



## COURSE GUIDE 2024/25

**Faculty** 351 - Faculty of Economics and Business. Elcano Department

**Cycle** .

**Degree** GCOMER30 - Bachelor's Degree in Business Management

**Year** Second year

### COURSE

27523 - Sociology of Organizations

**Credits, ECTS:** 6

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Sociology of Organizations" is a second-year subject in the Degree in Business Management, which forms part of the Business Economics module and is specifically included in the Human Resources and Teamwork category. It complements the subjects introduced in the first year, such as "Introduction to Business", and builds upon topics covered in the third and fourth years, namely "Business Administration" and "Human Resources", respectively. This course delves deeper into the analysis of various sociological phenomena occurring within and outside organizations, particularly within companies. It also explores the strategic process involved in organizing people across various institutions within contemporary society, such as companies, civil society organizations, and the state.

While the primary analytical tools are drawn from sociology, this course adopts an interdisciplinary approach by incorporating insights and categories from Economic Science, as well as other fields such as Philosophy, Psychology, History, Politics, Law, and Labor Relations.

The central framework revolves around a strategic perspective, assuming that individuals and groups operate within specific contexts with pre-established resources, behaviors, attitudes, and roles. Through the act of organizing, individuals and groups shape their future by aiming to achieve predetermined goals. Organizing is viewed as a management instrument or strategic configuration process involving changes and combinations of existing factors to attain desired objectives. Structures and regulations are developed to support these combinations, maximizing effectiveness and efficiency.

While the nature of organizations can vary significantly, our focus in this subject is primarily on the commercial and business aspects of contemporary organizations. We aim to elucidate their internal operations and their symbiotic relationship with the environment. Furthermore, we give equal consideration to both formal and informal structures within organizations. We delve deeply into the phenomena of organizational and social change resulting from globalization, creativity, innovation, and organizational leadership. Additionally, we examine the inherent contradictions faced by business and civil organizations as they navigate their futures.

This course will enable students to grasp how historical and social conditions shape the business landscape and underscore the importance of adopting a strategic perspective when confronting new challenges.

### COMPETENCIES/LEARNING RESULTS FOR THE SUBJECT

• Competency 1: Identify and distinguish the elements and relationships that constitute economic and business reality within the context of increasingly globalized markets.

o Learning Outcome 1: Utilize insights from sociology to comprehend human behavior and the establishment and evolution of (commercial) organizations amidst economic globalization.

o Learning Outcome 2: Analyze the operations of commercial organizations critically, systematically, and strategically.

• Competency 2: Manage processes and operations associated with businesses across various domains (organization and administration, accounting, financing, taxation, marketing), and apply appropriate management tools.

o Learning Outcome 3: Recognize diverse roles and organizational structures within companies and assess the ongoing changes they undergo.

o Learning Outcome 4: Identify issues related to human behavior within business organizations and their interactions with the environment, and devise and present viable solutions.

• Subject Competence: Apply principles and tools of Alternative and Solidarity Economy to professional practice.

o Learning Outcome 5: Apply critical thinking concerning the dominant economic model.

o Learning Outcome 6: Differentiate cooperative action from competitive action.

• Transversal Competencies:

o CT1: Apply logical and critical thinking in problem diagnosis and resolution.

o CT2: Demonstrate active listening and articulate oral and written messages clearly, as well as engage in effective teamwork.

o CT3: Search for and manage relevant and specialized information effectively.

### Theoretical and Practical Contents

The syllabus unfolds in three distinct sections: firstly, it delves into the foundational principles of sociology, applied to dissecting our market society as a cohesive system; secondly, it explores the intricacies of socialization processes within organizations, shedding light on the evolving roles individuals assume amidst organizational transformation; and finally, it delves into the realm of external organizations and labor relations, aiming to unravel the interconnectedness between the economic realm and civil society at large.



## Part I: Introduction to Sociology

Topic 1: Are we born or are we made? Introduction to the sociological perspective, the socialization process, the creation of roles, and the formation of personality. Particularly, the issue of gender and the construction of the category of women since modernity will be discussed.

Topic 2: Weber: formal organization and bureaucracy. Differentiation between institution and organization, formal and informal aspects of an organization, Max Weber and the concept of bureaucracy, technocracy. The syllabus will emphasize both the positive and negative aspects of bureaucratic organizations.

Topic 3: Critical theory and strategic thinking. The philosophy of internal relations or the interdependence of social roles. We will focus on the strategic perspective according to Gramsci, particularly discussing the tension between structure and agency from a critical standpoint that promotes empowerment within a specific historical context.

Topic 4: Marx: Capitalist society. Capitalist society as a system: the production of goods, the accumulation of wealth, and the revolution of the productive process. Throughout this topic, we will complement Topic 3 to understand the systemic foundations of our society according to Marx.

## Part II: The Company as an Organization

Topic 5: Schumpeter: The innovative entrepreneur and "creative destruction". Various theories of the entrepreneur, Schumpeter and the entrepreneur as an innovator, factors of business development. The notion of creative destruction will be related to entrepreneurial subjectivity and potential development.

Topic 6: Technology: The application of science to the production process. Industrial development, principles of Taylorism, critique of Elton Mayo, Globalization of the productive process and Global Value Chains. This topic will explain how technology is a social relationship, from a general appreciation to specific roles it plays in capitalist society.

