

SENIOR SEMINAR: A SOCIETY OF ORGANIZATIONS
SOCIOLOGY 410 “S”
Spring 2013

Mondays 12:30-3:20 p.m.
317 Asbury Hall

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SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

In my grandest proposition I argue that organizations are the key to society because large organizations have absorbed society. They have vacuumed up a good part of what we have always thought of as society, and made organizations, once a part of society, into a surrogate of society
(Charles Perrow, 1991, “A Society of Organizations,” *Theory and Society* 20:725-762).

Netflix, DePauw University, Cigna Health Insurance, Inc., San Quentin State Prison, Wal-Mart, Ladies Aligning for Cross-Cultural Excellence (LACE), Citibank, National Public Radio, the Internal Review Service, Marvin’s, Indiana Department of Motor Vehicles, The Democratic Party, The LA Lakers, Riley Children’s Hospital, The Catholic Church, Sodexo, State Farm Insurance, Oxford University Press, Amnesty International, Raggedy Ann Daycare, McDonald’s, Dish Network, Vectron Energy Delivery, *The New York Times*, Putnam County Youth Soccer Association, L’Atelier Salon, Deer Meadow Parent Teacher Organization, American Medical Association, Sprint, SNCC, Dell Computers, Domino’s Pizza, Memphis Portrait Studio, Custis Lawn Service, Irish Republican Army, Volkswagen International... Is Perrow correct? Have organizations absorbed society? Or are they simply components of it?

This seminar focuses on the theoretical and empirical study of organizations (public, private and nonprofit). We will consider micro and macro-level questions that inform contemporary research in the sociology of organizations field. What are organizations? Who participates in them? Who is at the top and who is at the bottom? How do organizations affect individual behavior? Do organizations only control individuals or can individuals be empowered by organizations? What makes some organizations more effective than others? more efficient? How are structural patterns of inequality replicated, modified or exacerbated by organizations? Under what conditions do organizations affect other organizations? How do grassroots organizations differ from international ones? Can organizations take on a life of their own? How do organizations

change? The first half of the semester we will explore these kinds of questions as we acquire a grounding in organizational theory and read the empirical work of contemporary organizational scholars. We will also read and discuss material intended to help you carry out your independent research. The second half of the semester will be spent primarily on your individual research projects involving original data collection that will culminate in a 25-35 page thesis and presentation. The semester will be full and fast-paced.

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

1. To obtain a thorough grounding in the social-scientific literature on organizations.
2. To understand the core theoretical issues and approaches to the study of organizations.
3. To recognize the increasing scope and centrality of organizations in contemporary society and to explore the implications for social, economic and political life.
4. To appreciate how structural patterns of inequality can be replicated, modified or exacerbated by organizations.
5. To develop the discipline and independence needed to design and carry out an original research project.
6. To practice the skill of presenting social-scientific research to a critical audience.

“S” OBJECTIVES

As part of DePauw’s competency program in oral communication, this course is designed to enhance your speaking and listening skills. In fact, speaking and listening are the foundation for everything we do this semester. We will talk about speaking and listening skills, practice them, and refine them. Presentations of your research, facilitation of class discussions and active participation in daily class meetings are three arenas that I will use to assess your competency at the end of the semester. To be certified “S” competent you are required to do satisfactory work (i.e., “C-“ or better) on these three aspects of the class. Specific expectations for each will be distributed in class. Please note that “S” certification and your letter grade for the class are two distinct assessments. It is possible to pass the course, but not be “S” certified.

REQUIRED READINGS

Lune, Howard. 2010. *Understanding Organizations*. Malden, MA: Polity.

Written as a comprehensive overview of the subfield of organizational sociology, this book will give you the conceptual tools and language needed to frame your independent research. We will be reading select chapters.

Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish your Thesis, Book, or Article*, 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

This is a “classic” in the field written by one of the contemporary “deans” of sociology.

We will be reading select chapters intended to help with the writing of your thesis.

Fine, Gary. 2009. *Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

This is the first of three case studies we will be reading. The focus is for-profit organizations.

Britton, Dana M. 2003. *At Work in the Iron Cage: The Prison as a Gendered*

Organization. NY: NYU Press.

This is the second case study that focuses on public organizations.

Stuber, Jenny M. 2011. *Inside the College Gates: How Class and Culture Matter in Higher Education*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

This last case study focuses on organizations in the public and private nonprofit sphere.

Additional required readings are available on Moodle.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at all seminar meetings. You should make this seminar a priority in your life and attend all seminar sessions. Missing class will lower your class participation grade.

