Soc 4966W: Major-Project Seminar

Semester: Spring 2022
Class: Tuesday/Thursday 11:15-12:30, Blegen 415
Instructor: Joseph Gerteis (gerte004@umn.edu); Office hours Tuesday 2-4pm, On Zoom
TA: Corey Culver (culve051@umn.edu) Office hours Tuesday & Thursday 1-2pm, On Zoom

Course overview

This seminar is designed to meet three goals. First, the course acts as a “capstone” experience for the major, giving you the opportunity to reflect back on what sociology is all about and to think ahead about how the perspectives, insights and experiences you have gained in the major can apply to your life and career beyond the University setting. Second, it provides a structured way to help you complete your thesis writing, a central requirement for majors wishing to graduate. Successful completion of the thesis shows mastery of the skills and perspectives of your field of study. The course is structured to help and encourage you along the way. Throughout, we emphasize the relationship between a sociological perspective and critical thinking, effective communication and meaningful civic engagement. Finally, the course involves career planning, with significant use of CLA Career Services.

Class structure, reading, and communication

The class is designed as an active seminar; there will be a few short overview “mini-lectures” but mostly we will be engaged in discussion, active learning exercises, workshops and peer reviews. We have one central text with which everyone will engage, Eric Klinenberg’s Palaces for the People (Broadway Books, 2018). All other readings will be on our Canvas course site, or online.

This is a writing intensive course. No matter which project track you decide upon (see below), you will spend significant time and energy in planning, drafting, and editing writing. We also discuss together how to structure papers and we workshop our writing-in-progress. There will be 20-25 pages of writing for the course, though the writing assignments are structured differently depending upon which pathway you choose.

The best way to communicate with us is during our class time. We are also available for office hours and except for a few weeks when we will announce otherwise, you do not need to make an appointment to come see us. Communication is particularly important as we enter another semester of the COVID era.
Course requirements and project options

The graded requirements for this course will depend upon which “track” you choose. All students will do the career development elements of the course, and all students will do the first paper which we build from our reading and discussion of Kleinenberg’s book (about 5-6 pages). The tracks diverge from there.

- **Track 1** involves a series of three additional shorter papers (each about 5-6 pages). These papers will bring together your understanding of “history” (the social conditions of our lives and public sociological writing on it) and “biography” (your own experiences, reactions, and recommendations). These papers are meant to develop your sociological imagination in a way that will be important beyond the university. This track offers the most collective support and structure, since everyone is working on parallel sets of issues and meet regularly to develop and workshop the papers. This track will be the best fit for most students!

- **Track 2** is more independent, and is centered around a longer sociological analysis paper (about 15-20 pages) based on your engagement in a service learning site. The best projects of this type are based on sites driven by your strong interests – for example, if you are strongly interested in social inequality, you might choose to work for a shelter or social service nonprofit. This track will involve 25-30 hours of service work outside of class with regular check-ins and development papers in class. Consult with the Center for Community-Engaged Learning office on your choice and use their system to log your hours.

- **Track 3** is geared toward the development of an extended reflective essay (about 15-20 pages). This track gives you the opportunity to deepen your understanding of an area of sociological research (theoretical and empirical) and reflect on its relevance for contemporary society and social life. Please note that of all the options, this is the most independent and the least structured. As with Track 2, there will be regular check-ins and development papers along the way, but most of the work happens outside of class.

No matter which track you choose, there are a total of 500 points possible in the course, as outlined in the table below. **Please note that while the career development elements do not carry a huge number of points, they are required for a final grade in the class.** Final grades will be assigned based on a percentage basis (ie, points earned/470) based on the following scheme: A (90% and up); B+ (86-89.9), B (83-85.9), B- (80-82.9), C+ (76-79.9), C (73-75.9), C- (70-72.9), D+ (66-69.9), D (63-65.9); F (below 63%).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Track 1</th>
<th>Track 2 &amp; 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised resume (2/3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Career exploration worksheet (3/4)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting with CLA Career Counselor</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project development</td>
<td>420 points</td>
<td>420 points</td>
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<td>Public space observation worksheet (1/27)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Track decision memo (2/1)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Social infrastructure paper (2/11)</td>
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<td>History/biography paper 1 (3/4)</td>
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<td>History/biography paper 2 (3/25)</td>
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<td>History/biography paper 3 (4/8)</td>
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<td>Proposal memo (2/25)</td>
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<td>Development draft 1 (3/18)</td>
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<td>Development draft 2 (4/1)</td>
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<td>Full paper draft (5/6)</td>
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<td>Attendance/participation</td>
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<td>30 points</td>
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<td>Total possible</td>
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<td>500 points</td>
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**COVID-19 Policies and guidelines**

