SPRING 2016 SYLLABUS  
Foundations of Sociology II  
SOC 302-002 – Portland State University – 2p-4:50p Tue & Thu – Cramer 158

PEOPLE
Instructor. Dara Shifrer, Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Office hours: Cramer Hall 217K – Tuesdays and Thursdays 10a-11a, by appointment  
Teaching Assistant. Sasha Bassett, Sociology Graduate Student, sbassett@pdx.edu  
Office hours: Cramer Hall 217W – Tuesdays and Thursdays 1p-2p, by appointment

Asking questions outside of class:
• **Step 1:** Check to see if your question has been answered in the syllabus or in the D2L discussion thread “Student Questions” (in DSL, click on Activities>Discussions).
• **Step 2:** Post your question in the D2L discussion thread “Student Questions.” Your question can be answered by classmates, the Instructor, or the TA. 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 D2L discussion thread, email me at dshifrer@pdx.edu. If you email me through D2L, I cannot guarantee a response within 24 hours.

LEARNING GOALS
In addition to guiding research methods, sociologists use theory to make sense of the world and human behavior. This 4-credit introduction to contemporary sociological theory will focus on theorists from the 20th and early 21st centuries whose work expands on and reformulates classic sociological theories. SOC 200: Introduction to Sociology is the recommended prerequisite for this course.
• Summarize main ideas of contemporary sociological theorists
• Contrast main ideas of contemporary sociological theorists
• Strengthen ability to apply theoretical frameworks
• Strengthen critical thinking and writing skills

REQUIRED MATERIALS
**Textbook.** The Social Lens: An Invitation to Social and Sociological Theory by Kenneth Allan. 3rd edition is preferred but older editions are acceptable. Copy available on reserve in the library.

**Internet and D2L.** Some assignments for this course will require the use of a reliable internet connection. Your connection should enable you to search the web, use email, attach and upload documents, and download and save files. Internet issues will not be a valid excuse for a late assignment – find an alternative source for internet now (such as a coffee shop) and do not attempt to complete assignments at the last minute. Many course resources will be available on D2L (https://d2l.pdx.edu/). If you have trouble accessing your D2L account, or do not have an ODIN ID & password to log in with, contact the OIT help desk (SMSU 18) at 503-725-HELP (4357) or help@pdx.edu.
**Word Processing and Printer.** You will be required to bring three copies of one or two Reading Responses you completed to practically every class. This will require you have access to software like Microsoft Word and to a printer. **Movie or TV show:** The final assignment requires you to watch a movie or TV show of your choosing with themes that align with the course material, so a Netflix, Hulu, or Amazon account may be useful but is not required.

**GUIDELINES**

**Classroom Conduct.** Rather than repeating the readings, classroom activities are designed to clarify the concepts and questions from the Reading Response, summarize the big picture, and expand on difficult concepts. Multiple modes of presentation and active learning are integrated into the class to increase your comprehension and retention of new ideas. You are expected to contribute to this classroom environment by being prepared, being an active participant, and being courteous to your classmates. Being prepared includes bringing your textbook to class. If your behaviors are negatively impacting the classroom experience and you do not improve after a warning, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will lose all credit for the day. Some discussion may turn to current politics. All students should aim to question and critique ideas without personally attacking others. Persistent issues will result in a report to the Office of the Dean of Student Life.

**Attendance.** If you miss class, arrive more than ten minutes after class begins, or leave more than ten minutes before class ends, you will receive no credit on your Mini Quiz. Grades on other assignments (e.g., Reading Responses, Writing Assignment) will be reduced by 20% for each day they are late.

**No Electronic Devices.** Electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops, iPads) are not allowed in this class. If you continue to use an electronic device after you have been warned, you will be asked to leave class for the day. You will receive no credit for that day’s Mini Quiz, regardless of whether you completed it and regardless of how long you already were in class that day. This policy is designed to increase classroom engagement and builds on recent research showing the use of laptops in classrooms has not improved student learning.

