

SOC150H1S – L0101/L2000
SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRIES
Winter 2018
University of Toronto, St. George

Instructor: Prof. Christian Caron

Class Time and Location: Wednesdays Noon-2pm, Location: Con Hall

Tutorial Times and Locations: See ACORN

Contact Information: christian.caron@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Assistants

TBA

Course Description

Using topics such as the mass media, crime and deviance, education, health, or others, this course continues to examine what is Sociology, its relationship with common sense and other disciplines, and the nature and goals of sociological research. Students will also have an opportunity to learn and develop important skills useful to prepare for second year courses and beyond.

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is organized around three key principles, collaborative learning, transparency, and choice. We do not learn alone, we learn in conversation with others. We learn by listening, by asking questions, by explaining. The classroom will be organized in such a way as to foster this collaborative learning environment through an emphasis more on discussion and interactive learning than on simply delivery content. Students will also have opportunities to pursue this collaborative learning approach in more depth through certain assignments. Learning is also a process and you should receive continual feedback on your thoughts and application of the material in assignments in order to know where you are doing well, where you are falling a little short and most importantly have the opportunity to make changes and improve. Finally, you will have different ways to make meaningful choices in how to demonstrate your knowledge and employ your skills developed during the semester.

The course is organized in such a way that it privileges the development and deployment of various skills, namely critical reading, critical writing and effective and inquisitive discussion and their relationship with one another. Writing notes while reading, organizing and synthesizing the material and one's own thoughts, communicating this effectively to colleagues, and asking probing questions are all part of this course's teaching approach. It is essential for you to keep up with the reading and to read actively. Active reading means taking notes as you read, making a list of questions you have as you read, and ideally reading far enough ahead that you have a chance not only to read but to think about what you have read. The expectation is that you will have read each class's readings by our class meeting. The goal is to foster a community of learners who will help each other make their way through the material, topics and issues, in collaboration with one another.

Prerequisite

The prerequisite to take SOC150H is one of SOC100H or SOC102H or SOC103H. Students without the prerequisite will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

Exclusion

SOC101Y1, SOC102H1+SOC103H1, SOC200H1, SOC200Y1, SOCB05H3, SOC221H5, SOC200Y5

Communication

This course will rely heavily on Portal (<https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>) to facilitate this community of learners. It will act as the ‘nervous system’ of this course. On the Portal page you will find this syllabus, assignments, announcements, grades and student-generated content on a series of discussion boards. You should check the Announcement tab on a regular basis as it will be the main mechanism to communicate about course related matters. Treat the Announcement tab as a series of appendices to this syllabus. While the Portal page will start relatively small, it will grow slowly in size over the course of the semester. One element present at launch is a discussion board called Questions about the Course. This discussion board is to be used for all course-related questions of a non-personal nature this semester, question about the course content, activities, assignments, exams, and deadlines. This way all clarifications provided are available to every student in the course. Of course, feel free to contact me by e-mail for any questions of a more personal nature regarding illness, special accommodations, grade review or anything else you might want to discuss with me privately. All e-mails are answered within 48h unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Course Materials

Alan Sears and James Cairns (2015) *A Good Book, In Theory 3rd edition*

Other course reading material can be found on Blackboard. Students are expected to read the readings prior to class and be prepared to engage in class discussions about the week’s reading.

Note that the collective reading list is relatively light given that part of the work for the semester involves collecting and reading your own sociology journal articles.

Evaluation

Peer Contributions (5%) – (throughout semester)

Each student has had a rich life full of personal, educational, and work experiences before walking into this course, and is thus well equipped to contribute something worthwhile to their colleagues’ learning experience. This component is there to encourage each of you to make these contributions, while giving each student plenty of choices in the manner in which they feel most interested or most comfortable doing so. There are several distinctive ways for each of you to contribute to your colleagues’ experience and accrue these 5%: (1) you can be one of the volunteer lecture or tutorial note-takers; (2) you can answer your colleagues’ questions on your TA Corner or the General Questions about the Course forum, where each question answered will be credited 0.5%; (3) you can accrue contributions by posting relevant material, clarifications, or reflections on the course content, such as material and insights from other courses you have taken, from what you see in the media, or from your own first-hand experience. Every posts made on the TA Corner about the assignments, or on the substantive forums that contributes to furthering the understanding of course material for your colleagues, and is no less than 100 words in length, will be credited 0.5% towards this component; (4) you can accrue grades towards this component by completing “special projects” advertised by the TAs in tutorial or online; and (5) you can also earn this 5% by suggesting other types of possible contributions to your TA or the instructor.

Portfolio (20%) – (every week)

Portfolios are a collection of weekly entries based on small assignments and write-ups assigned during tutorials and submitted on Portal. They will mostly be based on the work accomplished towards the on-going assignment, and a handful of times just made up of short reflexive writing. Portfolios are meant to showcase the work-in-progress during the year, and allow students to monitor and reflect on their own learning. Portfolios will be assessed for completion and quality at the end of the semester.

Annotated Bibliography (15%) – (due Feb 23rd)

Detailed instructions to be shared early in the semester

Literature Review and Proposal (25%) – (due April 4th)

Detailed instructions to be shared midway through the semester

Final Exam (35%) – (tbd, April exam period)

A three-hour, cumulative, exam drawing on material from the whole course

Lecture Schedule

Week 1 Jan 10th – Introduction to the course

No reading

Week 2 Jan 17th – Sociological Inquiries: Research Interest to Research Question

Sears and Cairns (2015) – chap 1 p1-24

Week 3 Jan 24th – Sociological Inquiries: Research Interest to Research Question II

Sears and Cairns (2015) chapter 3, p53-84

Week 4 Jan 31st – Introduction to Research Process

Chapter on Research Methods - uploaded to Portal

Hay et al. (2012) chapter 7, p106-126 - uploaded to Portal

Week 5 Feb 7th – Finding Sociological Work

Sears and Cairns (2015) chapter 4, p85-106

Week 6 Feb 14th – Reading Sociological Work

Hay et al. (2012) chapter 3, p35-56 - uploaded to Portal

Feb 21st - Reading week

Week 7 Feb 28th – Asking Sociological Questions

Sears and Cairns (2015) chapter 5, p107-136

Week 8 March 7th – Making Sense of Sociological Work

Sears and Cairns (2015) chapter 6, p137-158

Week 9 March 14th – Making Sense of Sociological Work II

Sears and Cairns (2015) chapter 7, p159-182

Week 10 March 21st – Communicating Research

Reading: tba

Week 11 March 28th – Ethics

Chapter on ethics – uploaded to Portal

Week 12 April 4th – Conclusion/Overview

No readings

Missed Deadlines

Note that late work is not accepted. In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). The original form must be given to me in person, within 5 business days. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is recommended you always advise your registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies).

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to know and adhere to the University's principles of academic integrity. Any act of plagiarism or other unethical behavior will be addressed in accordance with University guidelines. Please see the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" 6 (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) for specific information on academic integrity at the U of T.

Accessibility and Student Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and visit the Accessibility Services Office (<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>) as soon as possible.

Writing Support

Students are urged to seek assistance from the University of Toronto writing centre should they anticipate problems in this area. The writing centre can be visited on the web at: <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/centres.html>