UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Consultancy and Organization Development

2627-2-F5112P016

Learning area

Social Psychology, economic psychology and decision-making.

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

Main theories of consultation.
Consultation methods.
Process consultation.
The ethical dimension of consultation.
Organizational development: goals and opportunities.
Training in the organization: process, main methods and tools.
Leadership training.
Training transfer.

Applying knowledge and understanding

Linking the material presented during the course coherently.
Preparing for initial meetings with corporate clients and approaching them as constructively as possible.
Interpreting the organizational setting and its dynamics through multiple lenses in order to design and propose organizational development interventions.
Gaining practical familiarity with the main face-to-face training tools.
Thinking of leadership in the organization as a skill that can be developed, and being able to plan leadership training and leadership development initiatives.
Being able to apply a managerial training method that can support training design.

Independent judgment

Critical and judgment skills will be exercised and refined, for example, thanks to 1) guests/speakers who will bring cases to discuss with course participants, 2) classroom exercises with the professor, and 3) final group work that will involve discussion and exchanges of views between the members of each group to plan a lesson suitable for managerial training.

Communication skills

The ability to communicate the material learned in the course will be exercised during the final exam, which, precisely to support this skill, will be an oral exam. Furthermore, students will be constantly encouraged in the classroom to answer questions from the professor aimed at encouraging the ability to synthesize the issues discussed during the course; lastly, all group members will be asked to present at least part of the lesson developed by their team as their final assignment.

Capacity for learning

A "mixed" reading list consisting of academic papers and other texts intended for a general audience or practitioners, as well as reliance on the great authors of organizational consulting, will provide a solid grounding and ability to make decisions independently for students wishing to pursue the topics covered in the course in their further education or professional life.

Contents

The course will present the fundamentals of organizational consultation, with particular attention to Schein's process consultation model, and training as a means of developing the individual in the organization and the organization as a whole. The focus will be on leadership training. Organizational development will also be discussed as a set of interventions designed to promote organizational change and learning, often leveraging training and development activities.

Detailed program

• Approaches to consultation
• Process consultation
• The first meeting between consultant and client and the various types of client
• The ethical dimension of consultation

- Organizational development interventions
  • Training in the organization and the link to learning
  • The training process: from needs analysis to training evaluation
  • Main face-to-face training methods and tools (e.g., case studies, role playing, use of cinema).
  • On-the-job training: the example of mentoring
  • Leadership training
  • Training transfer

Prerequisites

No specific prerequisites

Teaching methods

Teaching will involve classroom lectures on theoretical and methodological subjects, in-class discussions, and individual and group work in the class on cases and exercises assigned by the instructor in order to develop the students' capacity to apply what they have learned.

The course consists of 18 three-hour lessons and one two-hour lesson. All lessons are in person.
Four lessons will be entirely devoted to exercises or discussions of specific cases, and will thus be interactive. In the remaining lessons, half of the time will be devoted to lecture-based activities and the other half to interactive activities.
Interactive activities will also include talks by experts and discussions of film cases and research findings.

Assessment methods

The assessment takes place through an **oral examination**.
As the oral exam is intended to assess student achievement of the learning objectives outlined above, it will center on both theoretical knowledge and the ability to apply it, or to design a real-life application. The exam may cover all the specified reading material (the two textbooks by Schein and by Castagna, the chapter from the English book written by Hodges, plus the articles listed on the e-learning webpage).
The oral examination will take place on two separate occasions for attending students: at the end of the course (1), they will be required to present a short lesson in groups for a hypothetical training program at an organization (see the description of the "lesson" in the text by Castagna indicated in the section headed Textbooks and Reading Materials). The lesson shall be based on one of the articles in the reading list given on the course's e-learning webpage. To demonstrate that they have mastered applied skills, students will also be required to explain the choices they made in planning the lesson. Starting this year, the class project will be designed as a training intervention embedded within a broader organizational development program aimed at introducing an AI tool into a hypothetical organization.
Afterwards, attending students will be examined individually during one of the regularly scheduled examination dates (2), and they will be asked about the two textbooks, the chapter in English, and the slides of the course.
Non-attending students will be examined only individually in an in-depth oral exam that will determine the whole final grade and that will be divided into two parts: (1) the former will focus on the articles listed on the e-learning page of the course, (2) the latter will focus on the two textbooks, the chapter in English and the slides of the course.
All the students will receive a final grade, which will be the average of the two parts of the exam.

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Schein E. H. (1999) *Process Consultation Revisited: Building the Helping Relationship.* Addison Wesley, Reading, MA. [Schein E. H. (2016) La consulenza di processo: come costruire le relazioni d'aiuto e promuovere lo sviluppo organizzativo. Raffaello Cortina, Milano.]
Castagna M. (2016, XI edizione) *Progettare la formazione. Guida metodologica per la progettazione del lavoro in aula. *Franco Angeli, Milano.

Hodges, J. (2017) Designing and delivering interventions. In *Consultancy, Organizational Development and Change. A Practical Guide to Delivering Value*. Chapter 5, pp. 153-198. Kogan Page: London. (Only chapter 5 for the exam)

Information about additional educational materials (i.e., the articles in the reading list) will be posted on the course's e-learning webpage.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE