SOCIOLOGY

The program is designed to help students develop new frameworks for analyzing a broad array of social relations—from everyday life interactions to large-scale historical and structural transformations—and to cultivate a critical appreciation for the academic discipline of sociology.

FACULTY

Robyn Kimberley Autry  
BS, University of Colorado Boulder; MS, Univ of Wisconsin Madison; PHD, Univ of Wisconsin Madison  
Associate Professor of Sociology; Chair, Sociology

Abigail Huston Boggs  
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Director, Service Learning; Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology; Coordinator, Service Learning

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BA, Tufts University; MA, Union Theological Seminary; PHD, CUNY The Graduate Center  
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Kerwin Kaye  
BA, University of Colorado Boulder; MA, University San Francisco; PHD, New York University  
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AFFILIATED FACULTY

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VISITING FACULTY

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Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology

EMERITI

Mary Ann Clawson  
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Professor of Sociology, Emerita

Alex Dupuy  
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John E. Andrus Professor of Sociology, Emeritus; Co-Director, Susan B. and William K. Wasch Center for Retired Faculty

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DEPARTMENTAL ADVISING EXPERTS

Greg Goldberg; Kerwin Kaye

- Undergraduate Sociology Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/soc/ugrd-soc/)

SOC151 Introductory Sociology

This course is an introduction to the systematic study of the social sources and social consequences of human behavior, with emphasis on culture, social structure, socialization, institutions, group membership, social conformity, and social deviance.

Offering: Host  
Grading: A-F  
Credits: 1.00  
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC  
Prereq: None

SOC202 Sociological Analysis

This course is an introduction to the major components of sociological analysis: the language of sociological inquiry, research techniques and methodology, types of explanation, and the relationship between theory and research.

Offering: Host  
Grading: A-F  
Credits: 1.00  
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
SOC151 Sociology and Social Theory
Through close reading, discussion, and active interpretation, this course will critically examine the basic writings of classical and contemporary social theorists who have influenced the practice of sociology.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC212 Sociology and Social Theory
This course provides an introduction to the sociological study of race and ethnicity. Students will investigate how race and ethnicity operate as markers of social exclusion in different parts of the world in different ways and with very different experiences of particular races or ethnic groups in any particular part of the world. Rather, this course explores how ideas about racial difference take hold in different parts of the world and how race and ethnicity operate as markers of social exclusion in distinctive ways.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC231 Sociology of Crime and Punishment
This course offers an introduction to the sociological study of crime and punishment. Crime is rarely far from news headlines or the public imagination. Every day, reports of drug dealing, muggings, and homicide fuel anxiety and debate about the problems of law and order. Here, we consider such debates in the context of both a vision for a just society and the everyday workings of the criminal justice system. The course is divided into three sections. We begin with an introduction to the historical meanings and measures of crime in society and then situate the modern U.S. within this history. In part two, we become familiar with the major ways that social scientists think about criminality and crime prevention. In part three, we turn to considerations of punishment. We ask how punishment is conceptualized in the U.S. and other nations, whether the American system of mass imprisonment is effective, and how we might envision improvements and alternatives.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC234 Media and Society
This course offers an introduction to the study of media, with a focus on critical social practices and controversies. A variety of media formats will be considered, with particular attention to print and visual images. The course takes up questions of representation, participation, consumerism, pleasure, and power that have dominated sociological and cultural studies approaches to media since the Frankfurt School. Topics will include advertising and branding, pornography, photojournalism, alternative media, social control, stereotypes, and objectification. Students will engage historical and theoretical texts and will be asked to participate in media processes, including production, interpretation, and critique.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC238 Media and Society
This course offers an introduction to the study of media, with a focus on critical social practices and controversies. A variety of media formats will be considered, with particular attention to print and visual images. The course takes up questions of representation, participation, consumerism, pleasure, and power that have dominated sociological and cultural studies approaches to media since the Frankfurt School. Topics will include advertising and branding, pornography, photojournalism, alternative media, social control, stereotypes, and objectification. Students will engage historical and theoretical texts and will be asked to participate in media processes, including production, interpretation, and critique.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC240 Comparative Race and Ethnicity
This course is an introduction to the sociological study of race and ethnicity in comparative and historical perspective. This is not a course about the experiences of particular races or ethnic groups in any particular part of the world. Rather, this course explores how ideas about racial difference take hold in different parts of the world in different ways and with very different consequences. Through comparisons of Western and non-Western societies, we will investigate how race and ethnicity operate as markers of social exclusion in distinctive ways.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC241 Mental Illness and Society
Psychiatric disorders are commonly viewed through a purely biomedical and/or psychological framework. In this course, we will apply a sociological imagination to the topic and interrogate the ways in which mental illness, often seen as a purely private ‘personal trouble,’ is also a public issue. We will read the works of classic and contemporary scholars, but we will also use memoirs and films to sensitize us to the experience of mental illness itself. We will explore mental illness as a social construction, stigma, and labeling theory and explore issues of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation in mental illness.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC244 Feminist and Queer Theories of Social Reproduction
This course will introduce students to the study of social reproduction and power with an emphasis on feminist, queer, and transnational approaches to inquiry and action. We will begin by exploring key methodologies and theoretical framings for understanding contemporary ‘American’ cultural, social, and political formations both within and beyond the territorial U.S., focusing on the effectiveness of discursive and historical modes of critical analysis. The subsequent sections of the course will turn to three case studies of the historical routes and transnational implications of U.S.-based political discourses around (1) population control and reproductive justice, (2) abolition and the prison-industrial complex, and (3) debt and higher education. By engaging with each area of inquiry through theoretical, historical, and grounded activist texts, we will think through the possibilities for utilizing academic work in concert with movement-based engaged scholarship to address the uneven distribution of life chances and the potential of imagining the world otherwise.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: FGSS244
Prereq: SOC151

