SOC280H1F: SOCIOLOGY OF CULTURE
Professor Vanina Leschziner
Department of Sociology
University of Toronto
Fall 2024

Location and Time: See ACORN, Wednesday, 11:10am-1pm
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Brief Overview of the Course

This course introduces students to the sociology of culture, understood as an area of study that examines (one) social influences on cultural developments, and (2) cultural influences on social processes. While there is a distinct set of objects, practices, and organizations that are explicitly "cultural" (e.g., art, music, food, fashion) most of what we call "culture" happens beyond those domains. Thus, in this course, we will examine culture not as those narrow domains, but as an approach to the study of social processes; that is, as shared meanings, orientations to the world, repertoires of action, or socio-cognitive schemas that shape social life.

The focus of this course is on the role of culture, the widely shared values, beliefs, logics of action, and practices that create patterns in the social world. This course is organized around theoretical approaches rather than substantive areas of research, with the goal of providing students with analytical tools to understand the social world, instead of with sets of examples about how "culture" works here or there. We will consider the role of culture in large societal contexts, as well as in small, delimited settings (e.g., occupations).

The course will begin with an overview of the sociology of culture, with attention paid to what defines this area of study and how it differs from other academic approaches to the study of culture. From the general overview, the course will move to focus on some of the most prominent theories and perspectives in the sociology of culture of the past few decades. By the end of the course, students will have been introduced to several of the major perspectives in the sociology of culture, and should have gained a basic understanding of how culture shapes social processes.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The prerequisite to take this course is SOC100H1. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time they are discovered.

Class Format, Requirements, and Grading
1- in-class test, October 16 …....………………….. 25%
2- take-home test, due November 13 ……..………… 40%
3- in-class test, November 27 ..……………………... 25%
4- in-class quizzes ………………………………….. 10%

Attendance
Attendance is expected. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for obtaining information about any announcements that may have been made in class as well as notes on the material covered from their classmates. Make sure you have classmates who can share this information with you if you are unable to attend.

Deadlines: Late work will not be accepted unless submitted with proper documentation. See below for details.

Documentation from your Physician or College Registrar
If you miss a test or a paper deadline, do not contact the instructor unless you have followed the steps described here.

Missed deadlines and tests: Students who miss a paper deadline or a test will receive a mark of zero for that paper or test unless the reason is a circumstance beyond their control. **Within three days** of missing a paper deadline or test, students must send the instructor a request for consideration. Students must document their request with **one of the following:**
Absence declaration via ACORN:
-U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form
-College Registrar's letter (e.g., in case of personal/family crisis or emergency)
-Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services

Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment <u>for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons</u>, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

Readings
BOOK SELECTIONS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES Book selections and all journal articles will be available on the Quercus course website, under "Course Materials."

Students are solely responsible for obtaining and reading all required materials before class. Give yourself enough time to deal with any problems or delays accessing the readings that may arise so you can be sure to come to class prepared to discuss the materials. Problems accessing readings will not excuse failure to demonstrate having done the required readings.

Assignments
In-class Quizzes
There will be a short quiz during each class meeting, except the first class and when there are in-class tests, so this amounts to 9 quizzes in total. Each quiz will consist of one question based on the day's readings. Each quiz is worth 1%, and you get to choose one quiz -- *at the time of writing it in class* -- that will amount to 2%. There is *no* make-up for quizzes. If you did not come to class, you get 0% on the day's quiz, unless you have official documentation (as noted above).

In-class Test
There will be two in-class closed-book tests on October 16 and November 27.

Make-up Test
Students who miss the test for a valid reason and wish to take a make-up test must give the instructor a written request for special consideration -- no later than 5 days after the date of the test -- which explains why the test was missed, accompanied by proper documentation (see above). A student who misses a test and the subsequent make-up test for a valid reason will not have a third chance to take the test, and the mark assigned for the test will be a zero.

Take-home Test
The take-home test is due on November 13, and it should be no more than 2,000 words (double spaced, 12 point type). Students will receive the questions around Reading Week. An electronic copy of the take-home test is to be submitted to Quercus at the beginning of the class on the due date. The take-home tests is not to be submitted via email or fax, or to the receptionist at the Department of Sociology.