The University requires all students and employees to be vaccinated or have a valid exemption; more information is at [safe-campus website](http://safe-campus-website). All community members are strongly advised to get a booster as soon as they are eligible. For information about getting a booster and how to schedule an appointment, please refer to [the University’s Get the Vax 2.0 initiative](http://university-get-the-vax-20).

If you experience [COVID-19 symptoms](http://covid-19-symptoms) or symptoms of any potentially infectious respiratory or other illness, you should stay home or in your residence hall room and not come to class or to
campus. Consult your healthcare provider about an appropriate course of action, and refer to the M-test program for COVID-19 testing resources. If you test positive for COVID-19 here are the guidelines for what to do. Absences related to illness, including COVID-19 symptoms, for yourself or your dependents, are excused absences and I will work with you to find the best course of action for missed work and course content. Corey and I will follow these same protocols and will let you know if the delivery of this course has to be temporarily changed as the result of my own circumstances.

When indoors on campus, students, faculty, staff and guests are currently required to wear a mask. You must wear your mask so that it covers both your nose and mouth. With the high transmissibility of the recent variants it is strongly recommended that you use an enhanced mask— a surgical mask either alone or in combination with a cloth mask, or an N95, KN95, AirPop or similar mask. Surgical masks are widely available: https://www.uhs.umn.edu/university-health-and-safety-mask-support-program.

Other course policies

- **Interaction.** Engagement during class time is critical for the capstone experience and the preparation of strong writing. Please come to class prepared and ready to engage each other with trust and good will. COVID will no doubt make some of the interaction more difficult this year. For days that we have to be on Zoom, please turn on your camera if you are able to do so (we know this is not always possible, but it makes interacting easier) and be willing to interact with each other.

- **Disabilities and accommodations.** It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities that may affect ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. If you have a documented disability, or an illness or other emergency that may require an exception, please discuss and confirm it with us as soon as possible, and well in advance of any deadlines.

- **Incompletes.** Grades of “incomplete” will only be given in very rare circumstances for this course. It is much better to get done! In the event that an incomplete is necessary, it will require a written agreement. Please ensure that you connect with us directly if you must miss more than a few classes due to illness or other emergencies.

Other resources

- [Center for Community-Engaged Learning](https://www.cale.umn.edu), 240 Appleby Hall
- [CLA Career Services](https://www.clarecruit.umn.edu), 441 Bruininks Hall
- [Center for Writing](https://www.cw.umn.edu), 15 Nicholson Hall
Class Schedule

Note that this class schedule is different from what you might be used to! Please read carefully. For the first part of the class, we all meet together in a mix of in-person and virtual modalities. After that, the schedule is different for those in different tracks. Students choosing Track 1 will meet together most class days (in person, unless circumstances force us to change). Those choosing Tracks 2 and 3 will be involved in independent work on those days, but will have dedicated check-in days (for which Track 1 students will be working on their own papers). For everyone, there are dedicated days where we ask you to pause your other work and spend focused time on career development.

Tuesday 1/18: (All) Welcome and overview of class.
  ● In person.
  ● No assigned reading

Thursday 1/20: (All) What is sociology / Project choice outline.
  ● In person.
  ● Read: C. Wright Mills, “The Promise”

Tuesday 1/25: (All) Thinking about social infrastructure.
  ● In person.
  ● Read: Klinenberg, Introduction-Chapter 2.

Thursday 1/27: (All) Thinking about civic belonging and estrangement.
  ● In person.
  ● Read: Klinenberg, Chapters 3-5.
  ● Due: Public space observation worksheet.

