Sociology 310: U.S. Society, Fall 2011 (Balshem)
CRN 13408, Section 001, MW 12:45-1:50, Shattuck Hall 212

INSTRUCTOR: Martha Balshem, Prof. of Sociology (balshem@pdx.edu; 503-725-8057). Office Hours: F 10:00-12:00, 217T Cramer

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Jeff Shelton (jshelton@pdx.edu). Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:30, 217 Cramer

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, we will focus on social problems in U.S. society and on the inequalities that are related to them. Our textbook presents an overview of major social problems in the United States; supplemental readings, videos, and audio files will address selected topics from among those covered in the book.

COURSE GOALS: My goals are that by the end of this term, you will—

• Become more aware of how clashing definitions of freedom, opportunity, and equality shape U.S. political discourse.
• Build a more detailed and accurate picture of the social and economic condition of the U.S. population.
• Increase your knowledge about race, gender, and social class inequality in the U.S.
• Think critically about citizen roles in finding and implementing solutions to the problems we face.

PREREQUISITES: This course is designed for Sociology majors, and the Sociology Department recommends that students take Sociology 200 ("Introduction to Sociology") first. Everyone, however, is welcome. I will assume that you have taken Sociology 200, or other Sociology courses, or for other reasons feel confident enough to be in this course.

THIS IS A HYBRID COURSE. Two-thirds of our class time is face-to-face, and one-third is on line. Details for the on-line class time are on D2L in ten Weekly Modules ("Weekly Module 1," and so on). Under each Weekly Module, you will find the following headings.

• "Week X Instructions": A brief statement of the week’s theme(s); a description of the on-line class time work for that week; and some helpful notes and reminders. The nature of the on-line class time work will vary—it might be doing some guided reading, watching a video, listening to an audio file, or some other activity. This is not homework; it substitutes for face-to-face class time.
• "Week X Discussion": Participation in this weekly on-line discussion is part of your homework for the course. The on-line discussions are asynchronous—there is no requirement to “meet” on line at any particular time.

You must have adequate internet access to complete this course. Neither your TA nor I can help you with technical problems. If you do not have good internet access at home, use a campus computer lab for on-line work. If you have trouble with your ODIN account, go ASAP to SMC 18 (in the basement of Smith Center) or contact the Technology Help Desk at help@pdx.edu or 725-HELP. You will need your Odin ID and password to access D2L. Note: I will not accept computer problems as an excuse for late or missing work.


CHANGES, UP-DATES, AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS: These will be posted on D2L; please check several times a week.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is claiming credit for someone else’s work. If you plagiarize on an assignment or cheat on an exam, I will give you a zero for that work and report you to the Dean of Students. Sadly, a zero on an exam would probably cause you to fail the course.

INCOMPLETES: Sometimes life emergencies make it impossible for a student to complete a course. If you are facing a bona fide crisis, I may be able to grant you an incomplete. This is possible only if you are passing the course at the time of your request. Please contact me right away if an emergency occurs.

COURTESY: Please silence your cell phones before class. I recommend turning them to the “off” position so you will not be tempted to step into the hallway to take a call during class. I ask that you not walk out while class is underway. If you cannot agree to this, please just sit on the aisle near the back of the room.

DISABILITIES SERVICES: If you have a disability and need an accommodation, please meet with me outside of class so that we can make the necessary arrangements. Students requesting accommodations must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. For more information on the Disability Resource Center and what resources are available at PSU, see http://www.pdx.edu/uasc/drc.html.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: Your classmates represent a diversity of views, identities, and backgrounds. Please speak in a way that is respectful to everyone. This means no racist, sexist, homophobic, or other hurtful language, and no jokes based on stereotypes—not even in informal conversation before or after class. If you have a political disagreement with something that has been said, please express it in a spirit of genuine inquiry. Asking a question is a good way to proceed, as long as the question is both kind and sincere. A university is meant to be a place where everyone feels welcome and we can grow to understand our differences. This can only happen if we all act in an open-hearted manner towards each other. If I believe that you are violating these rules, or disrupting the class in any way that makes it difficult for me to teach or for you or your classmates to learn, I will require you to leave the room. If this happens, please visit me in my office as soon after class as you can to touch base and talk.

GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (Midterm and Final) @ 100 points each</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly On-line Discussions (10 @ 10 points each)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>300</td>
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**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Exams:** Both will be multiple choice and cover all readings, videos, and lectures. Make-ups will be essay; see your TA to arrange.

**Weekly On-line Discussion:** Each week, you will be assigned to a discussion group of about 20 students (group membership will be randomly shuffled every week). Each week, you will be required to post one original comment of about 200 words in length and one response of about 50 words to another student's comment. We will remove any comments that we feel are offensive; you will have the opportunity to repost, if the deadline for doing so has not passed. We will begin each week's discussion with a prompt. Remember—these discussions will be asynchronous. You are not required to "meet" on line at any particular time. Each discussion, however, has a due date that will be strictly enforced. Discussion boards open each Monday at 2:00, and close at 12:30 p.m. the next Monday, 15 minutes before class. **You must finish the on-line work on time—there is no way to make it up.**

**Note on Attendance—**Attendance is not graded, but you will not succeed in this course if you do not attend class.

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<tr>
<th>CLASS SCHEDULE (&quot;W&amp;R&quot; refers to the Wright and Rogers textbook.)</th>
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| **1** Oct. 26: Introduction to the Course.  
  Weekly Module 1—Closes 10-3 at 12:30.  
  Note: Your on-line class time will involve a guided reading of W&R 10-32, "What Kind of Society is American Society?" This is designed to help you get a running start on the considerable amount of reading I have assigned for the next two weeks.  |
| **2** Oct. 2: Doing Gender Inequity.  Read W&R 233-246: "Gender, Inequality"  
  Weekly Module 2—Closes 10-10 at 12:30.  |
  Weekly Module 3—Closes 10-17 at 12:30.  
  Note: This will involve a guided reading of W&R 153-179: "High Road Capitalism."  |
  **Oct. 26: Midterm Exam**  
  Weekly Module 5—Closes Oct. 31 at 12:30.  |
| **6** Oct. 31: Racism and Criminalization.  Read Western & Pettit, "Incarceration and Social Inequality"  
  Nov. 2: Doing Gender Inequity.  Read W&R 296-333: "Gender Inequality"  
  Weekly Module 6—CLOSES EARLY, at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday Nov. 3.  |
| **7** Nov. 7: Skype Discussion with Erik Olin Wright.  
  Weekly Module 7—Closes Nov. 14 at 12:30.  |
  Nov. 16: The Tea Party.  Read Bartels, "The Irrational Electorate" and Zernike, Boiling Mad: Inside Tea Party America, pps. 1-12 (Zernicke is on paper reserve at the library circulation desk).  
  Weekly Module 8—Closes Nov. 21 at 12:30.  |
| **9** Nov. 21: Democracy and the Media.  Read W&R 396-411: "Corporate Control of the Media" and 412-431: "Militarism and Empire." Read Lindner, "Controlling the Media in Iraq"  
  Weekly Module 9—Closes Nov. 28 at 12:30.  |
| **10** Nov. 28: Liberal Democracy Revisited.  Read W&R 446-462: "Democracy From Below."  
  Nov. 30: Read W&R 465-475: "Possible Futures."  
  Weekly Module—CLOSES EARLY, at 11:59 p.m. on Friday Dec. 2.  |
| **Final Exam:** Mon., December 5, 12:30-2:20 (Note and prepare for this time change!) |
READINGS IN ADDITION TO WRIGHT AND ROGERS


Western, Bruce and Becky Pettit, (2010). "Incarceration and Social Inequality." Daedalus 139(3):8-19. Available at Millar Library. From http://www.pdx.edu, go to: Library/Resources/More>Citation Linker and enter title, journal name, and volume (in this case, 139).


THE U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
www.archives.gov September 17, 2010

The Declaration of Independence: A Transcription.

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776. The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. --That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient c

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.
He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.
He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.
He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.
He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.
He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.
He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.
He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.
He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.
He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.
He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.
He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:
For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:
For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:
For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:
For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:
For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences
For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:
For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:
For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.
He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.
He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.
He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.
He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.
He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.