SOC245 Intersectionality and Identity
Intersectionality has emerged as a central motif within both social analysis and political debate. We will examine the origins of this framework within black feminism and women-of-color activism, as well as the way this framework traveled to, and is used within, sociology and other disciplines. The course will also address critiques of intersectionality that have emerged within and outside of feminist theory, and extends the concept of intersectionality to think through intersections between various social identities and social institutions such as capitalism and colonialism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: AMST254, FGSS245
Prereq: SOC151 OR AMST174 OR AMST178

SOC246 Social Movements
How, when, and why do social movements emerge? What motivates individuals to participate? What transforms problems into grievances and grievances into action? How should movements be organized, and what tactics should they use? What factors explain movement success and failure (and how should success and failure be defined)? What is a social movement, anyway? This course seeks to introduce some of the major ways scholars have approached such questions and, at the same time, to give a sense of both the high drama and the everyday details of social movement activism, using historical and sociological case studies. Course readings concentrate on U.S. movements, including racial justice, class, gender, and sexuality-based activism.
This course addresses a variety of issues ranging from the social variation in and construction of drug experiences; the nature of scientific knowledge regarding drug use and the brain; the global trade in drugs and its relationship to histories of colonialism and contemporary forms of Western hegemony; notions of health, harm, and rehabilitation; and the various strategies that contemporary states rely upon in addressing issues pertaining to drug use (particularly criminal justice measures and interventions focused on harm reduction). The course places particular emphasis on the ways drug use is framed in relation to questions of freedom, justice, and the self, ultimately forming a part of a disciplinary apparatus that impacts everyone, whether we directly use drugs or not.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: FGSS256
Prereq: SOC151

