

EUROHESC Training Activity
Applications of organization theory in higher education research
University of Lugano, February 23-25, 2011
Room A32 (red building)

Day 1: Wednesday 23rd of February, 2011

12.00 - Welcome of participants and sandwich lunch

13.00 - Introduction

Benedetto Lepori, Centre for Organizational Research, University of Lugano.

13.15 - Opening session. New directions in Organizational Theory

Filippo Carlo Wezel, Centre for Organizational Research, University of Lugano.

13.45 – 16.30 - Session 1. A brief history and contemporary perspectives on organizations

Introduction and overview of the topic (John Usher, University of Lethbridge).

Key readings presented by PhD students.

16.30 - Coffee break

Applications to the higher education field: examples and perspectives

16.45 – 18.15 - PhD students introduction

PhD students will have 5' to shortly present the subject of their thesis and their specific interest in Organizational Theory.

19.30 - Dinner at Canvetto Luganese (see section 3 “Practical Information”)

Day 2: Thursday 24th of February, 2011

9.00 – 12.00 - From resource dependency to social networks

Introduction and overview of the topic (John Usher, University of Lethbridge)

Key readings presented by PhD students.

10.30 - Coffee break

Applications to the higher education field: examples and perspectives (Ivar Bleiklie, University of Bergen).

12.00 – 13.30 - Sandwich lunch

13.30 – 16.00 - Organizational fields, organizational ecology and higher education diversity

Introduction and overview of the topic (Balázs Kovács, University of Lugano) – 45'

Key readings presented by PhD students.

Applications to the higher education field: examples and perspectives.

16.00 - Coffee break

16.30 – 18.30 - New theories of firms and markets and universities

Introduction and overview of the topic (Richard Whitley, University of Manchester)

Key readings presented by PhD students.

Applications to the higher education field: examples and perspectives

19.30 - Dinner (see section 3 “Practical Information”)

Day 3: Friday 25th of February, 2011

8.30 – 12.00 - The New Institutionalism: Myths – Isomorphism – Agency

Introduction and overview of the topic (Uwe Schimank and Frank Meier, University of Bremen)

10.30 - Coffee break

Key readings presented by PhD students

Applications to the higher education field: examples and perspectives.

12.00 – 13.00 - Sandwich lunch

13.00 – 15.30 - Final session. Organizational specificities of universities and higher education reconsidered.

Chair: Ivar Bleiklie, University of Bergen.

Final discussion

16.00 - Leave of the bus to Milano Malpensa Airport

1 Outline of the sessions and readings

1.1.1 A brief history and contemporary perspectives on organizations

Instructor: John Usher, University of Lethbridge

This session will present an historical account of the development of organization theory with an emphasis on its sociological roots. This account will then be expanded to provide an overview of contemporary perspectives on organizations, several of which will be elaborated in subsequent course segments. An organizing framework for the perspectives will be provided as well as a discussion of epistemological and research methods implications. A third paper will focus particularly upon the construction of organizations in the public sector. Finally, a direct application of organization theory to higher education will be discussed.

Key readings and tasks:

- Scott, R. 2004, Reflections on a half-century of organizational sociology, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30: 1-21.

Organizational sociology is perhaps the dominant foundational discipline of organization theory and Scott does an excellent job of recounting its historical development and recent trends.

Q: Focusing in particular on the four recent trends brought forward by Scott, discuss how research in higher education has or has not kept pace and what fresh insights you might derive from these new directions.

- Baum, J. & T. Rowley, 2002, An Introduction, *Companion to Organizations*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1-34.

Baum & Rowley present ten contemporary perspectives on organizations.

Q: For each perspective, discuss the extent to which research in higher education has availed itself of the theoretical content and/or empirical finding.

Q: Are there perspectives not represented here that you believe should be?

Q: Provide a summary argument for which perspectives can best guide HEI research going forward.

- Brunsson, N. and Sahlin-Andersson, K. 2000. "Constructing organizations: The example of the Public Sector Reform." *Organization Studies*:721-746.

