



**B790: Workshop on Theory Building in Management  
Fall 2025 Course Outline**

**Human Resources & Management  
DeGroote School of Business  
McMaster University**

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***COURSE OBJECTIVE***

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The development of good theory is fundamental to academic research. The objective of this course is to explore what theory is in business administration and management disciplines, and learn how to develop good theory. Students will build their understanding through written assignments completed alone and in pairs, in-class exercises and an in-class journal, and discussion of assigned readings.

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***INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION***

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**Section 1: Thursday 8:30am – 11:30am**

**Dr. Erin Reid**  
Professor

reidem@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: by appointment

Class Location: please check A2L

**Student TA - TBD**

TA

[McMaster Email]

Office:

Office Hours:

Tel: (905) 525-9140 ext.

**Course website:** Check A2L

**Course prerequisites:** none

**Course antirequisites:** none

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**COURSE ELEMENTS**

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Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	No	IT skills:	No	Global view:	Yes
Avenue:	Yes	Ethics:	No	Numeracy:	No	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	No	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	No	Final Exam:	Yes	Guest speaker(s):	No

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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In this course, we will explore together what theory “is” in scholarship on management and business administration, how to distinguish between flawed, adequate and better theories, and how to construct our own theories.

We will begin with an examination of some of the key foundations and history of management and business administration theory and education. We will then take a practical turn, and together work through the stages and details of theory-building, including the processes of specifying an important research question or problem, developing a literature review and theoretical argument, specifying contributions, communicating theory in academic venues, and developing a theoretically-informed research program.

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**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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Upon completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

- Describe what theory “is” in management and business administration and why it is important
  - Develop plausible, testable theories for important problems in their discipline of focus
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**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS**

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- Nearly all assigned articles are posted on Avenue to Learn (free)
- There are also five required books, available new or used:

Becker, Howard. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're Doing it*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

About \$22 new online, used copies and old versions are acceptable and encouraged

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2009+. *The craft of research*. University of Chicago Press.

About \$23 new online, used copies and old versions are acceptable and encouraged

Kuhn, Thomas S. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

About \$23 new online, used copies and old versions are acceptable and encouraged

Khurana, Rakesh. 2007. *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

About \$40 new online, used copies and old versions are acceptable and encouraged

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### EVALUATION

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Missed assignments/exams not approved by the instructor will receive an F grade. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each day they are late. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

#### Components and Weights

<b>Critical assessments (weeks 4, 10)</b>	In pairs, write 2	20%
<b>Interview with a faculty member (week 9)</b>	Individual	25%
<b>Your theory (week 13)</b>	Individual (in-class weekly journal + culminating essay)	30%
<b>Participation</b>	In-class Contribution (individual)	25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

NOTE: The use of a McMaster standard calculator is allowed during examinations in this course. See McMaster calculator policy at the following URL:

[www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UndergraduateExaminationsPolicy.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UndergraduateExaminationsPolicy.pdf)

### Grade Conversion

Instructors have the discretion of marking individual components of a course with either a letter or numerical grading scheme but final course grades taken at McMaster can only be reported as either Pass/Fail or letter grades. When numerical grading is used in a course, the final course average with decimal place of 0.5 or greater should be rounded up before conversion to a letter grade. The minimum passing grade for a graduate student in any course taken is a B-, including undergraduate courses or courses taken off campus:

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A+	90-100	12
A	85-89	11
A-	80-84	10
B+	75-79	9
B	70-74	8
B-	60-69	7
F	00-59	0

### Course Deliverables

#### ***Critical Assessments (2)***

These assignments are each worth **10%** of your final grade and will be marked in pairs. Nearly all papers in academia are published by teams of 2 or more people; this assignment is designed to help you get started in collaborating on ideas with another person. You can work with anyone in the class, you are not restricted to a partner from your area. You are to work together to prepare a 1-page, single spaced paper that critiques the theory that has been constructed in one article (selections and due dates indicated below). In your critique, consider logic, assumptions, conclusions and testability.

- Critical Assessment 1 (Due Week 4). Select one of the readings from weeks 2 & 3.
- Critical Assessment 2 (Due Week 10). Select one of the exemplar readings from weeks 6, 7, 8 or 9.

#### ***Interview with a faculty member***

This assignment is worth **25%** of your final grade and will be marked individually.