**SOC247 Drugs, Culture, and Society**

This course explores the history, politics, and social meaning of sex work. Focusing particularly but not exclusively upon prostitution, we will pay careful attention to the diverse range of social experiences that form sex work, as well as the way in which prostitution is used as a governing metaphor within sexual relations more generally. Some questions the course will consider: How has sex work changed over time, and what do these changes tell us about both the nature of sex work and about the broader society? In what ways is sex work similar to or different from other forms of service labor or other types of intimate relationship? How do questions of race, class, sexuality, and gender alter the meaning and experience of sex work? What sorts of desires and expectations do clients bring to interactions with sex workers, and in what ways have these shifted over time? Recent controversies concerning sex trafficking and underage prostitution will also be addressed, as will the effects of various regulatory schemes that have been developed around the world.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

**SOC256 Sex Work and Sex Trafficking: Empowerment, Exploitation, and the Politics of Sex**

This course explores the history, politics, and social meaning of sex work. Focusing particularly but not exclusively upon prostitution, we will pay careful attention to the diverse range of social experiences that form sex work, as well as the way in which prostitution is used as a governing metaphor within sexual relations more generally. Some questions the course will consider: How has sex work changed over time, and what do these changes tell us about both the nature of sex work and about the broader society? In what ways is sex work similar to or different from other forms of service labor or other types of intimate relationship? How do questions of race, class, sexuality, and gender alter the meaning and experience of sex work? What sorts of desires and expectations do clients bring to interactions with sex workers, and in what ways have these shifted over time? Recent controversies concerning sex trafficking and underage prostitution will also be addressed, as will the effects of various regulatory schemes that have been developed around the world.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: FGSS256
Prereq: SOC151

**SOC259 Cultural Studies of Health**

Nothing is more fundamental to the human condition than our most basic right—the right to healthy life. Tragically, this right is inequitably distributed across human bodies and populations, especially along axes of race, gender, class, age, and nationality. In fact, persons residing in the U.S. do not have a right to healthy life. Issues of health and illness are, quite literally, matters of life and death that are shaped by broader political and economic institutions in human societies. In neoliberal nation states like the U.S., the guardian of the right to live a healthy life is a highly bureaucratic and technological form of corporate medicine. Medicine comprises a network of social institutions and technoscientific practices that people have created and use to diagnose and heal our bodily and psychic ills. While the practice of medicine has produced dramatic improvements in life expectancy and quality of life for billions of people, most people on the planet do not have access to basic medical care. Who thrives, who gets sick, who dies, and why constitute core questions for social justice.

This course investigates the complex embroidery of biosocial and cultural processes that shape the unequal experiences and meanings of health. Cultural studies of health document the role of medicine as a great instrument of power that both generates and alleviates suffering. As more and more areas of social life and parts of bodies are falling under the control of medicine (a process called medicalization), we must ask, What are the dynamics and implications of medicalization for human societies and cultures? Drawing on provocative readings and media from diverse fields in sociology and cultural studies of science, technology, and medicine, this course will investigate these questions and more with an emphasis on the answers to them might contribute to social justice and improve the conditions necessary for human thriving.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SISP
Identical With: SISP262
Prereq: None

**SOC260 Sound and Screen**

This course explores contemporary developments in the study of media, focusing on three primary areas—music, video games, and the Internet—that depart from and sometimes challenge earlier frameworks rooted in visual and narrative forms. In the first unit of the course, we will examine the relation of music to identity formation, as well as revisit media scholars’ longstanding interest in questions of meaning in light of music’s particular characteristics. In the second unit of the course, we will investigate the social dimensions of video game play, focusing on the often-overlooked seriousness of play and on the unique properties of games as rule-bound systems. In the third unit, we will review and ‘unpack’ some of the social, psychological, economic, and bodily transformations thought to be instigated by Internet use. Overall, the course aims to revisit sociologists’ and media scholars’ preoccupation with power, inequality, freedom, autonomy, and agency in light of the contemporary prevalence and particular characteristics of sonic and interactive media.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

**SOC266 The Social Life of Data**

All over the world, actions, feelings, and thoughts are becoming data. Divining future desires and anxieties, promiscuous digital networks collect and collate a wide variety of everyday data, marking populations as risky or profitable. Participation in these networks is frequently mandatory in order to access a wide variety of political, social, and economic opportunities. Even if you manage to delete your account or withdraw from these networks, digital systems leave ghostly activity traces or zombie profiles waiting to come back to life. The rise of these data systems offers profound sociological and philosophical challenges to how we understand social life, power, control, memory, conscious thought, and even the nature of humanity and the environment.