Class discussion. The seminar is discussion-based. While I will present mini-lectures to frame our discussions, the bulk of our time together will be discussing the assigned readings or your independent research. Your contributions will be particularly important when class members present their thesis work-in-progress. The quality of your participation will be assessed over the course of the semester.

Facilitation of one discussion. Beginning the third week, everyone (in pairs or solely) will take a turn facilitating discussion of one of our readings. The assignments will be made the first day of class.

Statement of topic (1 page) and annotated bibliography (at least 5 sources). **Due Monday, January 28 in class.** In one page, discuss the focus of your thesis and why you have selected this topic. Note the kinds of questions you hope to investigate and how you will go about answering them. Attached to this statement should be an **annotated** bibliography of at least 5 academic journal articles or books related to your topic with a short paragraph describing the study and its findings. The annotations should demonstrate that you have read these sources. Please type the bibliography in the format of the American Sociological Association (see document posted on Moodle if you are unfamiliar with this citation style).

How to pick a topic: The most important thing in selecting a topic is to pick something you are passionate about and find important, as you will be living and breathing it for the next 3 months. I strongly encourage you to craft a project that will have relevance to you beyond this semester. For example, if you are involved in community activism you might want to study the historical development of one of the organizations at the heart of your activist efforts. If you are thinking of seeking employment in the intimate violence field after graduation, you may want to study worker burn-out in rape crisis centers. If you want to go on to law school, you may want to compare recruitment strategies among small and large law firms. In short, your senior thesis does not have to be simply a “hoop” you are required to jump through that ends up in a box in your closet. Make it useful personally and make it your own. Three stipulations: 1) your research must be built on academic, social science literature (Be sure to verify that a scholarly literature exists before you finalize your topic.); 2) your research must involve original data collection (interviews, surveys, document analysis,

participant observation, etc.; and 3) you must select an organization(s) to which you can easily obtain access (Preliminary inquiries should be made as soon as possible.)

How to find 5 sources: Your thesis should be built around scholarly sources in the social sciences and include both scholarly books and journal articles. Good on-line indexes to check include: *Academic Search Premier* (with icon for peer-review articles checked), *Annual Review of Sociology, Humanities and Social Sciences Retrospective, JSTOR, Project Muse, Sociological Abstracts*, and *World Cat* (for books). You should check multiple on-line indexes, not just one or two. Web pages or organizational publications may be useful for background, but be sure to balance them with scholarly work. Popular sources from newspapers or magazines should be used sparingly. We will meet with Jo Macphail (reference librarian) on the first day of class. At that time you will also sign up for a **required** individual meeting with her.

Refined statement of thesis with extended annotated bibliography (10 sources) and preliminary discussion of theoretical framework. **Due Monday, February 11 in class.** This document is designed to show me that you are making progress on gathering relevant sources, reading extensively on your topic, revising/refining your overall thesis statement, and deciding on a theoretical framework for your thesis. Your 10 sources should be annotated and should include some sources on the theory you'll be using.

Full Annotated Bibliography (20-25 sources). **Due Monday, February 18 in class.** This bibliography is a list of all relevant sources you have found to date with a short paragraph describing the contents of the article. For a thesis of 25-35 pages in length, you should have at least 20 sources, but the exact number will vary depending on your topic. You will have two sorts of sources: a) material written about the organization(s) you are studying (e.g., rape crisis centers; Amnesty International); b) material on the conceptual or theoretical ideas you will be exploring in this organizational context (e.g., organizational culture; resource mobilization). **At the end of your bibliography, list the indexes that you checked for sources.** This is for my information only. When you turn in your final thesis, you should remove this information and the annotations from your bibliography. You may find out that some sources become irrelevant as your ideas develop and should be dropped. You will also come across new ones to add throughout the course of your reading. In the end, your bibliography should only include sources that you cite in your thesis and should include no less than 20 sources. Many of you will find that your bibliography ends up including 30-35 sources.

Presentation of research design. On **February 25** you will present your research design to the class. This is an informal presentation (no more than 10 minutes) and an opportunity for you to get advice and feedback from the entire class. You should bring 12 copies of your research instrument (interview questions, survey, coding sheet). Explain your research design: What method of data collection will you employ? What population will you sample? What is your sample size? What questions will be asked or what data will be collected? How will you analyze your data? What problems do you foresee, if any? If appropriate, you should also discuss how you have obtained access to the organization(s).

