

**Sociology R1B**  
**Sociological Reading and Composition: Workers of the World**

Instructor: Yueran Zhang [yueranzhang@berkeley.edu](mailto:yueranzhang@berkeley.edu)

(Instructor of Record: Laura J. Enriquez, Ph.D.)

Semester: Fall 2022

Class Time: Thursdays 2-4 pm

Class Location: 174 Social Sciences Building

Office Hours and Location: Mondays 11-1pm, Free Speech Movement Café (outside terrace)

Sign up here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/kmhho>

*If you'd like to meet with me but can't make the OH time, email me to schedule an appointment.*

Sociology R1B fulfills the second half of the Reading and Composition requirement. It has three main goals: 1) to assist you in developing a clear, persuasive, and personal prose style in English; 2) to refine and build upon the close reading techniques you practiced in R1A; and 3) to equip you with the skills necessary for writing a research paper—a standard requirement of many upper-division (100-level) courses.

Other goals of the course include: an increased ability to think critically, analyze and comprehend texts, construct arguments supported by evidence and reasoning, write clearly, and enjoy scholarly activity. Additionally, this course encourages students to cultivate a personal writing practice as a tool for analytical thinking and reading critically. Writing is more than a means to communicate; it provides a special tool to nurture analytical and creative thinking. These capacities facilitate success in scholarship, even in fields that put less emphasis on writing.

Designed to significantly improve composition skills, Sociology R1B trains you in the analysis, comprehension, structure, mechanics, and creativity of formal academic writing. We apply these skills in our reading of course material and outside texts. Not all of the readings exemplify excellent writing styles; rather they provide examples of various styles, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

This course features two major writing assignments, each of which corresponds to a form of writing most often encountered in the discipline of sociology. The first will ask you to carefully and critically analyze multiple scholarly works you have read in class. The second will be a research paper in which you convey the results of your own research efforts. These assignments emphasize advanced techniques of style, creativity, synthesis of multiple sources, and organization of relatively complex claims and analysis. This course also highlights the importance of revising in the writing process. Since our readings cover social science, it also introduces concepts useful for reading texts in these fields.

Thematically, this course revolves around one central question: what does it mean to be a worker in different parts of the world and at different historical moments? We will take a close look at workers' everyday experiences with their workplaces and surrounding communities, and ask how these experiences are shaped by broader contexts of political economy and various

structures of exploitation and oppression around the world. We will also examine workers' efforts to collectively change the world as they fight for economic gains, political power, equity and dignity. Through a comparative lens, the material invites us to consider the points of convergence and divergence among the experiences of workers in different societies, and the extent to which workers around the world could build solidarity with each other. The readings are chosen and arranged in such a way as to encourage students to both synthesize complex, abstract theories concerning the issues above, and creatively apply them to other contexts while evaluating both theory and evidence.

### **Coursework and Grading**

*A grade of at least "C-" is required to pass this course.*

Attendance and participation: 15%

Short reading responses: 20%

Essay 1: 5%

Essay 2: 20%

Final research paper: 40%

#### **NOTE:**

- *All of the assignments should be submitted to bCourses, NOT via email.*
- *As a general rule, late submissions are not accepted. Please do not ask for an exception or extension unless you are able to provide adequate supporting evidence of circumstances that warrant it (e.g. DSP, medical issues, personal or family emergency). Although you may have a legitimate reason for making such a request, not all of your classmates — even those with more serious situations — necessarily feel entitled enough or comfortable asking.*
- *As a general rule, no grade disputes will be entertained and no assignments will be regraded.*
- *Grades for each assignment, as well as the final grades, are not curved. Nor do I assign quotas for how many students could receive "A"s, etc. So bear in mind that you are not competing with your classmates in this course.*

Attendance and participation (15%): Students are required to attend and actively participate in each class. Missing more than two classes may affect your grade. If you must for any reason miss a class, please let me know in advance.