This course engages with the impact of data infrastructures and digital technologies in a non-deterministic fashion, which is to say that technical systems and structures, while powerful, do not fully determine social possibility. Focusing on historical, established, and emergent data systems, we look to understand technology as a field of affordance and prohibition, with feelings, thoughts, and politics dynamically interacting with rapidly modulating standards, norms, and methods. Course themes address a variety of theoretical topics that have been central to the social study of science and technology, including the efficacy of critique in encountering information processing systems.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC269 Bad Sex
In a 2003 op-ed in support of same-sex marriage, conservative New York Times columnist David Brooks writes, ‘Anybody who has several sexual partners in a year is committing spiritual suicide. He or she is ripping the veil from all that is private and delicate in oneself, and pulverizing it in an assembly line of selfish sensations.’ Brooks is far from alone in this critique of promiscuity. What is it about ‘casual encounters’ and hookup culture that so disturbs? Why is sex a magnet for anxieties about selfishness and irresponsibility? Why do we think of anonymity and intimacy in sex as mutually exclusive? What do we make of desires that are politically troubling? On what basis are particular forms of sex and sexuality vilified or valued? Is love the antidote to sexual hedonism, or hedonism in disguise? This course will consider widespread cultural anxieties about sex, sexuality, desire, and pleasure from sociological and psychoanalytic perspectives.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC270 Urban Societies
This course is a study of the social construction of the city focused primarily on the U.S. context. It examines various themes related to the development of modern cities beginning with the consolidation of capitalism during the industrial revolution. The class will consider the distinct experience of urban life as opposed to other modes of existence, or what Louis Wirth calls ‘Urbanism as a Way of Life.’ In addition, students will look at forms of stratification such as race and class inequality and their relationship to spatial issues such as suburbanization and revitalization. Also considered are contemporary issues such as globalization, the revival or renewal process of many American cities, environmental issues, as well as the effect of new media on how we conceptualize the city. All of this will be done by focusing on the relationship between individual experiences and the effect of the urban environment on issues of identity construction and interpersonal relations. In order to develop critical thinking and engagement around these urban issues, the course emphasizes weekly writings and class participation in development towards a final paper.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC284 Memory and Violence
This course offers historical, theoretical, and empirical perspectives to the study of personal and collective violence and memory. We will examine the intersections of biography, history, and memory in reference to traumatic events, ranging from personal abuse to mass atrocity. The course focuses on issues around memory—from memorialization and truth commissions to memoir and PTSD—in the aftermath of various types of violence. The central questions about the nature and politics of memory following traumatic events will entail conversations about the construction of personal and collective identities and the complexities of justice and healing.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC292 Death and Dying at the End of the World
Death looms large over life. The digital has given people unprecedented access to global media focused on death and dying, from far-flung calamities killing thousands to intimate gofundme pages for your friends’ cancer treatments. In an age of data-enabled prediction and preemption, death is capricious and untimely, remaining stubbornly resistant to scientific and philosophical certainty, despite ever more complex systems for death management. Meanwhile, circulating discourses of ecological and political catastrophe have proliferated thoughts of genocide, extinction, and planetary death. In this course, we look at contemporary encounters with death and dying at a variety of scales, from the search for death’s meaning/a meaningful death, to understanding death as a public feeling and inspiration for political imagination.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC293 Pleasure and Power: The Sociology of Sexuality
This course seeks to denaturalize some of what are often the most taken-for-granted aspects of daily life: our bodies and genders, our erotic desires, and our sexual identities. To this end, this course will provide a critical-historical overview of dominant Euro-American understandings of sexuality and their embodied legacies.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: FGSS293, AMST294
Prereq: SOC151