Your task is to interview a faculty member at a different university about their “favourite” theory in their field, and why they evaluate it in this way. Choose a faculty member who you do not know, and whose work you admire. This is an opportunity to get to know them. You may consult with your supervisor about who might be good to reach out to. Choose 2 or 3 potential interviewees in case your preferred interviewee is busy. Once you have settled on people you would like to know, email the first one to request a 45 minute meeting about their preferred theory, explaining it is for an assignment for an introductory PhD seminar on theory. Prepare 8-10 questions in advance, and plan for a conversational interview. You may wish to practice the questions with a friend from the class. I recommend that you record the interview and have it transcribed; this will make it easier to complete the assignment.



Your deliverable is an essay in which you (a) summarize the interview, (b) assess whether you agree or disagree with their opinion and (c) distill two to three lessons about what constitutes excellent theory in your field. In order to write a thoughtful essay, you will need to carefully read the theory that they identified as their favourite.

The essay should be 5 pages long, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a reference section listing the articles you read to complete the assignment. This essay should be uploaded to the assignment dropbox by the due date.

***Your theory: In-class journal and Essay***

This assignment is worth **30%** of your final grade and will be marked individually.

Your task is to develop a novel theory about a phenomenon of interest. The essay you develop that explains this theory should include: a research question or problem statement, a theoretical rationale/literature review that motivates the question/statement, an exposition of the theory, including mechanisms, and a statement of contributions to scholarly conversation. You will be given time in class to play with and develop your ideas.

This assignment will be graded based on two components:

**In-class journal** (10%): You will be provided time each week to work on your theory in a hand-written journal. Please bring paper and pencil to each class to develop this journal. The journal will be handed in along with the essay.

**Essay** (20%): The essay should be 15 pages long, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a reference section listing the articles you read to complete the assignment, using APA format. This essay should be uploaded to the assignment dropbox by the due date. If you are excited about your theory, I encourage you to develop it further to submit it to ASAC or another conference of your choosing in the new year.

***Participation***

Participation in class is worth **25%** of your final grade.

You are expected to attend each session, having prepared the day's assigned readings and advance our collective understanding through your comments and questions. IScholarship is a conversation, and a seminar is a discussion: your feedback, views, questions and points of misunderstanding and breakthrough will help elevate everyone's learning. If you are unable to attend due to illness or another unavoidable issue, you must do your best to inform me in advance.

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**COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK**

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Students who wish to correspond with instructors or other TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Program Administrator.

Students who have concerns about the course content, evaluation methods, or delivery should first reach out to the course instructor. If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, you may then reach out to the relevant Area Chair for further consideration.



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### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

[www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work. Such behaviour includes:

- following the expectations articulated by instructors for referencing sources of information and for group work;
- asking for clarification of expectations as necessary;
- identifying testing situations that may allow copying;
- preventing their work from being used by others (e.g., protecting access to computer files); and
- adhering to the principles of academic integrity when conducting and reporting research.

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### **AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION**

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**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

**All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

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### **COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT**

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**All courses** use some online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

Students may be required to use the Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor. The Respondus LockDown Browser is a downloadable program that allows a student to take an Avenue to Learn quiz in a secure environment. Quizzes can be set to use LockDown Browser or LockDown Browser.

For more details about McMaster's use of Respondus Lockdown Browser please go to <https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/respondus-lockdown-browser-and-respondus-monitor/>

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

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### **ONLINE PROCTORING**

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Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

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### **CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS**

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As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx, Teams, or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

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### **ATTENDANCE**

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Arriving late or missing class disrupts the learning experience for both you and your peers. Punctuality and attendance are crucial to maintaining a respectful, professional and productive environment for everyone, including our faculty.

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### ***MISSED ACADEMIC WORK***

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#### ***Missed Tests / Assignments/ Class Participation***

Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) as this is for Undergraduate students only. The PhD program will not accept an MSAF.

For scheduled courses where the end date is known and aligns to sessional dates, a grade must be supplied by the end of the course. Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course but must assign an Incomplete grade (INC) at the end of the course. Normally this extension is in the range of a few weeks. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the instructor to report the grade by the sessional deadline noted as 'Final Date to Submit Results of Incomplete Grades'. If the INC grade is not cleared by the deadline, normally an F grade will be entered.

If a student is approved for an extension, they and instructors should make arrangements and submit an Incomplete (INC) Grade Memo to [busphd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:busphd@mcmaster.ca). If the student is not able to complete their course requirements by the INC deadline, they should submit a Request for Extension and be specific regarding the new deadline.

