

**Sociology of City Life**  
**SOCIOLOGY 319**  
**Fall 2018**  
**Tuesday 6:00 – 8:45pm**  
**Room: Wimberly Hall 113**  
**Professor: Dr. Peter Marina**

**Office:** 437K Wimberly Hall

**Phone:** 608-785-6770

**Office hours:** 12-1 pm Wednesday; After class; or by appointment

**E-mail:** pmarina@uwlax.edu

**Instructor Website:** petermarina.com and downandoutneworleans.com

### **Course Description**

This course explores the political, social, cultural, economic, and religious aspects of city life. The metropolis offers unique insight into highly fascinating and unusual social worlds where urban inhabitants explore their identities and push the boundaries of self-exploration, transcendence, and identity formation. The city is the site of human creativity and struggle, lust and love, risk and adventure, fear and uncertainty, resistance and subversion, joy and triumph, and the endless possibility of self-realization. Yet, the city has changed in crucial ways with an accelerated gentrification process, sharp increases in poverty and inequality, shocking violence, increased hyper segregation, rapid immigration, growing unemployment and heightened distrust in public officials. This class goes deep into the depths of city life to explore its many wonders. Students will complete an individual class project examining city life culminating in a final paper and class presentation.

### **Student Learning and Outcomes**

1. Students will define, describe, and explain the social, political, cultural, economic, and religious aspects of city life. This course student learning outcome is related to the Sociology Program Student Learning Objectives: 1. Acquiring core disciplinary knowledge; 1a. Comprehension and use of core sociological concepts and; 1d. Demonstrate an ability to identify the importance of differences among urban groups regarding cultural and social variables.
2. Students will describe, explain, and apply terms and concepts related to urban sociology and the sociological study of the city. This course student learning outcome is related to the Sociology Program Student Learning Objectives: 1. Acquiring core disciplinary knowledge; 1a. Comprehension and use of core sociological concepts; 1b. Comprehension and use of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology; 2. Cultivating historical and comparative analysis skills; 2a. Achieving awareness of the historical roots of contemporary social practices and social problems.
3. Students will analyze critically and assess the utility of competing theoretical perspectives in urban sociology and the sociological study of city life. This course student learning outcome is related to the Sociology Program Student Learning Objectives: 3. Instilling quantitative and qualitative sociological research skills; 3d. Showing ability to critically evaluate published research.
4. Students will interpret sociological research effectively to evaluate the sociological/social structural characteristics of urban sociology and the sociological study of city life using formal and informal writing, and speaking. This course student learning outcome is related to the Sociology Program Student Learning Objectives: 4. Building strong communication skills; 4a. Being proficient

in the use and evaluation of appropriate social science-related resources, such as library and electronic sources; 4b. Communicating effectively in written and oral forms as part of required coursework; and 4c. Writing cogent sociological papers with proper grammar, spelling and ASA-style citations, and references.

### Requires Books

- David Grazian. *On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife*. 2011. (ISBN: 9780226019598)
- Terry Williams and Trevor B. Milton. *The Con Men: Hustling in New York City*. 2015. (ISBN: 9780231170826)
- Elijah Anderson. *A Place on the corner*. 2003. Second Edition (ISBN: 9780226019598)
- Marina, Peter. *Down and Out in New Orleans*. 2017. Columbia University Press. (9780231178525)
- Philippe Bourgois. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge University Press. 2002.

### Outside Readings

Various outside scholarly articles and book excerpts will be included to compliment and elaborate on critical concepts discussed in class.

### Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grading

#### Exam (100 Points)

This is a short-essay exam that covers class lectures and literature assigned in class. This exam is scheduled during your regularly scheduled exam date and time.

#### Oral Presentations and Final Paper (250 Points)

Students will write a ten-to twenty-page paper on an approved topic related to city life that incorporates ideas learned in class lectures, discussions, and readings. Students will present their findings to the class towards the end of the semester.

#### Five Mini-assessments (50 Points)

Students will complete five small out of class assignments in the form of a two-page paper on the following topics: (1) Describing Social Scenes (6 dimensions), (2) Participant-observation, (3) Qualitative interviews, (4) Observing City Scenes, (5) Writing Ethnography and Analyzing data. Details for these assignments will be discussed in class.

