Template for Semester Descriptions of Study Programmes at Aalborg University

Semester description

Semester details
School of Business and Economics
Study board of business economics
Study regulations:

Semester framework theme
Internal processes of companies and organizations – including financial management and organisation

Semester organisation and time schedule
The I 2017 3rd semester consists of three elements: business law, management accounting and a module in organization, Qualitative methods and Project work. The relation between the three elements is that they all focus on internal processes of companies and organizations. Business law and Management accounting is standalone courses and will therefore be examined independently. In 2018 will the curriculum exchange business law with financial accounting. From September 2018 will lecture in qualitative methods introduce nomothetic and ideographic approaches in order to help students build a frame for comprehending the connecting between courses. At the same time will lectures instructions about supporting this process by including introduction to the comprehension of qualitative methods, ontology, epistemology, and thereby philosophy of science in their courses.

Semester coordinator and secretariat assistance
Names of anchor-person (teaching staff), course coordinator, semester coordinator (or similar title) and secretariat assistance provider(s).
Coordinator: Frederik Hertel, Associate Professor
Office Administrator: Julie Søgaard & Helle Nordentoft, Senior Secretary

Module description (description of each module)

Module title, ECTS credits (and possibly STADS code)
Organization theory & Qualitative methods: 15 ECTS

Location: Campus Aalborg, Fibigerstræde 4, 9220 Aalborg East
3rd semester

Module coordinator
Semester coordinator: Frederik Hertel
Organization theory & Qualitative methods: Frederik Hertel

Type and language

Module type:

Organization theory & Qualitative methods is module combining course module in Organization theory and Qualitative methods with project module involving organizational case study and elements from lectures.

Language of instruction: English

Objectives for Organization (EBA 3rd semester)

Knowledge: The student is expected to acquire research based, theoretical and practical knowledge about organizations and organizational theory. This means having theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding of areas such as:
- *Organizational culture, organizational metaphors, management & management metaphors, organizational changes, organizational structure, bureaucracy etc.*

Skills: The student is expected to acquire skills to
- *Discuss and evaluate different approaches to organizations and organizational theories*
- *Theoretical imagination, which means; a) the ability to create connection between different theoretical elements in order to create new and suitable approaches to organizational analysis, b) the ability to seek theoretical inspirations in other fields (e.g. sociology, anthropology, communication studies etc.) and c) the ability to develop at least a silhouette of new organizational theories.*

Competences: The student is expected to acquire skills to:
- *Analyse a specific organizational setting*
- *The ability to develop new concepts (incl. networks of concepts) from organizational case studies*
- *The ability to discuss and frame own organizational case studies by including relevant organizational theory. This can include inspiration from e.g. organizational sociology, organizational anthropology, communication studies, philosophy etc.*
- *The ability to conduct critical evaluation of own and others organizational case studies*
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Objectives for Qualitative methods:

Knowledge:
The student is expected to acquire research based, theoretical and practical knowledge about qualitative methods applied in business research based on case studies. This means having theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding of the following areas:
The difference between ideographic and nomothetic research approaches to business studies
Guidelines for ideographic research designs (incl. deductive and inductive methods)
The essential ideographic methods (participant observation, qualitative interviews, text analysis based on hermeneutics)
The difference between participant observations in organization sociology and organizational anthropology
The essential processes in organizational anthropology (the ethnographic field work and the following anthropological analysis).
The difference between essential genres of qualitative interviews (the qualitative research interview, focus groups, etc.).
The essential elements of qualitative interviews (preparing the interview, developing interview guides, interview techniques and analysing interviews etc.).
Essential aspects of hermeneutic text-/document analysis applied in business studies (selection of text for analysis, arguments for selection, hermeneutic principles for analysing texts, the principles of dissemination).

