

Foundations of Sociological Analysis
Sociology 200
Spring 2017
Tuesday and Thursday 2:15PM - 3:40PM
Room: Centennial 3107
Professor: Dr. Peter Marina

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Office hours: 3:45-4:45pm Tuesday and Thursday; or by appointment

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Course Description

Designed for sociology majors, this course focuses on: (1) learning to think sociologically, including deeper comprehension of core sociological perspectives and concepts; (2) understanding the scientific methods in sociology; (3) the formulation of sociological research questions; (4) the resources and skills needed to effectively write a critical literature review; and (5) professionalization including how to build a curriculum vitae/resume, careers in sociology, presenting at professional conferences, and applying to graduate school. Sociology majors should take this course as soon as possible after completing SOC 110, as the skills taught in this course will benefit students in their upper division sociology courses. Prerequisite: SOC 110. Open to sociology majors only. Offered annually.

Course Objectives

The course objectives follow below:

- ◆ Demonstrate a basic understanding of core sociological concepts including the central theoretical perspectives and methodologies that shape and guide sociological analyses;
- ◆ Understand the importance of utilizing your critical thinking skills and sociological imagination in the classroom and in everyday life;
- ◆ Recognize the impact of social location (i.e. race/ethnicity, gender identity/gender expression, sexuality, religion, disability status, etc.) on the way individuals see, understand, and experience the world around them;
- ◆ Distinguish between social facts and social myths using empirical evidence grounded in the scientific method;
- ◆ Formulate a sociological research question and compose an effective literature review;
- ◆ Be able to construct a resume and/or curriculum vitae;
- ◆ Identify the process for applying to graduate school;
- ◆ Identify ways to make yourself marketable for future careers;
- ◆ Identify the process for presenting student research at professional meetings

Course Texts:

Required:

Belcher, Wendy. 2009. *Writing your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success*.

A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)
University of Chicago Press; Eighth Edition (March 28, 2013)

Additional readings will be available through the D2L course page.

Recommended Reading:

Mills, C. Wright. [1959] 2000. *The Sociological Imagination*.

American Sociological Association. 2010. *American Sociological Association Style Guide, 4th ed.* Washington, DC: American Sociological Association. ***NOTE:** The department recommends that you purchase this text from the bookstore or online at: <http://asa.enoah.com/Bookstore/ReferenceMaterials/tabid/13632/BKctl/ViewDetails/SKU/ASAOE701S10/Default.aspx> *- The 3rd edition, which contains the majority of the same information, is available in pdf form on the course D2L page.

Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grading:

400 total possible points:

Requirements	Points
Literature Review (Due 4/20)	50 points
Midterm Exam (3/9)	100 points
5 Mini-Assignments (See course Outline)	50 points
Research Proposal (Due 5/4)	150 points
Participation	50 points
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	400 POINTS

Grade	Total Points
A	372-400
AB	356-371
B	332-355
BC	316-331
C	280-315
D	240-279
F	239 or less

Literature Review (50 points)

Students will complete a literature leading the way towards the completion of their research proposal. This literature review is part of the final research proposal. Exact guidelines for the literature review will be discussed in class.

Midterm Exam (100 points)

There will be 1 in-class exam this semester. The midterm will offer a variety of components including multiple choice, short answer, and essay. A make-up exam will only be allowed with proper documentation (e.g., doctor's note). If given permission, make-up midterm will be during scheduled office hours.

Five Mini-Assignments (50 Points)

Students will complete five two-page paper assignments on the following topics: (I) Reflection Paper (designed to provide an opportunity to practice writing and critical thinking skills, to stimulate class discussion, and to help apply lessons learned in class to life experiences to develop a sociological imagination); (II) Short Essay: Structure vs Agency; (III) Applying the Sociological Imagination; (IV) Interview with a Sociology Major; (V) Thoughts on the Future. Details for these assignments will be discussed in class. All papers should be 2 typed, double spaced pages using 12-pt. font and 1" margins.

