Course information for PhD course on institutional theory, April 2012

Welcome to the PhD course on institutional theory at Uppsala University. The course is an intensive format course – full time (0900-1600) for five days (April 16-20, 2012). The learning philosophy is one of learning through active participation, which means that the major part of the course will consist of seminar-form discussions around the prescribed readings. It is thus absolutely essential that all participants have read all the literature in advance.

The aim of the course is that the participants will gain an understanding of the fundamentals of institutional analysis of organizations, its intellectual heritage, some of the most common research methods used in institutional analysis, and where the field is currently moving. Active participation in ALL the sessions is a requirement for a passing grade in the course, and the examination will be in the form of an individual essay that is to be submitted no later than one month after the end of the course – i.e. May 20, 2012. The essay must analytically engage the literature covered in the course and it should be no longer than 15 pages (double spaced text).

Due to Swedish copyright law we are not allowed to provide you with the reading material that is published, but the good news is that most of it is directly available through e-libraries, and with respect to the book chapters you will have to show initiative.

(Useful information regarding accomodation etc., please see the last page)
Readings Day 1 – Background

Forenoon

Marie Laure Djelic

Foundations and Intellectual History:


Afternoon

Stefan Jonsson

Key Notions 1 – Structure and agency in institutional theory

Institutional theory is in a sense a response to the question of how the “outside” influences organizations in a broad sense. A core question among institutional theorists has been to understand and grapple with the question of agency and structure; is there a role for actors in institutions and if so, what are the limits of actorhood?

In this section we will read four examples of (broadly) institutional texts that take different approaches to structure and agency. The aim of the session is to problematize the use and discontinuities of agency and structure within institutional theory.


Readings day 2 – Fundamentals

Forenoon

Kerstin Sahlin

Key notions 2 - Diffusion & Translation This lecture deals with the diffusion and translation of ideas and organizational elements. The adoption among many organizations of widely diffused organizational elements, management techniques and management ideals is one main mechanism through which organizations – across social sectors and continents – become homogenized. The literature dealt with in this part of the course directs attention to the mechanism of this circulation. A special focus is directed to Scandinavian literature, where this circulation has been analyzed as processes of translation and editing. Such conceptual frameworks have particularly highlighted the dynamic aspects of circulating ideas; how and why ideas become widespread, how they are translated as they flow and with what organizational consequences.


Afternoon

Marie Laure Djelic

Qualitative Strategies in Institutional Theory


Day 3 – Fundamentals

Forenoon Marie Laure Djelic

Key notions 3: Fields and Legitimacy


**Afternoon**

**Stefan Jonsson**

**Quantitative methods – When do things happen?**

Institutional theory differs in some respect from many other theories in that it is often equally interesting to figure out what leads to action as it is to understand what leads to the absence of action. For instance, a core idea of institutional theory is that what is not compatible with norms will be avoided – almost regardless of its technical efficiency. From a methodological point of view it is thus important to have tools that take care of analyzing the time it takes to an action, as well as what prompts the action. Event history analysis is one such method. We will read four texts where event history methodology has been used to answer different questions related to institutional theories.


**Day 4 – New Directions**

**Roy Suddaby**

**Forenoon**


Afternoon


Day 5 – Wrapping up

Forenoon

Nils Brunsson


Afternoon

Stefan Jonsson

No readings. The afternoon will be spent presenting and discussing ideas and drafts for your course papers.
Useful information:

**Uppsala web map:**
http://katalog.uu.se/map/sv_karta_2/ (Ekonomikum, Kyrkogårdsgr. 10 C)

**Arriving by train:** from the central station take bus no. 5 to Ekonomikum, Luthagsleden/Kyrkogårdsgratan

**Arriving by car:** from Stockholm/E4: drive to exit Uppsala S, go straight forward in the roundabout where the motorway (E4) ends. Follow the Tycho Hedéns väg until you reach the intersection with Råbyvägen. Turn left. Follow the Råbyvägen until you reach a roundabout (Police Headquarters on the right hand) which you follow straight through. Råbyvägen changes name to Luthagsesplanaden. Follow Luthagsesplanaden, turn left at the junction Luthagsesplanaden/ Kyrkogårdsgratan. After 10 meters turn right to the parking lot. Special parking tickets at a discount, see below.

Parking: A parking ticket with a special parking permit can be bought at the informationdesk/Ekonomikum (next to the restaurant Humlan, plan 1), price: 20 kr/day.

**Recommended hotels:** http://fek.uu.se/forskarutbildning/index.asp?page=doktorandkurser