Course Objectives

This seminar is designed to expose doctoral students to the current and emerging research topics in operations management. In the process, we will get exposed to a few seminal articles that have been selected based on evidence of a novel approach to either domain knowledge and/or research methods. This course will help develop skill sets in conducting independent research, critiquing articles and developing new research ideas and implementing a research study ready to be submitted to a journal. While this course will help you in getting practice for the comprehensive exam, this course is not meant to be an exhaustive set of materials that you need to know for the exam.

The course objectives are:

- To critically review the key literature pertaining to current areas of interest in operations management and develop researchable ideas that fill the gaps inherent in the articles
- To develop abilities to conceptualize, craft and shape research ideas leading to a researchable program
- To prepare students in pursuing “high impact” research topics
- To develop skills of oral and written presentation of research ideas and academic articles
- To execute an empirical study to be targeted to an appropriate OM journal

We will use a variety of methods to achieve these objectives: critiques of main papers and additional readings identified by the instructor as well as the students, preparation of “reaction papers”, review of an actual journal article submission, developing a full research paper and final exam. (Please see the section on “Development of Skill Sets”).

Required Materials

There is no required text book for this course. Two optional text books that might be useful are:


A supplementary packet containing articles is required and will be distributed to students in the beginning of the course. You are also required to distribute additional articles that you identify as pertinent to all students and the instructor.

**Development of Skill Sets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element of this Course</th>
<th>Skill Developed and Importance of the Skill</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Research Project</td>
<td>Developing and implementing research projects from conception to journal submission. Useful for developing own research program and dissertation. Develops written communication and analytical skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Article Review Assignment</td>
<td>Develops students as eventual reviewers of submissions to professional journals. Expected part of academic life. Develops written communication skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Class Participation</td>
<td>Active engagement in debate, critique and development of research ideas amongst a community of peers. Develops oral communication skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Article Reaction Papers</td>
<td>Develops skills of critiquing papers, isolating gaps and presenting ways of extending the body of knowledge in a rigorous fashion. Develops oral communication skills – useful for job market and eventual job as an academic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Exam</td>
<td>Provides opportunity to classify research in your own way and think about potential research avenues to be pursued. Helps in preparation of comprehensive exam.</td>
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Performance Evaluation

Your grade will be determined based on the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Research Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Journal Article Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Article Reaction Papers (based on 5 papers)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Research Project

The research project will require you to conceptualize, develop and shape a research article that is ready for journal submission by the end of the course. The expected quality of this research project is similar to papers that are published in a reasonable OM journal. Obviously, the goal should be to target a ‘top’ OM journal. This means that the paper should be well crafted, grounded in theory, rigorous and also tested empirically. I have access to some data sets and so do some of our other faculties. I would strongly encourage you to start EARLY and seek ways of obtaining access to a data set. Please seek my help as well. An equally acceptable alternative is to use secondary data sources. Some of the articles in the assigned readings provide exposure of how to go about this kind of research.

Your first deliverable is a formal research proposal to be made in class on October 15. It is important that you start off early in the term and run your ideas by me. At the time of proposal presentation, it is expected that you would have completed a rigorous synthesis of the literature pertaining to your chosen topic and have some tentative propositions/hypotheses based on guided theory. The expectation for the synthesis of the literature is similar to a meta analysis publication. After this stage, the creation of new knowledge would be through testing the model, synthesizing the findings and discussing the findings pursued culminating in a final research paper.

The final deliverables are presentation of your research project to the class and submission of a final research paper ready to be submitted to a journal (due dates are listed in the schedule).
Journal Article Review

I will be circulating three articles that have been recently submitted to an OM journal. Each student is expected to read all three articles but provide detailed written review of one article. The guidelines and directions for the review will be similar to a ‘live’ paper in a sense that you are expected to provide a professional review which is ready to be shipped off to the editor of the journal. The due date for providing a formal written review is Oct 1st and you will be presenting your review in class on this date.

