SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

Voyage: Spring 2015
Discipline: SOCIOLOGY

Systems of Inequality

Faculty Name: Dr. Michelle M. Camacho
Affiliation: University of San Diego, Full Professor
Discipline: SOCIOLOGY
Course Title: Systems of Inequality
TERM: Spring 2015
Division: Lower
Prerequisites: None
Logistical Information:
• Meeting time 9:25-10:40am
• Meeting location Room 2
• Meeting Schedule B DAY
• REQUIRED Field Lab Casablanca, Morocco April 19, 2015 0800-2000

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview: In an age of widening social polarization, the intersections of power, structure and agency are at the heart of sociological inquiry. The course will consider social problems relating to individuals and structures in comparative contexts, including stratification, social change, and struggles for peace and justice as they relate to issues of class, race, gender, sexuality and citizenship. We will also engage in inductive fieldwork and learn the basics of how sociological research is conducted. A camera will be required for a visual sociology project; we will theorize the tourist gaze as a case study.

The goal of the class is to be able to critically analyze ongoing social issues using a sociological framework. You might begin to question your “taken–for–granted” assumptions about everyday life. Adopting a sociological perspective entails looking at the world from a different vantage
point than the one you typically use; therefore much of the material presented in this course may challenge your values and beliefs. Whether your ideas ultimately change or remain the same, this course should help you clarify why you believe what you believe, help you understand the implications and consequences of those beliefs, and help you to compare your perceptions with empirical studies of the social world. Our research learning process will provide a good foundation for any future social science courses you may take.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1 – To critically identify and discuss issues of power and inequality as they relate to the creation of social problems.

2 – To explain how larger social structures relate to our individual lives.

3 – To describe how sociologists conduct research about social problems, and to practice introductory-level social inquiry.

4 – To learn how to use elementary data analysis to carry out analysis of social problems and to write up these findings as research reports.

5 – To describe and detail how social problems relate to social inequality and social justice, with particular consideration of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality & social class in comparative and cross-cultural contexts.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

AUTHOR: Garth Massey, Editor
TITLE: *Readings in Sociology*
PUBLISHER: Norton Press
ISBN #: 978-0-393-91270-8
DATE/EDITION: 2011/7th edition

AUTHOR: Mathabane, Mark
TITLE: *Kaffir Boy: An Autobiography of a Black Youth’s Coming of Age in South Africa*
PUBLISHER: Free Press
ISBN #: 0684848287
DATE/EDITION: 1998

**Selected readings:**
Selected journal articles and book chapters, available via digital download (Available on shipboard drive)

**Other materials required for this class:** Camera; also PowerPoint, Keynote, or Prezi software.
TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada- January 7:

**B1- January 10: Welcome & Syllabus Review**

Introduction and overview of sociological perspectives on contemporary social issues.

**B2-January 12: Social research-- How do sociologists examine social problems?**

Read Chapter 1: Sociology as an Individual Pastime (from *Invitation to Sociology*). Peter L. Berger pp 3-12.
Read Chapter 18: On Face-Work by Erving Goffman pp 185-196.

Introduction to the process of sociological research: what are the types of data used by sociologists? Student slide show homework presentations

Goal: to understand the basics of the research process -- how sociologists measure/interpret social issues

HILO –January 14

**B3- January 15: The Sociological Imagination**

Read Chapter 2: Personal Experiences and Public Issues (from *The Sociological Imagination*). C. WRIGHT MILLS pp 13-18

C. Wright Mills wrote a book called The Sociological Imagination in 1959. Read this selection and figure out: what is a sociological imagination? Look around your everyday life and think of three to four ORIGINAL examples of tensions between private trouble and public issues (for example, unemployment in this economy; divorce; war).

Illustrating the Sociological Imagination: Walking Tour on ship
Goal: To understand how sociologists relate the micro to the macro.

**B4-January 17: Globalization, World Economy, Structure and Agency**


Goal: Consider the following: “Regarding globalization, are you a defender or a dissenter? Why?”