Missing Grade Memo is required if instructors are unable to submit any grades via Mosaic. The instructor must submit a Missing Grade Memo to [busphd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:busphd@mcmaster.ca).

Reasons for Incomplete course work can include:

- Health-related or extenuating circumstances
- Representing the University at an academic or varsity event
- Religious obligations
- Conflicts between two (or more) overlapping scheduled assignments.

#### ***Failing a Course***

Failure a course is reviewed by the appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean Graduate Studies in the Faculty. The Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean Graduate Studies requests a departmental recommendation regarding the student, and this recommendation is given considerable weight. In the absence of a departmental recommendation to allow the student to continue, the student will be required to withdraw. Those allowed to remain in the program must either repeat or replace the failed course or milestone, per the decision of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study. A failing grade in a Certificate, Diploma, Master's or Doctoral course remains on the transcript. Students who fail a second course or milestone will not normally be allowed to continue in the program.

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### ***ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES***

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Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward



a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

### Process for Students

- Students must activate their accommodation(s) (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.) for each upcoming test, assignment, or exam, at least two weeks in advance. Students can do this by emailing their Instructor and the PhD Program Administrator ([busphd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:busphd@mcmaster.ca)). If a student cannot meet this deadline, they should contact to discuss alternative arrangements. The program is committed to exploring flexibilities where possible to support students.
- Students will leverage the accommodation (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.), in a designated testing room. Rooms will be booked according to the student's SAS accommodation. Unless the accommodation states otherwise, students should expect that they will be writing in a room with other students. One or more invigilators will always be in the room. Students may also take their tests/exams at the SAS test centre on main campus.
- Following the request to activate the accommodation(s), [busphd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:busphd@mcmaster.ca) will reach out to the student with their test, assignment, or exam details, including the date, time, and room number.

All policies and procedures, including restroom access, how extra-time is allocated for assessments under Universal Design, and the submission of memory aids in advance, are consistent with those of SAS on Main Campus. The only variance in procedure is communication around, and physical location of, assessment. There is not a dedicated testing space at RJC or DSB. Existing classrooms and lecture halls will be used for most testing. All SAS-approved accommodations will be honoured by our staff; however, core testing elements are not eliminated in alternative testing formats. Students should expect and plan for invigilation, incidental noise, and other potential distractions.

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### ***ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)***

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Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to the SEAO (Student Experience Academic Office) ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

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### ***COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING***

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Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.



The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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### ***POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE***

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The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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### ***RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS***

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#### ***ONLY IF APPLICABLE***

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental moral commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge, and understanding. As a research-intensive institution, McMaster University shares this commitment in its promotion of responsible research. The fundamental imperative of research involving human participation is respect for human dignity and well-being. To this end, the University endorses the ethical principles cited in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans:

<http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca>

McMaster University has mandated its Research Ethics Boards to ensure that all research investigations involving human participants are in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement. The University is committed, through its Research Ethics Boards, to assisting the research community in identifying and addressing ethical issues inherent in research, recognizing that all members of the University share a commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards in research involving humans.

If you are conducting original research, it is vital that you behave in an ethical manner. For example, everyone you speak to must be made aware of your reasons for eliciting their responses and consent to providing information. Furthermore, you must ensure everyone understands that participation is entirely voluntary. Please refer to the following website for more information about McMaster University's research ethics guidelines:

<http://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Organizations that you are working with are likely to prefer that some information be treated as confidential. Ensure that you clarify the status of all information that you receive from your client. You **MUST** respect this request and cannot present this information in class or communicate it in any form, nor can you discuss it outside your group. Furthermore, you must continue to respect this confidentiality even after the course is over.

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### ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES***

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Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of PhD B790 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined

above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

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***ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE***

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Do not use AI for your work in this course at all. It is crucial that you yourself do all the readings, develop the theories, and draft and polish the assignments. Use of AI has been showed to diminish people's critical abilities, and if used in this course, will interfere with your ability to learn, practice and retain the material.

