

SOC2561F: LIVES AND SOCIETIES

2014 FALL TERM

Class meets: Thursdays, 2-4 PM

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4:30 - 5:30 PM
Room 386, 725 Spadina Avenue

Textbook: Reprotext of required readings, available from The Bookstore

Highly recommended reading: sections of Babbie listed below. Babbie will be on reserve in short term loan in Robarts.

Prerequisite: SOC 101, 102, or 103

NOTE: The course site on Blackboard will include the course outline, occasional announcements, and lecture notes. Most students like to download the notes for a lecture ahead of time, then bring them to class and annotate with the additional material that comes up in lectures and discussions.

Much sociological work considers people at one point in their lives: while working, while in school, while parents of young children, and so forth. Life course analysis makes its special contribution by paying attention to biographies and to the ways that (1) human life histories are shaped by a person's place in society and in social history, and (2) how human life decisions cumulate to affect societies.

SOC 256 considers the very large scale comparative picture: very different kinds of society (from hunter-gatherer groups to complex modern countries) and the differences that kind of society makes to: qualitative differences in life course stages, the timing of stages, transitions between stages, the basic facts of birth and death, and the ways people see the life course.

The companion half-course, SOC 357, concerns lives in twentieth century Canada and today, with some comparisons to other first world countries.

NOTE on references to required readings in the course outline below:

All page references are the page numbers in the original source, not the page numbers in your reprotext. The originals are publicly available documents, and, their pagination does not change, while the pagination of the reprotext changes every year as I update it. For these reasons students should also use page numbers from the original sources, for example if using them in your essays.

TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

September 11: Introduction: Types of Societies

Required Reading

Lenski et al., Excerpts from *Human Societies*

September 18: Introducing Hunter-Gatherer Societies

Required Reading

Hill and Hurtado, Excerpts from *Ache Life History*, pp. 41-57, 65-73

Special resources: Class will start with the video “A Human Way of Life” (Videocass 001452 from the Audiovisual Library).

September 25: The Life Course for Hunters and Gatherers

Required Reading

Howell, Life History Stages, pp. 1-30, and pictures at end of this chapter

Shostak, Excerpts from *Nisa*, pp. 149-166

Hill and Hurtado, Excerpts from *Ache Life History*, pp. 219-236

NOTE: This class will begin with the first mini-lecture on your research for your essay: research basics, ethical research, and, choosing and recruiting a respondent.

Recommended reading:

Babbie, Earl. . *The Practice of Social Research*, whatever edition is on Short Term Loans in Robarts.

Chapter 1, section on ethics; Chapter 3, section on ethical issues in social research

Chapter 10, sections on case studies, qualitative interviewing, ethics.

October 2: Life Course Stages in Different Societies: Timing and Types of Stages

Required Reading

Gee, Historical Change in the Family Life Course

NOTE: This class will begin with the second mini-lecture on your research: how to conduct your interview.

Recommended reading: Babbie. Chapters 1, 10.

October 9: Transitions between Stages: Transition Rites

Required Reading

Shostak, pp. 151-166

Stearns, Grief, Death, Funerals, and, Rites of Passage

Davis-Floyd, Ritual in the Hospital

October 16: In-class mid-term test

October 23: Childhood in Different Societies

Required Reading

Lassonde, Age and Development

Gleason, Canada

Comparative History of Childhood
 Gillis, Life Course and Transitions to Adulthood
 Native American Children
 Bradbury, Conclusion from Working Families

NOTE: this lecture will begin with a mini-lecture on: analysing your data and writing it up.

October 30: Old Age in Different Societies

Required Reading

Keith, Age in Anthropological Research

November 6: Societies and Mortality – How and When do People Die?

Required Reading

Shostak, pp. 248-250, 309, 316-17

Hill and Hurtado, pp. 174, 210

McCracken and Phillips, portions on mortality

Meckel, Infant Mortality

November 13: Societies and Fertility; Social Implications of Mortality and Fertility

Required Reading

Howell, pp. 31- end including tables

Hill and Hurtado, pp. 262, 267, 467-9

McCracken and Phillips, all remaining parts

Fertility Rates

NOTE: Essays due!