**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 to academically dishonor. Plagiarism describes the use of another person’s words or ideas without giving that person credit. Information on avoiding plagiarism available at [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/). Any assignment or exam found to be academically dishonest will receive no credit and you will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Student Life. You will fail the course if any additional incidents of academic dishonesty occur.
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Accommodations. Any student with a physical, psychiatric/emotional, or learning disability is encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center to arrange academic accommodations to support your success in the course (503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu).

ASSIGNMENTS
The vast majority of your grade in this class is based on your completion of the readings and Reading Responses. Mini Quizzes assess class learning and recognize your participation in class each day. If you hoped to not complete the readings or to not attend class, this is not the class for you. On the other hand, in recognition of the fact that many of you have jobs, families, etc., a small number of absences are built into the class schedule. Finally, there is a Writing Assignment of four double-spaced pages. This class has no final exam.

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1000 total points available for the term:
- 25 Reading Responses at 26 points each   650
- 1 Writing Assignment                      206
- 16 Mini Quizzes at 9 points each         144

Reading Responses

Purpose of Reading Responses. You will be required to complete a Reading Response for most of the chapters assigned from Allan’s The Social Lens. The Key Concepts for each Reading Response are available in a document on D2L. The Reading Responses are designed to help your better understand and retain the readings, and to teach a study skill that can be applied to readings in virtually any course. The Reading Response is a form you fill in that guides your reading by listing theorist-specific key concepts for you to define or explain and then by asking similar questions about different theorists to facilitate comparisons. You will read approximately 20 pages from the Allan textbook for each class and often less. The reading for this theory course is light given that you are reading from a secondary source rather than the primary source – in other words, the Allan textbook summarizes the (often long-winded and unorganized) original writings from the classic theorists. The Reading Responses are still important.
comprehension tools because even the summaries of the theorists’ ideas can be hard to organize and remember without additional steps on your part. You will be able to use the Reading Responses for the Mini Quizzes. If you are a Sociology major, your completed collection of Reading Responses will also be useful in future courses.

Peer Grading of Reading Responses. You must bring three typed copies (NOT HANDWRITTEN) of each Reading Response to class. Handwritten Reading Responses will count as no Reading Response. Each Reading Response will be graded by two randomly selected classmates, with grades based in larger part on your effort and completeness than on your ‘accuracy.’ Peer-grading will support: 1) improving your own Reading Response as you add things you missed to your own Reading Response, 2) improving your classmates’ Reading Responses as you write comments while you grade, and 3) more effective classroom time as class starts with a reminder of the content of the readings. Because people read at different rates, grading will end once around 90% of the class has finished grading, with no penalty for those who didn’t finish grading. Faster graders can spend their extra time working on the next set of readings. The TA will finish any remaining grading, average the grades you received from your two classmates to ensure a more fair grading process, and return your classmates’ comments to you. If you feel your final grade on a Reading Response was unfair or inaccurate, you can write a statement of why you feel your grade was unfair to be submitted along with your classmates’ comments to the TA. Calculators permitted during grading time. Reading Responses are due at 10am on the due date listed at the end of this syllabus. If you submit your Response after class on the due date, your final score will be reduced by 20%. If you submit your Response after 10am on the day after the due date, your final score will be reduced by 40%, and so on.

Writing Assignment. Effectively communicating your thoughts in written form will benefit you in college and in your career. You will complete a two-part written assignment in which you apply theories from class to a movie or TV show of your choice. The first part of the written assignment is a one-paragraph summary of the movie or TV show and the theories you intend to focus on. The second part of the written assignment is a four-page double-spaced paper applying theories to various parts of the movie or TV show. More details will be provided to you well in advance of the due dates.

Mini Quizzes. Mini Quizzes will be administered at the end of every class, with the intent of evaluating the extent to which the class is grasping the most important points from the day’s theorist(s) and to recognize your participation in class. During class, you should make additional corrections to your Reading Response, which can then be used as notes for your Mini Quiz. You will receive no points on your Mini Quiz if you miss class, and Mini Quizzes cannot be made up. Your score will be reduced by 50% if you arrive more than ten minutes after class begins, or leave more than ten minutes before class ends. Because some absences are unavoidable (e.g., family emergencies, illness, religious holidays, school-related travel), your two lowest Mini Quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the term (i.e., there will be 18 Mini Quizzes but only 16 will be counted).