

ME2075 Leadership and power in industrial organizations: perspectives of gender and diversity Period 4, Spring 2021

Anna Wahl, professor Indek, course coordinator and examiner

The course evaluation process

The course was discussed and evaluated at the final zoom seminar, where all students participated. The students discussed the following questions in seven smaller groups:

1. What is the most important thing I learnt and the most valuable learnings in the course?
2. What improvements could be done in the course?
3. Other comments?

All groups shared their evaluations in class. JML aspects were included in reflections and discussions continuously, as this is part of course content.

Course content and design

The course draws on research mainly regarding gender, but also ethnicity, class, age, nationality and sexuality in organizations. Knowledge is related to theories on feminism, gender in organizations according to structure and culture, leadership, change, gender equality and diversity. The course was on zoom due to the pandemic situation.

Lectures took place in one introduction on zoom, in four prerecorded lectures on canvas, two guest lectures on zoom and a final seminar on zoom. There were three seminars for reflection and discussion with the course teacher on zoom, where students were divided into group A and group B. Students are expected to study the literature between lectures. The lectures and seminars help the students to understand the literature. They offer possibilities to discuss and reflect on the literature and the different theories. Students are expected to actively participate in discussions to learn and practice.

The examination is divided in two parts:

- The first written examination (INL1, 2,0 credits) consists of the submission of one assignment, graded Pass/Fail.
- The second written examination (TEN3, 4,0 credits) consists of an exam written at home, graded according to the grade scale A, B, C, D, E, FX, F.

Student results

Students results in the course were normal compared to previous years, with grades from A to F in the home exam. All students passed the course after second exam.

Results from open questions

1. What is the most important thing I learnt and the most valuable learnings in the course?

The concept of intersectionality – there are no simple solution
Even excluded groups exclude other groups

The importance of standing up for oneself and others
The importance of awareness
A structural perspective and to see the bigger picture
The course has opened my eyes, you are able to be aware of how I act now
Broad picture and understand how both minority groups and majority groups are affected of a change
Eye opener to see the world from a structural perspective and see the dynamics
Frustrated when reading news and articles now
Strategies to speak up without putting myself as a victim
More knowledge on the topic – women strategies, homosociality. All the examples have given me more knowledge.
Inclusiveness, diversity and equality important for the well-being of the company
Macho culture and how it affects safety
Structural perspective and have references to research and studies
Gender – important to start on the right ground
The importance of gender research and how it has developed and that is must proceed – the transformation and how we in the Nordic countries
The complexity of the issues and also the complexity of the solutions
Different concepts that I have heard of, i.e. token, homosociality, before but didn't think of them as central concepts
Gender neutral – sounded as something positive, but now I see that it contradicts the outspoken intentions
The structural aspects of gender equality and diversity
No action is too small
To know that my arguments are grounded
Reflect upon a case and to give solutions
Now I know how to act and how to do if becoming a manager in the future
Really interesting and good things to learn
And organization can undo gender through normative control
Men can be change agents, and not only women
Insights that explain structures that I have experienced but have not been able to put words on i.e. tokenism and homosociality
Be part of the change
Now I want my future organization that I work in to work actively with these questions and I also want to be part of that change
The importance of context – USA context and Nordic context, important to reflect upon your own context
Power perspective for a transformational change – we can work for change but it is important to study the potential and the transformation (time consuming but not that much effect)
Connection to other sustainability goals – i.e. gender equality
Awareness of different problems and to put names on issues that I have seen in real life

2. Improvements that could be done in the course?

Breakout rooms – more comfortable discussions in smaller groups
More info about practical programs and how to act/strategies of how to bring up the topic in a positive manner and to stay calm

Prepared topics for some of the seminars
Guest lectures – more of it (i.e. HR)
More and deeper discussions – the articles get you thinking
Reading groups or the ability to sign up for a reading group

3. Other comments?

The structure of the course has been very good
Recorded lectures worked very well
Reasonable amounts of articles to read before the seminar
It would have been more dynamic in physical meetings

Summary of student evaluations

Students were very positive in terms of what they learnt and that they could see that new insights will be valuable in future life. They would have wanted to meet in real life, under normal conditions. Many of the students think that more discussion in smaller groups would be an improvement and that topics could have been more prepared in advance by the teacher.

Summary of course results

The course was successful in relation to what was possible in terms of reflection and discussion. The new group seminars were highly appreciated, as was the prerecorded lectures.

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses

There were no obvious differences between male and female students in terms of results, and no such differences between international and Swedish students.

Course development

One possible development is to create reading groups with prepared topics to discuss when going through the reading suggestions in the literature list. The prerecorded lectures and reflective seminars should stay regardless of restrictions in meetings.