You are expected to have completed each week's required reading as preparation for class attendance and participation. Always read analytically and take notes as you go. Come to class with questions and observations about what you found interesting, significant, puzzling, etc. Bringing up specific passages is encouraged. If you do not read carefully and keep up, you might feel frustrated or disappointed with the course.

Whereas this course – as all seminar courses do – values active in-class oral participation, I also recognize that participation takes many forms and am willing to create opportunities for alternative forms of participation. Participation will be evaluated on both quality and quantity.

Throughout the semester I will sporadically and individually email you to communicate about your participation, so that you know what to keep up and what to improve on.

*NOTE: students who miss class during the first two weeks may be dropped.*

Short reading responses (20%): You are required to choose **four** weeks from Weeks 4-7 and 10-12 (i.e. seven options). In each of the chosen weeks, you write a short response, **no longer than 2 double-spaced pages**, on the week's required reading(s). The responses should be analytical – addressing such questions as what you think the authors' main arguments are, how well the authors have made their arguments, what you think the works' main strengths and weaknesses are, etc. – not mere summaries of the readings or simple statements of personal opinions. They are due **2 pm Tuesdays** of the chosen weeks. Since one of the purposes of these assignments is to promote quality in-class discussions on the readings, they must be submitted on time. The responses are graded on a check-plus/check/check-minus scale. If you choose to submit responses in more than four weeks, the four highest grades are counted.

Essay 1 (5%): The first essay of the course (**about 3 double-spaced pages in length**) is due in Week Three. A prompt will be handed out in class in Week Two. **This essay will not be graded on quality; you will receive a full mark as long as you hand it in.** The purpose of this essay is to give me a sense of the strengths and weaknesses of your writing skills, so that I could design my teaching accordingly.

Essay 2 (20%): The second essay of the course (**about 6 double-spaced pages in length**) is due in Week Nine. Instructions will be given at the appropriate time. In the week before the essay is due (i.e. Week Eight), you will be asked to submit a rough draft, go through an in-class peer review workshop, and then submit a revision plan. Since revising is one of the core writing skills this course emphasizes, one of the main grading criteria will be how seriously you take the revision process. Letter grades will be assigned on this essay.

Final research paper (40%): There is no final exam for the course. Instead, you will complete a final paper (**about 10 double-spaced pages in length**) that incorporates results of your own research. The second half of the course will guide you through the research process, with a number of in-between assignments: a brief research proposal, a research log with an annotated bibliography, a rough draft of the paper and an in-class peer review workshop. Letter grades will be assigned, based on **both** the quality of the final paper **and** the way you handle the entire research process.

## **Course Policies**

Contact info and office hours: If you need to contact me, email me directly at [yueranzhang@berkeley.edu](mailto:yueranzhang@berkeley.edu). Do not try to contact me through bCourses or reply to bCourses announcements. Expect a reply from me to your email within 48 hours (holidays or weekends not included).

Office hours are important and I encourage you to make use of them. Please email if you would like to meet but cannot make that time.

Scheduling conflicts: Please notify me by the second week of the semester about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts (such as religious observances, job or internship interviews, or athletic activities). I will try my best to help you make accommodations, but I cannot promise them in all cases. In the event there is no mutually workable solution, you may be dropped from the class.

Respectful discussion: Our classroom should be a place where everyone feels comfortable speaking up. It is of utmost importance that we respect each other. We use each other's preferred names and pronouns during discussions, listen to others' contributions carefully, refrain from dominating the discussions, and discuss speakers' statements and ideas without criticizing the speakers themselves.

Laptops and other electronic devices: Laptops and other electronic devices are allowed in class, as long as they are not distracting. If a student's use of electronic devices becomes a source of distraction to them or other students, I will prohibit that student from using electronic devices.

Food and drink: Food is not allowed in class. Drinking is acceptable, as long as it does not interfere with your active participation in class, or bother other students.

Course material: I encourage you to take notes from class and to share them among yourselves. However, you may not post notes or the materials I provide on any website, or disseminate them in any way without my prior, written permission. The same holds true for all course materials.