Topic 7: The director as a leader. The (dys)functions of the director, sources of power, and the basic dimensions of leadership. We will explore the origins and legitimization of the leader within an organization.

## Part III: Organizations External to the Company

Topic 8: The State: a relational approach. Genesis of the capitalist state and its transformation, the state as a social relationship, the multi-level state. A historical-theoretical review of the foundations of the current nation-state will be conducted, emphasizing the importance of strategic-relational theories.

Topic 9: Labor Relations I: business and union associations. Functionalist-harmonist theory, disruptive theory, formation of business and union organizations. Various perspectives on conflict within the company will be presented, explaining the principle of contradiction as a necessary organizational dynamic.

Topic 10: Labor Relations II: the Basque reality. Structure and functioning of labor relations in Spain and Euskadi from a comparative perspective. We will map current predominant trends in the world of work and labor relations: labor market structure, collective bargaining, conflict dynamics, and various discourses.

## TEACHING METHODS

The methodology for the Sociology of Organizations blends traditional teaching methods with active learning approaches. Master classes provide explanations of fundamental sociological concepts, complemented by active student participation through individual and group exercises, as well as debates. Practical sessions, including computer-based activities and classroom practices, offer opportunities for hands-on application and in-depth exploration through readings and case studies. These sessions aim to foster rigorous argumentation and professional expression. The combination of master classes and practical exercises is designed to help students develop Competencies 1-2 and Learning Outcomes 1-6, with a focus on understanding sociological foundations and applying them to real-world examples. Additionally, Project Based Learning involves team research on current strategic organizational issues, allowing students to deepen their understanding and analysis of class topics. It is expected that students will dedicate a significant portion of their time outside the classroom to this research work, fostering independent learning and critical thinking skills.



## TYPES OF TEACHING

Types of teaching	M	S	GA	GL	GO	GCL	TA	TI	GCA
Hours of face-to-face teaching	42		18						
Horas de Actividad No Presencial del Alumno/a	63		27						

**Legend:** M: Lecture-based S: Seminar GA: Applied classroom-based groups  
 GL: Applied laboratory-based groups GO: Applied computer-based groups GCL: Applied clinical-based groups  
 TA: Workshop TI: Industrial workshop GCA: Applied fieldwork groups

## Evaluation methods

- Continuous evaluation
- End-of-course evaluation

## Evaluation tools and percentages of final mark

- Written test, open questions 50%
- Exercises, cases or problem sets 10%
- Teamwork assignments (problem solving, Project design) 40%

## ORDINARY EXAMINATION PERIOD: GUIDELINES AND OPTING OUT

The subject's evaluation comprises a mixed approach, assessing both the acquisition of learning outcomes and competencies. It includes:

- Exam (individual): 50% of the total grade, divided into two parts. Both parts must average at least 40% to pass.
- Delivery of theoretical-practical exercises and class participation (individual): 10%
- Strategic Report (group): 40%

The exam and exercises assess learning outcomes related to specific competencies, while the research work evaluates a broader range of outcomes and skills. Students may opt for continuous evaluation or a final evaluation system. If choosing the latter, they must formally waive continuous evaluation. The final test includes both common questions for all students and additional questions for those opting for final evaluation, reflecting the learning outcomes developed throughout the semester. Absence from the exam constitutes a waiver from the ordinary call. In exceptional cases, exams can be rescheduled with teacher approval, either in person or virtually, with content consistency across formats. Regardless of format, clarity and coherence in presenting ideas are prioritized.

## EXTRAORDINARY EXAMINATION PERIOD: GUIDELINES AND OPTING OUT

In the extraordinary call, students will undergo a final test designed to assess all four competencies of the subject, comprising 100% of the final grade, without considering previous course results.

## MANDATORY MATERIALS

Mandatory materials

- Teaching material on each of the topics of the subject. Accessible through eGela and Publications Service.
  - PowerPoint presentations of each topic ( eGela ).
  - Selection of cases, news or articles for discussion and resolution in classroom practices. - Selection of materials on various topics that are offered to students as a basis for the preparation of their team work (written report + oral presentation).
- Bibliography

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Basic bibliography

- Adler, P.S. (Ed.). (2009). The Oxford handbook of sociology and organizational studies: Classical foundations . Oxford University Press.
- Adler, P. S., Du Gay, P., Morgan, G., y Reed, M. I. (Eds.). (2014). The Oxford handbook of sociology, social theory, and organization studies: Contemporary currents. Oxford Handbooks.
- Alvesson, M., Gabriel, Y., y Paulsen, R. (2017). Return to meaning: A social science with something to say. Oxford University Press

### Detailed bibliography

### Journals

### Web sites of interest

- INE (<http://www.ine.es>)  
 EUSTAT (<http://eustat.es>)  
 EUROSTAT &#8211; STRUCTURAL BUSINESS STATISTICS



(<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/structural-business-statistics>)

OECD - BUSINESS STATISTICS

(<https://www.oecd.org/sdd/business-stats/structuralanddemographicbusinessstatisticsdbsoecd.htm>)

BANCO MUNDIAL &#8211; DOING BUSINESS STATISTICS

<https://espanol.doingbusiness.org/es/doingbusiness>

ORGANIZACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DEL TRABAJO &#8211; LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS

(<https://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/lang--es/index.htm>)

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM &#8211; INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS STATISTICS

## OBSERVATIONS