SYLLABUS

PhD Course – *Phenomenon-Driven Theory Development*

Prof. Robert W. Gregory (University of Miami)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction
Generating new theory is among the most challenging, and most rewarding, of academic endeavors. Theory not only helps distinguish academic scholarship from journalism and consulting, it also helps establish the identity and boundary of an academic discipline. A significant starting point for theorizing is oftentimes the researcher's intellectual dwelling with the phenomenon under study. Phenomenon-based theorizing is a powerful way of developing theories relevant to explain novel yet poorly understood phenomena (Fisher et al. 2021; Gregory & Henfridsson, 2021; Van de Ven, 2007).

Objective
The objective of the course is to familiarize the student with theory development in management and business technology research. The focus is on methods and practices that help the researcher to develop theories that are novel, insightful, and logical.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the module, the student should be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of theory:
    - What theory is, what theory is not
    - Boundary conditions
    - Perspectives of theory
    - Nature of theory
    - Levels of theory
    - "good" theory
- Demonstrate an understanding of theorizing:
    - Reasoning
    - Perspectives of theorizing
    - "Good" theorizing
    - Variance theorizing
    - Process theorizing
- Demonstrate an understanding of writing theory papers:
    - Positioning theory papers
    - Making theory accessible
    - Psychology of writing theory papers
    - Theoretical contribution
    - Problematization

Prerequisites
The student must be a PhD candidate.

Attendance: ***Physical attendance in the classroom is required for in-person classes*** and attendance (participation) will be part of the grade. Absences will only be excused in cases of documented serious illness, injury, isolation or quarantine, religious observance, or civic obligation.

If you will miss class for religious observance or a civic obligation, you must inform your instructor at least one week in advance. Any other absences such as absences for work related travel, or family emergency may be excused at the discretion of the faculty upon receiving supporting documentation. If at some point in the semester ***you cannot physically attend class sessions due to illness, injury, isolation, or quarantine***, you must contact Dr. Gregory to determine how to make up the work and catch up with the material. I will request documentation, such as a medical attestation. Unexcused absences from the classroom may affect your grade or lead to you failing the course. Your ***presence in class is essential*** to your ability to understand and apply the material covered in this course. Treat this class as you would any other professional obligation.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Laptops, smartphones, PDAs, and other electronic devices (such as recording equipment) may be used during class, if attending in person, to aid learning (not to check social media or to complete work from other courses).

Recordings are Prohibited: Students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course.

Course Timeline

The course will take place on August 26th and 27th. We will meet for two consecutive days from 9 am in the morning until 5 pm in the afternoon.

Course Schedule

Session 1:	**Phenomenon**
	- course introduction: objectives, contents, and assignment
	- identifying a phenomenon
	- establishing a phenomenon
Readings:	Van de Ven (2007, chapter 3), Fisher et al. (2021), Gregory and Henfridsson (2021)

Session 2:	**Theory**
	- what theory is
	- what theory is not
	- boundary conditions
Readings:	Bacharach (1989), Sutton and Staw (1995), Leidner and Gregory (2024)

Session 3:	**Perspectives of Theory**
	- what theory does
	- different perspectives of theory
Readings:	DiMaggio (1995), Kilduff et al. (2011), Leidner and Gregory (2024)

Session 4:	**Nature of Theory**
	- variance theory

- process theory

Readings:	Van de Ven (2007, chapter 5), Mohr (1982), Leidner and Gregory (2024)

Session 5: Levels of Theory
- different levels of theory
- multi-level theorizing

Readings:	Cohen et al. (2022), Higgins and Shirley (2000), Leidner and Gregory (2024)

Session 6: "Good" Theory
- originality of a theory
- attributes of "good" theory

Readings:	Bacharach (1989), Feldman (2004), Leidner and Gregory (2024)

Session 7: Reasoning
- inductive and deductive forms of reasoning
- abductive reasoning

Readings:	Van de Ven (2007, chapter 4), Saetre and Van de Ven (2021)

Session 8: Perspectives of Theorizing
- phenomenon-driven theorizing
- literature-based theorizing
- spiral model of theorizing
- inductive top-down theorizing
- contrastive explanation theorizing

Readings:	Shepherd and Sutcliffe (2011), Gregory and Henfridsson (2021), Leidner and Tona (2021), Rivard (2021), Tsang and Ellsaesser (2011)

Session 9: "Good" Theorizing
- what theorizing is
- strategies for theorizing from process data
- construct/concept clarity

Readings:	Weick (1995), Weick (1989), Pentland (1999), Langley (1999), Suddaby (2010)

