SOC 535.001
Readings in Sociology
Fall 2014
M, 4:30 – 7:10 p.m.

Professor: William E. Thompson, Ph.D.
Office Location: Ferguson Social Science 229
Office Hours: M, W 11:00 a.m.-noon; T, R 1:30-3:00 p.m.; other times by appointment
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COURSE INFORMATION

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This graduate seminar explores advanced sociological principles through the use of selected classic and contemporary readings. Students will be expected to read, synthesize, and integrate a wide variety of sociological materials and to analyze and discuss them from divergent theoretical perspectives.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES/COURSE OBJECTIVES: This graduate course has the following major objectives, and after completing it students should be able to:

1. Describe and explain the world around them from a variety of sociological perspectives.

2. Demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills--especially the ability to read, synthesize, and integrate a wide variety of materials and to analyze and discuss them from a multitude of theoretical perspectives.

3. Describe and explain some of the important "classic" and contemporary literature/authors in sociology.

4. Be prepared for other graduate courses and graduate comprehensive exams.

REQUIRED BOOKS: *Invitation to Sociology* by Peter Berger, 1963, ISBN: 0-385-06529-9; *Thirty Readings in Introductory Sociology* edited by Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, Oxford Press, ISBN: 9780199934928; *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* by Erving Goffman, 1959, ISBN: 0-385-09402-7; and The Myth of Individualism: How Social Forces Shape Our Lives (2nd ed.), by Peter L. Callero, 2013,ISBN: 978-1-4422-1745-4. The books are available in the university bookstore and from a variety of other sources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

CLASS FORMAT: This is a graduate seminar. The purpose is ***not*** for the professor to dispense information and the students to try to absorb it. Rather, we all will be reading the same materials in preparation for class and will meet to analyze, discuss, and critique these readings together--all contributing to the learning process.

The environment will be totally open. Your participation in class discussion is not encouraged, it is ***demanded***! All ideas, comments, opinions, etc., will be heard. Likewise, all of them will be questioned, analyzed, and critically scrutinized. Do not be timid and do not "wear your feelings on your shirtsleeves." On the other hand, be cognizant of other's feelings and do nothing to interfere with another person's learning opportunities. We will be attacking other people's ideas, not attacking other people.

STATEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

As stated in the student handbook: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information.)

We will be discussing many contemporary controversial topics. A mature attitude and open mind is essential.

THIS CLASSROOM IS A "SAFE SPACE"

All persons who enter this classroom will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, race, sex, social class, religion, politics, sexual orientation , and/or lifestyle. There will be "Zero Tolerance" in this classroom for any form of ageism, racism, sexism, sexual harassment, or any other form of prejudice, discrimination, or bigotry.

ATTENDANCE: It should go without saying that attendance at all class sessions is extremely important. The class meets only once a week and there is no possible way to gain the information lost by missing class discussions. It is inevitable that one or two of you will have to miss a session for some very good reason. If this is the case, please check with others in the class to see what you missed. If you anticipate missing more than two class sessions, you probably should drop the course.

EXAMINATIONS: There will be two examinations in this course: A short answer/essay exam at mid-term; and a short answer/essay final exam. Each will be worth 100 points.

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEWS: There will be three out-of-class papers worth 100 points each. They should be 2 to 3 pages in length (typed, double-spaced). See guidelines at the end of syllabus for writing reviews and see the course schedule for due dates of each review. Papers turned in late (any time after the beginning of class when due) will be worth a maximum of 50 pts. Papers cannot be turned in any later than one week after the due date (NO EXCEPTIONS!). Do NOT e-mail the papers to the professor. Hand deliver them.

GRADES: Final course grades will be based on the 2 major exams (100 pts. ea.), 3 book reviews (100 pts. ea.), and seminar participation (100 pts.). The following final grading scale will be used:

A = 90-100% (540-600 total pts.)
B = 80 - 89% (480-539 total pts.)
C = 70 - 79% (420-479 total pts.)
D = 60 - 69% (360-419 total pts.)
F = < 60 % (< 360 total pts.)

POLICIES ON ENROLLMENT, "Xs", AND WITHDRAWAL: All policies regarding last day for enrollment, dropping without a grade, withdrawal from class, and the use of "X" will be rigidly adhered to in this course. Students should check the student handbook, current semester schedule, and the appropriate bulletin boards for specific deadlines. Seeing that all university procedures are properly followed is the student's responsibility.

CHEATING AND PAGIARISM: Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will **not** be tolerated. Anyone who participates in either activity will fail the course and the professor will initiate steps for the department and/or university to take further disciplinary action.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

There are no technology requirements for this course. Students should have access to a computer, however, to check their MyLeo accounts for e-mails from the professor.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course is taught face-to-face and is not web-enhanced.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
The most effective way to communicate with the professor will be to come to class. The professor will be in his office during posted office hours and by appointment. The best way to make an appointment is to communicate directly with the professor immediately prior to or after class. Appointments can also be made via e-mail.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION: I will communicate with the class through MyLeo e-mail. I will send out reminders about assignments, changes in syllabus, etc., to the entire class through e-mail using your official "My Leo" university e-mail address. Consequently, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to check your e-mail regularly for messages from me. I will attempt to respond to your e-mails in a timely fashion (usually within 24 hours) except for e-mails received after noon on Friday, any time Saturday, or Sunday. There is no such thing as a "sociological emergency." Any questions or problems you encounter over the weekend can be addressed on Monday.

