

SOC 448: Sociology of Education

Fall 2022 Syllabus

Portland State University – fully online

*****Course materials will typically be available on Canvas one to two weeks before they are due. If you hoped to work ahead more than this, this might not be the course for you.*****

PEOPLE

Instructor. Dara Shifrer, Associate Professor of Sociology, dshifrer@pdx.edu, office hours by appointment.

Teaching Assistant. Kaz Seko, Sociology PhD student, kseko@pdx.edu, office hours by appointment.

Asking questions:

- **Step 1:** Check to see if your question has been answered in the syllabus or in the Canvas discussion thread “Student Questions.”
- **Step 2:** Post your question in the Canvas discussion thread “Student Questions.” Your question can be answered by classmates or myself. Class communication will become more efficient as classmates with the same question benefit from your post.
- **Step 3:** If your question is personal or you do not receive an answer after 24 hours on the Canvas discussion thread, email me at dshifrer@pdx.edu. If you email me through Canvas, I cannot guarantee a response within 24 hours.

LEARNING GOALS

This four-credit course integrates classic and contemporary works from the sociology of education scholarly literature with a wide range of other types of materials to engage you visually, sonically, and tactilely. The goals of the course are that you:

- Understand sociological perspectives of education
- Apply sociological concepts/theories to everyday life and future careers
- Develop critical thinking and writing skills

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Movie/show: The final assignment requires that you watch a movie or show of your choosing with themes that align with the course material, so a Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, etc. account may be useful but is not required.

Internet: This course is ****COMPLETELY ONLINE**** so you need a reliable internet connection that will allow you to search the web, use email, attach and upload documents, and download and save files. Internet options have increased in some ways during the pandemic but avoid lost points by not trying to complete assignments at the last minute.

Canvas: All course materials and grades will be available on Canvas (<https://canvas.pdx.edu>). If you have trouble accessing your Canvas account, or do not have an ODIN ID & password to log in with, please contact the OIT help desk (Smith Memorial Student Union (SMSU) 18) at 503-725-HELP (4357) or help@pdx.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS

Counter to popular perception that college courses should involve lectures, research finds learning and retention is most effectively built by presenting important ideas in a multitude

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of diverse ways. This course's assignments involve readings from the textbook, academic sources, and popular sources; and video and audio clips. Online student discussions and a final writing assignment incorporate active student-centered learning into the class. In addition to preparing you for the exam, the quizzes help to be sure you are catching the most important points in the materials. Ultimately, course grades are based on one Exam, nine Quizzes, one Writing Assignment, nine Discussions, and a Canvas Profile Picture.

Deadlines and Late Assignments: This class includes deadlines because an unstructured course is less transparent and more chaotic for students and the instructor/TA. Yet, in recognition that all students will face challenges to meeting deadlines because of work, family, or health, missing a few deadlines will not result in a student failing the course or in receiving a zero for the assignment. There are typically three deadlines each week: Wednesday by 11:30pm, Friday by 11:30pm, and Sunday by 11:30pm. In Canvas's Modules area, there are Checklists of things to do each week (Monday through Sunday) along with many of the materials that you will read, view, etc. right below the Checklist. The quizzes are due on Sunday and cover the material you read, viewed, etc. for that week's Checklist. Total points possible will be reduced by 20% for each day an assignment is late (with days counting as ended at 11:30pm). Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than one week late. No extra credit is available in this course.

Grade	%
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	86-89%
B	82-85%
B-	80-81%
C+	76-79%

Grade	%
C	72-75%
C-	70-71%
D+	66-69%
D	62-65%
D-	60-61%
F	≤59%

1000 total points available for the term:

1 Exam at 300 points	300
1 Writing Assignment at 300 points	300
9 Quizzes at 25 points each	225
9 Discussions at 15 points each	135
1 Profile Photo at 40 points	40

Exam (DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 11:30PM): The exam, administered through Canvas, assesses your mastery of important course concepts. It will include some subset of the quiz questions. You will have a window of 4 days to complete the exam, and 2 hours to complete the exam once you begin. There will be no make-up exams except in extreme circumstances (e.g. death in the family, serious illness) accompanied by written documentation. If you do not contact me before the exam, you will also have to provide a documented reason why you could not contact me. Make-up exams are 100% essay.

