

The Moral Organization



SYLLABUS

VU Amsterdam Summer School

July 21-28, 2024



Any general questions for the Summer School support team? Contact amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl.

Course Details

You can recycle the information that can be found on the webpage to fill in the following sections. Please bear in mind that the syllabus is a key element of the course that helps students to decide whether this course is appropriate for them and can really help them when deciding to join. Make sure to be as detailed as possible.

Title	The Moral Organization
Coordinator(s)	Dr. Dick de Gilder
Other lecturers	Prof. Dr. Naomi Ellemers
Study credits	2 ECTS
Form(s) of tuition	On campus, workshop on campus or excursion
Approximate contact hours	20
Approximate self-study hours	36

Teaching staff (in order of appearance)

Dick de Gilder

Naomi Ellemers

Course description

Scandals in public and private organizations are an everyday occurrence. Money laundering by banks, sexual abuse by employees of NGO's, the marketing of unsafe products, are just a few of reoccurring events that harm society. At the same time, many organizations are undertaking corporate social responsibility activities, with the clear intention to contribute positively to society. It is important for both scientists and the general public to better understand why organizations often want to act morally, yet fail to do so, and why others could be regarded as exemplary organizations.

We will discuss insights from moral psychology, grounded in Social Identity Theory (SIT), to explain (im)moral behavior in and by organizations. SIT argues that individuals derive their identity from (ideally positive) group

memberships, and that their behavior usually follows from their self-definition as group members. For most people, the organization they work for is a very important 'group', with which they can identify, and which contributes to their self-image.

Our students will learn that many issues regarding (im)moral behavior in and 'by' organizations stem from high levels of identification with the organization, leading to a disregard for societal outcomes, sometimes even leading to negative outcomes for their own organization. They will also learn to understand how organizations may change - or can be helped to change - to avoid such detrimental outcomes and become a moral organization.

Our interactive course teaches students the latest insights in moral behavior in and by organizations, through interactive lectures, videos, short cases, discussion sessions and in-class (team) assignments. Guest lectures by experts from organizations that have a special interest in moral behavior or visits to an organization may also be part of the program.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Understand and discuss the intricacies of moral behavior in organizations
- Understand moral dilemma's in organizations and contribute to ways of dealing with them
- Present their analysis of a moral organizational issue in a short essay and video

Assignments and Assessment

Assessment will be based on a short individual essay (75% of the course grade). Each student will give a short video presentation based on their essay (25% of the course grade). Attendance is mandatory.

Provisional reading list

Ellemers, N., & de Gilder, D. (2022) *The moral organization: key issues, analyses, and solutions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Course Schedule

Preliminary program. One on one sessions with one of the teachers will also be made possible (during the program or instead of the social program). The essay will be written and the video will be made after the course and handed in on August 2.

Monday, July 22	<p>10.00 – 11.00 Getting to know your class mates and your teachers, logistics for the program</p> <p>11.00-12.00 Introduction to morality in organizations (de Gilder)</p> <p>13.30-15.15 Interactive lecture (de Gilder): Social Identity theory and introductory case</p>
Tuesday, July 23	<p>Morning:</p> <p>9.30-11.15 Interactive lecture Social Identity and morality in organizations (Ellemers)</p> <p>11.30- 12.30 Case (Ellemers): Lessons from the global financial crisis: Revising the governance code, introducing the bankers’ oath, and compliance of financial professionals. Regulation and sanctions as ways to enhance moral behavior in organizations.</p> <p>12.30-13.30 Lunch break</p>

	<p>13.30 – 14.30 discussions on the case</p> <p>15.00-16.30 Interactive lecture and discussion session on moral leadership (de Gilder)</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 24</p>	<p>9.15-10.45. Interactive lecture and discussion session motivating moral choices (de Gilder)</p> <p>11.00-12.00 Presentation of case options, select topic for essay (Ellemers).</p>
<p>Thursday, July 25</p>	<p>Excursion to Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) or Dutch Financial markets authority or on campus presentation by one of these partners.</p> <p>Discussion on interactions between regulators and companies (AFM versus PWC) and their perceptions of morality</p> <p>Afternoon: 13.00-14.30 Interactive lecture and discussion session on diversity and inclusion (Ellemers)</p> <p>14.30-17.00 reading time and preparation for Friday pitch on case/essay</p>

Friday, July 26	9.15-10.00 Interactive lecture and discussion session on the human factor in organizational change (De Gilder) 10.15-11.00 Interactive lecture and discussion session on interactions with stakeholders (Ellemers) 11.00-12.00 prepare pitch on case/essay 13.00-14.00 Pitching session 14.00 evaluation and farewell
Friday, August 2	Hand in essay and video

