: Changing Organizational Culture (Periode 2)	1
Vak: Culture and Identity in Organizations (Periode 2)	3
Vak: Master's Thesis in Culture, Organization and Management (Ac. Jaar (september))	4
Vak: Organization Sciences (Periode 1)	5
Vak: Organizational Ethnography (Periode 2)	6
Vak: Research Lab (Periode 4)	7
Vak: Research Proposal (Periode 1+2+3)	8
Vak: Transnational Organizations in a Global World (Periode 1)	8

Master Culture, Organization and Management

Opleidingsdelen:

- [Master Culture, Organization and Management keuzevakken](#)
- [Master Culture, Organization and Management verplichte vakken](#)

Master Culture, Organization and Management keuzevakken

Vakken:

Naam	Periode	Credits	Code
Changing Organizational Culture	Periode 2	6.0	S_COC
Culture and Identity in Organizations	Periode 2	6.0	S_CIO

Master Culture, Organization and Management verplichte vakken

Vakken:

Naam	Periode	Credits	Code
Master's Thesis in Culture, Organization and Management	Ac. Jaar (september)	24.0	S_MTcom
Organization Sciences	Periode 1	6.0	S_OS
Organizational Ethnography	Periode 2	6.0	S_OE
Research Lab	Periode 4	6.0	S_RL
Research Proposal	Periode 1+2+3	6.0	S_RP
Transnational Organizations in a Global World	Periode 1	6.0	S_TOGW

Changing Organizational Culture

Vakcode	S_COC ()
Periode	Periode 2
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Coördinator	prof. dr. A.H. van Marrewijk
Docent(en)	prof. dr. A.H. van Marrewijk
Lesmethode(n)	Hoorcollege, Werkgroep
Niveau	500

Doel vak

Important goals in this module are:

- Being able to connect theories on organizational and cultural change and intervention with acquired knowledge on organizations.
- Being able to develop a plan for the analysis of a concrete problem of cultural change and formulate proposals for interventions.

Inhoud vak

The seminar discusses recent academic theories and change prescriptions. The course debates question on whether cultures can be deliberately changed. The relation of cultural change and strategy will be discussed in order to understand the dynamics of cultural change. The focus is on traditions of 'planned change' as well as on process oriented concepts and methodologies of organizational development. During the seminar themes, such as participative change, interventions, organizational practices, spatial settings as intervention are discussed. A special focus is on the everyday practices of organizational change. What do organizations do when they say they are changing their culture? The seminar reflects on intervention strategies and their consequences for management, efficiency and effectiveness of (inter)national organizational networks.

Onderwijsvorm

Lectures and discussion groups (70%-30%). 12 lectures deal with most important strategies of organizational change and intervention. Students will prepare, present and discuss literature. Furthermore, students will participate in a group case which includes a culture intervention simulation program.

Toetsvorm

The course will be assessed through a group case (30%), a presentation of studied literature (10%) and multiple choice exams (60%).

Literatuur

- Digital reader: 15 academic articles on Cultural change and Intervention. 200 pp
- Christiane Demers (2007), Organization Change Theories, a Synthesis. Sage, (chapters 8). 45 pp.
- Mats Alvesson and Stefan Sveningsson (2008), Changing Organizational Culture. Cultural Change work in progress, Routledge, London. 191 pp.

Vereiste voorkennis

Participation in Organization Sciences (S_OS)

Aanbevolen voorkennis

Students are expected have some prior knowledge on organizational culture and change. E.g. Bate, P. 1994. Strategies for Cultural Change. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann or Alvesson, M. 2002 Understanding Organisational Culture. London: Sage

Doelgroep

Master students

Overige informatie

Participation in working groups is obligatory. Students have to participate in the intervention simulation.

Culture and Identity in Organizations

Vakcode	S_CIO ()
Periode	Periode 2
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Coördinator	prof. dr. H. Ghorashi
Docent(en)	prof. dr. H. Ghorashi
Lesmethode(n)	Hoorcollege, Werkgroep
Niveau	500

Doel vak

The aim of this course is to provide the necessary knowledge and reflection to enable critical understanding of the processes of exclusion and inclusion within organizations. By reflecting upon different approaches to identity and power in organizations, this course contributes to creating an academic foundation to contextualize organizational practices related to culture and diversity within broader theoretical and societal frameworks. In addition, the course will stimulate a rethinking of oft-employed concepts and approaches, such as power and diversity, in order to deal with the new challenges of the present and the future.

Inhoud vak

In this time of ubiquitous cultural diversity, which some refer to as the context of super-diversity, we are witness to contradictory processes. On the one hand there is an increasing demand for culturally sensitive measures and cultural recognition in different social spheres. On the other, we see a growth in culturally exclusionary practices in a variety of domains. The same paradox is visible within organizations. While it is believed that the organizations of the future will be inclusive organizations embracing all available talent and reaching diverse target groups, there is an increasing sense that they are driving around in circles never reaching a destination. The main focus of this course will be on the ways that organizational processes are shaped and reshaped through the interface with societal discourses that construct particular images of otherness. These images contribute to processes of inclusion or exclusion within organizations, affecting access to (power) positions. These images of otherness concern not only a horizontal division of identities but have a normative aspect by presenting the other as deviation of the norm. By contextualizing organizational processes within societal discourses this course will provide an understanding of explicit and subtle processes which contribute to the prominence of certain identities above others along with the ways in which the intersection of identities becomes a source of dominance or exclusion. The other related concepts for this course will be diversity, (discursive) power, and alterity.

