

Ryerson University – Sociology

SOC 490: Sociological Practice

Friday 9AM – Noon, Int’l Living & Learning Centre 102 (133 Mutual St.)

Instructor: Prof. Paul S. Moore
E-mail: psmoore@ryerson.ca
Office: Sociology Department – Jorgenson JOR 306
Phone: 416 979 5000 ext. 2604
Office Hours: Fridays 1 – 2 PM, or by appointment

I will normally reply to E-mail or phone messages within 48 hours. E-mail is best used as business communications. Stick to administrative details or “course business” for e-mail. To discuss ideas and the substance of lectures, assignments, or activities, it is best to meet with me in person during office hours or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide students with the opportunity to develop a structured program of study using sociological tools and concepts to investigate contemporary issues. Students will produce a project exploring an issue that is linked to their own sociological learning and their vision for the future.

TEXTBOOK

Howard Becker. 2007. *Telling About Society*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Other Readings most weeks.

REQUIRED WORK AND GRADING STRUCTURE:

Component	Format	Value	Due Dates
Group Research	Reports of Individual Research done for group tasks	5% x 2 = 10%	Week 3 & 4
Reading Reflections	Any 5 out of 8 reviews of readings	3% x 5 = 15%	Weeks 2 to 9
Proposal Statement	Draft and Revision of Proposal Statement of future plan	10% x 2 = 20%	Draft: Week 7 Revised: Week 12
Presentation & Response	Presentation of Proposal Statements, and a formal response to another’s	10% x 2 = 20%	Weeks 8 to 11
Research Essay	12-14 page written analysis of readings in relation to future plan	35%	Friday, Dec 5, strictly by 5PM

Report of Research for Group5% x 2 = 10%

In Weeks 2, 3, and 4, students will be grouped along similar interests. Each student, and each group as a collective, will have questions to begin answering, projects to begin researching, basic requirements, schedules, deadlines to find out. In Week 2, determine these individual questions to research over the week. You will submit a two-page research summary through Blackboard before class on Week 3, when you will re-evaluate or ask further questions. Submit a second research summary through Blackboard before class on Week 4.

Any 5 out of 8 Reading Reflections3% x 5 = 15%

From Weeks 2 to Week 9, you must submit a total of five brief, two-page reflections on that week’s readings. Select a key paragraph, paraphrase it into your own words, and discuss why this paragraph is central to understanding the meaning and significance of the readings for you.

Proposal Statement, Draft and Revision10% x 2 = 20%

For your personal project, submit a two-page proposal statement on Blackboard before class on Week 7. After detailed response and feedback, you will re-write it and re-submit on Blackboard before class on Week 12.

Presentation of Proposal Statement & Response to Another Student’s 20%

Within your small group of students with similar interests, present a workshop version of your proposal statement. Do not simply read it – state your intentions, key points, struggles, and pride in aspects of it. Another student will lead a follow-up discussion, and will submit to Blackboard before class a formal two-page response, suggesting points of clarity and confusion. Everyone in the group will have the opportunity to read your draft statement in advance.

Research Essay 35%

Based primarily on the course readings, but in relation to your personal project, compose a 12-14 page research essay reflecting on “Sociology as a Vocation,” a topic that can range from the personal to the political, from the everyday to a global scale.

Schedule of Readings

Attendance each Friday is mandatory. If you must be absent please excuse yourself in advance. The first half each week will be a lecture and discussion of the readings. The second half will involve either professionally-oriented group discussions or a professional guest.

Week 1 – Sep 5: Introductions, Getting Started

Week 2 – Sep 12:

- Becker, Chapters 1-2;
- Georg Simmel, “How is Society Possible?” and “The Problem of Sociology” (both 1908) from *On Individuality and Social Forms* (1972).

Week 3 – Sep 19:

- Becker, Chapter 3;
- Charles Lemert, “Personal Courage and Practical Sociologies,” from *Social Things* (2005).

Week 4 – Sep 26:

- Becker, Chapters 4-5,
- Jane Addams, Excerpt from *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1912).

Week 5 – Oct 3:

- Becker, Chapter 6;
- * - Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” *From Max Weber* (1918).

Week 6 – Oct 10:

- Becker, Chapter 7;
- * - Saskia Sassen, “Digging in the Shadow of Master Categories,” from *Sociologists in a Global Age* (2007).

Week 7 – Oct 17:

- Becker, Chapter 8;
- * - Pierre Bourdieu, Excerpt from *Sketch for a Self-Analysis* (2008).

Week 8 – Oct 24:

- Becker, Chapters 9-10;
- * - Dorothy E. Smith, “Women’s Experience as Radical Critique of Sociology” from *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge* (1990).

Week 9 – Oct 31

- Becker, Chapters 11-12;
- * - Zygmunt Bauman, “Postscript: Bauman on Bauman,” from *The Sociology of Bauman* (2008).

Week 10 – Nov 7 – Class is cancelled. To be rescheduled for the end of November.

Week 11 – Nov 14:

- Becker, Chapters 13-14;
- John Kramer, “Images of Sociology and Sociologists in Fiction,” *Contemporary Sociology* 8, no. 3 (1979): 356-362.

Week 12 – Nov 21:

- Becker, Chapters 15-16

* The order of the additional reading these weeks may change once guests are confirmed.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As in all courses, you are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct. Read about the Code, issues around proper citation, cheating, and plagiarism, and consider your student rights and responsibilities at the following Ryerson website: www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity

ACCESS CENTRE

Students requiring assistance and accommodations for their circumstances should introduce themselves to me *immediately* to discuss a plan for the course.