

SII 199Y, L0391 (2015-2016)

How We Use Time in Everyday Life

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Seminar:
Wednesdays 4-6 p.m.
725 Spadina Avenue, Rooms 36 and 41
Office hours: after class weekly

Substance:

In substance, this seminar examines how people use time in their everyday lives: the content, the patterns, and the implications. This analysis focuses on the circumstances under which variations in the use of time occur and the role of context – such as social factors or physical location – in governing people’s choices. The data collected can serve as the basis for understanding and explaining a number of issues in the social sciences. The seminar will include both an examination of seminal writings about people’s use of time and hands-on practice in the strategies and techniques of analyzing large-scale survey data, including the formulation of questions and steps taken to answering them. Through this seminar, students will acquire – from a sociological perspective – an appreciation not only of the concept of time but also of how they use time in their daily lives and how time-use helps them better understand many situations.

Objectives:

A number of skills will be addressed in this seminar. These include reading, writing, expressing points of view, and both asking and answering research questions - how to use numeric data to address these questions, use of data files and computers to organize, analyze, and show results clearly, and how the social sciences, alone and in combination, can address our everyday lives in ways that are not intuitively apparent.

The seminar will have the advantages of meeting in two types of rooms: a standard seminar room (41) and an interactive, computerized (“smart”) classroom (36). On any given day, we will shuttle back and forth between the two.

Requirements:

There will be weekly reading and short (e.g. one page, 12 font) writing assignments. The latter will vary between individualized statements or comments and specific analyses of numeric data. These will have a combined weight of 25 per cent of the final mark. The penalty for late submission without medical documentation is 10 marks per week or part thereof, subtracted from the particular assignment (with a potential 100 marks).

A test at the end of the first term on December 2 will account for another 25 per cent of the mark. There will not be a final examination.

Each student will, as the year goes on, propose, carry out, and present the results of a project representing a topic of personal interest *explicitly illuminated by time-use considerations and data*, utilizing one or more data file(s) to be made available. A proposal is weighted at 10 %. A paper due no later than at the time of the last scheduled meeting of the course, April 6 will represent another 25 % of the final mark.

Regular attendance and participation are essential for a successful learning process in this course. Therefore, a final 15 per cent of the final mark is based on a combination of presence in class and quality of participation in discussions. The learning process begins from the first class and is cumulative.

Required Readings:

These are two-fold. The first, referred to subsequently as the **TEXT**, is a book by the instructor: *Time-Use: Expanding Explanation in the Social Sciences*, Paradigm Publishers, 2005. It is available from the University of Toronto Book Store. The second will be a course pack of selected readings, “SIII199Y L0391) How We Use Time in Everyday Life”, available from Alico’s, 203 College Street (at St. George), the **READER**.

Course Outline:

September 16: Introduction; Time-use as a *zero-sum game*

Text: Chapter 1.

Reader: Zahari Staikov, “Modelling and Programming of Time-Budget (Methodological Issues)”

September 23: How the time-use approach illuminates individual and family routines

Text: pp. 16-38.

Reader: Tora Friberg, “The Organization of Everyday Living”

September 30: Data content in time-use studies of aggregates

Text: pp. 38-53.

Reader: John Robinson, “The Time-Diary Method: Structure and Uses”

October 7: Data structure and how it contributes to different types of analysis

Reader: “Session 5: TUS: File Structure and Analytic Strategies”

October 14: Time-point files

Text: pp. 53-69 (for October 14, 21, 28).

Reader: William Michelson, “Variations in the Rational Use of Time – The Travel Pulse of Commutes between Home and Job”

October 21: Episode files

Reader: William Michelson, “Sleep: Erosion or Compression in the Computer Age?”
“Time Pressure and Human Agency”

October 28: Summary files

Reader: Papers on time-use trends in the Netherlands and in Japan.

William Michelson, “Grounding Time-use in Microspace: Empirical Results”, “Never on Sunday”

November 4 & 11: Behavioral sampling – how to find and study “hidden samples”

Text: pp. 70-84.

Reader: William Michelson, “Home-based Employment and Quality of Life”, “Session 11: Extracting Additional Value from Time-use Data: Subjective Aspects and Subgroup Sampling”

November 18: Subjective Analysis

Text: pp. 85-102.

Reader: William Michelson, , “Semi-Annual Time Changes: Exploring Impacts on Time Use”
“Divergent Convergence”, and “Assessing Social Well-being in Time-Use Surveys: Positioning Macro Measures”

November 25: Occurrences

Text: pp. 103-111.

December 2: In-class test. (Last class meeting of the Fall Term for Wednesday classes)

2016

January 13: Sequences

Text: pp. 111-121

Reader: William Michelson & Ugo Lachapelle, "Patterns of Walking among Employed, Urban Canadians"

January 20: Multitasking

Text: pp. 122-136.

Reader: Duncan Ironmonger, "There are only 24 Hours in a Day! Solving the problematic of simultaneous time", William Michelson, "Unraveling the Mysteries of Sleep Duration Dynamics"

January 27 – February 3: Persons present

Text: pp. 137-155.

Reader: Inge Mestdag and Jessie Vandeweyer, "Where has family time gone?"

Lotta Persson and Klas Rydenstam, "Childcare, parent's time together with their children and children's time together with their parents"

Kristina Aalto and Johanna Varjonen, "Cheaper by the Dozen?" (Abstract)

A proposal for the final research paper will be due on February 3, with return feedback on February 10.

February 10: Place

Text: pp. 156-160.

Reader: Tommy Carlstein, "A Time-Geographic Approach to Time Allocation and Socio-Ecological Systems"

Allen Pred and Risa Palm, "The Status of American Women: A Time-Geographic View"

February 17: No class due to Reading Week

February 24: Rooms and spaces

Text: pp. 160-170.

Reader: Sherry Ahrentzen, Douglas W. Levine, and William Michelson, "Space, Time, and Activity in the Home: A Gender Analysis"

March 2: Places and trips

Text: pp. 170-179.

Reader: F. Stuart Chapin, Jr., "Human Time Allocation in the City,"

Solveig Mårtensson, "Time Allocation and Daily Living Conditions: Comparing Regions"

March 9: Exposure to risk

Text: pp. 180-193.

Reader: R.W. Armstrong, "Tracing Exposure to Specific Environments in Medical Geography"

March 16, 23, 30: Oral presentations of research papers and discussion.

April 6: Hard copies of the final research paper are due no later than at the start of class on April 6. Papers submitted in advance of that date will be returned with feedback at that class session.

