Amsterdam Business Research Institute

Social Network Analysis

Course Manual
Academic Year 2017-2018
Faculty
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Course Coordinator

Target groups
The course Social Network Analysis 2017-2018 is open to PhD candidates and research master students from the VU and the Netherlands engaged in research projects broadly related to business administration or organization studies. This is an advanced methods course that assumes basic prior understanding of business administration topics or organization studies and basic understanding of quantitative business research methods. The course workload represents 3 ECTS.

Course Content
A network perspective on organizational and management questions continues to appeal to a wide range of research domains. These include organizational behavior, knowledge management, HRM, entrepreneurship, information systems, and many more. The diversity in theoretical approaches to network research has yielded diverse methodological approaches, analyzing both structural and relational dimensions of networks and networking in organizational settings. The focus of this course is on providing basic knowledge and understanding of network theories with an emphasis on social network analysis (SNA) applications in intra- and interorganizational processes. The course draws on conceptual and empirical research in these areas to investigate the antecedents and consequences of social networks – emergence and change in relationships and how network configurations influence important outcomes such as career progress, innovation and performance. In addition to being able to critically review cutting-edge network research, participants develop a methodological basis that will allow them to design a network study in their own area of interest with a close attention to data collection, management and analysis issues. Finally, they will gain hands-on experience with specialized software for analyzing social networks (UCINET).

Learning Objectives
After a successful completion of this course participants:
- understand main social network theories and concepts
- can identify and describe different levels of analysis and formulate/solve research problems in terms of network variables
- are able to apply key concepts of social network analysis in a self-selected area of research to design own research project
- can use specialized software for network analysis (UCINET) to analyze and interpret research hypotheses
**Course Design**

The course is organized around four half day sessions in September and October 2017 and individual assignments. Each of the first three sessions is dedicated to one aspect of network analysis, and will consist of two parts: a lecture including an interactive discussion in which the topic is introduced and an afternoon part in which participants work with Ucinet. Participants are expected to come well prepared to these sessions. The final session is organized in a form of a mini-conference in which participants present their research proposals and provide/receive comments in the role of a reviewer.

There are two assignments, in the first (Ucinet) assignment participants analyze a provided dataset to explore the data, test hypotheses, interpret parameters, and report on the findings. In the second assignment, participants apply social network analysis approach to develop a research proposal in a self-selected area of research. This proposal includes a theoretical justification and research design outlining the major data collection, management and analysis issues. The papers will be presented during the mini-conference (last session of the course). All participants are expected to complete these assignments individually. Assignments and evaluation criteria for grading will be explained separately.

**Workload and credits**

The estimated time participants spend on study activities is:

- Attending Lectures and Interactive Assignment Sessions: 16 hours
- Studying Literature: 30 hours
- Completing the Individual Assignments: 40 hours
- **Total**: 86 hours (3 ECTS)

**Grading**

Attendance and active participation in the sessions is mandatory to pass this course. The required readings mentioned above are assumed to have been read prior to class. In addition, for the first three sessions participants will be assigned as paper discussants on a voluntary basis. The paper discussant has five to ten minutes to present the gist of the assigned paper, before launching the class discussion.

Grading is based on the following partial grades:

- 30% class participation
- 20% Ucinet assignment
- 50% final paper and presentation

All participants receive 3 ECTS after successful completion of the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Morning session</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Afternoon session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 7 Thursday</td>
<td>HG-1G10</td>
<td>11:30-13:30</td>
<td>HG-1G28 (Comp)</td>
<td>14:30-16:30</td>
<td>Network concepts / Introduction to Ucinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 14 Thursday</td>
<td>HG-1G08</td>
<td>11:30-13:30</td>
<td>HG-1G28 (Comp)</td>
<td>14:30-16:30</td>
<td>Network theories / Visualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 21 Thursday</td>
<td>HG-1G-11</td>
<td>12:00-13:30</td>
<td>HG-1G28 (Comp)</td>
<td>14:30-16:30</td>
<td>Research design / Hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 19 Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HG-0G08</td>
<td>13:30-16:30</td>
<td>Mini-conference</td>
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**Literature**


Additional literature in the form of reviews and empirical articles