Students with Disabilities:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Date:	Topic:	Reading Assignment:

M, 25 Aug.	Introduction, Syllabus, General Concepts, Code of Ethics	
M, 1 Sept.	Labor Day Holiday – no class	Berger, Sociological Imagination
M, 8 Sept.	Sociological Imagination	Section 1, Rdgs 1,2,3
	Critical Review Due	
M, 15 Sept.	Methods and Theory	Section 2, Rdgs 4,5,6
M, 22 Sept.	Culture and Socialization	Section 3, Rdgs 7,8,9
M, 29 Sept.	Social Institutions	Section 4, Rdgs 10,11,12
W, 6 Oct.	Race and Intersectionality	Section 5, Rdgs 13,14,15
M, 13 Oct.	**Mid-Term Exam**	
M, 20 Oct.	Presentation of Self	Goffman
	Critical Review Due	
M, 27 Oct.	Class and Intersectionality	Section 6, Rdgs 16,17,18
M, 3 Nov.	Gender and Intersectionality	Section 7, Rdgs 19,20,21
M, 10 Nov.	Forces of Social Change	Section 8, Rdgs 22,23,24
M, 17 Nov.	Global Dynamics	Section 9, Rdgs 25,26,27
M, 24 Nov.	Myth of Individualism	Callero
	Critical Review Due	
M, 1 Dec.	**Final Exam**	

Critical Book Reviews

(3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font)

1. Complete citation for the book including: Title, author, city of publication, publisher, date.

2. What is the author's major thesis?

3. How convincing is the author in supporting the major thesis? What does he/she use to support thesis?

5. What major theoretical perspective(s) is(are) represented?

6. Are there apparent biases? If so, what are they?

7. What are the major strengths of the book?

7. What are the major weaknesses of the book?

9. Does this book make a major contribution to the field of sociology? If so, what is that contribution? If not, why not?

10. What is your personal reaction to the book? Would you recommend it to others? Why? Why not?

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RECOMMENDED READING LIST*

(*Students also should consult with the Graduate Advisor for a reading list for comprehensive exams)

Berger, Peter

Invitation to Sociology
The Social Construction of Reality (with Luckmann)
The Sacred Canopy
Pyramids of Sacrifice

Blumer, Herbert
Symbolic Interactionism

Cockerham, William C.
Society of Risk-Takers: Living Life on the Edge

Collins, Randall
Four Traditions in Sociology

Comte, Auguste
The Positive Philosophy

Cooley, Charles H.
Human Nature and the Social Order
Social Organization
Social Process

Durkheim, Emile
The Division of Labor in Society
Elementary Forms of the Religious Life
The Rules of the Sociological Method
Suicide

Friedan, Betty
The Feminine Mystique
The Fountain of Age

Faludi, Susan
Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women

Gans, Herbert
Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste

Garfinkle, Harold
Studies in Ethnomethodology

Goffman, Erving
The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life
Asylums
Stigma
Interaction Ritual

Hall, Edward T.
The Silent Language

Hochschild, Arlie
The Second Shift: Inside the Two-Job Marriage (with Anne Machung)
The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work.

Homans, George
The Human Group

Jacobs, Jane
The Death and Life of Great American Cities

Johnson, Allan G.
The Forest and the Trees: Sociology as Life, Practice, & Promise

Lemert, Charles
Social Things: An Introduction to the Sociological Life
Thinking the Unthinkable: The Riddle of Classical Social Theories

Liebow, Elliot (anthropologist)
Tally's Corner

Marx, Karl
Capital
The German Ideology
The Communist Manifesto (with Engels)

McLeod, Jay
Ain't No Makin It

Mead, George H.
Mind, Self and Society

Merton, Robert
Social Theory and Social Structure

Mills, C. Wright
The Power Elite
The Sociological Imagination
White Collar

Parsons, Talcott
The Social System

Putnum, Robert
Bowling Alone: The collapse and Revival of American Community

Ritzer, George
Enchanting a Disenchanted World
Expressing America
Sociology: A Multi-Paradigm Science
The McDonaldization of Society
The Globalization of Nothing

Smith, Dorothy
The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology
The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge

Sorokin, Pitirim
Fads and Foibles in Modern Sociology

Contemporary Sociological Theories

Spencer, Herbert
Social Statics
Principles of Sociology

Sumner, William Graham
Folkways

Tannen, Deborah
You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation
You're Wearing That?

Terkel, Studs
Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do

Thomas, William I.
The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (with Znaniecki)
The Unadjusted Girl

Twenge, Janet
Generation Me
Toennies, Ferdinand
Community and Society

Veblen, Thorsten
Theory of the Leisure Class

Ward, Lester Frank
Applied Sociology
Dynamic Sociology
Outlines of Sociology
Pure Sociology

Weber, Max
The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
The Sociology of Religion

Whyte, William F.
Street Corner Society