

SOC 410: Sociology of War

Fall 2022, September 26, 2022-December 11, 2022

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the Sociology of War. War is a highly complex, and dynamic, form of social conflict. In this course, we will use sociological insights and tools to understand how war and violence have changed over time and their impact at the macro and micro levels of community. We will cover the following topics: collective violence and sociological theory, war in time and space, ideas and practices of warfare, the social divisions of war and violence, and organized violence in the 21st century. Students will engage with sociological theories and apply them to various perspectives on war and violence. We will think through questions, and debates relating to war through readings, online discussion prompts, online lectures, reflective writings, and films.

Course Goals

Upon completing the Sociology of War course, you should be able to:

- Identify and describe key issues and theories pertaining to war and violence.
- Synthesize, assess, and critique current debates and discussions on war and violence.
- Examine and evaluate key issues in war and violence aside from those discussed in class.

Class policies

Respect in the Online Classroom

I see the online classroom as a safe environment to explore new or difficult ideas and expand on our existing knowledge. I learn from you as you learn from me. Thus, respect for opinions and ideas expressed in the online classroom is paramount. Keep in mind that everyone has a different background and comes from perspectives or experiences that may be different than yours. You do not have to always agree with one another, but you must always be respectful.

Attendance

Since this is an online course, attendance is not a factor. However, participation in activities is expected (see Assignments).

All information you need is in the syllabus and/or the lectures. I will also post weekly updates, on Sundays, in Canvas.

If you have a personal emergency or issue that will prevent you from meeting assignment deadlines, please email me as soon as possible.

Participation

Since this is an online class, it is very important you do the readings/videos and actively participate in discussion responses. It is important for your success in this class to be present, engaging, and participatory.

Student Code of Conduct

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the Portland State University's Student Code of Conduct. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious offense, and Portland State University considers it academic misconduct. It is your responsibility to ensure proper citations in your papers (I do not care which "method" of citation you use for this class – APA, MLA, ASA, etc. – as long as you are consistent).

Email Policy:

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pdx.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations, you need to notify both the instructor and the [Disability Resource Center](#). You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. You can apply for accommodations at the [DRC website](#).

Additional resources you may find useful:

Writing Center: <https://www.pdx.edu/writing-center/>

Learning Center: <https://www.pdx.edu/tutoring/home>

The PSU Landing at FUMC is a collaborative community resource providing transitional safe-haven housing for PSU students navigating severe housing insecurity and homelessness. The PSU Landing is sponsored by a liberal, queer affirming church, and no religious activity occurs in the Landing. It offers assistance to students with hot showers, laundry, secured storage, stable WiFi and study space. The Landing has visually private sleeping pods reserved for each resident and other resources 7 nights/week with meals. Reach out to the PSU C.A.R.E. Team if you are in need of transitional housing or other assistance (askdos@pdx.edu, 503-725-4422). To learn more about our transitional housing program, including FAQ, please visit <https://fumcpdx.org/landing/>.

Course Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. I rely on articles, videos, power point presentations with voice over and active participation on the discussion board.

Grading Scale

Assignments and participation add up to a total of **220 points**. Grades are not curved or rounded up or down. The grading scale is as follows:

A	97-100%	212-220+ points	Excellent
A-	93-96%	204-211 points	
B+	89-92%	196-203 points	

B	87-88%	190-195 points	Good
B-	84-86%	185-189 points	
C+	80-83%	176-184 points	
C	77-79%	169-175 points	Satisfactory
C-	73-76%	161-168 points	
D+	70-72%	154-160 points	
D	66-69%	146-153 points	Inferior
D-	60-65%	131-145 points	
F	59% or below	130 points or below	Failure

Assignments and Descriptions

A week for this course runs from Monday-Sunday. Most assignments are due Sundays and Tuesdays by 11:59 pm.

This course relies on readings, reflections, films, and online discussions. Assignments are designed to help you think critically about what you are reading, watching, and class discussions.

