Sociology 110 | Organizations and Institutions   UC Berkeley | Summer 2017

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Office Hours, Summer 2017: **by appointment**
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Final exam: **in-class, Thursday, August 10th, 2017**

What will this course be about?

There is a curiosity to organizations in society today: they are utterly ubiquitous, and yet there is little formal theory about how they operate. We generally think about what happens in the world in terms of individual choices—our own choices, the choices of others; good choices, bad choices; selfish choices, selfless choices, etc. Organizations become nothing other than instruments of different types of individual choices.

The mission of sociology in general is to provide an understanding of what happens in the world as being shaped by more than just individual choice. The subfield of organizational sociology aims to show how social structure—and not just individual will—shapes what organizations do, and why. Toward this end, we will examine a number of different ways that organizational sociologists have abstractly conceptualized what "social structure" means, and make these abstractions concrete in case studies.

Readings

All course readings are available in PDF format on the bCourses site.

Grading

Your course grade will be determined by:

- **Two homework assignments**, weighted at 15% each (30% total). One will be due at the beginning of the second week of class. The other will be due at the beginning of the final week of class. Both are designed to lead in to the lecture material that follows them.

- **A take-home midterm exam**, weighted at 40% of the course grade. It will be short-essay style in nature (further details to be given later). The midterm will be distributed <u>on bCourses</u> on Thursday, July 20th at 12:00 PM noon. It will be due <u>on bCourses</u> on Friday, July 28th, at 12:00 PM noon.

- An **in-class final exam**, weighted at 30% of the course grade, administered on the final day of instruction: Thursday, August 10th, 2017. The final exam will be cumulative; it will cover material from the entire summer session. The exam will be strictly multiple-choice.

The course grading scale is as follows:

A+ 97+	A 93-96	A- 90-92

B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
		F	0-59		

When it comes time to compute overall course grades, I will round to the nearest whole number using standard rounding conventions. It doesn't really matter what the letter grade on the individual assignments are.

There are no other discretionary considerations that will factor into your grade. Furthermore, I do not offer extra credit beyond that which I may build in to the midterm and final exams.

There are no surprises in how I calculate course grades. The GRADES section on bCourses incorporates the weightings above and will accurately keep you apprised of your course progress. During the semester, with a little arithmetic, you can figure out how you need to do on subsequent exams to earn a particular grade.

Academic Honesty, Classroom Conduct

Violations of academic honesty have unfortunately been on the rise at UC Berkeley over the past few years, prompting among other things the posting of plaques in general classrooms around campus re-emphasizing the code of academic conduct. The general rule of thumb behind the code is: act in such a way that no one could possibly question your conduct.

Plagiarism—copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own—has been the central problem. Copying off either another student or off the readings (whether the readings are on or outside of the syllabus) both constitute plagiarism. We will use TurnItIn software to detect any instances of plagiarism on submitted assignments. All instances of plagiarism will be punished by an immediate **-0-** on the *entire* assignment in question, plus a report to the Office of Academic Affairs at my discretion.

Forming studying groups on your own is highly encouraged, especially since there are no discussion sections to accompany this course. If these groups are used to struggle through ideas or debate topics (both are also good uses of class time, by the way!), then the effort expended can be very rewarding. However, if groups are used simply to memorize a classmate's notes by rote, to subsequently recite on exams, **this is effectively another form of plagiarism** as far as I am concerned. I use this specific example because it recently popped up in one of my courses.

Study group meetings should be suspended while a take-home exam is being taken. They can begin again after the exam due date has been reached.

Use of laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. in class. I use my laptop for virtually everything and do not expect students not to utilize the various digital technologies we have at our disposal today. However, if you are texting, Twittering, watching Netflix, or some other such thing in class, you are likely distracting others and I will ask you to leave.

Reading/Exam Schedule

All readings for this course are available on bCourses in the READINGS folder of the FILES section.

Readings associated with a date are to be completed <u>prior</u> to the class meeting on that day. What follows may best be considered a preliminary plan. It may become necessary to adjust the reading schedule as the semester unfolds. If this happens, I will make the change(s) on bCourses—check the SYLLABUS section online to see the most up-to-date schedule. I will <u>not</u> change this PDF file.

Jul	3	Mon	**Introduction**
	4	Tue	<mark>##### INDEPENDENCE DAY: NO CLASS #####</mark>
	5	Wed	**Population ecology**

Reading: G. Carroll & A. Swaminathan, "Why the Microbrewery Movement?" but only:

- p. 715 to p. 735 (stop at "Data and Methods")
- p. 749 (starting with "Discussion") to p. 752 (stop at "Size and Impact")

	6	Thu	(cont'd; no new readings)

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	10	Mon	**Relational perspective**

Reading: J. Pfeffer & G. Salancik, "The Social Control of Organizations", ch 3 of *The External Control of Organizations*

<mark>**Homework #1 due Monday, July 10th, 10:00 AM, <u>on</u> <u>bCourses</u>**</mark>

	11	Tue	(cont'd; no new readings)
	12	Wed	**Institutionalist perspective**

Reading: P. DiMaggio & W. Powell, "The Iron Cage Revisited" but only:

- p. 147 through p. 154 (stop at "Predictors of Isomorphic Change")
- p. 156 (starting with "Implications for Social Theory") to the end

	13	Thu	(cont'd; no new readings)

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	17	Mon	**Emergence of the fast food industry**

Reading: E. Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* ch 1, 2

	18	Tue	**Expansion of the fast food industry**

Reading: E. Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* ch 4

	19	Wed	**Re-organization of American agriculture**

Reading: E. Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* ch 5, 6

	20	Thu	**Who should be the CEO of the American corporation?**

Reading: N. Fligstein, "The Intraorganizational Power Struggle", pp. 44-50 + first four lines of p. 51

==Take-home Midterm distributed on bCourses Thursday, July 20th, 2017==

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Jul	24	Mon	**What is "shareholder value" and where did it come from?**
			Reading: K. Ho, *Liquidated* ch 3
	25	Tue	(cont'd; no new readings)
	26	Wed	(cont'd; no new readings)
	27	Thu	**Organizations & Inequality: Does college reproduce inequality?**
			Reading: E. Armstrong & L. Hamilton, *Paying for the Party* intro + ch 2
	28	Fri	==Take-Home Midterm due on bCourses Friday, July 28th, 2017 12:00 PM==

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	31	Mon	**Organizations & Inequality: Divergent outcomes in college**
			Reading: E. Armstrong & L. Hamilton, *Paying for the Party* ch 5, 6
Aug	1	Tue	**Organizations & Inequality: Employers and the labor market**
			Reading: L. Rivera, *Pedigree* ch 1-3
	2	Wed	**Why did FEMA fail so badly during Hurricane Katrina?**
			Reading: C. Cooper & R. Block, *Disaster* ch 4
	3	Thu	**What is the DHS's mission and what is it NOT?**
			Reading: C. Cooper & R. Block, *Disaster* ch 6

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	7	Mon	**Social Networks I: Organizations are embedded within networks …**
			Reading: R. Burt, "Structural Holes and Good Ideas"
			==Homework #2 due Monday, August 7th, 10:00 AM, on bCourses==
	8	Tue	**Social Networks II: … but networks are embedded within organizations**
			Reading: M. Small, *Unanticipated Gains* ch 1, 2
	9	Wed	**"RRR Day"**
			We will use this day for course evaluations and material review.
	10	Thu	==FINAL EXAM in-class==