School of Information Management

INFO512: MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY

Trimester 1, 2016

COURSE OUTLINE

Prescription
An introduction to establishing the theoretical contribution of a piece of research.

Course Learning Objectives

	Course Learning Objectives (CLOs) Students who pass this course should be able to:
1	Demonstrate advanced understanding of the different types of theory, their nature, and their role in research.
2	Critically assess the types of literature review and explain their respective functions in the research process.
3	Identify and explain the contributions of theory within a given paradigm to specific fields of research.
4	Demonstrate the ability to carry out theory building in a research paper.

Trimester Dates:
From 29th February 2016 to 10th June 2016

Withdrawal from Course
1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 11th March 2016.

2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 13th May 2016. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an 'Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks or online.

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator:

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Lecturers:

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Professor Carol Saunders   RH 419
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Class Times and Room Numbers

Thursdays from 4:00 – 7:00pm in RH 421 (Level 4 Rutherford House)

Course Delivery

Weekly seminars: See "Class times and room numbers", above.

Expected Workload

To achieve satisfactory grades, you will need to spend at least 12.5 hours per week on INFO512, including time spent in class. Some aspects of the course will require less time, whereas others will require slightly more, depending on your previous knowledge of the topic. Before each session, please read the material for the week's topic and be ready to discuss the readings and other set work prepared for the class.

Assessment

	Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLOs	Due Date
1	Review of a theory development paper (max 1500 words)	25	1 to 3	1-4-2016
2	Review of an empirical paper, assessing specifically the theoretical contribution of the paper (max 1500 words)	25	1 to 3	29-4-2016
3	A draft research paper emphasizing the theoretical contribution aspect (max 2000 words)	50	1 to 4	10-6-2016

Mandatory Course Requirements
Students must submit all pieces of assessment by the due date.

The Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses see
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

Reading list
3-3-2016 Week 1: The purpose(s) of theory in applied social sciences (C Saunders)
- Avison, D., Malaurent, J. (2014). Is theory king? Questioning the theory fetish in information systems. *Journal of Information Technology, 29*, 327-336.
- Gregor, S. (2014). Theory – Still king but needing a revolution! *Journal of Information Technology, 29*, 337-340.
- Markus, M.L. (2014). Maybe not the king, but an invaluable subordinate: A commentary on Avison and Malaurent's advocacy of 'theory light' IS research. *Journal of Information Technology, 29*, 341-345.
- Daft, R.L. (1985). Why I recommended that your manuscript be rejected and what you can do about it. In L. Cummings & P. Frost (Eds.), Publishing in the organizational sciences (pp. 193-210). Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.
- Hambrick, D.C. (2007). The field of management's devotion to theory: Too much of a good thing? *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(6), 1346-1352.
- Hillman, Amy, "What is the Future of Theory", *Academy of Management Review,* 36, 4, (2011), 606-608.
- Weick, Karl, E. (1999). That's Moving: Theories That Matter. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 8*(2), 134-142.

Complementary readings:
- Banville, C. et M. Landry. Can MIS be Disciplined? *Communications of the ACM*, 32, 1 (1989), 48-61.
- Benbasat, I., & Zmud, R. W. (1999). Empirical research in information systems: The practice of relevance. *MIS Quarterly, 23*(1), 3-16.
- Constantinides, P., Chiasson, M.W., and Introna, L.D. (2012) The ends of Information Systems research: A pragmatic framework. *MIS Quarterly, 36*(1), 1-20.

10-3-2016 Week 2: Diversity and disciplinary cores (C Saunders)
- Benbasat, I. et R.W. Zmud. The Identity Crisis within the IS Discipline: Defining and Communicating the Discipline's Core Properties. *MIS Quarterly,* 27, 2 (2003), 183-194.
- Gioia, D. A., & Pitre, E. (1990). Multiparadigm perspectives on theory building. *Academy of management review*, *15*(4), 584-602.
- Orlikowski, W.J. et S.C. Iacono, Research Commentary: Desperately Seeking the "IT" in IT Research—A Call to Theorizing the IT Artifact. *Information Systems Research*, 12, 2 (2001), 121-134.