The thesis of Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson is that the origin of public sector reforms might be understood as attempts to construct 'complete' organizations (such as corporations) out of those in the public sector (such as hospitals and universities) that are/were incomplete due to the lack of attributes such as identity, hierarchy and rationality normally associated with the private sector. Central to this assertion are the transitions of agents and arenas, as separate instrumentalities, toward the emergence of socially constructed configurations of structures and processes called 'organizations.'

Q: Comment on the utility of actors, agents and arenas as a way of distinguishing among organizing possibilities.

Q: Is a single construct of 'organization' too limiting? Would a richer view of organization design options (e.g. Mintzberg 1979) enhance or defeat this argument?

Q: Are those reformers 'trying to make the organization actually work in the way it should' (p. 731) simply operating under the 'necessary illusions' of rationality, normality, perfect information, frictionless change, and linear cause & effect that place unrealistic assumptions not only on organizations, but also their environments? If so, does organization theory (as opposed to economics) suggest alternate pathways to public sector effectiveness?

Applications to the higher education field

- Musselin, C. 2007. "Are Universities Specific Organisations?" Pp. 63-84 in *Towards a Multiversity? Universities between Global Trends and National Traditions*, edited by Krücken, G., Kosmützky, A. and Torke, M. Bielefeld: transcript

1.1.2 *From power and dependency to social networks*

Instructor: John Usher, University of Lethbridge.

This session will provide an in-depth exploration of two linked perspectives on organizations: 1) power and dependency and 2) social networks. These approaches will be used to frame concepts that speak to the roles of politics and social networks both within and between organizations. Building on classic works in this area that have used universities as their empirical base, implications for further study of these topics in higher education will be investigated.

Key readings:

- HACKMAN, J.D. (1985) POWER AND CENTRALITY IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY, 30, 61-77.

This is a classic study of how resource allocation in a university setting can be affected by the use of power and politics at a time of financial difficulty.

Q: How do Hackman's findings compare with your own experience / understanding of how things work in real terms when resources are being distributed at a university? If there are differences, do you attribute them to the time (1985) or the place (US) of the original study?

Q: As an exercise in applying the concepts of the paper (and its measures if you wish), describe how you would use Hackman as a point of entry into understanding how individual research units within a university might attract resources.

- previous studies of resource allocation
- key concepts: centrality (how closely one unit meets the overall mission of a organization/institution) and resource allocation (dependent variable – money, space, staff)
- core (without them the institution would have a different purpose) and peripheral units (non central part of the institution)
- issue of power: environmental power (ability to acquire key resources from the environment)+ institutional power (independent of the environmental power – influence of the unit within the organization/institution)
- power of the unit is determent by relation of the unit with the object of the power
- resource negotiations strategies
- core gainers, core looser, peripheral gainers and peripheral losers
- connection with resource dependence theory

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Three levels of analysis: interpersonal + interunit + interorganizational

SNA – Social Network Analysis

Readings: Bordieu, Putnam, Coletan, Burt, Uzzi

Economic capital – money

Human capital – brains, skills

Cultural capital – prestige, status

Social capital – internal (cohesion, bonding, closer, interconnections between people) + external (bridging)

- tension between internal and external social capital
- internal capital – people don't want stars, they do not want to change, stars make them look bad

- BRASS, D.J., GALASKIEWICZ, J., GREVE, H.R. & TSAI, W. (2004) TAKING STOCK OF NETWORKS AND ORGANIZATIONS: A MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVE. *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*, 47(6), 795-817.

Brass et al. (2004: 807) maintain that their review of networks confirms the following: “(1) they transfer information that gives rise to attitude similarity, imitation, and generation of innovations; (2) they mediate transactions among organizations and cooperation among persons; and (3) they give differential access to resources and power.”

Q: Discuss the extent to which each of these findings have / should be taken up by higher education researchers.

Q: Consider in particular, the implications of the paper for the emerging network governance context of Higher Education in Europe.

- PROVAN, K.G. & KENIS, P. (2007) MODES OF NETWORK GOVERNANCE: STRUCTURE, MANAGEMENT, AND EFFECTIVENESS. *JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH AND THEORY*, 18: 229-252

Q: Categorize the current (nascent) mode of network governance in Higher Education in Europe as either participant-governed, lead organization-governed, or NAO giving due consideration to the authors' proposed evolutionary model.

Q: What are the implications for effectiveness on that network based on the authors' proposed contingency model (Table 1, p. 237)?

