

SOC 357: LIVES IN CANADA

2012 - 2013, SPRING TERM

Class meets: Tuesdays 2 - 4 PM, WI 1016

Professor: Bonnie H. Erickson
Telephone: 416-978-5263
E-mail: ericson@chass.utoronto.ca

Professor's office hours: Tuesdays 4:30 - 5:30 PM
Room 386, 725 Spadina Avenue

Textbook: *Lives in Canada: A reader in the Modern Life Course*, edited by Bonnie H. Erickson

Teaching Assistant: Alice Hoe, e-mail alice.hoe@mail.utoronto.ca

Course e-mail policies:

- 1) We will only accept e-mails from your University of Toronto e-mail account. Please put "SOC 357" in your subject line so we know the message is course-related.
- 2) We cannot provide instant or even overnight response. We will make every effort to reply to e-mails at least twice per week, when we have time.
- 3) Many important course announcements will be sent to you through the University of Toronto e-mail address recorded for you on Blackboard. Be sure to check this e-mail account regularly.
- 4) E-mails asking for information in this course outline (e.g. "How much is the midterm worth?") will NOT be answered. Read this outline!

Course Website:

This website is open to students enrolled in the course. On it you will find the course outline; announcements as they are made; grades; and lecture notes. The lecture notes are usually posted the day before the lecture. Most students like to print the notes off, bring them to class, and add marginal notes on extra things that come up in class.

To get access to the site: (1) get a UTORid if you do not already have one, (2) log on to Blackboard at <http://portal.utoronto.ca>, (3) click on the course name.

It is your responsibility to check for course news regularly.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The prerequisite to take this course is SOC220H1 or SOC281H1. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time they are discovered.

INTRODUCTION

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, (2) how individual lives unfold, and (3) how human life decisions cumulate to affect societies.

This course concerns lives in twentieth century and early twenty-first century Canada, with some comparisons to other highly developed countries.

A related half course, 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 cultural definitions of the life course, to the basic facts of life and death, and to life stages, their timing, and the ways people move from one stage to another.

TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

All of the required readings are chapters in your reprotex. If you cite one of the readings from the reprotex, you should use the original page references since these are the publicly available ones. Additional sources cited below are not required readings, but will be used in lectures.

You also should read some materials on research methods to help you in doing your analytic biographies (see information below on your essay assignment). Copies of Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, are on short-term loan.

You will get three mini-lectures on various aspects of doing your analytic biography. Each of these lectures has some strongly recommended reading selections from Babbie. You will not be tested on this material, but it will be extremely useful in doing your research essay, so do not neglect it.

January 8: Introduction; Principles of Life Course Analysis

Required Reading: Elder

Elder explains some core ideas of life course analysis and gives some wonderfully meaty examples of the impact of historical timing of lives, with special emphasis on the effects of the Great Depression and World War II. The next three weeks continue with additional classic arguments about the importance of when people are born and when they enter adulthood.

Non-required Reading Used in Lectures: Susan A. McDaniel, 2001, "Born at the Right Time?" *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 26:193-214. McDaniel discusses Canadians (especially women) born in six different periods, from 1916-26 to 1965-75.

January 15: The Size of One's Cohort

Required Reading: Pampel and Peters

Easterlin argued that people born into large birth cohorts have too many competitors throughout life, and hence have more troubles in education, work, family, and criminal arenas. Pampel and Peters give a solid overview of Easterlin's own work and the large body of related work.

January 22: Coming of Age and Developing a World View; first mini-lecture on research

Required Reading: Mannheim

Mannheim's classic paper is challenging but highly rewarding. Lectures will include some of the very interesting contemporary research showing the value of Mannheim's ideas.

First mini-lecture: research basics, and, choosing and recruiting a respondent

Recommended reading from Babbie: Chapters 1, 10

January 29: Mannheim and Related Research, Continued

February 5: The Changing Transition to Adulthood

Required Reading: Shanahan

Shanahan discusses changes in the patterns of early life transitions over time, and some important differences among countries.

February 12: *In-class midterm test*

February 19: *Reading Week*

February 26: Trajectories of Family Background, Education, Work, and Networks; mini-lecture on research

Required Reading: Frederick and Boyd; Corak; de Broucker and Lavalley; Erickson.

How does one's family background affect one's education, how do both affect one's first job, and how do all of these affect later work? How do social networks vary across the life course? The standard account of these linkages, with focus on Canada.

Second mini-lecture on analyzing and writing up your biography

Recommended reading from Babbie: Chapters 13, 17; Chapter 2 section on links between theory and research

March 5: Age and Crime; mini-lecture on research

Required Reading: Steffensmeier and Streifel; Macmillan

How is age related to the chances of committing a crime, and to the chances of being a victim of crime? How does victimization affect one's life?