Onderwijsvorm

Lectures and group presentations

Toetsvorm

The assessment is based on a final exam (70%) and a group presentation (30%) during the course. The students need to pass both parts.

Literatuur

Will be announced on Blackboard

Vereiste voorkennis

Participation in the Organization Sciences course

Doelgroep

Students of the Master's Programme

Overige informatie

Students choose either this course or the Changing Organizational Culture course.

Master's Thesis in Culture, Organization and Management

Vakcode	S_MTcom ()
Periode	Ac. Jaar (september)
Credits	24.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Coördinator	drs. T.A. Onderdenwijngaard
Lesmethode(n)	Werkgroep
Niveau	600

Doel vak

By writing their Master's Thesis students demonstrate their ability to carry out independent academic research. In the thesis, formerly acquired theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as empirical field data research are combined, analyzed and presented in a coherent manner.

Inhoud vak

The Master's thesis is the final subject of the Master COM, combining a fieldwork period and the actual thesis writing. The thesis is assessed with respect to the following: use of academic writing conventions, problematization, critical use of theory, data and methods, quality of analyses, and reflection on an academically and socially actual and relevant debates.

Onderwijsvorm

Individual and group supervision; students join a thematic thesis group, or in some cases opt for individual supervision, depending on the topic and supervisor availability.

Toetsvorm

Assessment form for the COM Master's thesis

Literatuur

To be approved by the thesis supervisor

Vereiste voorkennis

Participation in the courses of period 1, period 2 and Research Proposal is required.

Doelgroep

MSc COM students

Overige informatie

In practice, the preparation for the thesis starts in September / October with the "Master's Thesis Fair", in which students contact possible supervisors. From then on, students start preparing for the theoretical and methodological parts. The process of thesis supervision ultimately starts with the Research Proposal in period 3. In period 4 students also take parallel courses in the module "Research Lab". For students doing fieldwork abroad the Research Lab course can be alternatively scheduled. See also: description "Research Lab".

Organization Sciences

Vakcode	S_OS ()
Periode	Periode 1
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Docent(en)	dr. ir. F.G.A. de Bakker, dr. ir. F.K. Boersma
Lesmethode(n)	Hoorcollege
Niveau	400

Doel vak

- Knowledge of processes of organizing within different organizational settings;
- Understanding of different approaches and perspectives on the analysis of organization;
- Analysis of academic texts, and the application of theoretical debates to case studies.

Inhoud vak

Organizational Science sets the stage both theoretically and methodologically for researching, analysing and theorising processes of organizing in a variety of contexts. In this course we conceptualise organizations not as fixed entities but as ongoing processes of organizing. We combine a focus on organizational actors' sensemaking practices and their day-to-day (inter)actions with developing a sensitivity to particular situational and institutional contexts in which these interactions emerge or are embedded. Through an analysis of classic, contemporary and critical texts as well as exemplary case studies students develop knowledge of and insight in themes such as power and institutions, structure and culture, control and resistance, collaboration and conflict, and identity and identification. Taking a distinctly social scientific approach, we explore various theoretical and methodological debates in the field of organization science in order to develop an understanding of different perspectives to studying organizations and organizing.

Onderwijsvorm

Lectures

Toetsvorm

Written examination

Literatuur

Handel, Michael 2003. The sociology of organizations. London: Sage.
Supplementary papers as indicated in the study guide.

Doelgroep

Master students BCO and COM.

Organizational Ethnography

Vakcode	S_OE ()
Periode	Periode 2
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Niveau	400

Doel vak

Advanced study of methods for doing fieldwork.

Inhoud vak

The course contains two parts:

1. Intensive study of ethnographic and other interpretative methods for doing research in (and between) organizations. Special attention will be given to the methodological perspectives informing the various approaches (knowledge production).
2. Diverse modules preparing for the fieldwork of the Master Course (2nd semester): observation and interviewing, with an extra focus on the role and function of 'discourse/s', and data processing.

Discussion and debate are important in our understanding of teaching. Therefore, the interfaces of theoretical insights and application of methods emerge via discussion over questions like: the art of observation; the importance of reflexivity; the role of the researcher and his/her limits; aspects of anonymization; options for gathering data (written, pictured, filmed); validity, 'objectivity', and temporal and spatial dimensions in ethnographic research. In the second part, training and exercise are central.

Onderwijsvorm

Tutorial and individual supervision: tutorial, i.e. lectures, exercises, project work – also outside class hours – discussions, work groups, and a multiple choice exam.