Formatting: All work must be formatted correctly, which includes the following:

- single space the header at the top-left of your first page, and include only the following information: name, course, and assignment
- center your title, in bold, above your first paragraph
- no title page
- single space block quotations
- 1" margins on all sides
- indent paragraphs (no extra spacing between paragraphs)
- no justification for right-side margins
- double space the main text (i.e. except the header, block quotations, and the works cited page)
- insert page numbers (bottom center)
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- all other formatting guidelines that we cover in class

Refer to The Purdue Owl Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>) and chapter six of Berkeley's Writing Guide for more formatting information. Note that we use a modified version of MLA formatting, so some of what you find there will be different, in which case you should follow the guidelines specific to our course.

Proofreading: All assignments should be carefully checked for errors in spelling and grammar before submission.

Academic integrity: Plagiarism, broadly put, is the presentation of another's words and/or ideas as one's own. It is grounds not only for automatic failure, but also for administrative disciplinary action. This also applies for other forms of academic dishonesty (a.k.a. cheating). Please see the Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct, Section III B, Academic Violations, and Section IV, Disciplinary Procedures. If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment, be sure to ask me. You should also keep in mind that as a member of the campus community you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic work and be evaluated on your own merits. The consequences of academic misconduct — including a formal discipline record and possible loss of future opportunities — are not worth the risk.

Disability accommodations: UC Berkeley is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me.

Students who need academic accommodations should contact the Disability Students Program, 260 Cesar Chavez Center, to request an official accommodation. The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for authorizing disability-related academic accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. If you have been issued a letter of accommodation from DSP, please see me or contact me as soon as possible to work out the necessary arrangements. Note that DSP accommodations are not retroactive.

If you would need any assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building, the DSP recommends that you make a plan for this in advance. (Contact the DSP access specialist at 510-643-6456.)

## **Resources**

Student Learning Center (SLC): The SLC provides peer writing tutors: <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Wellness resources: Berkeley offers several types of counseling services. You can call 642-9494 to talk to someone for help or to make an appointment. For more information, see: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling/lets-talk>

### Recommended supplementary readings (on writing):

Becker, Howard & Pamela Richards. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, William A., et. al. 2006. *Sociology Student Writer's Manual, Fifth Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Metzger, Deena. 1992. *Writing for Your Life: a Guide and Companion to the Inner Worlds*. UK: HarperCollins.

Zinsser, William. 2006. *On Writing Well: the Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. New York: HarperCollins.

## **Course Schedule**

- “\*” indicates readings from which students could choose to write short responses on.
- All of our reading material can be found on bCourses.
- Please *ONLY* use the versions posted on bCourses for class reading, so that we can refer to the same sets of page numbers during in-class discussion.
- This schedule is subject to revision as we proceed through the semester. Students will be notified as early as possible if there is any change in the schedule.

## **MODULE A**

*Building upon what you have learned in RIA, this module covers the basics of what it takes to read challenging texts and write complex analytical papers.*

### Week One, August 25

#### **Introduction to the course**

*In-class reading activity:*

Chibber, Vivek. 2016. “Why the Working Class?” *Jacobin*. Available at <https://jacobin.com/2016/03/working-class-capitalism-socialists-strike-power>

### Week Two, September 1

#### **Reading a challenging text**

*Required reading:*

Marx, Karl. 1848. *The Communist Manifesto*. **Read: Preface; Part I: “Bourgeois and Proletarians”; and Part II: “Proletarians and Communists”.**

### Week Three, September 8

#### **Writing as a process of thinking**

- Essay One due 2 pm, Tuesday September 6

*No required readings for this week.*

## **MODULE B**

*In this module, you will sharpen your skills of analytical and critical reading through in-depth engagement with four works of exemplary sociological research. In each class session, we will also have a “writing focus” discussion that covers a key aspect of writing. In the end, you will write an essay to connect, compare and analyze the four works we have read.*