Tuesday 2/1: (All) CLA Career Services overview and resume workshop with Dylan Mazza.
  ● On Zoom.
  ● Look over your own resume and have it ready. (If you don't have one, it's time to make one!)
  ● Due: Track decision memo.

Thursday 2/3: (All) Thinking about times of trouble.
  ● In person.
  ● Read: Klinenberg, Chapter 6-Conclusion.
  ● Due: Revised resume.

Tuesday 2/8: (All) Social Infrastructure paper workshop.
  ● In person.
  ● Have a paper draft ready for discussion in class.
Thursday 2/10: (All) Career development: Graduate school.

- **On Zoom.**
- Due: Social infrastructure paper (by Friday 2/11, end of day).

Tuesday 2/15: (Track 2-3) Independent paper check-in day

- In person.
- Review project guidelines and be prepared to discuss.

Thursday 2/17: (Track 1) History, biography, and the self.

- In person.
- Read: Tressie McMillan Cottom. “In the Name of Beauty.” (From *Thick: And Other Essays*).

Tuesday 2/22: (Track 1) History/biography paper 1

- In person.
- Read/Do: Browse *The Society Pages* posts under headings Crime, Politics, or Inequality. Find at least 3 interrelated posts, at least 1 with the heading "there's research on that." Be prepared to discuss in class.
- Complete paper planning worksheet.

Thursday 2/24: (Track 2-3) Independent paper check-in day.

- In person.
- Bring a draft of the proposal, and be ready to discuss.
- Due: Proposal memo, by Friday 2/25 end of day.

Tuesday 3/1: (Track 1) History/biography paper 1

- In person.
- Paper workshop. Bring in a draft and be prepared to talk it through and workshop the writing.
- Due: Edited and polished History/biography paper 1 (by Friday 3/4, end of day).


- No class.
- Due: Complete Superstrong assessment and turn in career exploration worksheet.

Tuesday 3/8: SPRING BREAK
Thursday 3/10: SPRING BREAK
Tuesday 3/15: (Track 1) History/biography paper 2.
   ● In person.
   ● Browse *The Society Pages* posts under headings Health/Gender/Culture. Find at least 3 interrelated posts, at least 1 with the tag "there's research on that." Be prepared to discuss in class.
   ● Complete paper planning worksheet.

Thursday 3/17: (Tracks 2-3) Independent paper check-in day
   ● In person.
   ● Bring a draft of development paper 1, and be ready to present and discuss.
   ● Due: Development draft 1, by Friday 3/18 end of day.

Tuesday 3/22: (Track 1) History/biography paper 2
   ● In person.
   ● Paper workshop. Bring a draft and be prepared to talk it through and workshop the writing.
   ● Due: History/biography paper 2 (by Friday 3/25 end of day).

Thursday 3/24: (All) Career development: career counseling
   ● No class.
   ● Due: Make an appointment and meet with a CLA career counselor. Review and take with you the career orientation materials you have developed so far including resume.

Tuesday 3/29: (Track 1) History/biography paper 3
   ● In person.
   ● Read/Do: Browse TSP posts in the “Wonderful/Wretched” series. Decide upon at least 3 posts that speak to your experiences most clearly, and be prepared to discuss in class. (Note that you should feel free to also pair these with any posts from the Race section of TSP).
   ● Complete the paper planning worksheet.

Thursday 3/31: (Tracks 2-3) Independent paper check-in day.
   ● In person.
   ● Bring a draft of development paper 2 and be ready to present and discuss.
   ● Due: Development draft 2, by Friday 4/1 end of day.

Tuesday 4/5: (Track 1) History/biography paper 3.
   ● In person.
   ● Paper workshop. Bring in a draft and be prepared to talk it through and workshop the writing.
   ● Due: History/biography paper 3 (by Friday 4/8 end of day).
Thursday 4/7: (All) Career development
  - Tracks 1-3: No class
  - Develop profile on Handshake and upload CV.

Tuesday 4/12: (Tracks 2-3) Independent paper check-in day.
  - In person.
  - Bring a polished section draft and be ready to discuss and workshop.