SOC299 The Future Perfect
Sociology is typically preoccupied with the present and, to a lesser extent, the past, favoring empirical methods that aim to reveal a variety of truths: for example, the logics underlying social structures and systems, the causes of social inequality, and the mechanisms by which inequality is reproduced. Where does this leave the future? Despite the persistence of patterns of social life, the future remains always and ultimately undetermined. We cannot know it; we can only imagine, speculate, and fantasize. The future, it seems, belongs to the world of fiction: to novels, films, television shows, and music that offer visions of what it might hold. These visions are sometimes suffused with hope for a changed world and sometimes with anxiety at the prospect of change. What can we learn about the present from images of the future? Might they offer an antidote to suspicions that we are headed toward a future of increased inequality and scarcity and looming environmental catastrophe? What traps might we find ourselves in when we treat the future as a distinct category of time? This course pairs social theory with works of fiction in addressing these questions.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151 AND SOC212

SOC300 Queer and Trans Aesthetics
The seminar aims to develop intersectional frameworks for analyzing the artistic production of five artists who will be participating in a Trans* Revolutions symposium at the Center for the Humanities this spring: Tourmaline (film); Vick Quezada (photography, sculpture, film, and performance); Elliot Montague (film); Texas Isaiah (photography); and Emma Frankland (performance). We will also contextualize their work in relation to other artists, such as Ana Mendieta; Rotimi Fani-Kayode; Elle Pérez; Sandie Yi; Isaac Julien; Vaginal Davis; Kent Monkman; Martine Guiterrez; Felix Gonzalez-Torres; Juliana Huxtable; Laura Aguilar; Untitled Queen; and Wu Tsang. For the primary assignment, students will have two options: 1) a research paper on one or more of the participating artists or
another relevant artist; or, 2) a creative project (e.g., artwork, performance, poetry) in dialogue with the seminar’s topics. Students also will have the opportunity to engage the symposium’s featured artists during their visit.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: FGSS331, THEA311, AFAM331, AMST326
Prereq: None