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Quizzes: Quizzes, administered through Canvas, assess whether you're retaining key points of the materials you were assigned to read, view, and listen to in the days previous to the quiz day (items due on Wednesday and Friday). I recommend that you first write or type a list of all of the key concepts (see Writing Assignment in Main Files on Canvas for ideas) for that week. As you're reading, viewing, and listening, you can add definitions for the key concepts and important or relevant examples. Try to make connections across the course materials as you take notes. These notes will also be very helpful to you as take the final exam and write your final paper. You will have 1 hour to complete each Quiz once you begin. Quizzes cannot be "made up"—altering class structure for one individual requires advance notice and written documentation.

Writing Assignment (PART 1 DUE WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 11:30PM / PART 2 DUE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 11:30PM): Effectively communicating your thoughts in written form will benefit you in college and in your career. You will complete a two-part Writing Assignment in which you apply theories/concept from the sociology of education to a movie or show. The first part of the Writing Assignment is a one-paragraph summary of the movie or show, along with a statement of the three theories you plan to apply. The second part of the Writing Assignment is a four-page double-spaced paper applying theories to various parts of the movie or show. More details are available in the Writing Assignment rubric on Canvas (Modules>Main Files).

Online Discussions: The online discussions will require you to apply the course material to real-life examples through interaction with your classmates. Be sure to maintain netiquette (described below) in all online class discussions. To increase the substance and meaning of the discussions, you'll be assigned to smaller groups for each discussion. One student in each group will be assigned to be a facilitator for each discussion. The facilitator summarizes the main themes of the discussion and documents classmates' participation by uploading a Discussion Facilitator Form (on Canvas: Modules>Main Files) to the appropriate Assignment folder. Facilitators should document their participation in the discussion on the Facilitator Form as well. The Discussion group and facilitator assignments are available on Canvas in the pinned section of the Discussions page.

Netiquette: Although you might be accustomed to using electronic communication such as text messaging and chat, communicating as part of a course involves a different set of skills and conventions.

- Use formal English. Not everyone is familiar with twitter or text abbreviations.
- Use *asterisks* around a word instead of ALL CAPS to show emphasis. ALL CAPS give the impression you are shouting.
- Avoid lengthy posts and make your points as succinctly as possible. Avoid posting a great deal more often than your classmates.
- Avoid any personal criticism or potentially offensive language. If you disagree with a fellow student, describe your perspective clearly and politely rather than criticizing others' comments. Tone can be difficult to interpret online so be extra polite, careful, and kind when posting to the discussion board or emailing other students. If you

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read a message that feels like a personal attack, wait until you feel calm enough to reply in a way that will defuse the situation. If you are uncertain how to handle the situation, contact the instructor.

GUIDELINES

Recommendations: You may eventually ask professors to recommend you for graduate programs, jobs, or internships. To facilitate your professors being willing and able to write you a strong letter, your job as a college student is to become the kind of student professors can rave about: hardworking, collegial, intellectually inquisitive, and honest. Consider maintaining relationships over time with professors so that they know you well enough to write for you. Many juniors and seniors wish they had thought about this during their first year of college.

Academic Honesty: The PSU Student Conduct Code prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, buying and selling of assignments for others, unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information, and other practices understood as academically dishonest. Plagiarism describes the use of another person's words or ideas without giving that person credit. Information on avoiding plagiarism is available at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>. In addition to receiving no credit, you will be referred to the appropriate PSU authority for any assignment or exam found to be academically dishonest. You will fail the course if any additional incidents of academic dishonesty occur.

Accommodations: We will make it our top priority to build a community that is fully inclusive of all body types, identities, and ways of learning. This will require each of us to be attentive, flexible, and vigilant. If we are engaging in any practices throughout the semester that lead you to feel overlooked, unwelcome, or alienated, I welcome you to come talk with me. You will be heard. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible: 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu.

Harassment and Discrimination: As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals at <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help>.