Q: Appraise the emerging governance mode for HEIs in Europe in terms of the three network tensions identified. If the network could be (were) to be managed, how would you see these tensions being 'worked out'?

Applications to the higher education field

- Bleiklie, I., Enders, J., Lepori, B. & Musselin, C. (2010) “New Public Management, Network Governance and the university as a changing professional organization” in T. Christensen & P. Lægveid (eds.) *Ashgate Research Companion to New Public Management*, Aldershot: Ashgate (forthcoming).

1.1.3 *The New Institutionalism: Myths – Isomorphism – Agency*

Instructors: Uwe Schimank and Frank Meier, University of Bremen.

The basic concepts developed in the four key readings will be presented by the instructors. The presentations of the participants will be devoted to application of these concepts to the four EUROHESC projects. Thus, we need one participant from each project and the assignments will be based on projects and not on readings or topics.

Assignment: Present briefly (10 min) some first considerations on how basic ideas of the New Institutionalism (e.g. myth, decoupling, institutional field, isomorphism (coercive, mimetic, normative), institutional work, institutional entrepreneur) can be applied to your project (RHESI, EUROAC, CINHEKS, TRUE)! Please concentrate on one or two of the concepts developed in the key readings and to a specific limited aspect of your project! If you have any questions or problems, don't hesitate to contact us (uwe.schimank@unibremen.de or frank.meier@uni-bremen.de).

Key readings:

- Meyer, J. & B. Rowan, 1977. Institutionalized Organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony, *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2): 340-63.
- DiMaggio, P. & W. Powell, 1983, The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields, *American Sociological Review*, 48(2): 147-160.
- DiMaggio, P. (1988): Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory. In: L.G. Zucker (ed.): *Institutional Patterns and Organizations. Culture and Environment*. Cambridge: Ballinger, 3-21.
- Lawrence, T.B./R. Suddaby/B. Leca (2009): Introduction: Theorizing and Studying Institutional Work. In: T.B. Lawrence/R. Suddaby/B. Leca (eds.): *Institutional Work. Actors and Agency in Institutional Studies of Organizations*. Cambridge: University Press, 1-27 (here: 1-17).

Applications to the higher education field

- Krücken, G. (2003): Mission Impossible? Institutional Barriers to the Diffusion of the 'Third Academic Mission' at German Universities. In: *International Journal of Technology Management* 25: 18-33.
- Krücken G./F. Meier (2006): Turning the University into an Organizational Actor. In: G. Drori/J.W. Meyer/H. Hwang (eds.): *Globalization and Organization: World Society and Organizational Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 241-257.

1.1.4 *New theories of firms and markets and universities*

Instructor: Richard Whitley, University of Manchester

Many reforms to Higher Education systems have assumed that they are organizations in much the same way as conventional firms in market economies and can be restructured as competing collective entities. However, there are a number of reasons why this view is mistaken, particularly given the inherent uncertainty and innovativeness of scientific research and open-ended nature of much university teaching. It is also important to realize that the nature of firms and their competitive strategies, vary greatly between differently organized market economies. In this session, we will discuss some recent work on firms as strategic actors in different institutional regimes and its implications for the analysis of research in universities.

THE NATURE OF THE FIRM AS A STRATEGIC ACTOR

Readings

- Edith Penrose (1959) *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm*, pages 15-26.
- George Richardson (1998) "Some Principles of Economic Organisation," pp 44-62 in N Foss and B Loasby (eds) *Economic Organisation, Capabilities and Coordination*, London: Routledge.
- Metcalfe, J Stanley and Andrew James (2000) "Knowledge and Capabilities: A new view of the firm," pp 31-52 in Nicolai Foss and Paul Robertson (eds) *Resources, Technology and Strategy: Explorations in the resource based perspective*, London: Routledge
- Whitley, Richard (2008) "Universities as Strategic Actors," pp 23-37 in L Engwall and D Weaire (eds) *The University in the Market* London: Portland Press

Questions to be considered:

- What are the key features of firms in market economies?
- What are the necessary conditions for firms to act as strategic actors?
- How do these apply to universities