In-class activity using roles of proponents and opponents of globalization.
Study Day: January 20

**B5- January 21: Stratification and Social class differences**

In class experiential activity. Due next class, reflection essay. This activity cannot be made up if missed.

**B6- January 23: Privilege, Power and Inequality**

STRATIFICATION HOMEWORK 1 due: reflection essay based on our in-class activity


**B7- January 25: Globalization and hybridity**


Yokohama: January 26-27
In-Transit: January 28
Kobe: January 29-31

**B8- February 2: Production and consumption: Authenticity and fakes**

**China**


On fake stores:  
On fake walnuts:  

Shanghai: February 3-4  
In-Transit: February 5-6  
Hong Kong: 7-8

**B9- February 10:** Human rights, authority and responsibility: War


Film: *Hearts and Minds*, first 43 minutes only.

Ho Chi Minh: February 11-16

**B10- February 18:** Racism & Migrant labor, Singapore’s Little India


http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/28/opinion/singapores-angry-migrant-workers.html?_r=0


Singapore: February 19-20
Study Day: February 21

**B11-February 23:** Islamophobia & Refugee camps along Myanmar's border


In class discussion: Compare/Contrast with US-Mexican undocumented immigrants

Rangoon: February 24-March 1

**B12-March 3:** Reflection, Discussion

Due: McDonaldization Project

**B13- March 5:** Discrimination and minority rights


Film: *Mr. And Mrs. Iyer*

Cochin: March 6-11

**B14-March 13:** Social Constructions of Femininity

Work, Gender Inequality and Family
Read Chapter 41: The Emotional Geography of Work and Family Life, by Arlie Hochschild, (in reader, pp 439-452)

Film: *Killing Me Softly 4*

Study Day: March 14 (Note to students: start reading *Kaffir Boy*)

**B15-March 16:** Masculinity & Heteronormativity

Read Chapter 14: Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities. by M. Messner. Pp 137-152

Sociological Perspectives on Sexual Orientation, Homophobia and Heteronormativity

Film clips: *Tough Guise 2*
Port Louis: March 18

**B16- March 19: Apartheid**

Discuss: Is tourism a form of neo-colonialism?

Reading assignment:  

Discussion

Study Day: March 21

**B17-March 21: Apartheid (continued)**

Reading assignment:  
*Kaffir Boy: An Autobiography*: Conclude discussion


**B18- March 24: Effects of South African colonial history**


Cape Town: March 25-30

**B19- April 01 Power, inequality and “the gaze”**


Walvis Bay April 02-06
B20-April 8: Oral Presentations

B21- April 10: Oral Presentations

Study day: April 11

B22-April 13: Research Ethics

Read Chapter 8: “Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study” by Allan M. Brandt  pp 64-78.

Goal: To examine two famous cases in social science research and understand the importance of research integrity and prevention of harm to human subjects

B23: April 15 Identity in the context of Morocco

Reading assignments, Contrast the following two articles:


Read Chapter 9: To Veil or Not To Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas by Jen'nan Ghazal Read & John P. Bartkowski (in reader, chapter 9) pp 79-97.

Study Day: April 16

B24: April 18: Equality in Morocco


Casablanca, Morocco -- April 19-23
Field Lab: April 19

Study Day: April 24

B25: April 26 Final Class – Field lab due

April 29: Arrive in Southampton
FIELD WORK
Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Please do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.)

Proposed field lab: Inequalities in Casablanca: The Habous District and Understanding Gender in Morocco

In Casablanca, we will have the opportunity to examine power relations and inequalities through the lenses of gender, social class, race/ethnicity and other social characteristic as they are reflected in the spatial layouts of public places. We will apply these understandings to the case of the Habous District, an area that houses a souk, a public market in Casablanca. We will use participant observation to understand how systems of inequality correlate with public space and various indicators of social identity, including gender, age, nationality, religion, and social class differences. In the process, students will critically examine their own subjectivities as “outsiders” – how does our presence affect market relations and dynamics? For example, how do your salient characteristics, such as race and gender, affect your individual interactions with market place vendors? Students will also select and analyze marketplace artifacts (such as memorabilia specific to tourist consumers, postcards, or souvenirs), to examine how Morocco is represented for consumption. Students will be required to purchase such an item and be prepared to write a critical analysis of how the object “represents” Morocco through the tourist gaze. A component of this field lab will involve a discussion of how tourists in the marketplace affect and are affected by local power relations.