Research Proposal (150 Points)

The major assignment this semester is a research proposal. While this task may at first seem daunting, it is an assignment that students will work on exclusively for over half the semester, including individual

meetings with me and participation in a workshop in which students will work with their peers to edit and finalize papers. Further, students will be expected to give an oral presentation of their literature reviews at the end of the semester. Students will write a ten-page research proposal that involves the following sections: (1) Introduction- Explains the research topic, statement of the problem, key definitions and significance of the investigation, (2) Literature Review- Shows what we already know about the topic and where the research question fits within the existing literature, (3) Methods Section- Explains the proposed process of collecting and analyzing data, (4) Theoretical Overview- Explains the theoretical lenses best to situate the research, and (5) Questions and/or hypotheses- Offers proposed explanations before the methodology of a project is conducted, but after provided the opportunity to develop background knowledge (found in the literature review). This section will also include possible or expected findings from the research and the possible implications and importance of such findings.

Participation (50 points)

Attendance is imperative to do well in this course. Discussion is a critical component; 50 points of the final grade will be based on class attendance and participation. It is the student's responsibility to obtain any information missed as a result of an absence or lateness. To get credit for participation students must pay attention in class, respond to questions, and contribute to group and class discussions.

Make-up Policy: Students with an approved written excused absence may be allowed to take make-up exams but cannot make up in-class writing assignments.

Academic Integrity Statement

To remain in good standing with the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, you are expected to demonstrate academic honesty, integrity, civility, and respect for others. Academic integrity is defined as implicit or explicit behaviors that exemplify honesty and truthful representation of personal academic work. Cheating and plagiarism are examples of unethical behaviors that reflect deception or dishonesty. If you demonstrate plagiarism or cheating on any academic work you will receive an F in this course and will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from UW-L.

Specific information regarding academic misconduct and sanctions can be found at:

http://www.uwlax.edu/StudentLife/academic_misconduct.htm#14.03

Helpful information on how to avoid plagiarism can be found at:

<http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/research/plagiarism.html>

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, sensory, psychological, learning disability, ADD/HD, or are a current or prior military service member with wounded warrior status) who needs to arrange reasonable academic accommodations must contact the ACCESS Center (165 Murphy Library, 608-785-6900) to meet with an advisor to register and develop an accommodation plan. In addition to registering with The ACCESS Center, it is the student's responsibility to discuss their academic needs with their instructors. You can find out more about services available to students with disabilities at The ACCESS Center website:

<http://www.uwlax.edu/access-center/>

Title IX: Gender Equity and Sexual Assault

Title IX mandates that colleges receiving federal funding provide gender equity, not just in sports, but in all areas of campus life, meaning that all students should be able to study in an atmosphere free of harassment, sexual violence, and gender discrimination. Therefore, violence and harassment based on

sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, stalking, or violence or abuse in a relationship, the Student Life Violence Prevention Specialist is available to assist you with advocacy, information, and support, so that you can make informed choices about the options available to you in these situations. Services are free, confidential, and available to all UWL students, faculty, and staff members:

Violence Prevention Specialist: Ingrid Peterson

149 Graff Main Hall, (608)785-8062, Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M.-4:30 P.M.

Please see the following site for more information: <http://www.uwlax.edu/Violence-Prevention/Resources/>

As a faculty member of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, I am a mandated reporter of sexual harassment (including sexual violence). This means that I am obligated to disclose any detailed or specific information I receive about such incidents involving a member of this campus while that person is a member of this campus, regardless of whether the incident takes place on campus or off. I care about your wellbeing, and our course assignments sometimes lend themselves to disclosure, but you should not share any details of an incident with me until you have discussed your options under the new Title IX guidelines. There are confidential reporters available to students at UWL where you can have this discussion. The contact in Student Life is Ingrid Peterson, Violence Prevention Specialist, at (608) 785-8062 or ipeterson@uwlax.edu. I am also happy to help direct you to counseling and support services. Simply ask me to assist you in locating a confidential reporter and I will help you to do so.