COURSE SCHEDULE

**B790**  
**Workshop on Theory Building in Management**  
**Fall 2025 Course Schedule**

WEEK	DATE & DUE DATES	TOPIC, READINGS, DISCUSSION TOPICS
1	September 11, 2025	<p><b><i>What is management theory for and why are we all here, anyway? Understanding the history of management schools &amp; the purpose of management theory in society</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Khurana, Rakesh. 2007. Chapters 1-4 in <i>From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession</i>. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 1: An occupation in search of legitimacy</li> <li>- Chapter 2: Ideas of order: Science, the professions and the university in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century America</li> <li>- Chapter 3: The invention of the university-based business school</li> <li>- Chapter 4: 'A very ill-defined institution': The business school as aspiring professional school</li> </ul> <p>Mayo et al. (2021). Organizational Science and Healthcare. <i>Academy of Management Annals</i>, 15(2): 537.</p> <p>Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Christina T. Fong. "The business school 'business': Some lessons from the US experience." <i>Journal of management studies</i> 41, no. 8 (2004): 1501-1520.</p> <p>Spicer, André, Zahira Jaser, and Caroline Wiertz. "The future of the business school: Finding hope in alternative pasts." <i>Academy of Management Learning &amp; Education</i> 20, no. 3 (2021): 459-466.</p> <p><u>2 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are business schools, and what is their role in society?</li> <li>- What is the purpose of management and business administration theory and who is its audience?</li> <li>- What are your goals in joining McMaster's PhD program?</li> <li>- Why academia instead of consulting?</li> <li>- What do we do better than consultants?</li> </ul>

		<p><u>3 - Additional, optional readings</u></p> <p>Anteby, Michel. "The ideology of silence at the Harvard Business School: Structuring faculty's teaching tasks for moral relativism." In <i>The structuring of work in organizations</i>, vol. 47, pp. 103-121. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2016.</p> <p>Fotaki, Marianna, and Ajneesh Prasad. "Questioning neoliberal capitalism and economic inequality in business schools." <i>Academy of Management Learning &amp; Education</i> 14, no. 4 (2015): 556-575.</p>
2	<p>September 18, 2025</p> <p>Critical assessment #1 due</p>	<p><b><i>The craft of academia and progress of ideas</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Mills, C. Wright. 1959. "On Intellectual Craftsmanship." In <i>The Sociological Imagination</i>, 195–226. New York: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Bechky, Beth A. &amp; Gerald F. Davis. 2024. "Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Organizational Theory." <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> 67 (4): 945–972.</p> <p>Kuhn, Thomas S. 1970. <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i>. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>Grix, Jonathan. "Introducing students to the generic terminology of social research." <i>Politics</i> 22, no. 3 (2002): 175-186.</p> <p><a href="https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/a-company-reminder-for-everyone-to-talk-nicely-about-the-giant-plagiarism-machine">https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/a-company-reminder-for-everyone-to-talk-nicely-about-the-giant-plagiarism-machine</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/18/opinion/ai-chatgpt-school.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/18/opinion/ai-chatgpt-school.html</a></p> <p><u>2 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does Mills mean by intellectual craftsmanship? How does his thinking align with Davis and Bechky's call to recommit to craftsmanship?</li> <li>- What is a scholarly program of research? What is your vision for your program?</li> <li>- How do ideas progress over time?</li> <li>- How is AI likely to shift or disrupt these patterns?</li> </ul>
3	<p>September 25, 2025</p>	<p><b><i>Classic management philosophies and assumptions about human nature (1):</i></b> <b><i>Market-based / rational</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p>

