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Individual and Society
T/Th 03:55 – 05:15 pm
Ruth Adams Building 208
Cook/Douglas Campus
Spring 2018

Instructor: Irina Nicorici
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Office Hours: by appointment

Description: In this class we will be critically reading and engaging with the cutting edge research within sociology. We will question the taken for granted assumptions about the ways individuals construct societies and how societies in turn shape individuals. We will also study the role of history and culture in shaping the multiple dimensions of self. We will analyze the shifting meanings and the ways by which societies have been historically and culturally defined. We will also pay particular attention to the ways by which societies have reproduced and resisted divisions along the lines of gender, race, class, and culture.

What does it mean to study individuals and/or societies sociologically? How are they interrelated? First, we will examine how sociological imagination is activated and what challenges researchers confront when studying human experiences. Second, we will address how modernity has modified our social relationships, how we have learned to manage ourselves, how we have disciplined each other, learned to conform to or to resist social norms. Third, we will use sociological theories to understand the formation of multiple and various subjectivities and identities. Finally, we will discuss such pertinent themes as social and economic inequalities, deviance and group interaction.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Develop a sociological imagination, a distinctive analysis of the ways people think, feel, and behave that focuses on how they are situated in historically, culturally, and socially specific environments;
- 2) Understand how societies and individuals are different and interconnected;
- 3) Critically engage with the key questions addressed in the readings and analyze the ways by which social forces shape our everyday lives and interactions;
- 4) Appreciate the complexity of people's lives by using intersectional analysis to understand people's diverse experiences of gender, race, class and sexuality

Class Format: The daily format of the course emphasizes active learning through student-led discussions, group work and debates, critically viewing film clips, as well as raising questions and commenting on the weekly topic of focus and assigned readings.

Expectations: This class will be conducted as a working seminar. That means everyone must come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to actively participate in a discussion of the texts. A typical class period will require about 15-20 pages of reading. All required readings are posted on the Sakai site.

This is a class for students who are committed to learning and applying sociological imagination to their daily lives and the texts and are willing to challenge themselves.

First and foremost you are expected to think openly and critically:

1. You do not have to agree with the readings or others in the class, however you need to approach them with a critical and an open mind. It is very important to remember that one should react to *ideas and not individuals*.
2. You will find that not everyone will agree with you on principles that are important to you, and thus, *listening to and engaging* with others' points of view will be a valuable learning experience. Interesting and valuable discussions are best in an environment where everyone is comfortable to openly discuss and question their ideas and thoughts.

I understand that some people might be hesitant to contribute to in-discuss discussions, however; in this class we are all responsible for creating a safe environment for intellectual discussion and learning. It is required that you are respectful to others and that you use sociologically informed analyses in your discussions.

Disrespect for others and their points of view or ideas will NOT BE TOLERATED.

Evaluation: Students will demonstrate their knowledge through sustained, active class participation, blogging, writing a critical film review, and two exams. The breakdown is given below.

Date	Evaluations	% of Total Grade
Every class	Attendance and participation (maximum 4 unexcused absences)	10%
Monday 11 pm and Wednesday 11 pm	Twice a week blogging (10 weeks, 20 posts, 1.5 points each)	30%
March 8	Mid-term exam	25%
March 29	Critical Film Review	10%
May 4	Final exam	25%
	Total	100%

Attendance and participation (10%): Attendance is required for this course, attendance sheets will circulate at a random time during each class. Attendance entails arriving on time and staying for the duration of class time. Lateness is disruptive and disrespectful to everyone in class. If you are late without a prior legitimate excuse you will be considered absent. Participation entails active engagement with and challenging the material in the class, and asking and responding to questions. It also includes proper engagement in group work and discussions. Simply showing up to class is **not** considered active participation. **Missing more than 4 class meetings will result in a 0 (zero) for the attendance-and-participation grade rubric. No exceptions.** A class missed due to illness or family emergencies should be reported through the University absence reporting website at <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>. Indicate the date and reason for your absence. The instructor is automatically notified via email when a student reports his/her absence using this system.

Weekly blog postings (30%): You are required to upload **twenty** blog posts on Sakai about the assigned readings for **ten** different weeks, due prior to the class. You should plan on blogging **TWICE A WEEK**, addressing the two or more readings assigned for the week to come. Posts should be uploaded to Sakai (under Blogs) by **11:00 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, at the latest.** Each post is worth **1.5 points** and should consist of a brief reaction to ideas from the weekly readings that you found interesting, confusing, what questions the texts raised for you, what connections you observed between the texts, or what you would like to discuss further in the class. Go beyond just summarizing what was included in the texts; summaries will receive 0 (zero) points. You should aim to engage analytically and critically with the readings, interrogate, critique, and contrast them. You can choose to raise questions about a quote or about an idea or a theme that comes up in the texts. You might even make theoretical connections between readings and activities from one particular week to another. Or, as long as you provide sound reason, you could tell why you think some ideas are incorrect or misguided. This exercise requires active readings of the material before the class. I will use some of these questions in class discussions and activities.