### Grading

You can earn a total of 400 points for the class. Points are distributed as follows:

Assignment/Activity	Points
Final Exam	100
Five mini-assessments	50
Oral presentation	50
Final paper	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>

## **Final Grade Scale**

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

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

### **Other Course Requirements**

Attendance: It is important to attend class. Excess lateness and absence may result in grade reduction.

Reading Assignments: Read all required class literature prior on the date assigned. Class lectures and discussions are primarily designed around the scholarly literature assigned for the class.

Writing Assignments: All class writing assignments must have a 12-size regular font and double spaced paragraphs with your name, title, date, and page numbers.

Participation: Participation involves listening, asking questions, making comments, and so on.

### **Class Structure**

Class lectures and discussions rely on active student participation. The course structure involves lectures and discussions primarily related to the scholarly literature and research on the study of the city. Students may be selected on certain weeks to present course material or debate in class. At times during lectures, a modified version of the Socratic method is used to stimulate critical thinking.

### **Class Paper and Oral Presentations**

This class requires you to write a paper applying the theories discussed in class to demonstrate your understanding of urban life. All students are required to present their research during a scheduled class period (see class schedule below). The length of the presentation should be no more than seven minutes. Students should prepare and rehearse their presentation. Use an outline or note cards for your presentation. Do not prewrite your whole presentation and then read it.

The purpose of the oral presentation is to show that you can apply what you learned in class to develop your own original understanding of the city in modern society. For an effective presentation, you should prepare a one-page handout to be distributed to the class. It may contain an outline of your whole presentation or you can use it to communicate key concepts, findings, illustrations, and references. Remember that you only have seven minutes to present your work. Do not ramble; keep it succinct.

## **Class & Assignment Schedule (Subject to Modification)**

### **Week One: Introduction to Sociology of City Life**

9/4: What is the city and how do we study it?

Class Research Question: What is the social and cultural life of La Crosse?

### **Week Two: Using the Sociological Imagination to Understand City Life**

9/11: The sociological imagination and city life; The Soft City as a Human Habitat; Student research proposals related to the social and cultural life of La Crosse

*Readings:*

- The Sociological Imagination
- Jonathan Raban: The Soft City
- Jane Jacobs: The Uses of the City
- Mitch Duneier: Sidewalk

\*Due- Tentative Research Proposals

### **Week Three: Qualitative Research and Ethnography**

9/18: Gaining Entrée and Establishing Rapport; Tricks of the trade: Developing Themes; Literature Reviews- What makes your research question significant

*Readings:*

- Marina: Chapter One- Down and Out in New Orleans
- Terry Williams and Trevor B. Milton. *The Con Men*

### **Week Four: Describing Social Scenes (Meet at Root Note Cafe)**

9/25: Meet at Root Note (Special Assignment) Describing Social Scenes

\* Outside Readings: Marina- “Buskers, Hustlers, and Street Performers” from Down and Out in New Orleans; Opening scene of Spradley and Mann’s *The Cocktail Waitress: Women’s Work in a Man’s World*; David Grazian. Chapters One and Two of Grazian’s *On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife*; Chapters One and Two of Anderson’s *A Place on the corner*.

### **Week Five: Classical Urban Sociology**

10/2: Classical Urban Sociology- From Durkheim and Simmel to the Chicago School

*Readings:*

- Durkheim and the City: Mechanic to Organic Solidarity
- Georg Simmel: Metropolis and Mental life
- Wirth: Urbanism as a way of life
- Burgess: Growth of the City

*Other Topics:*

\* **Mini-Assignment I Due:** Describing Social Scenes (6 dimensions)

\* Instructions and guidelines for Participant Observation Assignment

## **Week Six: Urban Crime and Inequality**

10/9: Social Structure and Anomie; Human Ecology and Crime; Relative Deprivation and Crime

*Readings:*

- Massey and Denton: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass
- Bourgois: Understanding Inner-city Poverty
- Readings/Film on Policing, Broken Windows, and Stop and Frisk

*Other Topics:*

- \* **Mini-Assessment II Due:** Participant Observation
- \* Instructions and guidelines for Qualitative Interviews

## **Week Seven: Applying the Three Broad Perspectives of Sociology to Understand City Life**

10/16: Three Broad Perspectives of Sociology- Structural Functionalism, Conflict, and Symbolic Interactionism

*Readings:*

- Williams and Milton- *The Con Men: Hustling in New York City*  
Grazian- *On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife*  
Anderson- *A Place on the corner*