Some helpful tips for this course:

- Contacting me: **The best way to get a hold of me is via my University email: zook@pdx.edu.** Please do not use the email function in Canvas as I do not check it. I try to respond to all emails within 24-48 hours.
- Struggling students: If you are struggling or falling behind, the best thing you can do is **contact** me right away. I am happy to work with students who are struggling, but I can't help if I don't know what's happening.
- Late assignment policy: I don't have a late assignment policy. I have designed this course so that students should have enough time to complete all assignments. Assignments will lock at the due date/time, and no late assignments will be permitted. That said, I understand that life sometimes happens, and that each student is dealing with a unique set of circumstances outside of the classroom. If you are struggling, make sure to contact me. I care about your academic success.
- Page/word length: Where I note a page or word length, use as a guideline. I am more interested in the content you are writing than meeting a certain page length.

Disclaimer: This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for announcements or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in course announcements.

Assignment Summary

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Group Introductions	5 points	Sunday, 10/2/22 by 11:59 pm
Discussion Posts (5 points each for 10 weeks) - Respond to instructor posted discussion question weekly	50 points	Due by 11:59 pm Sundays; see Discussion Post/Response Timetable, below, for exact dates.

Weekly Discussion Response (2 points each, max of 4 points per week for 10 weeks) - Respond to 2 group mates' posts weekly	40 points	Due by 11:59 pm Tuesdays; see Discussion Post/Response Timetable, below, for exact dates.
Personal Reflection (25 points)	25 points	Due Sunday, 10/16/22 by 11:59 pm **5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 10/9/22
War Poster Redesign	50 points	Due Sunday, 11/20/22 **5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 11/13/22
Topic Paper	50 points	Sunday, 12/4/22 by 11:59 pm **5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 11/27/22 by 11:59 pm
<u>Total</u>	<u>220 points</u>	

Group Introductions – 5 points

Due: Sunday, 10/2/22 by 11:59 pm

The computer has randomly assigned you into a group to promote small group discussion throughout the term (see “Discussion Post” and “Discussion Response” assignments, below).

For this assignment, introduce yourself to your group. At a minimum, include:

- Your name
- Year in school
- What you hope to learn or gain from this course
- One fun or interesting fact about yourself

Discussion Post – 5 points each (50 points total)

Due: Sundays by 11:59 pm for 10 weeks of the course. See Discussion Post/Response Timetable, below, for exact dates.

Students have been randomly assigned into groups to promote small group discussion. **If your group has too few people posting, please notify me asap so I can assign you into another group.** You will get the most from this class if you are in an active and participatory group, and *your grade can be impacted if you remain in a quiet group.*

Discussion Posts should be relatively short – about 2-3 paragraphs (~250-350 words) and should respond to the discussion question(s). Use course readings, previous class discussions, or videos from class to help answer the question(s). Outside articles are also permitted but not required. If you are using outside resources, please cite your sources. The response should address all parts of the question posed, in a professional and academic manner.

In addition to answering the questions, you may want to critique elements you found troubling or disturbing, points where you disagree (be sure to include *why* you disagree), or questions you have regarding the material. These responses are intended to help you think critically about the material you encounter. You will be graded on writing style (typos, grammar, tone), as well as content.

Tip: Write your posts in Word and save on your computer, then copy into Canvas. If something disappears from D2L (it does happen on occasion), you will still have a record of your work and can still earn credit.

Discussion Response – 2 points each (max 4 points per week, 40 points total)

Due: Tuesdays by 11:59 pm for 10 weeks of the course. See Discussion Post/Response Timetable, below, for exact dates.

This assignment is designed to promote interaction within your group and critical thinking skills. Post a response to **two** different group members each week (you may post more than that but will not receive additional points).

Responses may be in agreement or disagreement (keep it professional), ask clarifying questions, “muse” about other options, etc. Have fun with engaging with your classmates and building relationships/rapport.