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The capabilities approach

- Strategic actors / strategic actorhood (intentionally generating objectives (problems) and routines of problem solving by authoritative coordination and resource allocation basing on knowledge)

Structural limitations on strategic actorhood for Universities:

- **core technology:** to produce new and acclaimed knowledge – acclamation by distribution of reputation in scientific communities – lack of knowledge about the causal relationship in and between combinations of resources, skills and outcomes
- high uncertainty on the outcomes of strategic decisions

Contingent limitations on strategic actorhood for Universities:

- hollow organizations (state-dominated)
 - o fragmented (no organizational discretion over crucial opportunities for strategic choices)
 - o bifurcated (some discretion but dominated by ministries and scientific elites)

- employment organizations
 - o state-chartered (moderate discretion within a general frameworks provided and controlled by the state)
 - o market-based (full formal discretion)

VARIETIES OF FIRM TYPES AND THEIR DISTINCTIVE CAPABILITIES

Readings

- David Teece (1996) "Firm Organization, industrial structure and technological innovation," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 31. 193-224.
- Richard Whitley (2007) *Business Systems and Organisational Capabilities*, pages 147-162,175-190, 228-238.

Questions to be considered:

- How do firms differ in key respects?
- How do firms develop different kinds of capabilities and how do these affect strategic choices?
- How could universities become different kinds of firms and develop distinctive capabilities?

THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURING OF FIRMS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

Readings:

- Richard Whitley and Peer Hull Kristensen (eds) *The Changing European Firm* (Routledge, 1996), chapters 6 & 7.
- Richard Whitley, *Business Systems and Organisational Capabilities*, pages 162-174, 190-202, 238-248.
- Whitley, Richard (2003) "Competition and Pluralism in the Public Sciences: The impact of institutional frameworks on the organisation of academic science," *Research Policy*. 32. 1015-1029.

Questions to be considered:

- How and why do different kinds of firms become dominant and develop different kinds of capabilities in different institutional contexts?
- Why did different kinds of firms become successful in Denmark and Finland?
- What are the implications of the institutional structuring of firms for the development of universities as distinctive organisations in different societies?

1.1.5 *Organizational fields, organizational ecology and higher education diversity*

Instructor: Balázs Kovács, University of Lugano.

This session will present an overview of the development of population ecology from its original formulation by Hannan and Freeman in 1977 to its evolution towards an audience-based approach, addressing the problem of classification of organizations in terms of socio-cognitive representations by relevant audiences, thus introducing issues of languages and codes, as well as of boundaries and of partial membership. Further, the use of these approaches and concepts to address the central issue of diversity of higher education systems will be introduced, with reference both to classical work at the population-level and more recent studies at the organizational field level. Finally, implications for empirical studies of diversity in higher education will be investigated.

Key readings

- Hannan, M.T. & Freeman, J., 1977, The population ecology of organizations, *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(4): 929-964.
- Hannan, M.T. & Freeman, J. 1984, Structural inertia and organizational change, *American Sociological Review*, 49(2): 149-164.
- Hsu, G., Hannan, M.T 2009, Identities, Genres and Organizational Forms, *Organization Science* 16(5), 474-490.
- Ruef, M. & Patterson, K., 2009, Credit and classification: Defining industry boundaries in 19th century America, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, In press.

Questions:

- What is the main topic for the article?
- Can you say something about the evolution of the classification of higher educational institutions in your country / Europe (maybe you can search for some extra readings)

2 List of participants

(with the exception of Review Panel and Scientific Committee's members)

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Anna	Kozmutzky	University of Kassel (DE)	kosmuetzky@incher.uni-kassel.de
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Martina	Montauti	University of Lugano (IT)	martina.montauti@usi.ch
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Jennifer	Olson	University of Georgia (US)	jrolson@uga.edu
Elke	Park	Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt (AT)	elke.park@uni-klu.ac.at
Filipa	Ribeiro	Universidade do Porto (PT)	filipa@cipes.up.pt
Marco	Seeber	University of Lugano (CH)	marco.seeber@usi.ch
Krystian	Szadkowski	Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (PO)	krystian.szadkowski@ei-ie.org
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Thymo	von Stuckrad	Technische Universität Berlin (DE)	stuckrad@ztg.tu-berlin.de
Elke	Weyer	University of Twente (NL)	e.weyer@utwente.nl