November 20: How People in Different Societies *See* the Life Course

Required Reading

Howell, Return to Dobe

Ikels et al., Perceptions of the Adult Life Course

Collings, Aging and Life Course Development

November 27: In-class final test

EVALUATION

- 1) In-class mid-term test October 16, 25%
- 2) In-class final test, November 27: 25%.
- 3) Essay, due November 13, 50%

IMPORTANT! HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY

You must hand in a hard copy of your essay AND you must submit it to Turnitin.com. The due date for both is November 13.

Handing in your hard copy: This is due November 13. You may hand this in weekdays 9-5 in room 225, 725 Spadina, or at the START of the class on November 13.

NO FAX OR E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. YOU CANNOT HAND YOUR PAPER IN TO ANYONE WORKING IN THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT NOR THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT MAILROOM.

Submitting your paper to Turnitin.com: This must also be done on or before November 13. Detailed instructions will be provided. Please note the following paragraph:

Turnitin.com: To deter and detect plagiarism, this course will make use of the turnitin.com system. Here is a standard paragraph about this: “Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site”.

Here is the link to the Turnitin site, which includes a guide for the student user:

“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site”.

Here is a link to instructions for students on how to use Turnitin:

<http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching/academicintegrity/turnitin/guide-students>

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is presentation of the writing of others as though it were your own. This includes copying passages from works written by others and including them in your essay without quotation marks. It is NOT sufficient to cite your sources; if you use their words, you must put them in quotation marks AND give proper citation.

Please also read the section on Academic Integrity issues below.

ESSAY TOPICS

All of you will write a research essay comparing the same kind of transition rite in two different societies, based on an interview with an informant. Your goal is to use course materials to explain similarities and differences in the “same” rite in different types of societies.

Transition rites are rituals marking a change from one life stage to another, or marking steps in the life course. Since the October 9 lecture on transition rites will use funerals as an example, you should consider another kind of transition rite such as weddings or graduation ceremonies.

To compare two different kind of society, you could:

- 1) compare Canada now to Canada some time ago, by interviewing an elderly person who has taken part in the kind of transition rite you are interested in, both recently and decades

ago. Your focus will be on major ways that Canada has changed in (say) the past half century, how these changes have changed the transition rite, and how some aspects of the rite may have survived extensive societal changes.

Or

(2) do the same thing for a different country, interviewing an older person who has experience of the same transition rite in that country in recent times and long ago.

Or

(3) compare the same rite in Canada today and a very different country today. The comparison country should be different in terms of the societal variables discussed in Lenski et al. In today's world, this means looking at a much less well developed society.

Be sure that you compare truly comparable transition rites. For example if your rite of choice is the wedding, it would not make sense to compare a Christian wedding in Canada with a Hindu wedding in India. It would be too difficult to establish which differences come from different religious traditions and which from the different societal contexts.

IMPORTANT: YOU MUST FOLLOW ETHICAL GUIDELINES !!

Since your essay will be based on an interview, you must follow the proper procedures for ethical research using human subjects. These procedures include: no research on vulnerable populations, protection of your informant's privacy and anonymity, gaining informed consent, and emphasizing the informant's freedom to not answer questions and to stop the interview at will. These matters will be discussed in more detail in the mini-lecture on September 25. There will be a copy of the necessary "informed consent" form on our Blackboard site. Since these are very important issues, do not start your research until after the lecture on September 25.

TIMING OF YOUR INTERVIEW

You **MUST NOT** start your research until after the lecture on September 25 (see previous paragraph). It is also highly advisable to wait until after the lecture on transition rites on October 9, since this will be of great help to you in preparing for your interview. You may look for a suitable respondent before these dates but do not interview them. You should also do the relevant course readings (especially those on transition rites) before your interview.

GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY WRITING AND SUBMISSION

PAGE LIMITS

There is a strict page limit of no more than 15 pages for the essay, double spaced, with font size 12 points and margins 1". References and tables (if any) are not included in the page limit.

Please review relevant materials in the Academic Handbook, such as the warnings about plagiarism.