Turnitin
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 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 is described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Assignments not submitted through *Turnitin* will receive a grade of zero (0 %), unless a student instead provides, along with their position paper, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via *Turnitin)* is in place because, strictly speaking, using *Turnitin* is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

Plagiarism: Be careful to avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the "Code of Behavior on Academic Matters"). If you are using somebody else's ideas, do not present them as your own. Give proper references if you are using somebody else's ideas, and use quotation marks if you are quoting. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference -- you are not going to be punished for that. Please also be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred off to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Use of Generative AI Tools
In this course, you may use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT and GitHub Copilot, as learning aids and to help complete assignments. You will not be permitted to use generative AI on the midterm test or final test. While some generative AI tools are currently available for free in Canada, please be warned that these tools have not been vetted by the University of Toronto and might not meet University guidelines or requirements for privacy, intellectual property, security, accessibility, and records retention. Generative AI may produce content which is incorrect or misleading, or inconsistent with the expectations of this course. These tools may even provide citations to sources that don't exist—and submitting work with false citations is an academic offense. These tools may be subject to service interruptions, software modifications, and pricing changes during the semester.

Generative AI is not required to complete any aspect of this course, and you are cautioned to not rely entirely on these tools to complete your coursework. Instead, it is recommended that you treat generative AI as a supplementary tool only for exploration or drafting content. Ultimately, you (and not any AI tool) are responsible for your own learning in this course, and for all the work you submit for credit. It is your responsibility to critically evaluate the content generated, and to regularly assess your own learning independent of generative AI tools. Overreliance on generative AI may give you a false sense of how much you've actually learned, which can lead to poor performance on the assignments, in later courses, or in future work or studies after graduation.

If you choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as you work through the take-home test in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for the test. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used (including the prompt used to generate the content), and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Any content produced by an artificial intelligence tool must be cited appropriately. Many organizations that publish standard citation formats are now providing information on citing generative AI (e.g., MLA: https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/).

Accessibility Needs
The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or

course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: _disability.services@utoronto.ca_ or _http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility_.

Class Schedule

September 4
INTRODUCTION
CLASSICAL FOUNDATIONS: CULTURE, MEANING, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

September 11
WHAT IS "CULTURE"?
Lyn Spillman, "Introduction," chapter 1 in *What is Cultural Sociology?* (Polity Press, 2020), pp. 1-21.

September 18
THE CONTEMPORARY STUDY OF CULTURE
Jason Kaufman, "Endogenous Explanation in the Sociology of Culture," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004): 335-357.

September 25
CULTURE AND MEANING
Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture," chapter 1 in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973), pp. 3-30.

October 2
CULTURE AND MEANING MAKING
Lyn Spillman, "Making Meaning Central," chapter 2 in *What is Cultural Sociology?* (Polity Press, 2020), pp. 22-48.

October 9
CULTURAL REPERTOIRES
Ann Swidler, selections from "Finding Culture," chapter 1, "Repertoires," chapter 2, "Conclusion: How Culture Matters" in *Talk of Love* (The University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 11-23, 24-34, 160-180.

October 16
In-class Test

October 23
CULTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE
Loïc Wacquant, "A Concise Genealogy and Anatomy of Habitus," chapter 24 in *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu*, edited by Thomas Medvetz and Jeffrey J. Sallaz (Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 528-536.

David L. Swartz, "Metaprinciples for Sociological Research in a Bourdieusian Perspective," chapter 1 in *Bourdieu and Historical Analysis*, edited by Philip S. Gorski (Duke University Press, 2013), pp. 20-35.

October 30
Fall Reading Week

November 6
THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF CULTURAL WORK
Howard S. Becker, "Art Worlds and Collective Activity," chapter 1 in *Art Worlds* (University of California Press, [1982] 2008), pp. 1-39.

November 13
SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND CULTURAL TASTE
Michèle Ollivier, Guy Gauthier, Alexis Hiêú Truong, Cultural classifications and social divisions: A symmetrical approach." Poetics 37 (5-6) (2008): 456-473.

Take-home Test due

November 20
THE COGNITIVE DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE
Eviatar Zerubavel, "Introduction: In the Beginning," "Islands of Meaning," chapter 1, and "The Great Divide," chapter 2, in *The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life* (The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 1-32.
November 27
In-class Test

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!