

Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:15 pm (Blair Hall 3103)

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, & Criminology, Eastern Illinois University

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All sociology majors are required to successfully complete this capstone course. This course is designed to serve as your culmination to the sociology major and allow you to exercise your capacity to integrate all you have learned within the discipline.

The content of the course serves several purposes and will be centered on current issues in today's modern world. The current issues within the course will be focused on the career interests of the enrolled student and their research projects. Moreover, these issues will be developed and analyzed according to each student's *sociological imagination*. As a capstone seminar, together, we will examine these various issues in the present-day United States and abroad, especially with their sociological relevance, and use of social theory, research methods and statistics.

The first portion of the course is an exploration in the **sociology of knowledge**, the *philosophical* part of sociology where we will ask questions such as:

- What are social facts?
- What is objectivity?
- What is truth?
- Why is history important to sociology?
- How do we know what we know?

The remainder of the course applies these questions in two ways: analyzing a book-length contemporary sociological study, and through individualized student research projects.

As the capstone course, you begin having your own stock of theoretical, methodological, and statistical knowledge and skills: you would not be in this class had you not completed these core sociology courses. Therefore, *this class aims to draw out what you have previously learned and apply it in this culminating experience*.

Course Description & Objectives:

This course is designed to provide each student with the opportunity to show mastery of each departmental learning objective as it relates to a current social issue. Students should:

1. Demonstrate sociological consciousness/imagination, recognizing the link between individual experiences/issues and larger social forces,
2. Demonstrate a sociological perspective promoting multicultural understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of diversity,
3. Demonstrate the ability to think critically,
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories and application,
5. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of skills necessary for conducting sociological research, and
6. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of skills necessary for statistical applications and literacy.

Required Text:

Babbie, Earl. 2015. *Observing Ourselves: Essays in Social Research*. 2nd ed. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc. & additional readings available in [D2L Brightspace](#).

Course Guidelines:

1. **Collegiality** – We are a diverse group of people who come from different geographic regions, with different life experiences, from different family environments, with different goals and

aspirations, and important views and perspectives. This is a uniquely wonderful characteristic of college. Therefore, listen thoughtfully to others, carefully consider how you expect to be treated, and respect the viewpoints expressed by others in a courteous and polite manner. We are never going to be asked to agree with what others always say, but if you disagree with what someone has said, you are to express your disagreement in a civil, respectful, & polite manner. We will have a classroom environment that is a safe and friendly place to exchange ideas and become better critical thinkers.

2. **Attendance/Participation** – I record attendance daily so plan to attend every class and participate fully. Also, arrive to class on time and avoid walking into class late.

Commit fully to this class for the best experience and positive performance. For every one hour you spend in a classroom, you are to devote 2 hours outside of the classroom to the course. Since you spend 2 ½ hours per week in our classroom, you need to spend 5 hours outside of the classroom per week working on course material. That's right... 7.5 hours in research methods per week. Now, if you are signed up for 5 classes, then you will devote 37.5 hours per week focused on your classes. 1/3 of that is actually sitting in the classroom. When you do this, you will succeed.

3. **Readings** – Read what is assigned before lecture, then the lecture advance your understanding of the course material. We use class time to discuss & build on course concepts, ideas and readings.
4. **Technology** – You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, and cell phones as long as it is used in a positive way and contributes to your learning of relevant course content. There will even be some class sessions where we will use technology together. Please be respectful about using technology and not distract your colleagues or me. If you are a distraction, I will ask you to leave.
5. **Office Hours** – I am always available to meet with you to discuss grades, lecture, exams or other the course matters. If my office hours or days and times conflict with your availability, please email and we will make alternative arrangements. Use the [meeting link](#) or go to my [faculty page](#) and click on 'schedule a meeting' to schedule your appointments.
6. **Communication** – Using your EIU email is the official 'university approved' method of communication. You are also welcome to come by the department or my office to talk. You may also call the main office phone number.

When you email, please include the following information: 1) Put the course # in the subject line (SOC 4700), 2) include greeting (Dr. or Professor Lovekamp), 3) use standard English, write in complete sentences, avoid abbreviations and text slang (TTYL, LOL), 4) and end with a signature (your full name). This will help me keep track of emails and reply in a timely manner. An email is just a modern letter, so write it well.

7. **Reading Annotations** (3 points each * 13 = 39 Total Points): You will read and annotate (make notations) of several class readings using Perusall Annotation platform or in the Dropbox feature within [D2L Brightspace](#). Perusall is an electronic version of marking up a reading with highlights, underlines, and comments in the margins. For articles not available through Perusall, there are reading prompts in the homework Dropbox.
8. **Annotated Bibliography Reports** (5 points each * 12 assignments = 60 Total Points): You will complete 12 annotated bibliography assignments. (See [D2L Brightspace](#) for more specific instructions).
9. **Applied Research Papers and Presentation** (160 Total Points): See below for detailed instructions and due dates. (See [D2L Brightspace](#) for more specific instructions).