Skills
The student is expected to acquire skills to conduct critical evaluations of:
Ideographic research design (incl. deductive and inductive methods) applied in business studies
The use of qualitative methods applied in business research/business studies
Participant observations applied in organization sociology and organizational anthropology
Ethnographic fieldwork and anthropological analysis applied in business studies.
The use of qualitative research interviews, focus groups, etc.

Competences:

The student is expected to acquire the following competences:
The ability to develop inductive and deductive ideographic research designs suitable for a specific case study in a complex organizational setting.
Independently conducting an ideographic research process involving qualitative research methods (e.g. participant observations, qualitative research interviews and text analysis).
The cognitive skills for critical thinking, analysis and synthesis while conducting participant observations, qualitative interviews and text analysis. This includes the ability to plan, process and conduct critical self-evaluation of own ideographic case studies.
The ability to develop concepts and to create network of concepts from an ideographic research in an organizational setting. This includes the cognitive skills to theorize and to discuss own theorization in relation to relevant organizational theory.

Academic content and conjunction with other modules/semesters

The intention is to provide students with an overview of each module and to create understanding of the module in relation to the semester and the entire programme.

Scope and expected performance:

Organization & project work *(270 hours): 16 hours of lectures, 48 hours of preparation for lectures, 11 hours for assignments, 135 hours of project work and 60 hours of self-study.*

Qualitative Methods *(135): 16 hours of lectures (including a workshop), 30 hours of preparation for lectures, 29 hours for assignments, 60 hours of self-study.*

Participants:

The participants consist of about 70 ordinary students from EBA 3rd semester and about 45 top-up students following one of our 4 different tracks on the top-up program. Beside from these groups we use to include about 6 to 10 Erasmus-students.

Prerequisites for participation

Since it's our 3rd semester the ordinary students are supposed to pass 1st and 2nd semester before attending 3rd semester. Top-up students are either having an AP/BA from a Danish/European University college or having curriculum from universities outside the European Union.

Module activities (course sessions etc.)

See Moodle for contain and activities.

Examination: Since it's important the exam is not becoming a hidden curriculum for the students we will here use some lines to describe the exam. The exam will be oral group exam based on the student's project. Requirements include approval of participation in assignments, seminars or the like.

The PBL learning processes is not ending while students submit their project. The learning process includes the time spend on preparing exam and attending the exam. Examiner and censor are therefore including learning produced during the project work, the learning produced after submitting the project and the learning produced during exam while determine the final mark. The censor is obviously encouraged to participate in discussions during the examination.

After welcoming the students, the students present their suggestion for agenda. Examiner and censor can accept or change the suggested agenda. Be aware the examiner and censor must ensure that the official guidelines and regulations are maintained.

After the opening session each student make a short oral presentation (5 to 7 minutes) on a self-chosen subject. The presentation cannot be a repetition of the report already read by examiner and censor. It must be a new subject connected with the project e.g. running from the discussion, the theoretical, organizational analysis, qualitative methods etc. In other words, it must extend the perspective presented in the project report and produce a new approach, perspective etc. on the work being done. Students should probably ensure that their presentation is not only feedback from e.g. the manager in the case study but should also include elements making it possible for the examiner and censor to determine the theoretical understandings e.g. by including new theoretical approaches, concepts or by develop new concepts based on the empirical material produced during project work. The students must be allowed to determine

whether they accept questions during their presentations or they prefer to wait until after the presentation. After questions or discussions about the presentations the students.

At this point the students have the opportunity to suggest a number of themes (4 to 6) for discussions but the examiner and censor still maintain the rights to reject or adjust the suggestions. The students start the discussion but examiner and censor participate in the discussion in order to create a deeper understanding of the students learning and in order to continue the students learning process.

Examiner might use the discussion for addressing questions for the project. At the right point examiner ends the discussions and starts addressing essential questions to the project. At this point the examiner ask the censor for final questions. Afterwards the students are excused and the discussion between censor and examiner starts. The students are called back in the room and given the mark including a short explanation.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qT80FPHasJk