COURSE DESCRIPTION

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. For this course, students will attend sociology research presentations at PSU as well as watch and discuss TED talks on sociological topics. We will also attend a panel of former PSU sociology students who will talk about careers in sociology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation (60 points): We will have several class meetings in which we watch a TED talk on a topic related to sociology and have a discussion as well as one class meeting where we will have a panel on careers in sociology. Students are expected participate in the conversation with thoughtful comments and questions. If you miss a class meeting, you have the option of completing an extra credit assignment to make up the points.

Response papers (40 points): You will complete a 600-800 word response paper for each research presentation we attend. If you miss a response paper, you have the option of completing an extra credit assignment to make up the points.

POLICIES

D2L: The instructor will post the syllabus on D2L. Students will submit response papers via D2L. The instructor will also post comments on response papers and grades for all 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.

Laptops/tablets/e-readers: I do not permit electronic devices during class discussions. You may use a device to take notes during research presentations. 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: Response papers will be penalized at 10% per weekday late and late assignments will not be accepted after 5 weekdays. No assignments will be accepted after 5:00pm Tuesday of finals week.

Access and inclusion for students with disabilities: If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the DRC to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, http://www.pdx.edu/drc. If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and to discuss your accommodations.

Title IX reporting: As a member of the university community, 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 or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.
COURSE OUTLINE

There is one readings assignment that you must complete prior to the first class: “Introduction to Feminist Research in Practice,” a draft chapter from *Feminist Research in Practice*, edited by Maura Kelly and Barbara Gurr (Circulated via email and available via D2L). This chapter will provide you with an overview of the sociological approach to research we will be exploring in this course.

Week 1 April 7
• Attendance/participation (10 points): Intro to course, research presentation by Maura Kelly

Week 2 April 14
• Attendance/participation: Sociology department brownbag research presentation with Dr. Minjeong Kim (San Diego State)
• Response paper (10 points): response to the April 14 research presentation (due Wednesday April 19 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a response paper if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 3 April 21
• Attendance/participation (10 points): TED talk and discussion

Week 4 April 28
• Attendance/participation: Sociology department brownbag research presentation with Dr. Julius McGee (PSU)
• Response paper (10 points): response to the April 28 research presentation (due Wednesday May 3 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a response paper if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 5 May 5
• Attendance/participation (10 points): TED talk and discussion

Week 6 May 12
• Attendance/participation: Sociology department brownbag research presentation with Dr. Mika Lassander (Åbo Akademi University, Finland)
• Response paper (10 points): response to the May 12 research presentation (due Wednesday May 17 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a response paper if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 7 May 19
• Attendance/participation (10 points): Panel discussion on sociology careers
Week 8 May 26

- Attendance/participation: Sociology department brownbag research presentation with Dr. Paul Y. Chang (Harvard)
- Response paper (10 points): response to the May 26 research presentation (due Wednesday May 31 by 5pm). Note: you may NOT submit a response paper if you did not attend the presentation. If you miss the presentation, you may complete the extra assignments to make up the points.

Week 9 June 2

- Attendance/participation (10 points): TED talk and discussion

Week 10 June 9

- Attendance/participation (10 points): TED talk and discussion

Optional extra credit assignment

You may complete one extra credit assignment (due Tuesday June 14 by 5pm, late assignments not accepted). For up to 10 points extra credit towards your course grade, write a 600-800 words response to the following prompts:

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 research presentation or TED talk from this term did you find most interesting (and why)?
RESPONSE PAPER GUIDELINES

TASK
The task of the response paper is to provide critical analysis of the research presentation. Each response paper must be 600-800 words.

SOURCES
For response paper, the only source is the research presentation. 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 response paper only if you use sources other than the course readings.

When citing sources in the text, use the last name(s) of the presenter(s) and year. For response papers, you only need to cite the presenter(s) and year once.

COMPONENTS OF THE ASSIGNMENT
Response papers must include both summary and analysis. Each week’s response paper must be 600-800 words. Part of the assignment is to edit your writing to be as concise as possible. Assignments that are under the minimum word count will not receive full credit.

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:

- The title of the presentation
- 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 evidence and main findings 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 majority of the response paper should focus on analysis. The primary purpose of the response paper is to provide an original and critical response rather than just a summary of the presentation. 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?

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 sample student response paper on D2L.

DUE DATES

Response papers are due by 5pm the Wednesday after the research presentation.

Response papers 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.