Thursday 4/14: MSS conference
  - No class, instructors at conference.
  - Please use time for catching up or working ahead on career development!

Tuesday 4/19: (Tracks 2-3) Extended office hour consultations.
  - No class. Make an appointment with Corey and/or Joe for 4/19 and/or 4/21.

Thursday 4/21: (Tracks 2-3) Extended office hour consultations.
  - No class. Make an appointment with Corey and/or Joe for 4/19 and/or 4/21.

Tuesday 4/26: (All) Career development.
  - No class.
  - Make a follow-up appointment with a CLA career counselor.

Thursday 4/28: (All) Conclusions, congratulations, and thinking ahead.
  - In person.
  - If you are graduating, consider decorating your mortarboard and taking a picture to share. (Note 1/16/22: fingers crossed for an in-person graduation. If there is one, and if they are accepting faculty in attendance, I'll be there!).
  - Due: Track 2-3 final papers due by 10 am Friday 5/6.
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS POLICIES

GRADES: University academic achievement is graded under two systems: A-F (with pluses and minuses) and S-N. Choice of grading system and course level (1xxx/3xxx/4xxx) is indicated on the registration website; changes in grade scale may not be made after the second week of the semester. Some courses may be taken under only one system; limitations are identified in the course listings. The Department of Sociology requires A-F registration in courses required for the major/minor. University regulations prescribe the grades that will be reported on your transcript.

A Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements (4.00 grade points)
A- 3.67 grade points
B+ 3.33 grade points
B Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements (3.00 grade points)
B- 2.67 grade points
C+ 2.33 grade points
C Achievement that meets the basic course requirements in every respect (2.00 grade points)
C- 1.67 grade points
D+ 1.33 grade points
D Achievement worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements (1.00 grade point)
F Performance that fails to meet the basic course requirements (0 grade points)
S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
S- 1.00 grade point
I Incomplete, a temporary symbol assigned when the instructor has a "reasonable expectation" that you 1) can successfully complete unfinished work on your own no later than one year from the last day of classes and 2) believes that legitimate reasons exist to justify extending the deadline for course completion. The instructor may set date conditions for make-up work. If a course is not completed as prescribed or not made up as agreed within the year, the I will lapse to an F if registered on the A-F grade base or an N if registered on the S-N grade base.
W Official withdrawal from a course after the end of the second week of the semester. You must file a course cancellation request before the end of the sixth week of the semester to ensure that the W, rather than the F, will be formerly entered on your record.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS (see schedule on the Calendar web site at https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/final-exam-times): You are required to take final examinations at the scheduled times. Under certain circumstances, however, you may request final examination schedule adjustment in your college office. Instructors are obligated to schedule make-up examinations within the final examination period for students who have three final examinations within a 16-hour period. Instructors also are encouraged to reschedule examinations for students with religious objections to taking an examination on a given day. You must submit your request for an adjustment in your schedule at least two weeks before the examination period begins. For assistance in resolving conflicts, call the CLA Student Information Office at 625-2020. If you miss a final, an F or N is recorded. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make up the examination. Final examinations may be rescheduled by the instructor only through the official procedure for that purpose (as noted on the above web page). Final examinations may not be scheduled for the last day of class or earlier or for Study Day. If an examination is rescheduled at the instructor's request, and you have an examination conflict because of it, you are entitled to be given the final examination at an alternative time within the regularly scheduled examination period for that semester.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: As a student, you are responsible for attending class and for ascertaining the particular attendance requirements for each class or department. You should also learn each instructor's policies concerning make-up of work for absences. Instructors and students may consult the CLA Classroom, Grading, and Examination Procedures Handbook for more information on these policies (https://policy.umn.edu/education/makeupwork).