Exams (25% each): March 8 mid-term and TBD final

There will be **two** exams. They will be based on short answers and essays based on the material from the assigned class readings, in-class discussions, and videos watched during the course. They will test your knowledge of and fluency in the course concepts. Therefore, so long as you show up for class and keep up with the readings, there should be no surprises come the exam day.

While the exams are non-cumulative, you are responsible for understanding the key themes that run through this class throughout the semester. A study guide will be distributed prior to each exam; this study guide will help you to identify and understand the important issues.

There will be no make-ups for the exams unless I receive notification at least three days prior to the exam, and you have a valid and documented reason for missing the scheduled exam. Students should get to the exams by the start time and must bring pencils or pens. Each exam counts for 25% of your grade. All electronic devices, including cell phones, should be turned off during the exams.

Critical Film Review (10%): Due March 29 in hard copy.

You are required to watch a feature movie (select one from the options provided in class, or talk to me if you want to select a different movie) and write a 3-5 page review, with a close analysis of social issues addressed using keywords, theories, approaches or concepts discussed in class.

You should use Times Roman Font with font size 12 and one inch margins, double spaced. Proper grammar and spelling are expected. Grading will be based primarily on content, though grammar, formative considerations, and the effort you put forth will factor into grading as well. Please include your full name and a proper title for the text within your paper. The Writing Center is a great resource, should you need any help.

Instructions: Write a three to five page critical review of a movie from the list provided in class. After watching the movie, provide a concise summary and a critical review of the ways by which the movie depicted and discussed issues related to your readings. Choose three concepts from the readings discussed in class, and integrate them into your analysis. Make sure to answer the following questions in your review:

1. Which movie did you select and why?
2. What is the major plot of the story (briefly)?
3. What sociological concepts are central components of the movie, and how?
4. To what extent did the particular historical and cultural contexts matter? How did they shape the events?
5. In what ways did the movie complicate your understanding of sociological concepts?
6. Did the movie rely on stereotypes in its depiction of individuals or social groups? If yes, how so? Which stereotypes did they work against?
7. Did you learn something new from the movie?

Course grades are based on the total number of points an individual earns on each rubric. No extra credit opportunities are available. **Final grades are not negotiable** and will be assigned according to the following scale.

Grade	Final Numerical Average
A	90 to 100
B+	85 to 89
B	80 to 84
C+	75 to 79
C	65 to 74
D	60 to 64
F	< 59

Disclaimer

This course syllabus is subject to change as needed. You will be informed about any changes ahead of time through Sakai and/or in-class announcement.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

E-mail etiquette and requirements: I will happily and promptly reply to all student email. However, you must follow a few simple rules. First, you must put “Soc 283” in the subject line. Second, you should include your name somewhere in the body of the message. Your email addresses often do not tell me who you are.

I do not buy into the culture of immediacy and the round-the-clock work ethics. Ergo, you should expect me to respond to your message within 24 hours, not instantaneously. If you have not received a reply within 24 hours, please feel free to e-mail again. However, please do not e-mail at the last moment (that is 24 hours before exams) with questions regarding the material. You may not receive a response to these e-mails. I do not access my computer or office on the weekends. How To Email A Professor Wiki: <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>

Sakai Site: The class Sakai website includes the syllabus, course readings, supplemental texts, and other important announcements pertaining to class. Please check the website regularly, to keep updated of class information and any changes in class schedules.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Academic Misconduct: Rutgers University policies state that academic misconduct may involve: cheating; fabrication; facilitating academic dishonesty; plagiarism; denying others access to information or material. Any instances of academic misconduct will be reported to your dean. Plagiarism is using someone else's words without giving the author proper attribution. For further information on plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty see the University's academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/>

Class Conduct: The Sociology Department encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe and productive classroom environment. As such, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and courtesy. Behaviors that distract students and faculty are not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by the instructor. Courteous expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted. If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Instructors may specify other consequences in their syllabi. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at <https://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/>.