LATE WORK

If your essay is handed in late, I will deduct 10% of the maximum possible grade for *each weekday* the work is late. To hand your hard copy in on time, you must do so at class on November 13 or in room 225 (725 Spadina) by 5 PM when the room will be locked. Your

Turnitin copy is on time if submitted by midnight of November 13.

PERMISSION FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS AND MAKE-UP TESTS

If you have acceptable reasons concerning things beyond your control, you may apply for permission to write a make-up test or hand in your essay late. You must have a very good reason, and you must be able to document it.

The most common reason is ill health that makes it impossible to write the test at the scheduled time, or a period of ill health that makes it impossible to complete your essay on time. You must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoroto.ca). This form may only be completed by a physician, surgeon, nurse practitioner, dentist or clinical psychologist. NO other medical documentation will be accepted. A doctor's note is NOT sufficient. Submit the form to the instructor in a sealed envelope addressed to the instructor, in class, during the instructor's office hours, or via the drop boxes in room 225, 725 Spadina. Please note that it is your responsibility to work ahead on your essay, so a minor short illness days before the due date is not an excuse for lateness.

In case of personal or family crisis, get a letter from your registrar. College registrars are very experienced, very discreet, and there to help you.

Submit your documentation to your professor only, not the TA or the Sociology Department.

Unacceptable reasons for lateness include: (1) "It is the end of term and I have so many tests and assignments." So does every other student! And you knew this was coming; it is your responsibility to work ahead. (2) "My family has booked me in for a vacation/my sister's wedding in a foreign country/ other trips or occasions." It is your responsibility to show up for your academic work, including lectures, tests, and handing in essays. (3) "My computer crashed." It is your responsibility to work ahead and to back up your work. (4) "I got stuck in traffic, my car broke down, etc." It is your responsibility to show up on time.

DATES FOR MAKE-UP TESTS

If you have to miss a test for a valid reason beyond your control, and you have appropriate documentation in the form of a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form or a letter from your registrar, you may write a make-up test.

MID-TERM MAKE-UP TEST WILL BE FRIDAY OCTOBER 24, 2-4 PM,

THE MID-TERM MAKE-UP TEST CAN ONLY BE WRITTEN AT THIS TIME, THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS, SO CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE NOW.

Final test make-up: TBA

GETTING HELP IN WRITING YOUR ESSAY

Please remember that your college has a writing lab with lots of experience. These labs are always very popular and very busy, so you need to make appointments well in advance.

SOME WRITING RESOURCES AT U OF T

(1) SOME GENERAL RESOURCES FOR ALL STUDENTS

Students can find information about college writing centres at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>. The teaching approach of the college writing centres is described at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning>.

The home page for the website "Writing at the University of Toronto" is www.writing.utoronto.ca.

More than 60 Advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice. A complete list of printable PDF versions are listed at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/about-this-site/pdf-links-for-students>

(2) RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS

The English Language Learning (ELL) Program is designed to help multilingual students achieve the high level of English required for top academic work at U of T. Our courses and activities are free and non-credit. All sessions are taught by highly qualified university instructors. Native speakers of English are also welcome. Visit our website at

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>

Starting on September 12, the ELL Program will offer free, online academic writing instruction through our Reading eWriting activity. To register, students should contact the ELL Coordinator at ell.newcollege@utoronto.ca

Starting on September 8, we will also offer free, on-site Communication Cafes which focus on the language needed for academic discussions and presentations. No registration is necessary. For the schedule and topics, visit

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell/communication-cafe>

Participating in ELL is a great way to help ensure a successful academic year. It's also a wonderful opportunity to meet other students who want to establish relationships in English. We offer small, friendly groups and professional advice about language improvement.

MORE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your University of Toronto degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgment.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work).

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers.
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from me or other available campus resources like the College Writing Centers, the Academic Success Centre, or the U of T Writing Website.

STUDENTS WHO NEED ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please approach Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Accommodations include getting a volunteer note-taker and writing tests under special conditions.

Do not approach your professor or TA about accommodations. Accessibility services has the necessary expertise, and they provide full confidentiality, so your privacy is protected.