Institutional Review Board forms for approval. **Due March 11 in class.** You should turn in to me a completed IRB form for me to sign and forward to the IRB. Instructions and forms are located on the DePauw Website (go to Academic Affairs, then Human Participants and Animal Use). If you are using human subjects in your research you cannot begin your data collection until you receive approval from IRB.

Thesis draft. (25-35 pages) **Due April 15 by 4 p.m. in my office.** The first version of your thesis should be a complete document, including a title page, introduction, all sections, source citations in the text for all borrowed ideas, a conclusion and a bibliography. I will provide you detailed comments on the first draft of your thesis. Although I will not grade your draft, it is required. **Failure to submit a draft of your thesis will result in a 50 point deduction from your total points for the course.**

In-class presentation of research findings. **On April 22** you will have 10 minutes to present the findings of your research to the class. This is a formal presentation that will serve as a practice run for the Senior Symposium.

Final Thesis. (25-35 pages) **Due Friday, May 3 by 4:00 p.m. in my office** (late theses will be penalized). The work you have been doing all semester should help you pace yourself over the course of the semester so you can produce a thesis of the highest of quality. In revising, you should take into account my comments as well as find additional ways to improve the document. Your final thesis of 25-35 pages should be carefully edited and proofed, and reflect your best work. Two copies (one comb-bound) should be turned in. The bound version will be placed into the S&A Senior Thesis Archive; the other will be returned to you with my comments.

Senior Symposium. Each Spring, all sociology and anthropology seniors present their senior thesis to the wider DePauw community, parents, and friends. This year it is scheduled for the evening of **Thursday, May 9, 2010 (6:30-9:00 p.m.)**. Please mark your calendars for this celebratory event and have your family do the same! [You should also consider this advanced notice that you are required to present at this event even though it is outside our regular class meeting time.] The event is set up like a mini-conference with concurrent sessions organized by theme. Each presenter will have 10 minutes, followed by Q&A. Your presentation should be professional and polished. A trip to the S-Center as preparation is highly recommended. Everyone is invited to a short awards ceremony afterwards. **Failure to present at this event will result in a 50 point deduction from your total points for the course.**

Senior comprehensive requirement. Fulfilling the senior comprehensive requirement in Sociology or Sociology/Anthropology involves writing a 25-35 page senior thesis of satisfactory (C- or higher) quality. A thesis of unsatisfactory quality will need to be redone in order to graduate and will lower your overall course grade.

SEMINAR POLICIES

How grades are calculated. Grades will be determined using the following point and percentage systems. You must complete all of the assignments.

S-related assignments:

Weekly class discussion	50 points
Facilitation of discussion	50 points
Presentation of research design	25 points
Presentation of findings	50 points
Statement of topic/biblio	25 points
Refined statement/theory/biblio	25 points
Full annotated bibliography	25 points
First version of thesis	required but not graded [50 point penalty]
Final version of thesis	200 points
Senior Symposium presentation	required but not graded [50 point penalty]
Total	<hr/> 450 points

Final grade:

90% and above = A-, A

80%-89% = B-, B, B+

70%-79% = C-, C, C+

60%-69% = D

59% and below = F

Late Work. Late work will be penalized 5 points for every 24 hours beyond the due date.

Security Measures. I ask that you keep copies (hard-copies and on disk) of your work before handing it in. If you are turning in something late, do not put it in my mailbox or under my office door. It is your responsibility to contact me and make arrangements to give me your late work in person.

Honor Code. As with all courses at DePauw University, you are bound by the policy on academic integrity. I highly encourage you to reread the policy if you have not reread it this semester: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/acadlife/app/aip/dishonesty/> Academic dishonesty includes the following: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, multiple submissions, abuse of academic material, deception and misrepresentation, electronic dishonesty, and carelessness. Each of these violations is described in detail in the Student Handbook. See me if you have any questions about your obligation to uphold this policy.

Special Accommodations. According to Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, "DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities and reasonable

accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). Accommodations are determined on a case by case basis. Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located at 101 E. Seminary St., [765-658-6267](tel:765-658-6267). It is the responsibility of the student to share the letter of accommodation with faculty and staff members. Accommodations will not be implemented until the faculty or staff member has received the official letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss implementation of accommodations with each faculty and staff member receiving the letter.”