Session 10: Variance Theorizing
- moderators and mediators
- moderated mediation

Readings:	Baron and Kenny (1986), James and Brett (1984), Preacher et al. (2007), Hayes (2018)

Session 11: Process Theorizing
- strategies for theorizing from process data
- building process theory with narrative

Readings:	Pentland (1999), Langley (1999), Cornelissen (2017)

Session 12: Positioning Theory Papers

          - introduction of a theory paper
          - setting the hook and joining a conversation
          - practical guide for writing a theory paper

Readings: Barney (2018), Grant and Pollock (2011), Lange and Pfarrer (2017), Thatcher and Fisher (2022)

Session 13:   **Making Theory Accessible**
          - verbalization
          - concretization
          - contextualization

Readings: Makadok (2022), Johns (2006)

Session 14:   **Writing Theory Papers**
          - the highs and the lows
          - coping strategies

Readings: Bundy et al. (2022)

Session 15:   **Theoretical Contribution**
          - originality of a theory
          - utility of a theory

Readings: Whetten (1989), Bergh (2003), Barley (2006), Rynes (2002), Corley and Gioia (2011)

Session 16:   **Problematization**
          - theory-focused problematization
          - phenomenon-focused problematization

Readings: Alvesson and Sandberg (2011), Monteiro et al. (2022)

READING LIST

Alvesson, M. G. and J. Sandberg (2011). "Generating Research Questions Through Problematization." Academy of Management Review **36**(2): 247-271.

Bacharach, S., B. (1989). "Organizational Theories: Some Criteria for Evaluation." Academy of Management Review **14**(4): 496-515.

Barley, S. R. (2006). "When I Write My Masterpiece: Thoughts on What Makes a Paper Interesting." Academy of Management Journal **49**(1): 16-20.

Baron, Reuben M., and David A. Kenny. (1986) "The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations." Journal of personality and social psychology **51**(6): 1173.

Barney, J. (2018). Editor's Comments: Positioning a Theory Paper for Publication. Academy of Management Review, **43**(3), 345-348

Bergh, D. D. (2003). "From the Editors: Thinking Strategically about Contribution." Academy of Management Journal **46**(2): 135-136.

Bundy, J., A. J. Shipp and S. Brickson 2022. "Demystifying and Normalizing the Psychological Experience of Writing for AMR: A Qualitative Analysis of the Highs, Lows, and Suggested Coping Strategies," Academy of Management Review, **47**(3), 341-357.

Cowen, A. P., Rink, F., Cuypers, I. R., Grégoire, D. A., & Weller, I. (2022). "Applying Coleman's boat in management research: Opportunities and challenges in bridging macro and micro theory." Academy of Management Journal, **65**(1): 1-10.

Corley, K. G. and D. A. Gioia (2011). "Building Theory About Theory Building: What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution?" Academy of Management Review **36**(1): 12-32.

Corneliessen, J. (2017). "Developing propositions, a process model or typology? Addressing the challenges of writing theory without a boilerplate." Academy of Management Review **42**(1): 1-9.

DiMaggio, P. (1995). "Comments on "What Theory is Not"." Administrative Science Quarterly **40**(3): 391-397.

Feldman, D. C. (2004). "What are We Talking About When We Talk About Theory?" Journal of Management **30**(5): 565-567.

Fisher, G., K. Mayer, and S. Morris (2021). "From the Editors—Phenomenon-Based Theorizing" Academy of Management Review **46**(4): 631-639.

Grant, A. M. and T. G. Pollock (2011). "Publishing in AMJ-Part 3: Setting the Hook." Academy of Management Journal **54**(5): 873-879.

Gregory, R. W., and Henfridsson, O. 2021. "Bridging Art and Science: Phenomenon-Driven Theorizing," Journal of Association for Information Systems (22).

Hayes, A. F. (2018). Partial, conditional, and moderated moderated mediation: Quantification, inference, and interpretation. Communication monographs, **85**(1): 4-40.

Higgins, Patricia A., and Moore M. Shirley (2000) "Levels of theoretical thinking in nursing." Nursing outlook **48**(4): 179-183.

James, L. R., & Brett, J. M. (1984). Mediators, moderators, and tests for mediation. Journal of applied psychology, **69**(2), 307.

Johns, G. (2006). "The Essential Impact of Context on Organizational Behavior." The Academy of Management Review **31**(2): 386.

Kilduff, M., A. Mehra and M. B. Dunn (2011). "From Blue Sky research to Problem Solving: A Philosophy of Science Theory of New Knowledge Production." Academy of Management Review **36**(2): 297-317.

Lange, D. and M. D. Pfarrer (2017). "Editors' Comments: Sense and Structure—The Core Building Blocks of an AMR Article." Academy of Management Journal **42**(3): 407-416.