- Robey, D. (1996). Research commentary: Diversity in information systems research: Threat, promise, and responsibility. *Information Systems Research, 7*(4), 400-408.
- Lewis, M.A. & Grimes, A.J. "Metatriangulation: Building Theory from Multiple Paradigms," *Academy of Management Review*, 24, 4, (1999), 672-690.
- Saunders, C.S., Carte, T., Jasperson, 'J., and Butler, B. "Lessons Learned from the Trenches of Metatriangulation Research," *Communications of CAIS,* February 2003, Vol. 11, Article 14, http://cais.isworld.org/contents.asp.

  Complementary readings:
- Benbasat, I.,et Weber, R. (1996). Research commentary: Rethinking "diversity" in information systems research. *Information systems research*, *7*(4), 389-399.
- Jasperson, J., Carte, T., Saunders, C., Butler, B., Croes, H. and Zheng, W. "Power and Information Technology in Organizations: A Metatriangulation Review," *MIS Quarterly,* 26, 4, (2002), 397-459. (SKIM - don't bother with Appendix)
- Weber, R. Still Desperately Seeking the IT Artifact. Editor's comments, MIS Quarterly, 27, 2 (2003), iii-xi.
- Vessey, I., V. Ramesh, et R.L. Glass. Research in Information Systems: An Empirical Study of Diversity in the Discipline and Its Journals. Journal of MIS, 19, 2 (2002), 129-174.
- Zhang, P., Yan, J. L. S., & Hassman, K. D. (2013). The intellectual characteristics of the information field: Heritage and substance. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *64*(12), 2468-2491.

17-3-2016 Week 3 What is a theory? (C Saunders)
- Bacharach, S. B. (1989). Organizational theories: Some criteria for evaluation. Academy of management review, 14(4), 496-515.
- Burton-Jones, A., McLean, E. R., & Monod, E. (2015). Theoretical perspectives in IS research: from variance and process to conceptual latitude and conceptual fit. *European Journal of Information Systems*, *24*(6), 664-679.
- Lundberg, C.C. (1999). Finding Research Agendas: Getting Started Weick-Like. *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist,* October.
- Sutton, R. I., & Staw, B. M. (1995). What theory is not. *Administrative science quarterly*, 371-384.
- Van de Ven, A.H. (2007). Variance and Process Models. Chapter 5 of *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 143-160.
- Weick, K. E. (1995). What theory is not, theorizing is. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *40*(3), 385-390.

Complementary readings:
- Delbridge, R. and Fiss, P.C., "Styles of Theorizing and the Social Organization of Knowledge," *Academy of Management Review*, 38, 3, (2013), 325-331.

31-3-2016 Week 4 What is a theoretical contribution? (B. Aubert)
- Agarwal, R., & Lucas Jr, H. C. (2005). The information systems identity crisis: Focusing on high-visibility and high-impact research. *MIS Quarterly*, 381-398.

- Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2011). Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution?. *Academy of Management Review*, *36*(1), 12-32.
- Davis, M.S. (1971). That's Interesting! Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 1(1), 309-344.
- Gray, P. H., & Cooper, W. H. (2010). Pursuing Failure. *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(4), 620-643.
- Weber, R. (2003). Editor's comment: theoretically speaking. *MIS Quarterly*, *27*(3), iii-xii.
- Whetten, D. A. (1989). What constitutes a theoretical contribution?. *Academy of Management Review*, *14*(4), 490-495.

7-4-2016 Week 5 Joining an academic conversation (B. Chawner)
- Baskerville, R. L., & Myers, M. D. (2002). Information systems as a reference discipline. *MIS Quarterly*, 1-14.
- Biehl, M., Kim, H., & Wade, M. (2006). Relationships among the academic business disciplines: a multi-method citation analysis. *Omega*, *34*(4), 359-371.
- Grover, V., Ayyagari, R., Gokhale, R., Lim, J., & Coffey, J. (2006). About reference disciplines and reference differences: A critique of Wade et al. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *7*(5), 336-350.
- Kjaergaard, A. & Vendelo, M. T. (2015) The role of theory adaptation in the making of a reference discipline, Information and Organisation, 25(3), 137-149.
- Sugimoto, C. R., Pratt, J. A., & Hauser, K. (2008). Using field cocitation analysis to assess reciprocal and shared impact of LIS/MIS fields. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *59*(9), 1441-1453.
- Wade, M., Biehl, M., & Kim, H. (2006). Information Systems is a Reference Discipline (And What We Can Do About It). *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *7*(5), 247-269.
- White, H.D.(2010) Bibliometric overview of information science. InM.J. Bates & M.N Maack (Eds.), Encyclopedia of library and information sciences (3rd ed., pp.534 - 545).