Class Participation

This is an important component of your grade. The quality and quantity of participation will determine your grade with a higher emphasis on the former category. Examples of good participation are: 1) Developing other peoples’ ideas and comments; 2) Providing evidence of your position through articles/readings that are not in the reading list; 3) Asking insightful questions for which you have thought through your own position; and 4) Comments and ideas that lead to skill development of all participants. For example, if the author has presented a table in a certain way and you come up to the podium/blackboard and present an improved way of presentation with the logic of how it is improved, that is a good example of developing skill sets.

I will be arranging a ‘brown bag’ seminar on a separate day to answer questions relating to academic life, such as managing dissertations, publishing dissertations, monitoring research program, job market strategies, professional networking, tenure and promotion and other qualitative aspects of academic life. Unless it is very pertinent to our discussion and skill development, please do not use our precious class time to discuss these issues.

It is expected that all of you participate in class discussions actively. However, if you have been inactive or have ‘hogged the air space’, please do not be offended if I intervene and ask you for your comments or direct the discussions to other participants as well.

Article Reaction Papers

Each student is responsible for leading discussions on one article assigned for each class session. The deliverable is a presentation to the class and on the date the article is discussed in class. Be creative! The purpose of this review is not to summarize the article (although a brief summary of key points might be useful), but to bring your own fresh perspective/feedback on the ideas expressed in the paper. A good review poses interesting questions, cites additional literature, extends the models and stimulates further inquiry and class discussion. If you propose an alternative model, be prepared to defend it.

You will be required to create a docket of article reaction paper presentations. Closer to the end of the semester, I will ask you to submit this docket to me for grading. You are welcome to seek my feedback at any time on how to improve your article reaction papers.
Final Exam

During the finals week, there will be a cumulative final exam covering all assigned articles, in-class discussions, journal reviewing assignment and the three empirical research projects. A detailed study guide will be distributed closer to the finals week. Please remember to take good notes at each class session. I will be doing so as well and I do plan on testing you on in-class discussions. You are expected to be familiar with all three articles assigned for journal reviewing (not just the one that you presented) and also to be reasonably familiar with the other two empirical research studies conducted by your peers.

Tentative Schedule

The following is the tentative schedule. We may be ahead or behind the schedule in different weeks.

Note: Articles marked “All” means all students read the article and be prepared to discuss but no reaction paper presentation is required for these articles. Typically these articles are seminal to the topic and can be integrated into the reaction paper presentations.

August 27, Week 1 – Introduction to Class and Research Traditions

(All) POMS Conference Plenary Talk of Marshall Fisher: “What can we learn about research style from physics, medicine and finance?”

(All) POMS Emerging Scholar Meeting Notes

(Shankar, Sam and Alan) What are the current editorial philosophies of journals that publish OM research? Please coordinate with each other so that you do not duplicate efforts. Be prepared to present an executive version of the editorial philosophies of each journal. Do not cite verbatim.

September 3, Labor Day Holiday - no class

September 10, Week 3 – Measurement and Construct Validation


Additional Readings:


September 17, Week 4 – Structuring Literature Reviews/Typologies and Meta Analysis


Additional Readings:


September 24, Week 5 – Supplier Relations and Supply Management


Additional Readings


October 1, Week 6 - Journal Article Review Presentations


(All) Steven Gregory (Handout)

October 8, Week 7 - Supply Chain Management


Additional Readings


October 15, Week 8 - Presentation of Research Proposals
October 22, Week 9 – Operations/Marketing/New Product Development Interface


Additional Readings:


October 29, Week 10 – Publishing Case Study Research


Additional Readings:


November 5, Week 11 - Using Secondary Data and Archival Sources


November 12, Week 12 - Using Secondary Data and Archival Sources (2)


Additional Readings:


November 19, Week 13 - Emerging Topics

E-Operations, Behavioral Approaches in OM and Service Operations


Additional Readings


Aleda Roth and Larry Menor (2003), Insights into service operations management: A research agenda, Production and Operations Management, 12(2), 145-164.


**November 26, Week 14 – Emerging Topics(2)**

*Safety, Risk Management, China*


Additional Readings


December 3, Week 15 - Presentation of Final Research Projects

December 17, Final Exam - 2pm
DUE DATE FOR FINAL RESEARCH PAPER