Third mini-lecture on last minute tasks: essay format, submitting your essay to Turnitin, a reminder about how to avoid plagiarism, etc.

March 12: Biography and Crime;

Required reading: Hagan; Tanner, Davies, and O'Grady

How crime fits into biographies; how it is affected by past and current life circumstances, and how it in turn affects later life.

March 19: Age and Health; *Essays Due*

Required Reading: D'Arcy, Mirowsky and Ross

How mental and physical health, and their causes, are related to age.

March 26: Biography and Health

Required reading: Pearlin et al.

How health fits into biographies.

April 2: *In-class final test*

EVALUATION

1) In-class mid-term test, February 12: 25%.

2) Final test, April 2: 25%.

3) Essay, due March 19: 50%

ESSAYS

Your essay will be an *analytic biography*. In an analytic biography, you apply course materials to discuss, interpret, and explain one person's life, and at the same time use information about the life story to reflect on ways that our course materials could be extended or improved.

You need to interview someone old enough to have had a long life – someone 65 or older would be best. If you cannot find a volunteer 65 or older, someone 60 or older would be OK. You may use anyone who is willing to tell you about his or her life. You must observe proper procedure for work with human subjects (this includes explaining your project and plans to the potential respondent, having them read and sign the consent form provided for you on the course website, and protecting their privacy; there will be more discussion of this in class). You **MUST** use course materials to analyse the biography, and use the biography to reflect on course materials. Beware the temptation to just tell a terrific story about a fascinating life. Every life, closely considered, is fascinating, but it does not become sociology until it is analysed with sociological concepts, theories, and findings. Include the signed consent form with your paper.

DO NOT conduct the interview until you know how to do so properly. That is, wait until the first “mini-lecture” in the class of January 22, when we will discuss how to select a respondent, obtain informed consent, and do an interview. **NEVER** conduct interviews, or any other form of research on human subjects, until you have completed informed consent procedures. Doing research on people in a carefully ethical manner is essential.

You will probably need to do some additional background reading to help make sense of your biography. For example, you may interview someone who spent many years in another country, so you will need to look up relevant information about that context.

There is a strict page limit of no more than 10 pages for the essay, double spaced, with font size 12 points or larger and margins at least 1". References, figures and tables are not included in the page limit.

Please use ASA referencing style. Include a cover page with your name and student number, course information (SOC 357, Lives in Canada, Professor Bonnie H. Erickson) and the title of your essay. Please number your pages, starting with 1 for the first page of your text (not

the cover page).

IMPORTANT! HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY

You must hand in a hard copy of your essay AND you must submit it to Turnitin.com, on or before March 19.

Handing in your hard copy: This is due March 19. You may hand this in weekdays 9-5 in room 225, 725 Spadina, or in class March 19 BEFORE class starts.

NO FAX OR E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Submitting your paper to Turnitin.com: This must also be done on or before March 19. Detailed instructions will be provided. Please note the following paragraph:

"Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com Tu reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site."

DO NOT PLAGIARIZE

Be careful to avoid plagiarism. That is, do not copy words from someone else's writings and present them as your own. If you include someone else's words, use quotation marks and give proper references. It is NOT enough to just include your source in your list of references. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense with very heavy penalties (see the Academic Handbook).

See also the section on ACADEMIC INTEGRITY below.

LATE ESSAYS

If your essay is handed in late, I will deduct 10% of the maximum possible grade for *each weekday* the work is late. For example if you submit your paper March 20 (one day late) and get 75% for it, the grade will be reduced to 65%. These are serious penalties – do not be late! The maximum penalty is 100% of your grade, for papers 10 or more days late.

MISSED TESTS

If you do not write a test at the scheduled time, you will get a grade of zero.

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 get your doctor to complete a University of Toronto medical certificate. This must clearly state when you were unable to work. 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. Submit your documentation to your professor only, not the TA or the Sociology Department.

There are other kinds of good reasons besides ill health. ALL must be documented. If documentation is difficult, or if it involves confidential matters, please go to your college registrar. College registrars are very experienced, very discreet, and there to help you. And if you have a serious problem it will likely affect more than just one of your courses; the registrar can send messages to all your professors recommending extensions if they are appropriate.

Unacceptable reasons 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 U of T health certificate or a letter from your registrar, you may write a make-up test. Here are the dates for the make-up tests. **MAKE-UP TESTS CAN ONLY BE WRITTEN AT THESE TIMES, THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS, SO CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE NOW.**

Mid-term test make-up: February 26, 10 - 12 AM

Final test make-up: April 9, 2- 4 PM

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.

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 UofT. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your UofT 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 acknowledgement.

- 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.