

Sociology 110 | Organizations and Institutions

UC Berkeley | Fall 2016

Instructor: **Linus Huang**Office Hours, Fall 2016: **Mondays 1:30-3:30, Barrows Hall, Room 487**E-mail: **lbhuang@berkeley.edu**Final exam: **Thursday, December 15th, 2016 7:00-10:00 PM**Graduate Student Readers: *TBD***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 (2) take-home midterm exams**, weighted at 40% of the course grade each (80% between the two of them). They will be distributed on Monday, September 26th and Friday, November 4th, respectively, and will be due on Monday, October 3rd and Monday, November 14th, respectively. Each will be short-essay style in nature.
- An **in-class final exam** administered during the University’s official timeslot for our course. This will be Thursday, December 15th, 2016, from 7:00 PM-10:00 PM. The final exam will be a **cumulative** and will be of **multiple-choice** format. It will be worth 20% of your course grade.

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 course grades, I will round to the nearest whole number. It doesn't really matter what your letter grades on the individual exams 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

Readings associated with a date are to be completed prior 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 not change this PDF file.

Aug	24	Wed	Introduction: the “why” and “what” of a sociology of organizations No readings.
	26	Fri	(Introduction, cont’d) No readings.

	29	Mon	(Introduction, cont’d) No readings.
	31	Wed	(Introduction, cont’d) No readings.
Sep	2	Fri	The population ecology perspective: environmental selection

	5	Mon	◀◀◀ LABOR DAY: NO CLASS ▶▶▶
	7	Wed	The population ecology perspective: resource partitioning <i>Reading:</i> Glenn Carroll & Anand Swaminathan, “Why the Microbrewery Movement?” but only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • p. 715 to p. 735 (stop at “Data and Methods”) • p. 749 (starting with “Discussion”) to p. 752 (stop at “Size and Impact”)
	9	Fri	(Population ecology, cont’d) No new readings.

	12	Mon	The relational perspective <i>Reading:</i> Jeffrey Pfeffer & Gerald Salancik, “The Social Control of Organizations”
	14	Wed	(Relational perspective, cont’d) No new readings.

Sep	16	Fri	(Relational perspective, cont'd) No new readings.
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	19	Mon	The institutionalist perspective <i>Reading:</i> Paul DiMaggio & Walter Powell, “The Iron Cage Revisited” but only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • p. 147 through p. 154 (stop at “Predictors of Isomorphic Change”) • p. 156 (starting with “Implications for Social Theory”) to end
	21	Wed	(Institutionalist perspective, cont'd) No new readings.
	23	Fri	(Institutionalist perspective, cont'd) No new readings.
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	26	Mon	(Institutionalist perspective, cont'd) No new readings.
Midterm #1 Distributed on bCourses Monday, September 26th			
	28	Wed	The emergence of the fast food industry in the U.S. <i>Reading:</i> Eric Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 1, 2
	30	Fri	(Emergence of fast food industry, cont'd) No new readings.
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Oct	3	Mon	Expansion of the fast food industry <i>Reading:</i> Eric Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 4
Midterm #1 Due on bCourses Monday, October 3rd			
	5	Wed	(Expansion of fast food industry, cont'd) No new readings.
	7	Fri	The reorganization of American agriculture <i>Reading:</i> Eric Schlosser, <i>Fast Food Nation</i> ch 5, 6
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	10	Mon	(Reorganization of American agriculture, cont'd) No new readings.

Oct	12	Wed	Who gets power inside organizations? <i>Reading:</i> Neil Fligstein, “The Intraorganizational Power Struggle” but only: • pp. 44-50 + the first four lines of p. 51
	14	Fri	(Who gets power, cont’d)
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	17	Mon	What is <u>shareholder value</u> and where did it come from? <i>Reading:</i> Karen Ho, <i>Liquidated</i> ch. 3
	19	Wed	(Shareholder value, cont’d) No new readings.
	21	Fri	(Shareholder value, cont’d) No new readings.
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	24	Mon	(Shareholder value, cont’d) No new readings.
	26	Wed	What role has financialization had on income inequality? <i>Reading:</i> Ken-Hou Lin & Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, “Financialization and U.S. Income Inequality, 1970-2008” but only pp. 1284-1295.
	28	Fri	(Financialization & income inequality, cont’d) No new readings.
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	31	Mon	(Financialization & income inequality, cont’d) No new readings.
Nov	2	Wed	Financialization @ the University of California <i>Reading:</i> Charlie Eaton et al, “Swapping Our Future: How Students and Taxpayers are Funding Risky UC Borrowing and Wall Street Profits”
	4	Fri	(Financialization @ UC, cont’d) No new readings.
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Midterm #2 Distributed on bCourses Friday, November 4th			
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Nov	7	Mon	Organizations & Inequality: College and the “Party” pathway <i>Reading:</i> Elizabeth Armstrong & Laura Hamilton, <i>Paying for the Party</i> intro + ch. 2

Nov 9 Wed **Organizations & Inequality: College and the “Mobility” pathway**
Reading: Elizabeth Armstrong & Laura Hamilton, *Paying for the Party* ch 5, 6

11 Fri ◀◀◀ **VETERAN’S DAY: NO CLASS** ▶▶▶

14 Mon (Organizations & Inequality: College, cont’d)
 No new readings.

Midterm #2 Due on bCourses Monday, November 14th

16 Wed **Organizations & Inequality: Employers and the labor market**
Reading: Lauren Rivera, *Pedigree* ch. 1-3

18 Fri (Organizations & Inequality: Employers and the labor market, cont’d)
 No new readings.

21 Mon **FEMA, the DHS & Hurricane Katrina: the State as a set of organizations**
Reading: Chris Cooper & Robert Block, *Disaster* ch. 4

23 Wed ◀◀◀ **NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY: NO CLASS** ▶▶▶

25 Fri ◀◀◀ **THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS** ▶▶▶

28 Mon (The State as a set of organizations, cont’d)
 No new readings.

30 Wed **FEMA, the DHS & Hurricane Katrina: What is the Department of Homeland Security’s mission and what is it not?**
Reading: C. Cooper & R. Block, *Disaster* ch. 6

Dec 2 Fri (What is the Department of Homeland Security’s mission and what is it not?, cont’d)
 No new readings.

5 Mon **READING,**

7 Wed **RECITATION, and**

9 Fri **REVIEW**

15 Thu **Final Exam 7:00 PM-10:00 PM**