We will share a Moroccan meal with a local family and have the opportunity to ask questions about issues of gender, social class, religion and elements of the Moroccan lifestyle to enhance our understandings of our observations.

In the afternoon, time permitting, we will visit Solidarité Féminine, (or another NGO supporting single mothers and their children), to deepen our understandings of gendered inequities.

Academic Objectives:
1. To apply sociological theories of inequalities to the spatial organization of a souk in the Habous district.
2. To understand how marketplace relations are organized around cultural dimensions of gender, age, and other visible social characteristics.
3. To understand nuances of gender by engaging with, listening to the perspectives, of Moroccan women.
4. To practice ethnographic skills and sociological research methods, such as participant-observation and informal interviewing, in an open market and with a Moroccan family.
5. To analyze and demonstrate how gender is negotiated, transgressed, affirmed, and/or reproduced in social interaction.
FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

Field Lab Assignment: Gender and Society: Photo Essay

In this assignment you will create a digital photo essay of gender in everyday life from a performative and interactionist perspective. The photo essay should focus on yourself or other people “doing gender,” or potentially challenging or “undoing” gender. It involves (1) taking photographs or video that illustrates “doing gender” and (2) writing an essay response for each photograph.

Responses should include:
1. A title for each photo, including the date, time and place the photo was taken
2. What you intended to capture in each frame
3. What the photo means to you
4. Whether you had any impression at the time that you were unable to capture visually

Technical requirements:
- How Many Shots?
  Each student should shoot at least 20 photographs and upload your “best” 10 or 12 photographs. The “best” should be those whose content meets the criteria above and those that are well-shot (not blurry, not too dark, etc.).
- Who May I Photograph?
  You may take photographs of yourself, your friends, and/or our community aboard the Explorer. You should have their permission to take the pictures and to upload the pictures to our classroom’s intranet page. If you want to take pictures of strangers in our ports of call, you should get their permission or take the photographs at a distance sufficient that subjects cannot be identified.
- Who Will Have Access to My Photographs?
  We will discuss the projects in class and I will assume each of you has given me permission to share your photos within our class discussions unless I hear differently from you, in which case you can present them to me privately. (Note: Please do not share others’ photos outside of our classroom. You may not copy and/or distribute any photographs taken by other class members. It will be considered an honor offense if you copy or distribute other people’s photographs.)
- Where Do I Upload My Photos?
  This information will be provided in class.

Photo essays on gender performances in everyday life from: “Picture My Gender(s): Using Interactive Media to Engage Students in Theories of Gender Construction” by Carey Sargent and Sarah M. Corse. Teaching Sociology 2013 41: 242
Field Assignment #1  McDonaldization Project

The specific learning goals for this assignment are: (1) to understand the routinization of labor; (2) to develop a critical awareness of a global organization in specific local contexts; (3) to theorize rational efficient forms of social organization and social control; and (4) to practice participant observation as a social research method.

Pick a site: Visit at least one McDonald’s fast food restaurant in one of the following countries: Japan, China, Singapore, Burma or India. Sit at a booth where you can observe what is going on at the counter and behind the counter.

Observations to be filled out as you observe or shortly thereafter:
1. What is the complete cycle of interaction between a customer and the employees behind the counter? Write it out in terms of its steps.
2. How many different jobs are there behind the counter? Write down some possible job titles for them.
3. Is someone obviously in charge? How do you know?
4. How is he/she controlling what the employees are doing?