Discussion Post/Response Timetable (all due by 11:59 pm)		
Module	Discussion Post due (5 pts each):	Discussion Response due (2 pts per response, 2 response due each week):
Module 1	Sunday, 10/2/22	Tuesday, 10/4/22
Module 2	Sunday, 10/9/22	Tuesday, 10/11/22
Module 3	Sunday, 10/16/22	Tuesday, 10/18/22
Module 4	Sunday, 10/23/22	Tuesday, 10/25/22
Module 5	Sunday, 10/30/22	Tuesday, 11/1/22
Module 6	Sunday, 11/6/22	Tuesday, 11/8/22
Module 7	Sunday, 11/13/22	Tuesday, 11/15/22
Module 8	Sunday, 11/20/22	Tuesday, 11/22/22
Module 9	Sunday, 11/27/22	Tuesday, 11/29/22
Module 10	Sunday, 12/4/22	Tuesday, 12/6/22

Personal Reflection – 25 points

Due: Reflection 1 due by Sunday, 10/16/22 by 11:59 pm

5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 10/9/22 by 11:59 pm

In 2 double-spaced typed pages, you will respond to a prompt, which will be posted the Sunday before they are due, at the latest.

Guidelines for each reflection:

- The prompt will be rather vague intentionally. This is your opportunity to explore, in writing, an issue that is of interest to you, what the future of the topic or issues looks like, and/or what should be done about it.
- These are meant to be informal papers. Writing in the first person is ok, and outside resources are not required. If you do use resources, remember to properly cite.
- Though reflections are informal, I will still be looking for correct grammar usage/typos and professional language.

Tip: A good personal reflection may require some vulnerability on your part. What is your role in the topic/issue asked about? Do you have privilege, and if so, can you identify it? How can we use our positions of power or privilege to address the topic at hand? Note: These are not prompts that should be included in the reflection, just tips to help you get writing.

A good idea: Use these personal reflections to start brainstorming topics/ideas for your Topic Paper, due at the end of the term.

War Poster Redesign Project – 50 points

Due: Sunday, 11/20/22 by 11:59 pm

5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 11/13/22 by 11:59 pm

For this project, you will digitally re-design a pro-war poster as an anti-war poster, based on what we have learned throughout the class. You will also write an explanation that accompanies the poster.

Guidelines for the project:

- You may find the poster from any source, but make sure it is an actual poster created during war time and cite your source. **Submit an image of the original poster with this project** (a screen shot is fine).
- You may re-design the poster using any software you have access to or are comfortable using (PowerPoint or Google slides are likely the easiest methods). **The poster must be turned in as a PDF so I can open it.**
- The explanation should be approximately 2 pages in length, and include the following information:
 - o A brief background on the poster and war the poster is from (try to keep this section very high level – about 1 paragraph, but not more than 2. Be sure to cite your sources.).
 - o Why you chose this poster (what spoke to you or stood out to you? Why?) (About 1 paragraph).
 - o Discuss the elements you focused on to redesign, why you made the changes you did, and their significance (2-3 paragraphs).
 - o Tie your changes and/or poster directly to our class readings, discussions, and lectures (2-3 paragraphs).
- Be creative with this project – I look forward to seeing what you come up with.

Topic Paper – 50 points

Due: Sunday, 12/4/22 by 11:59 pm

5 bonus points if turned in by Sunday, 11/27/22 by 11:59 pm

In 5-6 double-spaced typed pages, you will delve further into a topic of your choice on the sociology of war. Pick a topic that interests you – it may be something we've discussed in class that you go further in-

depth on, or you may pick something not covered in class that falls under the general heading of sociology of war.

- Introduce your topic and tell why it is important to think about. Make sure you clearly state what the issue is.
- Briefly explain the key ideas/theories/beliefs surrounding this topic. Is it a new phenomenon or has the issue been around for a while? Where is it an issue and for whom?
- Is there disagreement over this topic/issue? What are these disagreements? Who says what?
- What does the future look like for this topic/issue? What are people doing about it now? What are your thoughts on it and what, should be done about it?

Three outside resources are required from academic sources (journal articles/books). You will be graded on writing style (typos, grammar, tone), as well as content. Make sure you cite properly (any style is acceptable, just be consistent), include a bibliography, and do not plagiarize (see plagiarism policy, above). You should make connections to class readings, lectures, and discussions throughout the paper to demonstrate your depth of knowledge of key issues in sociology of war.

Tip: The best papers are those that pick a small piece of a larger topic.