3 List of readings and assignments

ASSIGNMENTS	PRESENTER 1	PRESENTER 2
SCOTT, R. 2004, REFLECTIONS ON A HALF-CENTURY OF ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIOLOGY, ANNUAL REVIEW OF SOCIOLOGY, 30: 1-21	Bojana Culum	Marko Turk
BAUM, J. & T. ROWLEY, 2002, AN INTRODUCTION, COMPANION TO ORGANIZATIONS, OXFORD: BLACKWELL, 1-34.	Ester Höhle	
BRUNSSON, N. AND SAHLIN-ANDERSSON, K. 2000. "CONSTRUCTING ORGANIZATIONS: THE EXAMPLE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM." ORGANIZATION STUDIES:721-746.	Enno Aljets	
MUSSELIN, C. 2007. "ARE UNIVERSITIES SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS?" PP. 63 84 IN TOWARDS A MULTIVERSITY? UNIVERSITIES BETWEEN GLOBAL TRENDS AND NATIONAL TRADITIONS, EDITED BY KRÜCKEN, G., KOSMÜTZKY, A. AND TORCA, M. BIELEFELD: TRANSCRIPT	Elke Weyer	Amy Ewen
HACKMAN, J.D. (1985) POWER AND CENTRALITY IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY, 30, 61-77.	Jennifer Olson	Zarko Dragsic
BRASS, D.J., GALASKIEWICZ, J., GREVE, H.R. & TSAI, W. (2004) TAKING STOCK OF NETWORKS AND ORGANIZATIONS: A MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVE. ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL, 47(6), 795-817.	Krystian Szadkowski	Aurelia Kollasch
PROVAN, K.G. & KENIS, P. (2007) MODES OF NETWORK GOVERNANCE: STRUCTURE, MANAGEMENT, AND EFFECTIVENESS. JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH AND THEORY, 18: 229-252.	Giulio Marini	Luminita Moraru

BLEIKLIE, I., ENDERS, J., LEPORI, B. & MUSSELIN, C. (2010) "NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT, NETWORK GOVERNANCE AND THE UNIVERSITY	Elke Park	
THE NEW INSTITUTIONALISM: MYTHS, ISOMORPHISM, AGENCY	Eric Lettkemann	Peter Kretek, Marius Herzog
THE NATURE OF THE FIRM AS A STRATEGIC ACTOR	Tatiana Fumasoli	Thimo von Stuckrad
VARIETIES OF FIRM TYPES AND THEIR DISTINCTIVE CAPABILITIES	Brigida Blasi	Anna Kosmützky
THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURING OF FIRMS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT	Eliana Minelli	
HANNAN, M.T. & FREEMAN, J., 1977, THE POPULATION ECOLOGY OF ORGANIZATIONS, AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, 82(4): 929-964.	Adriana Gorga	Marco Seeber
HSU, G., HANNAN, M.T 2005, IDENTITIES, GENRES AND ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS, ORGANIZATION SCIENCE 16(5), 474-490.	Filipa Ribeiro	
RUEF, M. & PATTERSON, K., 2009, CREDIT AND CLASSIFICATION: DEFINING INDUSTRY BOUNDARIES IN 19TH CENTURY AMERICA, ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY, IN PRESS.	Martina Montauti	

4 Practical Information

How to reach Lugano

The most convenient option is to land in Milano Malpensa; here, you can find a bus which directly arrive to Lugano. Please, check the timetable at the following URL:

<http://www.malpensaexpress.ch/orari.asp> (Giosy Tour)

How to reach Lugano railway station

For those interested in returning to Lugano railway station, there is a bus which leaves every 30' minutes (XX.02; XX.32; XY.02; XY.32 etc.) from Corso Elvezia:



Your accommodation

Both hotel Ceresio and hotel Lido Seegarten are located nearby the University of Lugano and they are very close to the lake and the city-centre. A room is already booked for you: in doing the check-in, please, specify you are here for the ESF OT Course in University of Lugano. Please, remember also that you are in charge of paying for your lodging in the hotel. Participants will be reimbursed according to ESF rules.

- Cost of Hotel Ceresio is 70 CHF/person for a single room and 100 CHF/person for a double room;
- Cost of Hotel Seegarten is 140 CHF/person for a single room.

If you need other information about the hotels, check the following URLs:

<http://www.hotelceresio.ch/en/index.htm> (participants)

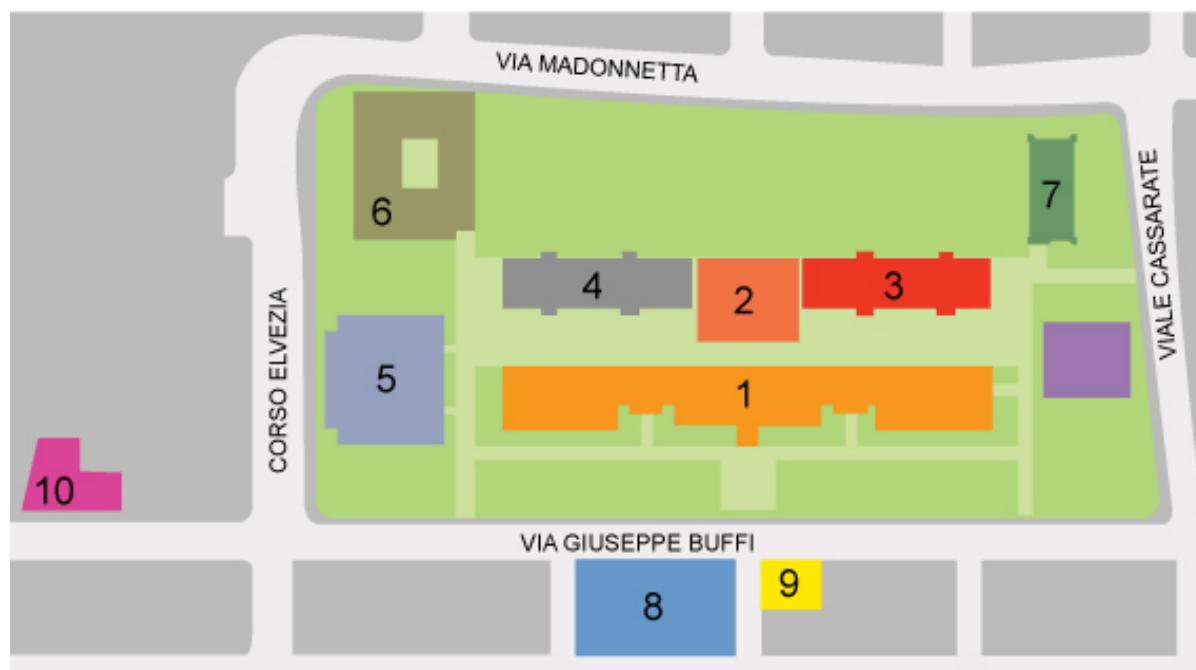
<http://www.hotellido-lugano.com/pagine/hotel.cfm> (speakers, Review Panel and Scientific Committee)

University of Lugano

- The whole course will be held in University of Lugano, **red building (3)**, **room A32**.
- Scientific Committee meeting will be held in University of Lugano, February 23, **red building (3) room A24**, from 15.00 to 17.30
- Review Panel meeting will be held in University of Lugano, February 24, white building - **orange (1)** in the map - **room 351**, from 09.00 to 13.00

You can find useful information about University of Lugano on its official website ...

<http://www.usi.ch/en/index.htm>



Currency and sockets

In Lugano you can pay with both Swiss francs and Euros, which are commonly accepted by providing the change in CHF.

Please note that the Swiss sockets are not always compatible with European ones. Accordingly, it would be better to bring with you an adapter.

Lunch and dinners

Due to the tight schedule of the course, sandwich lunches will be provided for all the three days.

Joint dinners will take place at “Canvetto Luganese”
via Rinaldo Simen 14 (Ph. 091.910.18 90)



We asked the restaurant to offer you their best options and conditions. We also asked to prepare vegetarian meals for those who do not eat meat.

Useful contacts

If you need information or help, you can contact Martina Montauti as follows:

- *m.ph.* +41.76.7827335
- *e-mail* martina.montauti@usi.ch

ENJOY THE COURSE AND YOUR STAY IN LUGANO!