Toetsvorm

Assignments, group project, and exam.

Literatuur

Several chapters from Organizational Ethnography (2009), Edited by Sierk Ybema, Dvora Yanow, Harry Wels & Frans Kamsteeg + additional chapters and articles to be announced via BlackBoard before course begin.

Vereiste voorkennis

Aanbevolen voorkennis

Thorough knowledge of (qualitative) methods of research and the capacity critically to use other methods of research is a requirement to enjoy and benefit from the course. During the summer a list with additional theory / recommended works will be distributed via the COM website.

Research Lab

Vakcode	S_RL ()
Periode	Periode 4
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Docent(en)	dr. A.J. Porter
Lesmethode(n)	Werkgroep, Hoorcollege, Practicum
Niveau	500

Doel vak

This course serves to underpin the Research Proposal with a solid methodological base.

Inhoud vak

In close connection with 'Organizational Ethnography', students read additional methodological texts, and integrate these in the Research Proposal. Additionally, students receive training in the appropriate research instruments for their fieldwork (interview protocols, observation protocols, etc.)

Onderwijsvorm

Individual supervision – online assignments

Toetsvorm

Methodology section and research instruments need to be approved by the supervisor.

Literatuur

Reading is part of the assignments – further reading to be established in consultation with the supervisor.

Vereiste voorkennis

Participation in courses of period 1 and 2 of the Master's programme COM as well as participation in Research Proposal.

Aanbevolen voorkennis

Participation in courses of period 1 and 2 of the Master's programme COM as well as participation in Research Proposal

Doelgroep

MSc COM students

Overige informatie

Experts from the Sociology/Methodology Department will be consulted in the assessment process. Students who intend to do fieldwork abroad

should make such known to the course coordinator via the thesis supervisor; their course schedule may be organized alternatively.

Research Proposal

Vakcode	S_RP ()
Periode	Periode 1+2+3
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Coördinator	dr. F.J. Companjen
Docent(en)	dr. F.J. Companjen
Lesmethode(n)	Hoorcollege
Niveau	500

Doel vak

To prepare the student for his/her fieldwork research.

Inhoud vak

The course consist of two elements: general lectures and thesis supervision sessions. Before students write a research proposal guided by their supervisors, we offer three general (guest) lectures in which overall themes and topics are addressed. Handling theories, styles of argument, and composition (compulsory parts) of the thesis. The general lectures are followed by session in the thesis groups, leading up to the research proposal. The final research proposal needs to be accepted and marked by the supervisor before a student can start his/her field research.

Onderwijsvorm

Lectures, self-study, individual and/or group supervision

Literatuur

General reading is to be established. Part of the reading is focused on the individual Research Proposal, and to be established in consultation with the supervisor (i.e. from the formation of the thesis groups in October on).

Doelgroep

MSc COM students

Overige informatie

In practice, the preparation for the thesis starts in September - October with the Master's thesis fair, in which students contact possible supervisors. From then on, students start preparing for the theoretical and methodological parts. The process of thesis supervision and writing finally takes off with the Research Proposal in period 3. In period 4 students also take parallel courses (online) in the module "Research Lab". For students doing fieldwork abroad the Research Lab course will be alternatively scheduled. See also: description Master's Thesis COM.

Transnational Organizations in a Global World

Vakcode	S_TOGW ()
Periode	Periode 1
Credits	6.0
Voertaal	Engels
Faculteit	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Coördinator	dr. H. Wels
Docent(en)	dr. H. Wels
Lesmethode(n)	Hoorcollege
Niveau	500

Doel vak

The aim of the course is to acquire knowledge and understanding of societal, professional and scientific debates addressing processes of organizing in a globalizing world. The prevailing debates will be differentiated according to the domains of economic developments, political processes, social change and cultural transformation.

Inhoud vak

In Western management literature it is assumed that processes of globalization generate ever-larger organizations stretching across national borders and showing high levels of integration according to Western models of the Transnational Corporation (TNC). Economies of scale, the decline of the nation state as provider of both legal protection and national identity, the emergence of a homogeneous culture worldwide and the triumph of neo-liberal thinking seem to be the achievement of globalization. Of particular interest is the emergence of a global educational industry that seems to advance the ongoing standardization of organizational practices and culture. However, recent literature on globalization challenges this point of view. Coalitions and cooperative efforts in cross-border ventures generate network(ed) organizations, regionally and locally embedded organizations and organizational networks, a larger diversity in (organizational) cultures and identities, and increasing interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and social entrepreneurship. At the same time, governments have to rethink the reach of their policies and new concepts of governance are taking root, affecting ideas about the management of private and public sector organizations as much as of development organizations. New public management, public-private partnerships and partially conflicting demands for standardization of organizational processes and cultures versus ongoing diversification are the challenges emerging as a consequence of globalization.

Onderwijsvorm

Interactive lectures, guest lectures and discussion meetings.

Toetsvorm

Written examination (take home exam via Blackboard) - optional: midterm assignment.

Literatuur

To be announced

Doelgroep

Master students COM