SOC302 Paternalism and Social Power
This course will consider the construction of caring and helping in the structuring of social relations. What does helping entail? How does power operate in the velvet glove? What, if anything, lies beyond paternalism? How does social change occur? Competing perspectives on paternalism from within social and political theory will be considered as vehicles for tracing power dynamics in a survey of U.S. social formations related to family, gender, sexuality, race, labor, class, medicine, criminal justice, religion, environmentalism, and international relations.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC307 Authenticity and Its Others
This course will examine scholarly and popular conceptions of authenticity and inauthenticity. How do notions of authenticity function within contemporary culture? What are the various inauthentic others to which authenticity is juxtaposed?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC308 Baby Got Back: Embodiment, Gender, and Sexuality in Black Music
This multimedia course uses a sociocultural approach to explore how black bodies continue to be sized, classed, sexed, and gendered through black musical expression. We will examine black music as a cultural object, both embedded in and responsible for steering national cultures, to argue that black music is indeed a lens through which to examine the struggles, contradictions, and triumphs of black peoples in the U.S. and abroad. Connecting theoretical frameworks of race, embodiment, socioeconomic status, gender, and sexuality with: (1) visual cultures of black bodies in motion (stemming from minstrelsy and chitlin’ circuits to musicals and music videos) and (2) a variety of songs written, produced, and/or performed by black musicians (that include but are not limited to: the blues, jazz, rock and roll, rhythm & blues, soul, afrobeat, hip hop, dancehall, pop, soca, hip life, and reggaeton), this class will seek to interrogate how black music creates, replicates, regulates, packages, and distributes identity through a paradigm of production and consumption. We will discuss topics such as commodification, resistance, and representation while listening to artists such as Nina Simone, Sir Mix-A-Lot, Las Cruudas, former 2 Live Crew member Luke, Biggie Smalls, Mr. Killa, De La Soul, Lil’ Kim, Outkast, Jill Scott, Ayisoba, Big Freedia, Alison Hinds, Nicki Minaj, and Fela Kuti to attempt to understand exactly what type of power (and magic) that music possesses.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC309 America’s Lure: The Politics of the Transnational US University
Over the course of the last decade the number of international students traveling to the United States has more than doubled. As of 2016, over a million students travel annually to U.S. campuses. In popular culture, governmental rhetoric, and statements from university administrators, this movement has been ascribed to the ‘lure’ of American institutions of higher education and the knowledge, prestige, and futures they are thought to provide access to while simultaneously providing evidence of the successful internationalization of the U.S. university. Students will engage queer, feminist, postcolonial, indigenous, and critical race studies as we historicize and theorize this phenomenon while grappling with the transnational dynamics of the U.S. university from its founding as a central institution of settler colonialism in the 17th century through to the current moment of the so-called global, neoliberal university.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC313 Time, Masks, Mirrors: Aging in America
Longevity is almost universally wished for, but its actual accomplishment may also invite fear, even dread, depending on the context in which it occurs. We will study the socio-cultural meanings of aging in the US as they are informed by history (collective and personal), cultural background, social scripts, caregiving relationships, institutional support/constraint, and current conceptualizations of the life course and the ‘aging’ mind and body that often rely heavily on categorization and vocabulary associated with biomedicine. In addition, we will explore the idea of age in relation to sustainability and disposability as it is applied to dwellings, objects, the natural environment, and even persons. Enrolled students will be introduced to qualitative methods and analysis of qualitative data through conducting a series of interviews with an elder living in the local community that focus on the relationship between place and well-being over the life course, culminating in a record that can be shared with others.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC315 The Health of Communities
Our focus will be on understanding the role of social factors (e.g., income, work environment, social cohesion, food, transportation systems) in determining the health risks of individuals; considering the efficacy, appropriateness, and ethical ramifications of various public health interventions; and learning about the contemporary community health center model of care in response to the needs of vulnerable populations. We explore the concept and history of social medicine, the importance of vocabulary and the complexity of any categorization of persons in discussions of health and illness, ethical issues related to the generation and utilization of community-based research, the role of place and the importance of administrative and cultural boundaries in the variability of health risk, and the idea of just health care. Enrolled students serve as research assistants to preceptors at the Community Health Center (CHC) of Middletown.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.25
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: SISP315
Prereq: None

SOC316 Community Research Seminar
Small teams of students will carry out research projects submitted by local community groups and agencies. These may involve social science, natural science, or arts and humanities themes. The first two weeks of the course will be spent studying the theory and practice of community research. Working with the
community groups themselves, the teams will then design and implement the research projects.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.50
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: ENV5316
Prereq: None

SOC319 Theories of Capitalism

Capitalism has profoundly shaped world history, acting as one of the primary drivers of social change, and working to shape a tremendous variety of social institutions ranging from colonialism to our sense of time. This course takes a critical approach to the study of capitalism, looking at the ways capitalism has intersected with and transformed the nature of social oppression (particularly in relation to nation, race, gender, and sexuality), as well as the ways it works to shape everyday consciousness. Historical changes within capitalism will be explored, considering particularly the rise of corporate capitalism and of contemporary neoliberalism. We will examine a wide variety of theoretical approaches to capitalism, taking Marx’s thought as a jumping-off point for elaboration and critique. We will conclude by considering alternatives to capitalism that have been proposed in both historical and contemporary contexts, together with an examination of practical efforts to implement these possibilities.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Identical With: AMST309
Prereq: SOC151 OR AMST174 OR AMST178

SOC320 Life and Death: Relations of Biopower and Necropower

This seminar is an advanced examination of how science and technology shape the politics of life and death. We will consider how science and technology have become handmaidens to human (and, in some cases, not human) life and death, impacting the social, legal, and ethical frameworks we use to define what constitutes the embodied, relational, and conceptual space between ‘alive’ and ‘dead.’ Using theories of biopower and necropower as our guides, we will cover a diverse set of themes including sexual reproduction, birth, population, toxicity, decay, genocide, mortality, and the afterlife as they intersect with modern institutions of power. We will ask, How can we better understand the ways in which social institutions and actors deploy sciences and technologies to foster health or manufacture death?

