SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT

Reg. no U 2018/456

Department of Business Administration

EHFE003, Critical Management Studies, 7.5 credits

Critical Management Studies,

7,5 hp

Third Cycle/Forskarutbildningsnivå

General information

The course EHFE003 is a course in Business Administration at the third cycle level.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies: Business Administration

Many researchers in social science and organization studies assume that companies and other organizations work for 'the common good', that their outputs make things better for customers, employees, owners and the general public. Organizational structures and practices are thought to accomplish organizational objectives and serve stakeholders. In short, organizational and institutional arrangements are seen as fair and unproblematic. In contrast, studies within critical management problematize the status quo. They focus on the 'darker' side of business and organizations.

The word 'critical' has, of course, a number of meanings. All research is critical in the sense that the researcher is observant and intolerant of weak argumentation, speculative statements, erroneous conclusions etc. In Critical Management Studies, 'critical' is understood as the stimulation of a more extensive reflection upon established ideas, ideologies and institutions in order to encourage liberation or at least reduce repression. Critical theory is referred to as a tradition of social science, including the Frankfurt School and related authors and lines of thought such as Marx, Foucault, poststructuralism, certain versions of feminism and so on. Critical Management Studies is a large an expanding research orientation, prominent in organization studies and sociology but also to some extent in accounting, marketing and strategy.

The PhD course aims to give an advanced introduction to the theoretical frameworks, research interests, methodologies and discussions in Critical Management Studies. The course will also give examples of critical studies and explores how critical research can be produced. Much space will be given for participants to present and get feedback on their ideas and projects.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding
- A thorough understanding of CMS – its background, definition, manifestations and implications.

Applying knowledge and understanding
- Applying the CMS literature to the personal research project
- Critical reflect on the CMS debates in research

Communication:
- Have an ability to form arguments for both research and public debate orally as well as in writing.

Course content
- Theoretical roots of CMS such as critical theory, post-structuralism, labour process theory, critical realism, post-colonialism and feminism
- Methodological issues in doing CMS
- Applying CMS in fields such as leadership and identity
- CMS and philosophy
- Performativity and non-performativity in CMS
- Ethics, aesthetics and CMS
- Publishing in CMS and the rise of 'excellence'

Assessment

Written paper based on student's own project (max 4.000 words).

Credits

Grades are Pass or Fail.

Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious academic offence. The University will take disciplinary actions against any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other improper practices in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University for a specific period of time.

Entry requirements

PhD students accepted to the PhD programme in Business Administration or an adjacent subject are eligible for the course.

Course literature

See separate literature list.

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Books

Alvesson, M., Bridgman, T., & Willmott, H. (Eds.). (2009). *The Oxford handbook of critical management studies*. Oxford University Press.

Jeanes, E., & Huzzard, T. (Eds.). (2014). *Critical Management Research: Reflections from the Field*. London: Sage.

Articles

Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. (2010) "Towards a New Manifesto" *New Left Review,* 65, 32–61

Alvesson, M. Gabriel, Y., Paulsen, R. (2017) The Problem: So Much Noise, So Little to Say. Chapter 1 in *Return to Meaning*

Alvesson, M. (2008). The future of critical management studies. In Barry, D., & Hansen, H. (Eds.) *The Sage handbook of new approaches in management and organization*. London: Sage.

Alvesson, M., & Spicer, A. (2012). A stupidity-based theory of organizations. *Journal of management studies*, *49*(7), 1194–1220.

Alvesson, M. and Kärreman, D. (2000) Varieties of discourse: on the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human Relations,* 53,9, 1125–1149.

Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. (2011) Decolonializing discourse: critical reflections on organizational discourse analysis. *Human Relations*, 64,9, 1121–1146

Gabriel, Y. (1995). The unmanaged organization: Stories, fantasies and subjectivity. *Organization Studies, 16*, 477–501.

Gabriel, Y. (2016). Psychoanalysis and the study of organization. In R. Mir, H. Willmott & M. Greenwood (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy in Organization Studies* (pp. 212–225). London: Routledge.

Gabriel, Y. (1991). Organizations and their discontents: A psychoanalytic contribution to the study of corporate culture. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 27*, 318–336.

Gorz, A. (1999) The lost magic of work. Chapter 3 in *Reclaiming work*. Cambridge: Polity.

Graeber, D. (2013) On the phenomenon of bullshit jobs. Strike! Magazine.

Louwanda E. & Wendy L.M. (2015) Impossible Burdens: White Institutions, Emotional Labor, and Micro-Resistance. *Social Problems* 2015 vol: 62 iss: 3 pg: 439 –454

Marcuse, M. (1968) Industrialization and capitalism in the work of Max Weber. Chapter 6 in *Negations*.

Spicer, A.; Mats Alvesson, and Dan Kärreman. 2009. "Critical performativity: The unfinished business of critical management studies." *Human relations* 62 (4):537–560.

Spicer, A., Mats Alvesson, and Dan Kärreman. 2016. "Extending critical performativity." *Human Relations* 69 (2):225–249.

Spoelstra, Sverre, and Peter Svensson. 2015. "Critical performativity." In *The Routledge Companion to Critical Management Studies*, 69.

Paulsen, R. (2013) How to succeed at work without really trying. Chapter 6 in *Empty Labor*

Weber, M. (1930) Asceticism and the spirit of capitalism. Chapter 5 in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.*

Wharton Amy S. 2009 "The Sociology of Emotional Labor." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35: 147–65