14-4-2016 and 21-4-20165 Weeks 6 and 7 Identifying, evaluating, and Reviewing the literature (B. Chawner)
Note: the organization of these two weeks and the allocation of readings will be provided after the beginning of the trimester.
- Baumeister, R.F., Leary, M.R. (1997). Writing Narrative Literature Reviews. *Review of General Psychology*, 1(3), 311-320.
- Boote, D. N., & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational researcher*, *34*(6), 3-15.
- Cooper, H. M. (1998). Synthesizing research: A guide for literature reviews (Vol. 2). Sage.
- Fulmer, I.S. (2012). Editor's Comments: The Craft of Writing Theory Articles: Variety and Similarity in AMR. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(3), 327-331.

- Hart, C. (1998). Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination. Sage.
- Khan, K. S., Kunz, R., Kleijnen, J., & Antes, G. (2003). Five steps to conducting a systematic review. *JRSM*, *96*(3), 118-121.
- Levy, Y., & Ellis, T. J. (2006). A systems approach to conduct an effective literature review in support of information systems research. *Informing Science: International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline*, *9*, 181-212.
- Lucassen, T., Muilwijk, R., Noordzij, M. L., & Schraagen, J. M. (2013). Topic familiarity and information skills in online credibility evaluation. *Journal of the American society for information science and technology*, *64*(2), 254-264.
- Paré, G., Trudel, M. C., Jaana, M., & Kitsiou, S. (2015). Synthesizing information systems knowledge: A typology of literature reviews. *Information & Management*, 52 183–199.
- Randolph, J. J. (2009). A guide to writing the dissertation literature review. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, *14*(13), 2.
- Rocco, T. S., & Plakhotnik, M. S. (2009). Literature reviews, conceptual frameworks, and theoretical frameworks: Terms, functions, and distinctions. *Human Resource Development Review*, *8*(1), 120-130.
- Rosenthal, R., & DiMatteo, M. R. (2001). Meta-analysis: Recent developments in quantitative methods for literature reviews. *Annual review of psychology*, *52*(1), 59-82.
- Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. *Human Resource Development Review*, *4*(3), 356-367.
- Webster, J., & Watson, R. T. (2002). Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: writing a literature review . *MIS quarterly*, *26*(2).

5-5-2016 Week 8 Theory building – general (B. Aubert)
- Gregor, S. (2006). The nature of theory in information systems. *MIS Quarterly*, *30*(3), 611-642.
- Holton, E. F., & Lowe, J. S. (2007). Toward a general research process for using Dubin's theory building model. *Human Resource Development Review*, *6*(3), 297-320.
- Lynham, S. A. (2002). The general method of theory-building research in applied disciplines. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *4*(3), 221-241.
- Weick, K. E. (1989). Theory construction as disciplined imagination. *Academy of management review*, *14*(4), 516-531.

12-5-2016 Week 9 Theory building using cases (G. Oliver)
- Andersen, P. H., & Kragh, H. (2010). Sense and sensibility: Two approaches for using existing theory in theory-building qualitative research. *Industrial marketing management*, *39*(1), 49-55.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*, *14*(4), 532-550.
- Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: opportunities and challenges. *Academy of management journal*, *50*(1), 25-32.

- Fiss, P.C. (2009). Case studies and the configurational analysis of organizational phenomena. Chapter 24 of *The Handbook of Case Study Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. pp. 415-431.
- Markus, M.L. (1989). Case selection in a disconfirmatory case study. *Harvard Business School Research Colloquium*.
- Siggelkow, N. (2007). Persuasion with case studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), 20-24.

19-5-2016 Week 10 Process theory (JG Bernard)
- Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management review*, *24*(4), 691-710.
- Langley, A. (2007). Process thinking in strategic organization. *Strategic Organization*, *5*(3), 271.
- Markus, M.L., Robey, D. (1988). Information Technology and Organizational Change : Causal Structure in Theory and Research, 34(5), 583-598.
- Pentland, B. T. (1999). Building process theory with narrative: From description to explanation. *Academy of management Review*, *24*(4), 711-724.
- Van de Ven, A.H. (2007). Designing Process Studies. Chapter 7 of *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 195-231.
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Poole, M. S. (2005). Alternative approaches for studying organizational change. *Organization Studies*, *26*(9), 1377-1404.