Veterans and Active Military Personnel:

Veterans and active military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to me. For additional information and assistance, contact the Veterans Services Office

<http://www.uwlax.edu/veteran-services/>. Students who need to withdraw from class or from the university due to military orders should be aware of the military duty withdrawal policy:

<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/academicpolicies/withdrawal/#military-duty-withdrawal-university>

Eagle Alert System:

This class will be participating in the “Eagle Alert” system through WINGS. The Early Alert system is designed to promote student success. If I notice that you are experiencing difficulties early in the semester (e.g., low assignment scores or poor attendance), I may enter feedback into the program and you will receive an email indicating that feedback has been left. I may also enter positive feedback encouraging you to think about additional opportunities. You will be able to access the feedback through your student center in WINGS. I encourage you to meet with me and use one or more of several helpful campus resources listed here

<http://www.uwlax.edu/studentsuccess/>

Class Schedule: (The course outline contained in this syllabus may change at the instructor's discretion in order to meet the needs of specific situations that may arise in the course of this semester and well as that needs of the students. Any changes to the syllabus including the course outline will be posted on D2L, emailed, or explained in class)

*Note: Classes listed in italics represent proposed *Professionalization in Sociology* days.

Week One: Introduction to Sociological Foundations

1/24: Introduction to Sociological Foundations

1/26: An Invitation to Sociology

Week Two:

1/31: What is the Sociological Imagination?

2/2: The Sociological Imagination: “The Promise”

Week Three: The Problems with Sociology

2/7: Grand Theory and Abstract Empericism; Irrelevant Reserarch; Objectivity vs social justice

2/9: *Professionalization*: Faculty Panel Discussion on Research and Teaching

***Assignment I:** Reflection Paper (Due 2/9)

Week Four: Core Concepts in Sociology

2/14 Agency vs Structure; Four Units of Analysis- History, Structure, Culture, Biography

2/16: Structure of Research Proposal, Research Questions, and Literature Reviews

* **General Topic for Research Proposal Due**

***Assignment II:** Structure vs Agency? (Due 2/16)

Week Five: Classical Sociology Theorists

2/21: Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Simmel

2/23: Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Simmel

***Assignment III:** Applying the Sociological Imagination (Due 2/23)

Week Six: Practical Information for Budding Sociologists

2/28: How to Utilize Library Resources – **Class Meets at the Library**

3/2: *Professionalization*: *Panel Discussion with Sociology Majors to Discuss Careers, Internships, Graduate School, and Research*

***Assignment IV Due:** Interview with a Sociology Major (Due 3/2)

Week Seven: Starting the Research Proposal

3/7: Developing a topic and research question; Structure of Research Proposal

3/9: **Midterm Exam**

Week Eight: Mid-semester Break (3/14 – 3/16)

Week Nine: The Literature Review

3/21: Reading the scholarly literature. Types of scholarly literature and strategies for reading them

3/23: Writing the Literature Review

Week Ten: Research Methods

3/28: Types of research Methods

3/30: Ethnography

Week Eleven: Individual Meetings with Students

4/4: Individual Meetings with Students

4/6: Individual Meetings with Students

Week Twelve: Presenting the Literature/Opening and Concluding the Research Proposal

4/11: Class Workshop: Research Question, Literature Review, and Proposal

4/13: Mini-presentations of Literature Review

Other possible topics:

Professionalization: Building a Curriculum Vitae/Resume and Presenting Research at Professional Conferences

Professionalization: How to Apply to Graduate School

***Due: Literature Review: First Draft (Due 4/13)**

Week: Thirteen: Presenting Research at Professional Conferences

4/18: *Professionalization: How to Apply to Graduate School and what is it like?*

4/20: Types of Academic Conferences and Presenting Research at Professional Conferences

***Due: Literature Review: Final Draft (Due 4/20)**

***Assignment V Due: Thoughts on the Future**

Week Fourteen: Presentations of Research Proposals

4/25: Finalization of Research Proposals

4/27: Presentations of Research Proposals

Week Fifteen: Presentations of Research Proposals

5/2: Presentations of Research Proposals

5/4: Presentations of Research Proposals/ Semester Wrap-Up and Unanswered Questions

*** Research Proposal Due**

Final Exam: Monday, May 8 12:15-2:15 p.m

Enjoy summer break!