Applied Paper #1 – Social Issue	(30 Points)
Applied Paper #2 – Grounds	(30 Points)
Applied Paper #3 – Warrants/Conclusions	(40 Points)
Applied Paper #4 – Reflection	(40 Points)
Applied Paper – Presentation	(20 Points)
Reading Annotations 39 pts.	A=(100-90%) 259-233
Annotated Bibliographies 60 pts.	B= (89-80%) 232-207
<u>Applied Papers 160 pts.</u>	C= (79-70%) 206-181
TOTAL 259 pts.	D= (69-60%) 180-155
	F= (0-59%) 154 or below

10. **Writing Standards** – Good writing is essential to the point that it communicates your voice. This is not a writing course, but a course with a tremendous amount of writing. I am interested in your ideas, not your punctuation. I provide guidelines for page format and length, font size, and other best practices as parameters in which I look forward to reading your prose.
11. **Academic Integrity** – You are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools (such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course. Your written work will be submitted through Turnitin in D2L Brightspace. Turnitin includes an AI detection tool which indicates the amount of qualifying text within the submission that Turnitin’s AI writing detection model determines was generated by AI. This information may be used, in addition to other evidence, if there are concerns with academic misconduct. You are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s [Code of Conduct](#). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Accountability and Support. You will automatically fail the course if you submit any work that violates these principles.

Students with Accommodations Statement: If you are a student in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact Student Accessibility and Accommodations Services ([OAA](#)). All accommodations must be approved through OAA. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

Medical Emergency Statement: For medical emergencies, go to the nearest phone & call 911. Be sure to state the floor & room number of the emergency to the 911 operator. If possible, someone should go to the central entrance of Blair Hall to direct EMS personnel to the medical emergency scene. If emergency is on the 2nd/3rd floor, someone else should hold the elevator on the first floor for EMS use.

Tornado Statement: In case of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor, near the posted severe weather signs. Under no circumstances should you attempt to leave the building.

Building Fire Statement: In case of fire, activate the fire alarm & exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building & cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north & south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closest exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the North & south ends of the building. Under no circumstance should the elevator be used. Group assembly areas for all classes in Blair are either on the patio area between Blair & Old Main or on the southeast corner of the North Quad. As you exit the building, continue moving well away from the exits so that you do not impede the egress of other students or the work of fire officials. Move a safe distance away from the building.

LECTURE SCHEDULE		ASSIGNMENTS	
TOPIC	READINGS	PAPERS & BIBLIOGRAPHIES	ANNOTATIONS
January 9 & 11 1. Introduction	Berger "Invitation to Sociology"		Berger Annotations (Due 1/11)
January 16 & 18 2. Imagination	Mills "The Promise" & 'A Social Science of Solutions"		Mills Annotations (Due 1/16)
January 23 & 25 3. Constructionism	Best Chapters 1 & 2	Annotated Bib 1, 2, 3, 4 (Due 1/26)	Best 1 & 2 Annotations (Due 1/23)
January 30 & February 1 4. Research		Applied Paper 1 (Due 2/2)	
February 6 & 8 5. Inquiry	EB 1 - Closed Answers and Open Questions & "Transforming Education"		EB 1 Annotations (Due 2/6)
February 13 & 15 6. Reality	EB 2 - Truth, Objectivity, and Agreement & "Being Sane in Insane Places"		EB 2 Annotations (Due 2/13)
February 20 & 22 7. Perspectives	EB 3 - Paradigms & "Pairing Sociology with Design"	Annotated Bib 5, 6, 7, 8 (Due 2/23)	EB 3 Annotations (Due 2/20)
February 27 & 29 8. Research		Applied Paper 2 (Due 3/1)	
March 5 & 7 9. Social Fact	Durkheim "Rules of Sociological Method" & "Love is Part of What We Need"		Durkheim Annotations (Due 3/5)
March 12 & 14 10. Research & Action	Weber "Methodological Foundations of Sociology" & Marx "Materialist Method"		Weber & Marx Annotations (Due 3/12)
March 26 & 28 11. People Like Us	Charon - "What Does it Mean to be Human?"	Annotated Bib 9, 10, 11, 12 (Due 3/29)	Charon Annotations (Due 3/26)
April 2 & 4 12. Research		Applied Paper 3 (Due 4/5)	
April 9 & 11 13. Presentations	Applied Paper Presentations		
April 16 & 18 14. Free Will	EB 4 - Determinism vs. Freedom & "Isle Inequality"		EB 4 Annotations (Due 4/16)
April 23 & 25 15. Swan Songs	EB 13 - Scientific Close Mindedness		EB 13 Annotations (Due 4/23)
Finals Week		Applied Paper 4 (Due 4/30)	

- a) 1/22/24 deadline to withdraw from course w/ no grade; 3/29/24 deadline to withdraw from with a W.
- b) This syllabus serves as a contract between the student & professor. You are responsible for all information contained within this syllabus. Any changes the professor makes will be announced in advance.
- c) Holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 1/15/24; Lincoln's Birthday 2/16/24; Spring Break 3/18-22.