26-5-2016 Week 11 Theory building with Typologies (JG Bernard)
- Doty, D. H., & Glick, W. H. (1994). Typologies as a unique form of theory building: Toward improved understanding and modeling. *Academy of Management Review*, *19*(2), 230-251.
- Doty, D. H., Glick, W. H., & Huber, G. P. (1993). Fit, equifinality, and organizational effectiveness: A test of two configurational theories. *Academy of Management Journal*, *36*(6), 1196-1250.
- Fiss, P. C. (2011). Building better causal theories: A fuzzy set approach to typologies in organization research. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(2), 393-420.
- Shenhar, A. J., & Dvir, D. (1996). Toward a typological theory of project management. *Research policy*, *25*(4), 607-632.

2-6-2016 Week 12 Ethics (Theory and Practice) (D. Johnstone)
- Horner, J & Minifie, F (2011) Research ethics III: Publication practices and authorship, conflicts of interest, and research misconduct. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 54, S346-S362.
- Guillemin, M & Gillam, L (2004) Ethics, reflexivity, and "ethically important moments" in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 261-280.
- Frechtling, D & Boo, S (2012) On the ethics of management research: an exploratory investigation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106, 149-160.
- Remenyi, D, Swan, N & Van den Assem, B (2011) Ethics protocols - the key issues. Chapter 1, in *Ethics Protocols and Research Ethics Committees*. Academic Publishing International, Reading, UK.

- Schultze, U & Mason, R (2012) Studying cyborgs: re-examining Internet studies as human subjects research. *Journal of Information Technology*, 27, 301-312.
- Zimmer, M (2012) Commentary on 'Studying cyborgs: re-examining Internet studies as human subjects research'. *Journal of Information Technology*, 27, 313-314.
- Ransbotham, S (2012) Preserving opportunities in Internet research: a commentary on 'studying cyborgs'. *Journal of Information Technology*, 27, 319-320.

Additional material (for information)
Multilevel theories

- Burton-Jones, A., Gallivan, M.J. (2007). Toward a Deeper Understanding of System Usage in Organizations: A Multilevel Perspective. MIS Quarterly, 31(4), 657-679.
- Drazin, R., Glynn, M. A., & Kazanjian, R. K. (1999). Multilevel theorizing about creativity in organizations: A sensemaking perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, *24*(2), 286-307.
- Hitt, M. A., Beamish, P. W., Jackson, S. E., & Mathieu, J. E. (2007). Building theoretical and empirical bridges across levels: Multilevel research in management. *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*(6), 1385-1399.
- Klein, K. J., & Kozlowski, S. W. (2000). From micro to meso: Critical steps in conceptualizing and conducting multilevel research. Organizational research methods, 3(3), 211-236.
- Klein, K. J., Tosi, H., & Cannella, A. A. (1999). Multilevel theory building: Benefits, barriers, and new developments. Academy of Management review, 24(2), 248-253.

Tools for theory building

- Bourgeois, L. J. (1979). Toward a method of middle-range theorizing. *Academy of Management Review*, *4*(3), 443-447.
- Boxenbaum, E., & Rouleau, L. (2011). New knowledge products as bricolage: metaphors and scripts in organizational theory. *Academy of Management Review*, *36*(2), 272-296.
- Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. Qualitative sociology, 13(1), 3-21.
- Davis, J. P., Eisenhardt, K. M., & Bingham, C. B. (2007). Developing theory through simulation methods. Academy of Management Review, 32(2), 480-499.
- Fiss, P. C. (2007). A set-theoretic approach to organizational configurations. Academy of management review, 32(4), 1180-1198.
- Shepherd, D. A., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2011). Inductive top-down theorizing: A source of new theories of organization. *Academy of Management Review*, *36*(2), 361-380.
- Tsang, E. W., & Kwan, K. M. (1999). Replication and theory development in organizational science: A critical realist perspective. Academy of Management review, 24(4), 759-780.

Student feedback
Student feedback on University courses may be found at
www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Communication of Additional Information
Communication is normally via email to all class members.

Link to general information
For general information about course-related matters, go to
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information

Note to Students
Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and academic audit. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of VBS programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

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