		<p>Coase, R. H. "The Nature of the Firm." <i>Economica</i> 4, no. 16 (1937): 386–405. <a href="https://doi.org/10.2307/2626876">https://doi.org/10.2307/2626876</a>.</p> <p>Gantt, Henry L. "A graphical daily balance in manufacture." <i>Journal of Fluids Engineering</i> 24 (1903): 1322-1331.</p> <p>Taylor, Frederick Winslow. "Principles and methods of scientific management." <i>Journal of Accountancy</i> 12, no. 3 (1911): 3.</p> <p>Smith, Adam. "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations." <i>Readings in economic sociology</i> (2002): 6-17.</p> <p><u>2 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the fundamental assumptions about human nature in this stream of management thinking?</li> <li>- Which of these assumptions hold up well? Which do not? What evidence do you have?</li> </ul>
4	October 2, 2025	<p><b><i>Classic management philosophies and assumptions about human nature (2) – humanistic, irrational</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Follett, Mary Parker. 1919. Community is a Process. <i>Philosophical Review</i>, 28(6):576-588.</p> <p>Follett, Mary Parker. 1926. The Giving of Orders. <i>Scientific Foundations of Business Administration</i>.</p> <p>Mayo, Elton &amp; Smith, J.H. 1998. Chapter 4 in <i>The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilisation</i>. First Edition. Routledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4: Hawthorne and the Western Electric Company</li> </ul> <p>Thaler, Richard H. "From homo economicus to homo sapiens." <i>Journal of economic perspectives</i> 14, no. 1 (2000): 133-141.</p> <p>Price, Brian. "Frank and Lillian Gilbreth and the manufacture and marketing of motion study, 1908-1924." <i>Business and economic history</i> (1989): 88-98.</p> <p><u>2 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the fundamental assumptions about human nature in this stream of management thinking?</li> <li>- Which of these assumptions hold up well? Which do not? What evidence do you have?</li> </ul> <p><u>3 - Additional readings</u></p> <p>Weber, Max. <i>The Protestant ethic and the "spirit" of capitalism: and other writings</i>. Penguin, 2002.</p>
5	October 9, 2025	No class this week.
6	October 15, 2025	<p><b><i>What is good theory?</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Developing your research question and specifying why it matters</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Weick, Karl E. "Theory construction as disciplined imagination." <i>Academy of management review</i> 14, no. 4 (1989): 516-531.</p> <p>Davis, M. S. 1971. "<i>That's interesting!</i>" <i>Philosophy of Social Science</i>, 1: 309-344.</p> <p>Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chapters 3 &amp; 4 (pgs 40-72) in <i>The craft of research</i>. University of Chicago press, 2009.+  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 3: From topics to questions</li> <li>- Chapter 4: From questions to problems</li> </ul> </p> <p>Ashford, Susan J. "Having scholarly impact: The art of hitting academic home runs." <i>Academy of Management Learning &amp; Education</i> 12, no. 4 (2013): 623-633.</p> <p>Sutton, Robert I., and Barry M. Staw. 1995. "What Theory Is Not." <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> 40 (3): 371–384.</p> <p>Sterling, Robert R. "On theory construction and verification." <i>The Accounting Review</i> 45, no. 3 (1970): 444-457.</p> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles</u>: read and assess the research question for the article from your area.</p> <p><b>MOBHR</b>: Rothbard, Nancy P. "Enriching or depleting? The dynamics of engagement in work and family roles." <i>Administrative science quarterly</i> 46, no. 4 (2001): 655-684.</p>

		<p><b>Health Policy &amp; Management:</b> Kerrissey et al. (2021). Joint problem-solving orientation in fluid cross-boundary teams. <i>Academy of Management Discoveries</i> 7(3): 381.</p> <p><b>Accounting:</b> Bamber, L. S., John (Xuefeng) Jiang, &amp; Wang, I. Y. (2010). What's My Style? The Influence of Top Managers on Voluntary Corporate Financial Disclosure. <i>The Accounting Review</i>, 85(4), 1131–1162.</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Breeden, Douglas T. 1979. An Intertemporal Asset Pricing Model with Stochastic Consumption and Investment Opportunities. <i>Journal of Financial Economics</i>, 7, 265-96.</p> <p><b>IS:</b> Hevner, Alan R., Salvatore T. March, Jinsoo Park, and Sudha Ram. "Design science in information systems research." <i>MIS quarterly</i> (2004): 75-105</p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> Mohliver, Aharon, Donal Crilly, and Aseem Kaul. "Corporate social counterpositioning: How attributes of social issues influence competitive response." <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> 44, no. 5 (2023): 1199-1217</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the difference between a good and a bad theory?</li> <li>- What makes a theory endure?</li> <li>- Thinking back to the readings from Weeks 2 &amp; 3: Which of the theories is the "best," in your opinion?</li> <li>- What makes for an excellent research question?</li> <li>- What makes for a poor research question?</li> <li>- Where do good research questions come from?</li> <li>- What did you conclude about the quality of the theory and research question for the article from your area? How did the other assigned readings help you assess its quality?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper:</u> Bring a sheet of paper with three research questions you might pose about your personal phenomenon of interest. You will have time in class to workshop your questions with the group. Choose questions and a phenomenon that are of deep interest to you; this will be the beginning of your paper for this course.</p>
7	October 22, 2025	<p><b><i>Problematizing the literature and building a theoretical foundation for the project</i></b></p> <p>Please come to class having read all the assigned reading.</p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p>



