



MN4241 – Creating, Managing and Using Knowledge in Organisations

MODULE TYPE/SEMESTER: Senior Honours/**Option** (20 Credits)/Semester 2

PRE-REQUISITE(S): MN2001 and MN2002

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AIM:

We are now living in what is known as a ‘knowledge economy’ with organisations increasingly being defined by their knowledge, skills and expertise instead of their material outputs. We traditionally associate sectors such as education, law, and financial services with the production and use of knowledge, but, as we will see in this module, ‘knowledge work’ is undertaken by a wide variety of people across the whole spectrum of organisations and sectors.

In this module we will explore how knowledge is created, managed and used in organisations, asking some ‘big’ questions along the way. For instance: What do we mean by knowledge in an organisational context and in society at large? Whose knowledge is included and excluded in organisational practice and policy? How and why do organisations (mis)use research-based knowledge? What is the role and impact of mis- and dis-information in the workplace? The aim of the module is to offer participants ways of navigating and addressing these and other questions in the world of work and beyond.

METHOD OF TEACHING & LEARNING:

Teaching and learning takes place in 3-hour sessions which include a mixture of taught content, discussion and practical activities. These activities are often creative in nature and are designed to contextualise and cement the concepts and theories being taught. During the module participants and teaching staff will form an interactive ‘learning community’ where the emphasis is on learning from one another. Some sessions may include guest speakers who add further practical and up-to-date examples of creating, managing or using knowledge in contemporary organisations. Attendance is compulsory at all sessions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Critically evaluate popular notions of knowledge and knowledge work as manageable commodities
- Develop awareness of the complexities of knowledge and ways of knowing as inherent aspects of work
- Enhance abilities to appreciate differing perspectives on issues of direct relevance to them in their future working lives
- Gain insights to enable them to become responsible practitioners
- Develop critical thinking to identify 'givens' or taken-for-granted notions in everyday life
- Enhance their ability to accommodate complexity and contradiction in relation to work practices and academic literature
- Develop understanding of the relations between theory and practice
- Develop experience of working with others and sharing knowledge, through participation in module activities and course work

ASSESSMENT:

- Individual set-question essay of 2500 words (50% of module mark)
- Individual reflexive essay of 2500 words (50% of module mark)

CORE READING LIST:

There is no set text for this module, though it is highly recommended that you read Orr, K., Nutley, S., Russell, S., Bain, R., Hacking, B. and Moran, C. (2016), *Knowledge and Practice in Business and Organisations*, New York: Routledge.

The reading will draw on a variety of sources including textbooks, monographs and academic journals, some of which are listed below. You will be expected to read for each lecture/tutorial session as well as seeking out additional relevant material.

Relevant readings:

- Barley, W., Treem, J. and Kuhn, T. (2018) "Valuing Multiple Trajectories of Knowledge: A Critical Review and Research Agenda for Knowledge Management Research." *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(1): 278-317
- Brown, J. S. and Duguid, P. (1991) "Organizational Learning and Communities-of-Practice: Toward a Unified View of Working, Learning and Innovating", *Organization Science*, 2 (1), pp. 40-57.
- Cook, S. D. N. and Brown, J. S. (1999) "Bridging Epistemologies: The Generative Dance between Organizational Knowledge and Organizational Knowing", *Organization Science*, 10, pp. 381-400.
- Easterby-Smith, M. and Lyles, M.A. (Eds.) *The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Feldman, M. and Orlikowsky, W. (2011) "Theorizing Practice and Practicing Theory", *Organization Science*, 22(5)
- Hall, B.L., & Tandon, R. (2017). Decolonization of knowledge, epistemicide, participatory research and higher education. *Research for All*, 1, 6-19.

- Lauer, M., & Aswani, S. (2009). Indigenous Ecological Knowledge as Situated Practices: Understanding Fishers' Knowledge in the Western Solomon Islands. *American Anthropologist*, 111, 317-329.
- Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nonaka, I., Toyama, R. and Byosiere, P. (2001) "A Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation: Understanding the Dynamic Process of Creating Knowledge" in Dierkes, M., Berthoin Antal, A., Child, J. and Nonaka, I. (Eds.) *Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Other readings:

These resources will be supplemented with other references to scholarly books and/or journals throughout the module. Details will be provided in lectures and on Moodle site

Organisation of courses may be subject to change without notice.