

LP901-30 Creativity & Organisation

26/27

Department

SCAPVC - Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Jonathan Vickery

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module examines the internal organisational dynamic of the creative business, from financial planning and human resource management to organisational theory. The module is divided into three parts. The first part examines the definition and creation of 'value' in the creative and media industries and relates this to issues in financial management. The second part examines the organisational structure of creative and media businesses. The third part examines strategic planning, incorporating a critique of 'scientific' approaches to management and planning and a search for alternative models for strategic planning for small creative enterprises.

Module aims

To develop an understanding of the internal dynamics and attributes of creative and media enterprises, based on the tension between systematic organisational structures and routines and open-ended, unpredictable processes and products.

To examine the emergence of distinctive approaches to human resource management and financial planning in response to the particular needs and attributes of creative and media enterprises.

To review the relationship between creativity and organisation from the perspective of organisational theory.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS THE OUTLINE SYLLABUS. CONTENT OF INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY SEMINARS IS LIKELY TO CHANGE IN RESPONSE TO ONGOING ACADEMIC AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS.

Week 1: Two theories of Value. This seminar examines the creation and management of 'value' in the creative and media industries. The seminar will focus on the relationship between qualitative concepts of value (symbolic goods, human capital, intangible assets), and quantitative measures of output (financial values, price).

Week 2: Creative accounting: This seminar considers how intangible assets and human capital can be reconciled with financial planning. In particular, creative businesses face particular problems with costing and pricing their work, and in establishing reliable income streams. In this seminar we will consider how conflicting perceptions of value cause practical problems in valuation, pricing and budgeting.

Week 3: Commercial and creative risk-taking. This seminar examines how risk is managed and assessed in the creative and media industries. Investors see the creative industries as high risk because they are unpredictable and most of their assets are intangible. However, from a creative perspective, risk is seen as a source of innovation. How do cultural producers manage creative risk, and how do they convince investors that the commercial risks of investment are worthwhile?

Week 4: The individualised organisation. In a knowledge economy, the core assets are individual talents. This seminar considers how creative organisations attempt to structure their businesses around individual talents, the antithesis of 'organisational man'. What are the structural models of the past and the future? What are the implications for management style? How can creative businesses retain an 'individualised' structure as they grow larger and older?

Week 5: Flexible Specialisation. Organisational theorists argue that we have moved from a 'Fordist' system of integrated mass production to a 'post-Fordist' era based on 'flexible specialisation'. Small specialised firms form networks to share resources and risk, allowing them to respond more flexibly to changing market conditions. While raising some questions about the theoretical basis of these arguments, this seminar is concerned with the practical implications of this new flexibility for organisations and for individuals.

Week 6. Growing the Organisation: the lifecycle. The point where small creative organisations become big business is often the moment where the original idea and the original team are at their most vulnerable. This seminar examines what happens when small organisations grow. Theoretical models of change will be considered alongside the impacts of organisational change on internal and external relationships.

Week 7. What is Strategy? This seminar examines the meaning and purpose of strategic planning for creative and media businesses. Over-planning can lead to a bureaucratic, inflexible approach; under-planning places too much reliance on 'spontaneous' processes. This seminar examines some of the theoretical and managerial approaches to strategy and their limitations in order to

refer to the original question: what is a strategy and why do we need one?

Week 8. Leadership in the creative industries. This seminar examines the role of the leader in the creative industries and in 'creative' organisations. We will look at 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' leadership styles, and consider how leaders shape both strategy and culture. We will also consider whether there is a distinctive model of leadership in creative organisations and the creative industries. In this seminar we consider how emergent strategy depends upon 'leading from the middle', and the role of leadership in shaping, filtering and facilitating strategic and creative processes.

Week 9. Creative Cultures. This seminar examines the extent to which an organisation's strategy and structure are rooted in a specific organisational 'culture'. This culture could be based on national norms and traditions, or it could reflect particular values and beliefs. For smaller, less formally structured organisations, implicit 'culture' may be more influential than explicit 'strategy'. This is especially true in the creative industries, where 'values' are reflected in the organisation's core business but also in the assumptions and behaviours of those working in the organisation and buying its products. Is this strong implicit culture a strength or a weakness for creative organisations?

Week 10. Scenarios and Strategy. Scenario planning is a technique for generating 'strategic options' and challenging narrow assumptions about the future and about our business. Scenarios depend upon imaginative 'what if' thinking combined with an analysis of probability and relevance of each scenario to the particular business. Finally, the 'strategic options' need to be reviewed, leading to decisive action in the present. During the seminar we will introduce the development of scenario planning as an alternative to forecasting during the 1980s and outline an application of scenario planning to strategic planning..

Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive features of creative and media enterprises.
- Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts and issues in the management of creative and media enterprises.
- Demonstrate an understanding of contemporary management in the creative and media industries.
- Gather, interpret and present evidence, with which to analyse organisations in the creative and media industries.
- Question assumptions behind management theory and organisational practice in the creative and media industries.
- Reason critically and debate interpretations.
- Communicate what they have learnt, both orally and in writing.
- Solve problems, arising from research, readings and written work.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of different modes of analysing creative and media enterprises.

Indicative reading list

Research element

Students must gather, interpret and present evidence in production of their written assignments.

Interdisciplinary

Readings are drawn from management literature, cultural and media studies, creative industries research. This content is reflected in the assignment tasks (essay and literature review), and in the topics and themes discussed in seminars.

International

Seminars draw upon case studies and examples of creative and media industries and organisations from the UK, China and Europe. Students are encouraged to draw upon their own experience in writing their essays, including examples and cases from their home countries.

Subject specific skills

- Demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive features of creative and media enterprises
- Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts and issues in the management of creative and media enterprises
- Demonstrate an understanding of contemporary management in the creative and media industries
- Gather, interpret and present evidence, with which to analyse organisations in the creative and media industries
- Question assumptions behind management theory and organisational practice in the creative and media industries
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of different modes of analysing creative and media enterprises

Transferable skills

- Reason critically and debate interpretations
- Present an argument or case convincingly to a group of people
- Communicate what they have learnt, both orally and in writing
- Work collaboratively with others in seminar presentations
- Solve problems, arising from seminar presentations and written assignments

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	10 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (9%)
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (9%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	140 hours (81%)
Total	172 hours

Private study description

Seminar readings 14 hours per week = 140

Reading / preparation plus writing for first assignment = 28

Reading / preparation plus writing for main essay = 100

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Critical Literature Assessment	20%	28 hours	No
A critical assessment of provided representation on the subject of creativity and organisation.			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component			
Individual research paper	80%	100 hours	No
Students will choose one essay topic from a list of options.			

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Summative feedback for both assignments via Tabula using the following headings: Knowledge & Understanding; Argument & Analysis; Research; Presentation in addition to a graded mark. Summative assessment on literature project will include formative feedback towards essay writing.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of TLPS-W4P4 Postgraduate Taught Creative and Media Enterprises
- Year 1 of TTHS-W4P4 Postgraduate Taught Creative and Media Enterprises

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of TLPS-W4P4 Postgraduate Taught Creative and Media Enterprises
- Year 1 of TTHS-W4P4 Postgraduate Taught Creative and Media Enterprises