		<p>Locke, Karen, and Karen Golden-Biddle. "Constructing opportunities for contribution: Structuring intertextual coherence and "problematizing" in organizational studies." <i>Academy of Management journal</i> 40, no. 5 (1997): 1023-1062.</p> <p>Webster, Jane, and Richard T. Watson. "Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review." <i>MIS quarterly</i> (2002): xiii-xxiii.</p> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles</u>: read and assess the way the article from your area problematizes the literature</p> <p><i>MOBHR</i>: Barley, S. R. (1986). Technology as an occasion for structuring: Evidence from observations of CT scanners and the social order of radiology departments. <i>Administrative science quarterly</i>, 78-108.</p> <p><i>Health Policy &amp; Management</i>: Valentine &amp; Edmondson (2015) Team Scaffolds: How Mesolevel Structures Enable Role-Based Coordination in Temporary Groups. <i>Organization Science</i> 26(2):405-422.</p> <p><i>Accounting</i>: Ball, Ray, and Philip Brown. "Portfolio theory and accounting." <i>Journal of accounting research</i> (1969): 300-323</p> <p><i>Finance</i>: Baker, M., &amp; Wurgler, J. (2006). Investor sentiment and the cross-section of stock returns. <i>Journal of Finance</i>, 61(4), 1645-1680.</p> <p><i>IS</i>: DeLone, William H., and Ephraim R. McLean. "The DeLone and McLean model of information systems success: a ten-year update." <i>Journal of management information systems</i> 19, no. 4 (2003): 9-30</p> <p><i>Strategy</i>: Galvin, Benjamin M., Donald Lange, and Blake E. Ashforth. "Narcissistic organizational identification: Seeing oneself as central to the organization's identity." <i>Academy of Management Review</i> 40, no. 2 (2015): 163-181</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are some different ways to "problematize the literature"?</li> <li>- Why do we need to engage with current literature?</li> <li>- What is useful or not so useful about framing a paper around a "gap"?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper</u>: Come to class having sketched out the key literatures that your research question is rooted in. Think critically about their key assumptions and how you might bring them together to motivate the research question.</p>
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8	<p>October 29, 2025</p> <p><b><i>Building your theory: Concepts, mechanisms, hypotheses and propositions</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Coleman, James S. "Social Theory, Social Research, and a Theory of Action." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 91, no. 6 (1986): 1309–35.  <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/2779798">http://www.jstor.org/stable/2779798</a>.</p> <p>Hedström, Peter, and Richard Swedberg. "Social mechanisms." <i>Acta sociologica</i> 39, no. 3 (1996): 281-308.</p> <p>Becker, Howard. (1998) Chapter 4 in <i>Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're Doing it</i>. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press (pg. 109-214).</p> <p>- Chapter 4: Concepts</p> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles: read and assess the quality of the theory for the one from your area</u></p> <p><b>MOBHR:</b> Lee Cunningham, Julia, Laura Sonday, and Susan J. Ashford. "Do I dare? The psychodynamics of anticipated image risk, leader-identity endorsement, and leader emergence." <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> 66, no. 2 (2023): 374-401.</p> <p><b>Health Policy &amp; Management:</b> Nembhard &amp; Edmondson (2006). Making it safe: The effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. <i>Journal of Organizational Behaviour</i>, 27, 941–966.</p> <p><b>Accounting:</b> Francis, J., Philbrick, D., &amp; Schipper, K. (1994). Shareholder litigation and corporate disclosures. <i>Journal of Accounting Research</i>, 32(2), 137-.</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Almeida, H., Campello, M., &amp; Weisbach, M. S. (2004). The cash flow sensitivity of cash. <i>Journal of Finance</i>, 59(4), 1777-1804.</p> <p><b>IS:</b> Benbasat, Izak, and Robert W. Zmud. "The identity crisis within the IS discipline: Defining and communicating the discipline's core properties." <i>MIS quarterly</i> (2003): 183-194.</p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> Lovelace, Jeffrey B., Jonathan Bundy, Timothy G. Pollock, and Donald C. Hambrick. "The push and pull of attaining CEO celebrity: A media routines perspective." <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> 65, no. 4 (2022): 1169-1191.</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u></p>
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		<p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are mechanisms?</li> <li>- What are the trade-offs of simplicity vs complexity in building theory?</li> <li>- How do you determine the right unit of analysis?</li> <li>- What happens if you shift the unit of analysis?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper:</u> Come to class with some ideas about the key mechanisms that might matter in answering your research question.</p>
9	<p>November 5, 2025</p> <p>Interview with a Faculty Member Assignment due</p>	<p><b><i>Building your theory: Arguments, logic and claims</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chapters 7, 8, 9 (pgs 114-149) in <i>The craft of research</i>. University of Chicago press, 2009.+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 7: Making good arguments: An overview</li> <li>- Chapter 8: Claims</li> <li>- Chapter 9: Reasons and evidence</li> </ul> <p>Becker, Howard. (1998) Chapter 5 in <i>Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're Doing it</i>. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press (pg. 109-214).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 5: Logic</li> </ul> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles:</u> read and assess the quality of the arguments, logic and claims for the article from your area</p> <p><b>MOBHR:</b> McGinn, Kathleen L., and Katherine L. Milkman. "Looking up and looking out: Career mobility effects of demographic similarity among professionals." <i>Organization Science</i> 24, no. 4 (2013): 1041-1060.</p> <p><b>Health Policy &amp; Management:</b> May, C. (2013). Towards a general theory of implementation. <i>Implementation Science</i>, 8:18.</p> <p><b>Accounting:</b> Sunder, Shyam. "Optimal choice between FIFO and LIFO." <i>Journal of Accounting Research</i> (1976): 277-300.</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Ben-Rephael, A., Carlin, B. I., Da, Z., &amp; Israelsen, R. D. (2025). Uncovering the hidden effort problem. <i>Journal of Finance</i>, 80(2), 1261-1311.</p> <p><b>IS:</b> Burton-Jones, Andrew, and Detmar W. Straub Jr. "Reconceptualizing system usage: An approach and empirical test." <i>Information systems research</i> 17, no. 3 (2006): 228-246</p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> Lee, Eric Y., John R. Busenbark, Michael C. Withers, and Edward J. Zajac. "How Music Theory Can Inform Competitive Dynamics: Anticipatory</p>

