Sociology 407
SOCIOLOGY SEMINAR: ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH
Fall 2016
Friday 12:00-1:00
Broadway 222

Instructor: Dr. Maura Kelly
Email: maura2@pdx.edu
Office: Cramer 217R
Office hours: Tues 12:00-2:00 and by appointment Tues/Thus/Fri
Phone: 503-725-8302

This one credit course examines contemporary sociological research on a variety of topics, such as work/occupations, family, education, criminology, immigration, health/medicine, urban sociology, gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and class. The focus will be on attending sociological research presentations (in person at PSU and online via TED talks by sociologists) and reading peer-reviewed articles.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Preparation and participation (20 points): For class meetings where we will discuss assigned readings, students are responsible for coming to class prepared to discuss the reading to participate in the conversation with thoughtful comments and questions. For class meetings where we will attend a research presentation or a panel discussion, students must check in with the instructor prior to the start of the presentation or panel. You will not receive credit for preparation and participation if you enter a presentation or panel late so BE ON TIME. Each week’s preparation and participation is worth two points towards your course grade. You cannot submit a weekly writing assignment for a presentation or panel you did not attend. If you miss a class meeting, you have the option of completing extra credit assignment(s) to make up the points.

Weekly writing assignments (80 points): Each week, you will complete a 600-800 word writing assignment reflecting on the material (research presentation, TED talk, or assigned reading). You are expected to complete ten assignments; each is worth eight points towards your course grade. If you miss a weekly assignment, you have the option of completing extra credit assignment(s) to make up the points.

POLICIES

Required readings and TED talks: Links to readings and TED talks are included in the syllabus. If you cannot access a reading through the link, you are responsible for navigating to the reading from the PSU library homepage.

D2L: The instructor will post course materials on D2L. Students will submit assignments via D2L. The instructor will also post comments and grades for assignments on D2L.

Email: The instructor regularly communicates with the class via PSU email so be sure that you are receiving my emails. It is your responsibility to check your email daily during the school week and respond in a timely manner. In emails to the instructor, please put the title of the course in the subject line and sign your emails using your first and last name. Use the email addresses on the first page of the syllabus. The instructor will generally respond to email within 24 hours. Emails sent after 5:00pm on Friday will generally be answered by 5:00pm on Monday.
Academic honesty: You are expected to demonstrate complete academic honesty. Please refer to the Student Conduct Code for more detailed information on PSU policies. Cheating or plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and will be reported.

Plagiarism: If you use a direct quote (i.e. someone else’s words), you must include it in quotation marks and cite the source, including author(s) name(s), the date of publication, and the page number. If you summarize or paraphrase an idea from another person, you must cite the source, including author(s) name(s) and the date of publication. Failure to cite your sources, whether intentional or not, is plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and will be reported.

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the PSU Disabilities Resource Center (DRC) and the instructor at the beginning of the term to arrange accommodations. The DRC is located in 435 Smith and can be contacted at 725-4150 or by email at drc@pdx.edu. Visit their website at http://www.pdx.edu/drc.

Laptops/tablets/e-readers: If you prefer to read electronic versions of the readings, you may bring these devices to class to reference the readings during class discussions. You may also use these devices to take notes in class. However, if you use your device for non-class purposes, you will be asked to put away your device.

Classroom conduct: You must demonstrate the highest level of respect for your peers and for the instructor. All points of view will be welcomed and respected; however, statements or behaviors that are disrespectful towards individuals or groups will not be tolerated. Behaviors that are distracting to your peers and to the instructor are not acceptable (e.g. coming in late, packing up or leaving early, using electronic devices for non-class purposes, and having side conversations).

Guests in class: The instructor does not allow people under age 18 to attend class. If you would like to bring a guest to class who is over 18, please ask the instructor in advance.

Cancelled classes: In the case of inclement weather or other emergencies, please refer to the PSU web page: http://www.pdx.edu/. In the event that the instructor has to cancel class, she will email the class as soon as possible. If the instructor has not arrived to class 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, consider class cancelled for the day.

Late assignments: Weekly writing assignments focusing on readings will be accepted with a 10% late penalty if submitted between 9am and noon. Assignments will not be accepted after noon. Weekly writing assignments focusing on TED talks, presentations, or panels will be penalized at 10% per weekday late and late assignments will not be accepted after 5 weekdays. Extra credit assignments are due by 5:00pm Wednesday of finals week will not be accepted late.
COURSE OUTLINE

You are required to complete the assigned readings before class on the day they are due for weeks 1, 2, 4, and 8. You are strongly encouraged to bring the readings to class, either in hard copy or on an electronic device (e.g. laptop, tablet) with the readings on the screen at the start of class. You should refer to your copy of the readings to participate in class discussion.