Analysis: Read chapter: 42. The McDonald's System (from The McDonaldization of Society). By George Ritzer. Identify these principles in the context of your site visit: efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. Discuss: How is this McDonald’s different from and similar to a McDonald’s in your hometown? Factors to consider include: what are the customers doing in addition to eating? Who is alone? How long do the customers stay? What other variables are salient in your observation?

In addition, reflecting on the issue of control, as presented by Ritzer, describe one of the following cases: 1) identify and discuss your “worst job”. What made it bad? In what ways was your work McDonaldized? OR 2) identify and discuss an experience that you have had, at home or abroad, in which your leisure time was McDonaldized. Incorporate sociological terminology in your response.

Field Assignment #2: Social class, Inequality and the Environment: Group Project

The specific learning goals for this assignment are: (1) to expand students’ understanding of the relationship between social class and environmental inequities; (2) to observe variability of housing conditions by geographic region and theorize class stratification; (3) to critically analyze how social class and citizenship status affects certain populations around the world.

This is a group project that draws on collaborative teamwork to produce an oral presentation. Some questions to consider include: Does social class determine place of residence? Why or why not? Explain in light of your case. Reflect: how might a communities’ ability to demand better environmental protections also be mediated by race, class, or citizenship status? How is climate related to environmental inequality? What are the implications of this for certain populations around the world? How do environmental hazards disproportionately impact certain
populations? Identify how class, race, nationality, immigrant status, or gender may play a determining role in an individual’s life chances, mortality, or chance of success in the future.

You will work in groups of four students, and your final score on this project will be shared. A portion of the grade will be comprised of a self/group evaluation in which you will provide feedback on your own role in the group, as well as identify the strengths and weaknesses of the other group members. Each group will meet with me, in advance of conducting the work, to select a country for photodocumentary project and identify a subtheme. Once your topic has been approved, each groups’ collective task is to take photos that address and highlight this theme with the goal of producing a coherent and sociologically informed photographic essay, which will be presented visually and explained orally in class. (Students may use PowerPoint, Prezi, a video editing program, or any appropriate software for visual display.)

Your presentation of this visual sociology project is due April 1, 2015. The group presentation will be an oral report that incorporates visual components. The presentation must demonstrate a shared and equitable distribution of labor. The presentation style should be fluent, energetic, and constrained to the time limit (to be discussed in class). For the presentation, students have great creative potential. I encourage you to be as innovative as you would like in your style.

The work must include the following components: 1) Introduction using sociological terminology; 2) Framing the topic in the literature; 3) Methodology: Overview of contexts and discussion of each members’ role in producing this work; 4) Insights and findings – discussion of relevant themes, what was revealed, what you want to teach the class. Strive to be innovative here; do not reiterate the obvious. 5) Reflection on challenges and limitations of this work. 6) Conclusions.

Some possible topics for your photodocumentary include:

- Water
- Public health
- Transportation (or lack thereof)
- Economic development
- Housing construction
- Presence of industrial factories/pollution near housing
- Food deserts
METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

**Field lab report:** Gender and Society: Photo Essay  20%

**Field lab participation:** 10%

**Field assignments:**
1) McDonaldization project  10%
2) Social class status, Inequality and Environmental Hazards: Group project 20%

**Leadership** (lead class discussion) 5%

**Active participation** (in class activities): 15%  (Attendance is required; penalties for absences will be deducted from the participation grade).

**Quizzes on the readings:** 15%

**Stratification homework:** – essay based on in class exercise 5%

Total: 100%

**RESERVE LIBRARY LIST** for Field Lab Assignment:


3. http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/african_diaspora_isp/3


**ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS** (in order of when they will be needed for class)


Schep-Mer-Hughes, Nancy

Melissa Harris-Perry, “Black Citizenship and South Africa, “*The Nation*, April 6, 2009


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**


Film: *Mr. And Mrs. Iyer*

Film: *Hearts and Minds*

Film: *Killing Me Softly 4*

Film clips: *Tough Guise 2*

**HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].”