*Other Topics:*

- \* Discussion on Interviews

## **Week Eight: Individual Student Office Hours**

10/23: Scheduled Times Assigned

## **Week Nine: Ethnographic Methods**

10/30: In the Field- Interviews, Participant-Observation, Taking Notes, Etcetera

*Readings:*

- Anderson- *A Place on the Corner*
- Williams and Milton- *The Con Men: Hustling in New York City*
- Grazian's *On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife*

- \* **Mini-Assessment III Due:** Qualitative Interviews

## **Week Ten: Meet at Root Note (Observing City Scenes)**

11/6: Meet at Root Note for class field projects in the city

## **Week Eleven: Qualitative Research Writing and Analysis**

11/13: Qualitative Research Writing and Analysis as Objective and Interpretive/ Science and Art

*Readings:*

- Grazien-*On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife* (Urban Nightlife and the Formation of identity Among University Students)  
Marina- Conclusion to *Down and Out in New Orleans*

\* **Mini-Assignment IV Due:** Observing City Scenes

**Week Twelve: Thanksgiving (No Class)**

**Week Thirteen: Analyzing Data and Generating Themes**

11/20: Analyzing Data and Generating Themes

\* Bring Qualitative Data to Class: Writing Ethnography and Analyzing data

**Week Fourteen: Analysis and Writing of City Life**

11/27: Analyzing Data and Writing up Findings

\* **Mini-Assignment V Due:** Writing Ethnography and Analyzing data

**Week Fifteen: Student Oral Presentations (Meet Downtown La Crosse)**

12/4: Student Oral Presentations

**Week Sixteen: Conclusion**

12/11: Student Oral Presentations

\* Final Paper Due 12/18

**Final Exam: Tuesday, December 18 at 7-9 p.m.**

**Enjoy Winter Break!**

## **Other UWL Syllabus Related Policies**

### ***Academic Misconduct (Cheating and Plagiarism)***

Academic misconduct is a violation of the ASA code of ethics and the student honor code (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/academicpolicies/studentconduct/>). Plagiarism, including inadequate referencing or citation of other research is unacceptable. All work handed in for this class must be the students' own individual work. Plagiarism or cheating in any form may result in failure of the assignment or exam, failure of the course, and may include harsher sanctions. Academic misconduct is unacceptable. All work handed in for this class must be the students' own individual work. Plagiarism or cheating in any form may result in failure of the assignment or exam, failure of the course, and may include harsher sanctions. Refer to the Eagle Eye at <http://www.uwlax.edu/Student-Life/Student-handbook/#14.01> for a detailed definition of academic misconduct. For helpful information on how to avoid plagiarism, go to <http://www.uwlax.edu/catl/readiness/ethics.html>. You may also visit the Student Life Office if you have questions about plagiarism or cheating incidents. I encourage you to discuss any concerns regarding plagiarism or cheating with me directly and well before any assignments are handed in. Failure to understand what constitutes plagiarism or cheating is not a valid excuse for engaging in academic misconduct.

### ***Communication about Class Interruptions***

In the event of a campus incident that impacts the availability of teaching spaces, any changes or cancellations will be communicated to you via your university email. Depending on the incident, some or all of the information might be posted on the UWL home page.

### ***Writing Center***

The Writing Center, which is located in the Murphy Learning Center, provides trained peer tutors who can help you with any writing task (e.g., papers, proposals, research projects, summaries, reports, letters, application essays) at any stage of the process — understanding assignments, planning papers, organizing ideas, making revisions, improving sentences, using sources, etc. For current hours or to schedule an appointment, visit <http://www.uwlax.edu/writingcenter/>

### ***Sociology as a Writing-in-the-Major Program***

The Sociology major is a “writing-in-the-major” program (WIMP). The purpose behind the program is to insure that any undergraduate who completes a major in sociology has experienced sufficient informal and formal writing experiences so that graduates are proficient at communicating through a variety of formats. In all your sociology courses, you will be writing, and in each class, you may be asked to do a wide variety of types of writing. The department sees writing as an extremely important skill and as a mechanism to enhance student learning. In addition, you will learn the referencing and citation style used by archaeologists or sociologists. By completing the Sociology major, you will be completing the “writing emphasis” component of your general education requirements. The objectives of the writing-in-the-major program are available at <http://www.uwlax.edu/wimp/>. The student learning outcomes for Sociology major at UWL is available on the department webpage at <http://www.uwlax.edu/sociology/>.

