



## Seminar in Supply Chain Management

**SM-826**

### School of Business & Economics

Program	<b>Ph.D.</b>
Credit Hours	<b>3</b>

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Although the supply chain management (SCM) field has grown over the last three decades, only the last decade has seen some efforts by the academic researchers to develop a theoretical framework that will define the SCM boundaries (Shaffer et al, 2011). Due to this lack of theoretical framework, some researchers have applied the existing socio-economic theories to provide theoretical basis for supply chain management (Halldorsson et al, 2007, Ketchen and Hult, 2006). As such, there is no original theory of supply chain management.

Theory building is more art than science and to help students understand the concept of theory building in general and specifically in SCM we will acquaint students with current ideas relevant to theory building in organizational science, where most of theories have been developed in the recent past if we compare different areas of management sciences. Therefore, most of the articles that students will read and come prepared to discuss in class are from organizational science.

In the first half of the semester students will be provided articles each week on theory building such as “what is good theory” and importantly how to build theory. In the second half of the semester students will be exposed to the state of the art research in different areas of supply chain management. Specifically, it will focus on the application of different socio-economic theories in the development of theoretical basis for the management of supply chains, such as, theory of firm, resource based theory, theory of industrial organization, principal-agent theory, resource-advantage theory, etc. Students should not expect to finish this course with perfect theory in hand. Rather, these ideas will allow you to better understand where theories come from, how to evaluate theory, and hopefully how to build novel theory with your own work.

The students will be required to go over the articles provided for discussion in the class and submit maximum of two-page critical evaluation of these articles each week. Coming to class ready to offer your opinions and reflections on each and every article is essential. Class contribution will play a role in your grade (20%). Also, students will present the literature

findings in the class from both, applications of socio-economic theories in SCM perspective and emerging literature on strategic, tactical, and operational aspects of SCM. The students will develop familiarity with the current literature and improve modeling and presentation skills through writing a term paper, presentations, and discussions in the class.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this course is to equip the participants with the necessary skills and tools for the successful completion of their Ph.D. thesis.

Specifically, the aim is to:

- To understand where theories come from
- How theories are built?
- How to evaluate theories?
- Carryout successful literature research
- Read and understand recent research contributions
- Formulate interesting research problem
- Write a term paper
- Present research findings and successfully defend them in class discussions

## **GRADING**

The grade you receive will be based upon your performance on (1) Writing Assignments, (2) Class discussions, and (3) Term paper. Your course grade will be based on a weighted evaluation of the following categories:

<b>INSTRUMENT</b>	<b>WEIGHT</b>
<b>Writing assignments</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Class discussions</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Term paper</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Each course participant will select a specific research topic in his/her area of interest, and will research relevant literature in order to write a 17-20 pages (4000 to 5000 words) term paper excluding references.

Some of the relevant research areas are:

- Outsourcing

- Inventory
- Procurement
- Sustainable supply chain management
- Supply chain integration
- Supply chain performance
- Supply chain planning and design
- Transportation and distribution
- Warehousing
- Matching demand and supply
- Strategic supply chain management

The list is not exhaustive. A student may choose some other area not mentioned in the list for term paper.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

The course consists of a combination of lectures and presentation/discussion sessions. Each week, students will be assigned readings. Each student will come prepared with the reading assignment and also submit a maximum two-page typed critical evaluation of the articles. Any student can be asked to start the discussion. Coming to class ready to offer your opinions and reflections on each and every article is essential. The relevant articles for discussion will be provided a week before the scheduled class.

**Week One:**

COURSE INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION ON “WHAT IS THEORY?”

**Weeks Two to Three:**

WHAT IS GOOD THEORY?

**Week Four:**

THEORY BUILDING PROCESS.

**Week Five to Six:**

WHERE CAN NEW THEORIES COME FROM?

**Week Seven to Eight:**

SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THEORY?

**Weeks Nine to Twelve:**

APPLICATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC THEORIES TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

This topic will be covered over a number of sessions. Under this topic, research papers written on the application of specific non-logistic theories on the management of supply chains will be discussed. Some of the theories that will be discussed are:

- Theory of Constraints
- Agency theory
- Control theory
- Coordination theory
- Governance theory
- Grounded theory
- Theory of Industrial Organization
- Resource based theory
- Resource Advantage theory
- Strategic Management theory
- Systems theory
- Theory of Firm
- Organizational Theory

The papers for these sessions will be provided a week before the scheduled class. These papers focus on the application of socio-economic theories on the management of supply chains.

### **Weeks Thirteen to Fifteen:**

#### **STRATEGIC, TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPPLY CHAINS**

This topic will also be covered over a number of sessions. In these sessions we will discuss papers that focus on strategic, operational and tactical issues that are faced by the firm in the management of supply chains. The papers for these sessions will also be provided a week before the scheduled class.

### **Academic Journals**

Some of the useful discipline specific academic journals, which will be of help in the literature review include:

- European Journal of Operational Research
- European Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management
- Industrial Marketing Management
- International Journal of Operations and Production Management
- International Journal of Physical and Distribution Management
- International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management
- International Journal of Production Economics
- Journal of Marketing
- Journal of Operations Management
- Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management
- Journal of Supply Chain Management
- Supply Chain Management: An International Journal

### **References:**

Halldorsson, A., H. Kotzab, J.H. Mikkola, T. Skjett-Larsen. 2007. Complementary Theories to Supply Chain Management. Supply Chain Management: An International Journal, 12, 284-296.

Ketchen, D.J., and T.M. Hult. 2006. Bridging organization theory and supply chain management: The case of best value supply chains. *Journal of Operations Management*, 25, 573-580.

Shaffer, K.J., P.M. Dalton, D.M. Plucinski. 2011. Exploring a Theoretical Basis for the Management of the Supply Chain. *International Journal of Business and Public Administration*, 8, 113-124.