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SISP
Identical With: SISP320
Prereq: None

SOC321 Disgusting? Revolting!

Who or what do we find utterly repugnant? Are we the nasty, vile ones? Is it possible that we are unconsciously attracted to that which disgusts us? What might it take to turn disgust into desire, and vice versa? In what ways might disgust indicate not only disruption or transgression, but some kind of threat and alternative to the status quo? What might be lost or gained when the disgusting clean up their acts, or are shown to have been respectable all along? In this course we will explore the politics of filth, particularly in terms of the desires, attitudes, identities, and behaviors that elicit disgust. We will consider how disgust infuses political ideology—i.e., how people understand and approach the social groups that disgust them (for example, racialized immigrants, queers, fat people, and drug addicts), but also the wealthy, the privileged, the ‘basket of deplorables.’ We will also explore the psychoanalytic relation of disgust to desire.

Offering: Crosslisting

Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM328
Prereq: None

SOC322 The Sociology of Nina Simone

An artist, activist, and visionary, Nina Simone possessed both a talent and political platform that continues to permeate discussions inside and outside the walls of academia. Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon, Simone was trained as a classical pianist that would eventually travel the world to perform music that encompassed the struggles of black life. This course acknowledges that her music, with pieces such as ‘Mississippi Goddam’ and ‘To Be Young, Gifted and Black’ undoubtedly made social, cultural, and political contributions to American society. However, much of Simone’s personal life, including her battles with racism, sexism, and mental illness, as well as her relationships with her contemporaries, like Lorraine Hansberry and Miriam Makeba, is often eclipsed by and not considered alongside with her body of work. This course will examine Nina Simone as a whole person, wrought with contradictions, that poured her life experiences into her music, often at the expense of her own success. This class will: sociologically examine the emergence of such a person by interrogating the social environments that impacted her views on social justice; deploy black feminist and womanist analytical frameworks to deeply understand how white supremacist capitalist patriarchy may have taken a toll on Simone’s career, but ignited her passion to speak truth to power; and utilize cultural and sociological paradigms of framing, stratification, and symbolic interaction to fully understand the sociology of Nina Simone.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC323 ‘Racing’ Across Africa

Is Africa post-racial? Have you wondered how someone becomes Black/African, white, ethnic, and/or its implicit hierarchies, which scholars refer to as racialization? When you think about race and racism, does Post-Independence (PI) Africa come to mind? If not, why is PI Africa removed from our understanding of race? How can we think about Africa today as always undergoing processes of racial imperialism and how does it intersect with sexuality, gender, and class? Lastly, how do we conceptualize Post-Independence Africa in relation to the African diaspora?

We will go from Ghana to Kenya, Nigeria to South Africa, to understand how race is articulated in these spaces during colonization and after formal colonization has ended. We will also gain theoretical language needed to refute raceless logic. These processes will help us recognize why PI Africa is perpetually marginalized within a globally racialized capitalist economy. This course will contribute to thinking about forms of solidarity in our own lives toward visions of decoloniality, equity, and justice for those racialized as Black, especially in Africa.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: None

SOC326 Race, Fantasy and Fetish

What role do fantasy and fetish play in the making and unmaking of race? How might fantasy and fetish disrupt and reinforce power differentials in surprising or unexpected ways? From comic book heroes to ‘race play’, this course explores how bodies, relationships, and space itself are fetishized in the racial imagination. It moves beyond the basic observation that race is socially constructed to consider how fantasy, desire, and fetish render such constructions volatile and spectacular, yet also banal and predictable.
We will discuss the historical and social context of race as both imagined and imaginary in relation to western fantasies of the self and object others. This course draws on texts from race, queer, and postcolonial theory, along with popular material, including fantasy fiction and film, to highlight the fantastical underpinnings of the everyday realities of racial difference.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: SOC151 AND SOC240