You are required to submit a weekly writing assignment for each of the ten weeks of the term. Due dates vary; check the syllabus to see when each week’s assignment is due. All writing assignments must be submitted via the dropbox feature of D2L.

Week 1 September 30

1. Reading assignments (due prior to first class meeting): Kelly, Maura. In progress. “Putting Feminist Research into Practice” draft chapter from Feminist Research in Practice. (Circulated via email and available via D2L)
2. Class: Intro to course, research presentation by Maura Kelly
3. Weekly writing assignment: response to September 30 Kelly research presentation (due Wednesday October 5 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a weekly writing assignment if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the September 30 presentation, you may complete the extra assignment to make up the points.

Week 2 October 7

2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Thompson article on October 7 (due Friday October 7 by 9am, assignments not accepted after noon)
3. Class: Discuss article

Week 3 October 14

1. Class: Sociology department brownbag research presentation by Dara Shifrer (LOCATION TBA)
2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Shifrer research presentation (due Wednesday October 19 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a weekly writing assignment if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the October 14 presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.
Week 4 October 21


2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Menjívar and Lakhani article (due Friday October 21 by 9am, assignments not accepted after noon)

3. Class: Discuss article

Week 5 October 28

1. Class: Sociology department brownbag research presentation by Melissa Thompson (LOCATION TBA)

2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Thompson research presentation (due Wednesday November 2 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a weekly writing assignment if you did not attend the presentation. If you missed the October 28 presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 6 November 4

1. Class: Research presentation by Maura Kelly (REGULAR CLASS LOCATION)

2. Weekly writing assignment: response to November 4 Kelly research presentation (due Wednesday November 9 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a weekly writing assignment if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the November 4 presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 7 November 11 (NO CLASS)

1. Class: Class does not meet; watch TED talk: “Dorothy Roberts: The problem with race-based medicine” (available at: [https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_roberts_the_problem_with_race_based_medicine](https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_roberts_the_problem_with_race_based_medicine))

2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Roberts TED talk (due Wednesday November 16 by 5pm)

Week 8 November 18


2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Pfeffer article (due Friday November 18 by 9am, assignments not accepted after noon)

3. Class: Discuss article
Week 9 November 25 (NO CLASS)

1. Class: Class does not meet; watch TED talk: “Alice Goffman: How we're priming some kids for college — and others for prison” (available at: http://www.ted.com/talks/alice_goffman_college_or_prison_two_destinies_one_blatant_injustice)
2. Weekly writing assignment: response to Goffman TED talk (due Wednesday November 30 by 5pm)

Week 10 December 2

1. Class: Panel discussion on the sociology major and sociology careers (REGULAR CLASS LOCATION)
2. Weekly writing assignment: instead of the usual assignment, answer the following questions for the final assignment (due Wednesday December 7 by 5pm):
   a. What have you learned about sociological research this term?
   b. How did the content of this seminar complement or expand on the content of your previous coursework (in sociology or other departments)?
   c. Which article, TED talk, or presentation from this term did you find most interesting (and why)?

    Finals week: Optional extra credit assignments

You have the option to complete one or two extra credit assignments. You can watch one of the the below TED talks and complete one additional writing assignment; you may watch both of the TED talks and complete two additional assignments. Each extra credit assignment is worth up to five points towards your course grade (due Wednesday December 7 by 5pm).

TED Talk: “Sam Richards: A radical experiment in empathy” (available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/sam_richards_a_radical_experiment_in_empathy?language=en)

TED Talk: “Zeynep Tufekci: Online social change: easy to organize, hard to win” (available at: http://www.ted.com/talks/zeynep_tufekci_online_social_change_easy_to_organize_hard_to_win

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WEEKLY WRITING ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

TASK

The task of the writing assignment is to write a short response paper in which you engage with the research presentation, TED talk, or reading assigned. For writing assignments responding to assigned readings, you will also write three questions that will be used in class discussion. Each writing assignment must be 600-800 words. Use these guidelines for weeks 1-9; see the note under week 10 for the prompt for the final writing assignment.

SOURCES

For writing assignment, the only source is the research presentation, TED talk, or reading selection assigned. You may draw on outside sources in addition to the reading selection; however, drawing on outside sources is strongly discouraged. You should only incorporate additional sources if it enhances your analysis. Any sources that you consult should be cited. Any time you take a direct quote, as well as when you summarize or paraphrase an idea from another person, you must cite the source. Failure to cite your sources, whether intentional or not, is plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and will be reported. You must include a references section at the end of the writing assignment only if you use sources other than the course readings.