COURSE PERFORMANCE AND GRADING: Instructors establish ground rules for their courses in conformity with their department policies and are expected to explain them at the first course meeting. This includes announcement of office hours and location, the kind of help to be expected from the instructor and teaching assistants, and tutorial services, if available. The instructor also describes the general nature of the course, the work expected, dates for examinations and paper submissions, and expectations for classroom participation and attendance. Instructors determine the standards for grading in their classes and will describe expectations, methods of evaluation, and factors that enter into grade determination. The special conditions under which an incomplete (I) might be awarded also should be established. The college does not permit you to submit extra work to raise your grade unless all students in the class are afforded the same opportunity.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: You are entitled to a good learning environment in the classroom. Students whose behavior is disruptive either to the instructor or to other students will be asked to leave (the policies regarding student conduct are outlined on-line at https://communitystandards.umn.edu/know-code/consequences)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: University instructors may restrict or prohibit the use of personal electronic devices in his or her classroom, lab, or any other instructional setting. For the complete policy, visit: http://policy.umn.edu/education/studenttresp

SCHOLASTIC CONDUCT: The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:
Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. Students cannot evade (intentionally or unintentionally) a grade sanction by withdrawing from a course before or after the misconduct charge is reported. This also applies to late withdrawals, including discretionary late cancellation (also known as the "one-time-only drop"). For the complete policy, visit: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/.
A REMINDER OF RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
* SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES *

GRADE INFORMATION: Grades are due in the Office the Registrar within 3 business days after the final examination. No information regarding grades will be released by the department office staff to anyone except designated personnel in Records and college offices. Students may access their own grades through the MyU Portal.

INCOMPLETES: It is the instructor's responsibility to specify conditions under which an Incomplete (I) grade is assigned. Students should refer to the course syllabus and talk with the instructor as early as possible if they anticipate not completing the course work. Coursework submitted after the final examination will generally be evaluated down unless prior arrangements are made in writing by the instructor. University policy states that if completion of the work requires the student to attend class in substantial part a second time, assigning an "I" grade is NOT appropriate. Incompletes are appropriate only if the student can make up the coursework independently with the same professor. Students need to have completed a substantial portion of the course in order to be even considered for an Incomplete.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS: Arrangements for special examinations must be made directly with the instructor who taught the course and who is responsible for approving and supervising the examination or making individual arrangements. Circumstances for missing an exam include, but are not necessarily limited to: verified illness, participation in athletic events or other group activities sponsored by the University, serious family emergencies, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, and religious observances. It is the responsibility of the student to notify faculty members of such circumstances as far in advance as possible.

GRADE CHANGES: Grades properly arrived at are not subject to renegotiation unless all students in the class have similar opportunities. Students have the right to check for possible clerical errors in the assignment of grades by checking with the instructor and/or teaching assistant.

Students with justifiable complaints about grades or classroom procedures have recourse through well-established grievance procedures. You are expected to confer first with the course instructor. If no satisfactory solution is reached, the complaint should be presented in writing to the department Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising (909 Soc Sci). If these informal processes fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, other formal procedures for hearing and appeal can be invoked. See the departmental advisor in 923 Social Sciences to explore options.

DISABILITY SERVICES: Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. For more info contact Disability Resource Center in 180 McNamara. https://disability.umn.edu

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: "Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Faculty, Graduate Students, and full time Staff are Mandated Reporters for prohibited conduct. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or related retaliation; or if you have questions about any EOAA-related issue, please contact Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) at (612) 624-9547 or eoa@umn.edu For the complete policy, visit https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/2020-09/policy_sexual_harassment SEXUAL ASSAULT STALKING.pdf

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAMS INFORMATION: The Sociology Department offers two options for the Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science degree. Students interested in majoring in Sociology should view the online-information session about the major. Due to COVID-19, further information can be obtained from the following persons via email or online at http://cla.umn.edu/sociology

General information, Sociology Department – soc@umn.edu
Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising, Bobby Bryant – socadvis@umn.edu
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Prof. Teresa Swartz – tswartz@umn.edu
Soc Honors Faculty Representative, Prof. Teresa Swartz – tswartz@umn.edu
Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Joe Gerteis – gerte004@umn.edu
Graduate Program Associate, Becky Drasin – drasi001@umn.edu

Undergraduate jobs, internships, volunteer and research opportunities, scholarships, and much more can be found in the Undergraduate Resources site - https://sociologyundergrad.wordpress.com/