		<p>Awareness and Successful Preemption." <i>Academy of Management Review</i> ja (2024): amr-2022.</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is a good argument? What is a less convincing argument?</li> <li>- What is the distinction between reasons and evidence?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper:</u> Bring a sheet of paper with your key hypotheses, or propositions for your individual paper. You will have the opportunity to workshop them in class.</p>
10	November 12, 2025	<p><b><i>Building your theory: Contributions</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Lange, Donald &amp; Michael F. Pfarrer. 2017. "Editors' Comments: Sense and Structure—The Core Building Blocks of an AMR article." <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 42(3): 407-416.</p> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles:</u> read and assess the contributions claimed for the article from your area</p> <p><i>MOBHR</i>: Dacin, M. T., Munir, K., &amp; Tracey, P. (2010). Formal dining at Cambridge colleges: Linking ritual performance and institutional maintenance. <i>Academy of management journal</i>, 53(6), 1393-1418.</p> <p><i>Health Policy &amp; Management</i>: Greenhalgh &amp; Stones (2010). Theorising big IT programmes in healthcare: Strong structuration theory meets actor-network theory. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i> 70(9): 1285.</p> <p><i>Accounting</i>: Healy, Paul M. "The effect of bonus schemes on accounting decisions." <i>Journal of accounting and economics</i> 7, no. 1-3 (1985): 85-107</p> <p><i>Finance</i>: Greenwood, R., &amp; Sammon, M. (2025). The disappearing index effect. <i>Journal of Finance</i>, 80(2), 657-698.</p> <p><i>IS</i>: Sarker, Suprateek, Sutirtha Chatterjee, Xiao Xiao, and Amany Elbanna. "The sociotechnical axis of cohesion for the IS discipline." <i>MIS quarterly</i> 43, no. 3 (2019): 695-A5.</p> <p><i>Strategy</i>: Bridoux, Flore, and John W. Stoelhorst. "Microfoundations for stakeholder theory: Managing stakeholders with heterogeneous motives." <i>Strategic management journal</i> 35, no. 1 (2014): 107-125.</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u></p>