When citing sources in the text, use the last name(s) of the author(s)/presenter(s) and year. For writing assignments, you only need to cite the author(s)/presenter(s) and year once. If using quotes, include the page number in the citation. You may use the title of the research presentation, TED talk, or article (in quotation marks) in the text if you wish, but this is not necessary. Examples:

In “Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations,” Acker (2006) presents data that demonstrates that there is significant gender inequality in the U.S. labor force.

Acker defines “inequality regimes” as “loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations” (2006:443).

COMPONENTS OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Writing assignments must include both summary and analysis. Writing assignments focusing on articles must also include three discussion questions. Each week’s writing assignment must be 600-800 words. Part of the assignment is to edit your writing to be as concise as possible.

Summary: This should be accomplished in one short paragraph. You may return to an analysis of these points in the following paragraphs. Include the following elements, as appropriate (TED talks may not explicitly discuss research design or theory):

- The title of the presentation, TED talk, or article
- The last name(s) of the authors and the year
- The main argument the speaker/author is making.
- A very brief summary of either the main findings (research presentations and articles) or evidence (TED talks) used to support the main argument.
- If the research design is discussed, include a very brief discussion of the research methods (research question, method, and sample)
• If sociological theory is discussed, identify the theoretical framework and/or define any key theoretical concepts

Analysis: The primary purpose of the weekly writing assignment is to provide an original and critical response rather than just a summary of the text. Use examples and quotes to support the points of your analysis (in this short paper, limit your use of quotes and use only short quotes). Note that your personal feelings, responses, or experiences are not appropriate for a sociological analysis. You may choose to answer some of the following questions (do not attempt to address all of these questions in this short response paper):

• What are the strengths and, more importantly, what are the weaknesses (but be sure you are not simply summarizing points from the text)?
• Do you agree or disagree with the main argument the author is making? Provide evidence for your view.
• To what degree does this scholarship take an intersectional perspective? If it does not take an intersectional perspective, what else might we learn if we applied an intersectional lens?
• How does the research design shape the findings? What else might we learn if we used a different research method or a different sample of participants?
• To what degree does the scholar engage in reflection on their role as a researcher in producing knowledge? If they do not engage in this type of reflection, speculate about how the researchers’ identities might shape the research process.
• What questions does the research raise that might be addressed by future studies?
• What are the policy implications of this scholarship?

Discussion questions (articles only): Provide three discussion questions related to the reading. Good discussion questions are open-ended and will facilitate a good discussion in class. Choosing discussion questions that follow from points that you make in your critique is a good strategy.

Assignments should show clear and concise writing and appropriate proofreading; assignments will not receive full credit if they show significant problems with grammar, spelling, word use, typos, awkward sentences and/or improper formatting. See standard formatting template and sample student writing assignment paper on D2L (incorrectly formatted assignments will lose points).
DUE DATES

Due dates for each weekly writing assignment are below. Writing assignments focusing on readings are due at 9am on the day the class meets to discuss the reading. Writing assignments focusing on research presentations or TED talks are due by 5pm the Wednesday after the class meeting. Note that class does not meet weeks 7 and 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class date</th>
<th>Focus of writing assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 30</td>
<td>Research presentation by Maura Kelly</td>
<td>Wed Oct 5 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Article “Wrangling Tips”</td>
<td>Fri Oct 7 by 9am</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Research presentation by Dara Shiffer</td>
<td>Wed Oct 19 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Article “Transformative Effects of Immigration Law”</td>
<td>Fri Oct 21 by 9am</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>Research presentation by Melissa Thompson</td>
<td>Wed Nov 2 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Research presentation by Maura Kelly</td>
<td>Wed Nov 9 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>TED talk by Zeynep Tufekci</td>
<td>Wed Nov 16 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>Article “I Don't Like Passing as a Straight Woman”</td>
<td>Fri Nov 18 by 9am</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>TED talk by Alice Goffman</td>
<td>Wed Nov 30 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Panel discussion on the sociology major and careers</td>
<td>Wed Dec 7 by 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>Optional extra credit assignments</td>
<td>Wed Dec 7 by 5pm</td>
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Writing assignments must be submitted via D2L. Submit your assignment in the appropriate folder (indicated by the last name of the author) in the dropbox of D2L. Be sure to COPY AND PASTE your assignment into the “comments” box as well as ATTACH your word or pdf document.