SYLLABUS

Professor: Alfredo García
Wednesdays, 3-4:50PM
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COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

Welcome to the class! This course is designed to introduce you to some of the important topics in sociological theory such as anomie, self, cultural capital, social capital, and others. I will be teaching this course primarily as a theory course. As such, the goal will be to dissect and uncover the very foundations of our inquiry: to question the premises of our questions, for instance, and to view the world with different theoretical lenses. As a 3000-level course, the subject matter is mainly geared towards students who are majoring in sociology or other social sciences. I will be tailoring the content, however, so that it is accessible and interesting to students from any major.

The goal of the class is to digest complex theoretical ideas, relate them to society, and to bring our research to a wider public. As a hybrid course, only half of our time will be spent in class. These lecture discussions will focus on the readings and concepts specifically. The other half will require you to research a topic in depth and to write substantive and useful content on a Wikipedia page of your choice. It is at this point that you will take your new knowledge from class and add outside research so as to contribute to the worldwide forum of Wikipedia.

Required Texts

There is no textbook for this course. All readings will be available through Blackboard.

Grading

10% In-Class Presentation
20% Participation and Attendance
70% Wikipedia Project

In-Class Presentation

You will choose a reading of your choice from the syllabus during the first week and will be responsible for presenting the piece to the class. You can provide handouts or study aids of any kind, but you do not
have to give a formal presentation using a PowerPoint Prezzie. You should be prepared to speak for approximately 5-7 minutes. Your task is to break down the reading into digestible segments and tell your peers about the reading’s relevance and importance. Some questions that you should keep in mind as you read include:

- What is the main argument in this piece?
- Why is this considered an important contribution to sociology?
- What does this piece show us that is new and/or interesting?

These are all difficult readings, so do not become frustrated—try your best and look on the internet for additional resources and aids to help you synthesize the information.

**Participation and Attendance Policy**

Twenty percent (20%) of the final grade will be based on participation and attendance. This is a *sizeable* portion of your grade and is a vastly important part of the course. You are expected to have read all of the week’s materials prior to coming to class and must arrive prepared to discuss all of the readings with your own input on the topics. Class time will be a mix of lecture, activities, and discussion, so be prepared to talk about the materials that have been assigned for class. We meet face-to-face only once a week, so make sure to dedicate time throughout the week to do the readings. DO NOT leave it for the night before class; you will *hate* yourself.

By taking this class, you are making a commitment to attend all lectures, arrive on time, and leave only when class is fully finished. *Attendance is mandatory at all face-to-face sessions:* absences will result in deducted participation/attendance points.

Technology is now ubiquitous and is an integral part of social interaction today. The dings, vibrations, and boinks of cell phones, tablets, and computers, however, are highly distracting for class discussions and lectures. As a result, you must turn off and put away your cell phone and computers upon entering the classroom. *Laptops will not be allowed during class.* Make sure to bring plenty of paper and writing utensils for class notes and activities.

It is my legal right to prohibit any kind of recording of this class, and I exercise that right. Therefore, recording devices of any kind, audio or video, are prohibited in this class. Violating this policy is illegal, and violators will be sanctioned.

**Wikipedia Project**

Wikipedia has increasingly become the first resource many internet users consult whenever they encounter an unfamiliar topic. This reliance on Wikipedia is incredibly exciting because it allows for vast amounts of knowledge and information to reach individuals across the globe for free. This reliance on Wikipedia, however, is also equally troubling because of the ever-present dangers of inaccurate, even malicious, information being spread and reinforced through the site.

This semester, you will have the opportunity to play an active role in this social phenomenon by constructing and revising your own Wikipedia entries. We will be workshopping this project throughout 12 weeks of the semester in bits and pieces as part of the online portion of this course. This project will require extensive library research, so please be aware of what this entails. Although the project contributes to 70% of your final grade, there will be several assignments along the way that form the final grade for the project. All the information for the Wikipedia Project can be found on our course’s
homepage. Please bookmark this page on your web browser because we will be referencing the homepage repeatedly throughout the term.

Grading Scale

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There are no make-up exams and/or assignments, there is no grading curve, and there is no extra credit. Late materials will not be accepted.

Center for Academic Success

The Center for Academic Success is available on both campuses to support you. They provide personalized attention tailored to your needs in a user-friendly environment that includes online support. You can get help writing a paper, reading more efficiently and increasing textbook comprehension, or even creating an individualized learning plan. The center is located in the Green Library 120 at MMC and in AC1 160 at BBC. Find them online at http://undergrad.fiu.edu/cas/learning-center/.

Disability Clause

Students with disabilities, as defined by law, have the right to receive needed accommodation if their disabilities make it difficult to perform academic tasks in the usual way or in the allotted time frame. In order to receive accommodation, however, students must register with the Disability Resource Center in GC 190 at MMC and WUC 131 at BBC.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following course schedule may be subject to change. The readings and assignments are listed by their due date. All students are required to have all readings and assignments finished prior to arriving to class on each date.

Jan 13 – Introduction to Course

Readings
No readings assigned for this class.
Research Field Trip with Sarah J. Hammill, Business Librarian & Online Learning Librarian, Sociology Subject Expert (GL280).

Jan 20 – Reality

Readings

Assignments Due
Read “Editing Wikipedia” handout
Start thinking about topics

Jan 27 – Social Facts

Readings

Assignments Due
Read “Using Talk Pages” and “Evaluating Wikipedia” Handouts
Continue thinking about topics

Feb 3 – The Self in Society, Part I: Me, Myself, and I

Readings

Assignments Due
Practicing the basics of Wikipedia
Read “Choosing an article” handout
Complete all introductory modules

Feb 10 – Face-to-Face Class Cancelled (Conference)

Assignments Due
Choose a Wikipedia article and add to an article
Read “Citing Sources” and “Avoiding Plagiarism” handouts
Complete supplementary training for “Sources and Citations”

Feb 17 – The Self in Society, Part II: Double Consciousness

Readings

Assignments Due
Complete supplementary training for “Sandboxes and Mainspace”

Feb 24 – The Self in Society, Part III: Dramaturgy

Readings

Assignments Due
Finalizing topic and starting research
Drafting a starter article

Mar 2 – Charismatic Authority

Readings

Assignments Due
Read “Moving out of your Sandbox” handout

Mar 9 – The Separation from Society, Part I: Anomie

Readings

Assignments Due
Moving your articles to mainspace
Read “Illustrating Wikipedia” and “Evaluating Wikipedia” handouts

***************Mar 16 – SPRING BREAK!***************

Mar 23 – The Separation from Society, Part II: Alienation

Readings
- Estranged Labour (70-81)
- Alienation and Social Classes (133-5)
- Capitalism, Machinery and Automation from “The Gundrisse” (278-290)
- Wage Labor and Capital (203-217)
- Manifesto of the Communist Party (469-491)

Assignments Due
Choose articles to peer review

Mar 30 – The Separation from Society, Part III: Alienation Today

Readings

Assignments Due
Expand your article into a complete first draft
Read “Peer Review” handout

Apr 6 – Social Capital

Readings

Assignments Due
Peer review and copyedit

Apr 13 – Cultural Capital

Readings

Assignments Due
Address peer review suggestions
Continue improving articles
Prepare for in-class presentations
Read “Polishing your article” handout

Apr 20 – Final Presentations

Apr 27 – Final Presentations

Assignments Due
Reflective essay on your Wikipedia contributions (Single-spaced, 1” margins, 11-pt Calibri font, 1,000-1,250 words)
Final Wikipedia entries due