Students with Disabilities

If you need accommodations, please visit <http://ods.rutgers.edu> for more information on general disabilities categories and accommodation request. Students requesting specific accommodations should obtain and provide faculty notices to the instructor.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Tuesday, January 16	Overview of the course and requirements. No readings.
Thursday, January 18	Sociological Imagination Henslin, James. (1999). Sociology and the Social Sciences. Mills, C. Wright. (1959). Personal Experiences and Public Issues.
Tuesday, January 23	Dyer, Gwynne. (1985). Anybody's Son Will Do. Dog, Mary Crow. & Erdoes, Richard. (1990). Civilize Them with a Stick: Education as an Institution of Social Control.
Thursday, January 25	Berger, Peter. & Luckman, Thomas. (1966). The Social Foundations of Human Experience. Schwalbe, Michael. (2005). Sociological Mindfulness.
Tuesday, January 30	The Social Shaping of Subjective Experience Simmel, Georg. (1903). The Metropolis and Mental Life.
Thursday, February 1	Bellah, Robert et al. (1985). The Search for Meaning in Modern America. Gergen, Kenneth. (1991). The Dissolution of the Self.
Tuesday, February 6	Twenge, Jean. (2006). An Army of One: Me.
Thursday, February 8	Siebert, Charles. (2006). An Elephant Crackup?
Tuesday, February 13	Social Interaction Goffman, Erving. (1959). The Presentation of Self. Grazian, David. (2008). The Girl Hunt. Video: The Elevator Experiment
Thursday, February 15	Hochschild, Arlie Russell. (1979). Emotion Work and Feeling Rules. Video: A Class Divided
Tuesday, February 20	Social Control Foucault, Michel. (1975). Panopticism. Shearing, Clifford. & Stenning, Phillip. (1992). From the Panopticon to Disney World: The Development of Discipline.
Thursday, February 22	Zimbardo, Phillip. (1972). The Pathology of Imprisonment. Scott, James C. (2012). Scott's Law of Anarchist Calisthenics. Video: Zimbardo's Prison Experiment

Tuesday, February 27

Authority and Social Conformity

Meyer, Phillip. (1970). If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You?

Videos: Asch Conformity Experiment,
Milgram's Obedience Experiment

Thursday, March 1

Lifton, Robert Jay. (1986). Nazi Doctors at Auschwitz.
Kelman, Herbert. & Hamilton, V. Lee. (1989). The My Lai Massacre: A Crime of Obedience?

Mid-term exam review sheet distributed in class

Tuesday, March 6

The Social Shaping of Reality

Zerubavel, Eviatar. (2011). Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community. Chapter 4, "Nature and Culture."
Schwartz, Barry. (2009). Collective Forgetting and the Symbolic Power of Oneness.

Thursday, March 8

Mid-term exam

Tuesday, March 20

Reproducing and Resisting Class Inequalities

Mantsios, Gregory. (2003). Class in America – 2003.
Schor, Juliet. (1998). The Visible Lifestyle: American Symbols of Status.
Kilborn, Peter. (2005). The Five-Bedroom, Six-Figure Rootless Life.

Thursday, March 22

Sternheimer, Karen. (2007). Class Consciousness.
Paules, Greta. (1991). Getting and Making a Tip.
Gans, Herbert. (1994). The Uses of the Underclass in America.

Video: Tammy's Story in 2001 and 2013

Tuesday, March 27

Reproducing and Resisting Gender Inequalities

West, Candace. & Zimmerman, Don. (1987). Doing Gender.
Thorne, Barrie. (1986). Borderwork among Girls and Boys.
Messner, Michael. (1996). Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities.

Thursday, March 29

Hossain, Rokheya Shekhawat. (1905). Sultana's Dream.

FILM ASSIGNMENT DUE

Tuesday, April 3	Reproducing and Resisting Racial Inequalities Omi, Michael. & Winant, Howard. (1994). Racial Formation. Dubois, W.E.B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. Brodkin, Karen. (1998). How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America.
Thursday, April 5	Van Ausdale, Debra. & Feagin, Joe R. (2001). Young Children's Racial and Ethnic Definitions of Self. Video: Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode III The House We Live In
Tuesday, April 10	Socio-Economic Confrontations Marx, Karl. & Engels, Friedrich. (1848). Manifesto of the Communist Party.
Thursday, April 12	Nir, Sarah Maslin. (2015). The Price of Nice Nails.
Tuesday, April 17	Deviance and Crime Anderson, Elijah. (1994). The Code of the Streets. Jones, Nikki. (2008). Working the Code in the Inner City.
Thursday, April 19	Montemurro, Beth. (2006). Deviance and Liminality. Marx, Gary. (1988). The Unintended Consequences of Undercover Work.
	Final exam review sheet distributed in class
Tuesday, April 24	Groups and Networks Erickson, Bonnie. (2003). Social Networks: the Value of Variety. McGabe, Janice. (2016). Friends with Academic Benefits.
Thursday, April 26	Hardin, Garrett. (1968). The Tragedy of the Commons. Wright, Erik Olin. (2011). Real Utopias.
Friday, May 4	Final exam