UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

# COURSE SYLLABUS

# Organizational Change

**2223-2-F8802N021**

## Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding:
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of and/or facility in organizational analysis, including close reading of cases, and application to facts.
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of and/or facility in
organizational failure analyses to understand how organizations favor, manage and react to unexpected events.
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of theoretical methodological coordinates and methods of analysis for the diagnosis of organizational problems through the discussion of cases.
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of and/or facility in finding, understanding, using and critiquing secondary organizational literature.
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of and/or facility in the development and change of organizations and institutions.
At the end of the course, students will have acquired understanding of and/or facility in understanding and and neutralizing the processes of creation of organizational scapegoats.

## Contents

The main theme of the course is the study of organizational change processes with particular reference to the management of uncertainty, the unexpected and myopia in organizations. The goal is to guide the analysis, diagnosis and identification of reliable organizational models in complex and uncertain environments. The course is structured as an investigation in progress on topics such as: Organizational change in complex systems. Scapegoating and organizational inertia. Organizational myopia: foresight in organizations. Managing the unexpected in organizations. The high reliability organizations.

## Detailed program

The course aims to provide students with tools and concepts for in-depth analysis and critical knowledge of strategic processes, organizational change and uncertainty management in complex organizational contexts. Particular attention will be paid to the construction of "scapegoats" and organizational inertia. It deals with a set of issues and problems that today more than ever concern organizations that find themselves operating in complex and hyper-competitive environments. Through a review of the main theories, case analysis and study activity in subgroups, the factors that hinder or favor the management of the unexpected and organizational learning within complex organizations are analyzed. By analyzing unsuccessful and successful cases, students will be able to familiarize themselves with the theories of strategic management in conditions of uncertainty and share the main tools for formulating and implementing successful strategies. Finally, a typology of organizations will be analyzed, High Reliability Organizations - HROs, capable of conducting operations with low error rates for long periods of time, making decisions that produce reliable and high quality operations, acting with anticipation and containing the unexpected.

The topics of the Organizational Change course are connected to those of Psychology of group processes and Working in the service society.

## Prerequisites

Elements of logical reasoning, and knowledge of current events.

## Teaching methods

Lectures. Analysis of case-studies. Team-work in the classroom and individual study at home.

## Assessment methods

Attending students will be assessed through (1) a group project work, (2) individual written test based on "open questions" regarding the two textbooks (full study of the books).

Non-attending students will be assessed through an individual written test based on "open questions" regarding the two textbooks (full study of the books).

Assessment criteria for the test (for attending and non-attending students):

1. language properties - appropriate use of terms;
2. precision in the logical presentation of the arguments;
3. ability to build connections between various topics;
4. completeness of the presentation given the time limits and pages available.

## Textbooks and Reading Materials

Attending students (Full study of the texts)

(1) Catino M. (2014), Organizational Myopia: Problems of Rationality and Foresight in Organizations, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Paperback edition).
(2) Catino M. (2022), Trovare il colpevole. La costruzione del capro espiatorio nelle orgnizzazioni, Bologna: il Mulino.
(3) Materials provided by the teacher during the course.

Non-attending students (Full study of the texts)
(1) Catino M. (2014), Organizational Myopia: Problems of Rationality and Foresight in Organizations, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Paperback edition).
(2) Catino M. (2022), Trovare il colpevole. La costruzione del capro espiatorio nelle orgnizzazioni, Bologna: il Mulino.

## Sustainable Development Goals

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE