ORGANIZATION THEORY AND APPLICATION:
SEMINAR ON INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

COURSE INFORMATION:

Class Meetings: 
Thursdays, 1:15 – 4:05 pm.
527 CERAS
SCANCOR Conference Room

Instructor: 
Walter W. Powell
CERAS 532
Phone: 725-7391
Email: wpowell@suse.stanford.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 11-12, and by appointment

Goals of the Course:

The seminar will explore several lines of recent research from sociology, political science, and economics that attempt to explain the process of institutional change. The aim of the course is to assess the utility of these approaches, and understand what kinds of questions this work is best suited to answer. After reviewing the various approaches, we turn to several interesting topical areas and examine the purchase of these theories in accounting for specific cases of institutional transformation. The course is intended for PhD students.

Course Requirements:

Students will share the responsibility for discussing materials and for raising questions. Students are expected to do all of the required reading and be prepared to discuss the materials in class. Final grades are based on three types of information:

1. All students will lead class discussion at least once during the quarter. Discussion assignments will be made on the first day of class. In addition, all students should arrive at class with questions, topics, and issues to be raised for discussion. Twenty-five percent of the course grade is based on class participation.
2. All students are asked to prepare brief memos (1-2 pages) relating to the reading for each week. Formats may vary but it is useful to include:

   a) ideas, concepts, arguments which you found stimulating, worth remembering and building on,
   b) questions, concerns, disagreements with the ideas,
   c) connections and/or contradictions between one idea or approach and another.

Memos should be emailed to the instructor by 9 am on the day of class. Twenty-five percent of the course grade will be based on weekly memos.

3. Research proposal:

   This paper should apply the ideas from the course to a specific empirical case that you are working on. The length should be 15 – 20 pages. Fifty percent of the course grade will be based on this paper. The research proposal is due by March 15th, 5 pm. Please submit a hard copy. Electronic copies will not be accepted.

Auditors must meet requirements 1 and 2, but not 3. No exceptions permitted.
The course is not available on a pass/fail basis.

Course Materials:

Reading packet, available from Field Copy, (650) 323-3155, fcp1@aol.com. The copy service will bring the packets to the first class.

Schedule:

Week 1 – January 6: Introduction
Overview of course, assignments, decisions made about topics

Approaches to the Study of Institutional Change

Week 2 – January 13: Institutional Logics


Week 3 – January 20: We need to re-schedule this class as I have a SSRC board meeting in New York

The Emergence and Transformation of Organizational Fields


Week 4 – January 27: Politics and Institutionalism


**Week 5 – February 3: Economics and Institutions**


**Week 6 – February 10: Santa Fe Institute inspired studies of institutional and network dynamics** (all of these readings are either available on the web or will be distributed electronically).


- also peruse their “Network Structure and Robustness of Marine Food Webs.” Santa Fe Institute Working Paper #03-04-024.

**Cases of Institutional Emergence and Transformation**

**Week 7 – February 17: Open Science and Proprietary Science**


**Additional readings will be distributed.**

**Week 8 – February 24: The Open Source Movement**


**Week 9 –March 3: Regional Economies**


**Week 10 – We will schedule an evening dinner session for students to present their research projects.**

Research paper due by March 15th, 5 pm.