		<p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is a contribution?</li> <li>- What is the distinction between empirical, theoretical and practical contributions?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper:</u> What are the key contributions of your theory? Bring a list of them. Be sure to map them to the literature: consider making a table with a column detailing each contribution and a column explaining how each contribution relates to the problems you have identified in the literature.</p>
11	<p>November 19, 2025</p> <p>Critical assessment #2 due</p>	<p><b><u>Writing well &amp; visuals</u></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Colin Fisher: <a href="https://open.substack.com/pub/colinmfisher/p/issue-7-how-i-became-a-good-writer?r=r7zrk&amp;utm_campaign=post&amp;utm_medium=email">https://open.substack.com/pub/colinmfisher/p/issue-7-how-i-became-a-good-writer?r=r7zrk&amp;utm_campaign=post&amp;utm_medium=email</a></p> <p>Ezra Zuckerman, “Tips to Article Writers”: <a href="https://mitsloan.mit.edu/shared/ods/documents?PublicationDocumentID=7627">https://mitsloan.mit.edu/shared/ods/documents?PublicationDocumentID=7627</a></p> <p>Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chapters 14, 15, 16 (pgs 222-281) in <i>The craft of research</i>. University of Chicago press, 2009.+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 14: Introduction and conclusion</li> <li>- Chapter 15: Communicating evidence visually</li> <li>- Chapter 16: Revising style: Telling your story clearly</li> </ul> <p><u>2 - Exemplar articles:</u> read and assess the quality of the writing for the article from your area</p> <p><i>MOBHR</i>: Chambliss, D. F. (1989). The mundanity of excellence: An ethnographic report on stratification and Olympic swimmers. <i>Sociological theory</i>, 7(1), 70-86.</p> <p><i>Health Policy &amp; Management</i>: Bullock et al. (2021). Understanding the implementation of evidence-informed policies and practices from a policy perspective: a critical interpretive synthesis. <i>Implementation Science</i>, 16:18.</p> <p><i>Accounting</i>: Ball, Ray, and Philip Brown. "Portfolio theory and accounting." <i>Journal of accounting research</i> (1969): 300-323.</p> <p><i>Finance</i>: Grossman, S., and J. Stiglitz, 1980, “On the impossibility of informationally efficient markets,” <i>American Economic Review</i> 70, 393-408.</p>

		<p><i>IS</i>: Venkatesh, Viswanath, Michael G. Morris, Gordon B. Davis, and Fred D. Davis. "User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view." <i>MIS quarterly</i> (2003): 425-478.</p> <p><i>Strategy</i>: Webb, Justin W., Laszlo Tihanyi, R. Duane Ireland, and David G. Sirmon. "You say illegal, I say legitimate: Entrepreneurship in the informal economy." <i>Academy of management review</i> 34, no. 3 (2009): 492-510.</p> <p><u>3 - Discussion topics</u> Develop a visual of your theory (so far) and bring a paper copy to share with classmates.</p> <p>Please prepare these questions ahead of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the goal of writing?</li> <li>- Is writing the best way to communicate theory?</li> <li>- What are some attributes of good writing?</li> </ul> <p><u>4 – Individual paper</u>: We will do some writing practice in class. Bring a pen!</p>
12	November 26, 2025	<p><b><i>In-class theory conference</i></b></p> <p>In this class, you will share the theories you are developing with each other. Bring hand-outs summarizing your theory's key aspects (e.g., research question, literature, predictions, and contributions).</p>
13	December 3, 2025  Theory paper and hand-written in-class journal due	<p><b><i>Communicating your theory, publishing it &amp; building a scholarly program of research</i></b></p> <p><u>1 - Readings to be completed ahead of class</u></p> <p>Weber, Max. 1946. "Science as a Vocation." In <i>From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology</i>, edited by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 129–156. New York: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Skim the following collection of pieces and consider how they hang together and communicate the theory Neeley constructed:</p> <p>Neeley, Tsedal B. "Language matters: Status loss and achieved status distinctions in global organizations." <i>Organization Science</i> 24, no. 2 (2013): 476-497</p> <p>Neeley, Tsedal. "<u>Language and Globalization: 'Englishnization' at Rakuten (A).</u>" Harvard Business School Case 412-002, August 2011. (Revised April 2013.)</p>

		<p>Neeley, Tsedal. "Global Business Speaks English: Why You Need a Language Strategy Now." Harvard Business Review 90, no. 5 (May 2012): 116–124.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8VoxpR08Vg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8VoxpR08Vg</a></p> <p><u>2 - Discussion topics</u></p> <p>Come ready to share what you learned in your interviews with scholars about how they built their research programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do we communicate our work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o How to identify conferences</li> <li>o How to identify outlets</li> <li>o How to submit articles</li> <li>o Academic vs. practitioner outlets vs. media</li> <li>o Navigating the review process</li> <li>o How do we move from Paper 1 to 2 to 3...?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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