Langley, A. (1999). "Strategies for Theorizing from Process Data." Academy of Management Review **24**(4): 691-710.

Leidner, D.; Gregory, R.W. (2024). "Theory and Theorizing." Journal of Association for Information Systems

Leidner, D. E. and O. Tona. 2021. "A Thought-Gear Model of Theorizing from Literature." Journal of the Association for Information Systems. **22**(4).

Makadok, R. (2022). "From the Editors: Guidance for AMR Authors about Making Formal Theory Accessible," Academy of Management Review **47**(2): 193-205.

Mohr, Lawrence B. (1982) "Approaches to explanation: Variance theory and process theory." Explaining organizational behavior 2:35-70.

Monteiro, E., P. Constantinides, S.V. Scott, M. Shaikh, A. Burton-Jones (2022). "Qualitative Research Methods in Information Systems: A Call for Phenomenon-Focused Problematization." MIS Quarterly 46(4): iii-xix.

Pentland, B. T. (1999). "Building process theory with narrative: from description to explanation." Academy of Management Review **24**(4): 711-724.

Preacher, K. J., Rucker, D. D., & Hayes, A. F. (2007). Addressing moderated mediation hypotheses: Theory, methods, and prescriptions. Multivariate behavioral research, **42**(1): 185-227.

Rivard, S. (2021). "Theory building is neither an art nor a science. It is a craft." Journal of Information Technology **36**(3): 316-328.

Rynes, S. (2002). "From the Editors: Some Reflections on Contribution." Academy of Management Journal **45**(2): 311-313.

Saetre, A.S.; Van de Ven, A. (2021). "Generating Theory by Abduction." <u>Academy of Management Review</u> 46(4): 684-701

Shepherd, D. A. and K. M. Sutcliffe (2011). "Inductive Top-Down Theorizing: A Source of New Theories or Organization." <u>Academy of Management Review</u> **36**(2): 361-380.

Suddaby, R. (2010). "Editor's Comments: Construct Clarity in Theories of Management and Organization." <u>The Academy of Management Review</u> **35**(3): 356-357.

Sutton, R. I. and B. M. Staw (1995). "What Theory is Not." <u>Administrative Science Quarterly</u> **40**(3): 371-384.

Thatcher, S. M. B. and G. Fisher (2022). "From the Editors—The Nuts and Bolts of Writing a Theory Paper: A Practical Guide to Getting Started." <u>Academy of Management Review</u> **47**(1): 1-8.

Tsang, Eric WK, and F. Ellsaesser (2011) "How contrastive explanation facilitates theory building." <u>Academy of Management Review</u> **36**(2):404-419.

Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). <u>Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research</u>. New York, Oxford University Press.

Weick, K. E. (1995). "What Theory is not, Theorizing is." <u>Administrative Science Quarterly</u> **40**(3): 385-390.

Weick, Karl E. (1989). "Theory construction as disciplined imagination." <u>Academy of management review</u> **14(**4): 516-531.

Whetten, D. A. (1989). "What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution?" <u>Academy of Management Review</u> **14**(4): 490-494.

Evaluation Criteria

1.	Participation	50%
2.	Discussion Leadership	50%
	TOTAL	100%

Description of Evaluation Criteria:

DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP (50%): Each student will be designated as "discussion leader" for multiple class sessions (dependent on course enrollment). The requirements are to lead the session and summarize briefly (because all students will have read) 45 minutes maximum – the key points/issues of the required readings and to "kick off" the general discussion. In particular, the discussion leader should (1) highlight the key themes/issues across the assigned and supplemental readings rather than summarize each reading; and (2) develop some questions or points for class discussion. The discussion leader will also help the class to explore some of the research issues the leader feels are important to the topic. I may deviate from these issues where necessary to address other important aspects on the topic. The discussion leader prepares a brief synthesis for his/her colleagues to guide the discussion. The synthesis will be provided to all seminar participants prior to the session. Your synthesis should be posted at least two days before the class you are leading.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (50%): Each week there are assigned readings. Some readings students will access themselves; others will be made available using an online platform designed to encourage engagement with the materials and your classmates. Students will be given instructions during our first class about how to access these readings. Students are expected to contribute to all the seminar discussions. Preparation for each class session by demonstrating that content has been read will significantly determine each student's ability to fulfill this requirement. Even if a student is not the discussion leader, they should still be ready to share their thoughts on the integration, evaluation and extension of the readings. This should include discussion of the research question or issues being addressed and purpose of the article: The important ideas, concepts, theories, methods, results, and conclusions for each article.