### ***Classroom Protocol***

Coming to class late or leaving class early is disruptive and disrespectful. I expect students to be on time and ready for class. I expect that students will take care of personal needs such as getting a drink of water, going to the bathroom, etc. before or after class and not come and go while class is in session. On occasion, students must leave during a class, if you have to leave a class early, please let

me know at the beginning of class and make a quiet exit. It is not necessary to inform me that you will not be attending a class unless arrangements need to be made to make up an assignment for that day.

All electronic devices should be silenced during class and put away. Phone calls, texting, email, internet use, MP3 players/iPod use, etc. are not acceptable within a classroom setting. Students who intentionally use prohibited electronics during class will be required to leave the classroom. Students who disrupt the classroom or other students' learning experience by talking or carrying on side conversations within the classroom will also be required to leave the classroom.

Assignments, papers, and exams must be completed and handed in on the appointed dates. I will not accept late assignments unless I determine the circumstances to be beyond the student's control. The instructor determines the acceptability of student absences. Students with authorized absences will be allowed to make up exams or papers within a reasonable time-period. Students who are going to be absent for more than 3 days should contact the Student Life Office at 149 Graff Main Hall, 785-8062 and notify them of your absence so that the university and all instructors are informed of your absence (they do not authorize absences).

### **Eagle Alert System**

This class will be participating in the Eagle Alert System <https://www.uwlax.edu/academic-advising-center/eagle-alert/student-resources/> through WINGS. The 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 limited participation), I may note this information and you will receive an email indicating that I have entered feedback. I may also enter positive feedback encouraging you to consider additional learning opportunities. The link in the email will take you to WINGS where you can login to see the feedback. I encourage you to meet with me and/or refer to the helpful campus resources listed below under Academic Services and Resources and on UWL's Student Success page <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/student-success/>.

### **Inclusive Excellence**

UWL's core values include "Diversity, equity, and the inclusion and engagement of all people in a safe campus climate that embraces and respects the innumerable different perspectives found within an increasingly integrated and culturally diverse global community"

(<https://www.uwlax.edu/chancellor/mission/>). If you are not experiencing my class in this manner, please come talk to me about your experiences so I can try to adjust the course if possible.

### **Name/Pronouns**

Please advise me of your preferred name or gender pronoun(s) early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Information on UWL's preferred name policy is available here <https://www.uwlax.edu/records/preferred-name/> and UWL's Pride Center is available for additional assistance.

### **Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI)**

UWL conducts student evaluations electronically. Approximately 2 weeks prior to the conclusion of a course, you will receive an email at your UWL email address directing you to complete an evaluation for each of your courses. In-class time will be provided for students to complete the evaluation in class. Electronic reminders will be sent if you do not complete the evaluation. The evaluation will include numerical ratings and, depending on the department, may provide options for comments. The university takes student feedback very seriously and the information gathered from student evaluations is more valuable when a larger percentage of students complete the evaluation. Please be especially mindful to complete the surveys.

## **Academic Services and Resources at UWL**

Below are several student services available to students taking online courses:

- Academic Advising Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/advising/>
- ACCESS Center (formerly Disability Resources): <http://www.uwlax.edu/access-center/>
- Career Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/careerservices/>
- Counseling and Testing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/counseling/>
- Financial Information: Financial Aid Office <https://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/> and It Makes Cents <https://www.uwlax.edu/it-makes-cents/>
- Murphy Learning Center (Walk-in tutoring): <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/>
- Murphy Library: <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/>
- Multicultural Student Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mss/>
- Public Speaking Center: <https://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/subject/public-speaking-center/>
- Records and Registration: <http://www.uwlax.edu/records/>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/>
- Student Support Services: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-support-services/>
- Veteran Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/veteran-services/>
- Writing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/writingcenter/>

## **Technical Support**

For tips and information about D2L visit the Information Technology Services (ITS) student support page, at <http://www.uwlax.edu/D2L/Help-for-students/>.

Need help making sure your computer is set up correctly for online coursework? D2L's System Check <https://community.desire2learn.com/d2l/systemCheck> ensures that your computer and web browser are configured to properly access their system.

You can also contact the ITS Support Center at (608) 785-8774 or email them at [helpdesk@uwlax.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uwlax.edu) for questions about D2L or any other technological difficulties. The hours for ITS are Monday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, and Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.

## **Our Legal Obligations to You**

See the following link of statements that reflect UWL's legal obligations to students:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/info/syllabus/>