

Sociology 4000-01

Political Sociology

MFW: 1:00-1:50pm
Old Main 302

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Office Hours: Mondays, 10-12:30; Thursdays, 12-2:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course proposes a broad understanding of politics: everything in society has political content and context and, thus, everything falls under the rubric of “political sociology.” The guiding questions of the course, however, are: How does American society work? How do we best understand this society sociologically? and, How can we take what we learn and envision a better future? Or, should we?

The course is organized around Wright and Best’s forthcoming book, *American Society: How it Actually Works* (W.W. Norton) – since the book is not yet available, the authors have generously allowed us to use a free e-manuscript.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

There are three primary course objectives.

- ✓ First, you will learn *factual knowledge* about political sociology and American society.
- ✓ With this factually knowledge, you will, second, enhance your *critical thinking skills*.
- ✓ The poet, Michael Ondaatje once wrote, “I don’t know what I love until I write it out.” The third objective of this course is to provide opportunities for you to articulate your thoughts by “writing them out,” which means developing and improving your *writing and essay skills*.

REQUIRED READING

Main Text:

Eric Olin Wright and Joel Rogers (forthcoming). *American Society: How it Actually Works*. W.W. Norton. <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/ContemporaryAmericanSoicety.htm>

ASSIGNMENTS:

Critical Response Paper 1, The Market	9%	January 15 th
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Critical Response Paper 2, Health Care	9%	January 29 th
Critical Response Paper 3, Fairness & Justice	9%	February 12 th
Critical Response Paper 4, Racial Inequality	9%	February 26 th
Critical Response Paper 5, Terrorism	9%	April 16 th
Term Paper	22.5%	April 21 st
Take Home Final	22.5%	April 29 th
Attendance and Participation	10%	
Total:	100%	

TURNITIN.COM: All written assignments must be **uploaded to turnitin.com** by the due date. Turnitin is an online database and software program that assesses written assignments for plagiarism. More details will be provided in class.

CRITICAL RESPONSE PAPERS are short, 3-4 page essays in which you will reflect critically and sociologically on a given topic. These papers must be submitted on-time, especially since they will prepare you for our group discussions. More details will be presented in class.

If you do not have a paper with you at the beginning of class on the due date, you will not be permitted to engage in the group discussion and your participation points will be compromised greatly.

The **TERM PAPER** is a 10-15 page academic research essay on a topic of your choice. You will need to show how the topic is “political” and it must have a specific sociological argument and intent. Please note that we have no assignments due in March; please take this time to research and write your term paper. More details will be presented in class.

The **TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM** will be a 10 page essay response to the final exam question. The final exam question is meant to test not only your comprehension of the course materials but how well you can integrate the readings, lectures, films, and discussions into a coherent reflective essay.

ATTENDANCE: The only way to get full points is by being in class AND by arriving on time!

PARTICIPATION: You are required to participate in all class and small group discussions to the best of your ability. You will be evaluated according to the usefulness of your contribution as well as on how diplomatically you treat your fellow students (and me). Moreover, if you submit shoddy work, you will not be deemed to be participating to the best of your ability.

NOTE: If you do not complete all course work you will receive 0/10 on your attendance score.
GRADING:

100-93 = A	73-76 = C
90-92 = A-	70-72 = C-
87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
83-86 = B	63-66 = D

80-82 = B- 60-62 = D-
77-79 = C+ 59-below = F

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Assignments: All assignments must be typed; handwritten assignments will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero. All assignments must be uploaded to turnitin.com by the deadline.

Make Up Tests, Late Assignments, and Extensions: Upon receipt of valid documentation, a make up test will be held for those students who were unable to write a test. Late papers are only accepted upon receipt of valid documentation (e.g. illness = medical note from a physician). All documentation must be submitted within one week of the missed exam/assignment, unless this is impossible. Since all due dates of assignments are known well in advance, I expect each student to organize her/his time to complete the assignments when due. If you are experiencing difficulties in the class, please see me in advance of the due date for an extension on an assignment.

Email communication: Please do not send multiple emails within a 24 hour period. I will answer emails as quickly as possible, but in some instances you may have to wait a day or so. When sending an email, please ensure that all your questions or concerns are addressed in a single message.

Office Hours: Any student who needs to speak with me in person must make every reasonable effort to attend my office hours. Office hours are not be used to gather information about missed lectures. If you miss a lecture, please speak with students who were in attendance about course content.

STUDENT DISABILITY NOTICE

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), in Room 205C of the Sharwan Smith Center or phone (435) 865-8022. SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. You are expected to have read and understood the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights, and the intellectual property

policy, for information about procedures and about what constitutes acceptable on-campus behavior.

DISCLAIMER:

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.