University of Groningen
Summer Schools 2017

Corporate Governance and the Effectiveness of Boards

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characteristics and measures of firm decision-making and performance. More recently, researchers have begun to contextualize the formation of boards and their role in determining firm decisions and outcomes by taking into account formal (law, regulations, quality of government) as well as informal institutions (culture, values, trust).

At the same time, part of the research on boards has been directed toward researching cognitive and behavioral aspects of boards' decision-making processes. Studies in this field aim at opening the so-called “black box” to find out how interactions between individual team and board members affect decision making, team and board effectiveness and, ultimately, also organizational performance.

The aim of this summer school is to discuss the strength and weaknesses of both research pillars and their contribution to our understanding of how boards are formed and how they work in order to effectively perform their roles. We will also deal with measurement issues and discuss datasets and methodologies to use these datasets in research.

Corporate failures and scandals such as Enron and Parmalat in the early 2000s and, more recently Volkswagen and Toshiba, have heated up debates in policy circles and media, as well as in academia, with respect to the role of boards in these scandals. Understanding how corporate boards are formed and how they act has therefore become an important topic, both in policy as well academic circles.

Research on boards focuses on how they influence firm strategic decisions and outcomes. Traditionally, this research has investigated the link between board and/or individual characteristics and measures of firm decision-making and performance. More recently, researchers have begun to contextualize the formation of boards and their role in determining firm decisions and outcomes by taking into account formal (law, regulations, quality of government) as well as informal institutions (culture, values, trust).

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