### Week Four, September 15

#### **Writing focus: composing sentences**

*Required reading:*

\*Ribas, Vanesa. 2015. *On the Line: Slaughterhouse Lives and the Making of the New South*. Berkeley: University of California Press. **Read: “Introduction”, Chapter 4, and “Conclusion”.**

### Week Five, September 22

#### **Writing focus: developing an argument**

*Required reading:*

\* Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2021. *Unfree: Migrant Domestic Work in Arab States*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. **Read: “Introduction”, Chapter 4, and “Conclusion”.**

Week Six, September 29

**Writing focus: structuring a paper**

*Required reading:*

\* Agarwala, Rina. 2013. *Informal Labor, Formal Politics, and Dignified Discontent in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **Read: Chapters 1 and 2, and “Conclusion”.**

Week Seven, October 6

**Writing focus: revising**

*Required reading:*

\* Koo, Hagen. 2001. *Korean Workers: The Culture and Politics of Class Formation*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. **Read: Chapters 1, 4, 5 and 6.**

Week Eight, October 13

**Peer review workshop**

- Rough drafts of Essay Two due 2 pm, Tuesday October 11

*No required readings for this week. This class session will be a peer review workshop for your Essay Two drafts.*

## **MODULE C**

*A major objective of RIB is to equip students with important skills to incorporate research into writing. This module will introduce you to sociological research and guide you through a process in which you conduct a research project and write a research paper. Along the way, we will also continue our in-depth engagement with sociological texts, paying particular attention to their research methods and logics of inquiry.*

Week Nine, October 20

**Workshop: what it means to do sociological research**

- Revision plans for Essay Two due 11:59 pm, Sunday October 16
- Final drafts of Essay Two due 2 pm, Thursday October 20

*No required readings for this week.*

Week Ten, October 27

**Research focus: locating sources**

- Brief research proposals due 2 pm, Tuesday October 25

*Required reading:*

\* Seidman, Gay W. 1994. *Manufacturing Militance: Workers’ Movements in Brazil and South Africa, 1970-1985*. Berkeley: University of California Press. **Read: “Introduction”, Chapters 1 and 4, and “Conclusion”.**

Week Eleven, November 3

**Research focus: evaluating and using sources**

*Required readings:*

- \*Silver, Beverly. 2003. *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*. New York: Cambridge University Press. **Read: pp.124-149.**
- \*Lee, Cheol-Sung. 2007. "Labor Unions and Good Governance: A Cross-National, Comparative Analysis." *American Sociological Review* 72(4): 585-609.

Week Twelve, November 10

**Research focus: annotated bibliography**

*Required readings:*

- \*Comisso, Ellen T. 1981. "The Logic of Worker (Non)Participation in Yugoslav Self-Management." *The Review of Radical Political Economics* 13(2): 11-22.
- \*Sobering, Katherine. 2019. "The Relational Production of Workplace Equality: the Case of Worker-Recuperated Businesses in Argentina." *Qualitative Sociology* 42(4): 543-565.

Week Thirteen, November 17

**Advanced research workshop**

- Research logs, with annotated bibliographies, due 2 pm, Tuesday November 15

*No required readings for this week.*

Week Fourteen, November 24

**No class**

Week Fifteen, December 1

**Peer review workshop**

- Rough drafts of final research papers due 2 pm, Tuesday November 29

*No required readings for this week. This class session will be a peer review workshop for your final research paper drafts.*

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE 11:59 PM, TUESDAY DECEMBER 13**

***Land Acknowledgement***

*We recognize that Berkeley sits on the territory of xučyun (Huichin [Hoo-Choon]), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo) speaking Ohlone people, the successors of the historic and sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to the Muwekma (Muh-wek-muh) Ohlone Tribe and other familial descendants of the Verona Band.*

*We recognize that every member of the Berkeley community has benefitted, and continues to benefit, from the use and occupation of this land since the institution's founding in 1868. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold the University of California, Berkeley more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.*