Laptops. Because this is a discussion-based seminar, I would prefer that you not use your laptops in class. This means that you will need to make hardcopies of the readings posted on Moodle and/or bring in notes from the reading.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

DATE	ASSIGNMENT
January 28	<p>I. Why Study Organizations?</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Lune, Howard. 2010. <i>Understanding Organizations</i>. Malden, MA: Polity, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-18). [Book]</p> <p>Statement of thesis topic with abbreviated annotated bibliography (5 sources) due in class</p> <p>Class meeting with Jo Macphail [PLEASE BRING LAPTOPS]</p>
February 4	<p>II. Organizational Sociology</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Scott, W. Richard. 2004. “Reflections on a Half-Century of Organizational Sociology.” <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 30:1-21. [Moodle]</p> <p><u>Read for reference:</u> Lipson, Charles. 2008. <i>Doing Honest Work in College</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, “Class Participation” pp. 27-29 and “Taking Good Notes” pp. 33-41. [Moodle]</p> <p>Complete individual meeting with Jo Macphail by February 8</p>

February 11	<p>III. Organizational Analysis at the Micro-level</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Lune, Howard. 2010. <i>Understanding Organizations</i>. Malden, MA: Polity, Chapter 4 and 5 (pp. 61-84; 85-104). [Book] (Facilitator 1)</p> <p>Steven P. Vallas. 2003. “The Adventures of Managerial Hegemony: Teamwork, Ideology and Worker Resistance.” <i>Social Problems</i> 50(2):204-225. [Moodle] (Facilitator 2 and 3)</p> <p><u>Read for reference:</u> Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. 2010. <i>They Say I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing</i>, 2nd edition. NY: WW. Norton, “Introduction,” pp. 1-15. [Moodle]</p> <p>Becker, Howard S. 2007. <i>Writing for Social Scientists</i>, 2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, “Terrorized by the Literature,” pp. 135-149. [Book]</p> <p>Refined statement of thesis with extended annotated bibliography (10 sources) and preliminary discussion of theoretical framework due in class</p>
February 18	<p>IV. Organizational Analysis at the Macro-level</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Lune, Howard. Lune. 2010. <i>Understanding Organizations</i>. Malden, MA: Polity, Chapter 6 (105-131). [Book] (Facilitator 4)</p> <p>Jenness, Valerie and Ryken Grattet. 2005. “The Law-In-Between: The Effects of Organizational Perviousness on the Policy of Hate Crime.” <i>Social Problems</i> 52(3):337-359. [Moodle] (Facilitator 5 and 6)</p> <p>Full annotated bibliography (20-25 sources) due in class</p>

February 25	<p><u>Read for reference:</u> Becker, Howard S. 2007. <i>Writing for Social Scientists</i>, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, "One Right Way," pp. 43-67. [Book]</p> <p>Presentation of Research Design in class. Bring 12 copies of research instrument (survey; interview questions; coding sheet).</p>
March 4	<p>V. Three Case Studies</p> <p>Corporate/For-profit Sector</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Fine, Gary. 2009. <i>Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work</i>. Berkeley, University of California Press. (Facilitator 7 and 8)</p>
March 11	<p>Public Sector</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Dana M. Britton. 2003. <i>At Work in the Iron Cage: The Prison as a Gendered Organization</i>. NY: NYU Press. [Book] (Facilitators 9 and 10)</p> <p><u>Read for reference:</u> Becker, Howard S. 2007. <i>Writing for Social Scientists</i>, 2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, "Editing by Ear," pp. 68-89. [Book]</p> <p>IRB forms due in class</p>
March 18	<p>Nonprofit Sector</p> <p><u>Read for class:</u> Stuber, Jenny M. 2011. <i>Inside the College Gates: How Class and Culture Matter in Higher Education</i>. NY: Lexington. (Facilitators 11 and 12)</p> <p>Note: Once you receive IRB approval, begin data collection</p>
March 25	<p>No class. Spring break. Note: Data collection</p>

April 1	Individual conferences Note: Data collection/analysis
April 8	Individual conferences Note: Data analysis/writing
April 15	Individual conferences Complete first draft of thesis due by 4:00 p.m. (332 AH)
April 22	In-class presentations of research.
April 29	Individual conferences Final draft of thesis due: Friday, May 3 by 4 p.m. (332 AH)
May 6	V. An Admonition and Future Directions <u>Read for class:</u> Charles Perrow. 1992. "Organisational Theorists in a Society of Organisations." <i>International Sociology</i> 7(3):371-380. [Moodle] Lune, Howard. Lune. 2010. <i>Understanding Organizations</i> . Malden, MA: Polity, Chapter 9 (pp. 173-192). [Book] Course evaluations [PLEASE BRING LAPTOPS]
May 9	Senior Symposium (6:30-9:00 p.m.)