SOC350 Sociology of Knowledge
This course provides a survey of the sociology of knowledge, a subfield of sociology that investigates how social structures shape the production of knowledge and how knowledge, in turn, shapes society.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SISP
Identical With: SISP350
Prereq: None

SOC352 Race, Immigration, and the U.S. Empire
Did we all enter this country on equal grounds? How do our racialized ethnicities, immigration histories, gender, sexuality, and class impact our position in the United States? When you think about immigration, do black immigrants come to mind? This course provides an overview of critical assessments of immigrant communities within the U.S. empire. Theories of institutional racism, white supremacy, and ethnic fallacies are placed at the center of the conceptual framework of the course. Its aim is to demystify immigrant success narratives by relaying the historical, legal, political, and capitalist structures that affect access to upward mobility for immigrant groups and their descendants. Students will learn how black American, black immigrant, Latinx, Asian, indigenous, white eastern European, and white western European communities (including white colonial oppressors), and those at the intersection are grafted within an anti-black, global racial hierarchy that informs their current position in a settler-colonial empire.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC

SOC399J Adv. Res. Sem: The Hair Class
Hair does things. It covers and exposes us. We pluck, conceal, wax, curl, and otherwise manage it. Its presence and absence serve as sites of critical engagement, personal and cultural expression, and political strife. This course will introduce students to the emerging field of critical university studies through a feminist, queer, and anti-racist frame. What, we will ask, does it look like to think in and about the university at this historical moment? What does it mean to consider the university's history in relationship to power and the nation-state? What are the gender, sexual, class, and racial politics of knowledge production? And how can we most productively take up the university itself as an object of scholarly inquiry?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC

Prereq: SOC151

SOC399H Advanced Research Seminar: Hot Mamas: Black Women, Sexuality, and Body Size
Black women, no matter where they were born or currently live in the world, deploy survival strategies that propel them past perceived deviances and into discursive spaces of dynamic personhood. This is especially true for fat black women and how they navigate their respective identities in the areas of social, physical, and mental health; socioeconomic status; and beauty culture. In this class, we will interrogate these areas alongside blackness, womanhood, and sexuality to fully consider the implications of body size as a substantial category of intersectional analysis. By bringing medical and sociological studies into conversations with political and feminist theory, while also engaging with literary pieces and popular culture, this interdisciplinary course aims to equip all of us with a deeper understanding of sexuality and body size and their significance in the lives of black women. We will journey our way through this course using the works of black feminists such as Patricia Hill Collins, theorists such as Michel Foucault, sociologists such as Samantha Kwan, political scientists such as Cathy Cohen, lawyers such as Dorothy Roberts and Paul Campos, and writers such as Lucille Clifton and Alice Walker. In addition, we will bring our lived experiences and proximity to popular culture (magazines, music, films, and online resources such as personal blogs) to stake out our own truths and fill out any gaps that we believe are present in the literature. The class will mix lecture, class discussion, group presentations, and small-group work to advance mastery of the material.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC399I Advanced Research Seminar: Assembling the Self
This advanced research seminar is open to sociology majors in their senior year or in the second semester of their junior year and fulfills the capstone requirement for the major. The course is divided in two halves. In the first half, we will read a variety of autoethnographic texts, in which the authors use personal experience as a foundation for sociological reflection and insight. We will spend time thinking about the political and methodological benefits and limitations of autoethnography, surveying a range of approaches to incorporating one’s experience into scholarship, and attending to the ways that autoethnographic texts respond to existing research and theory. In the second half of the class, students will develop a substantial and original autoethnographic essay, with class sessions focused on workshop and presenting writing in progress.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC399G Advanced Research Seminar: Introduction to Critical University Studies
The university is in crisis, or so we are often told. With college and university budgets rapidly shrinking, tuition and student debt are increasing exponentially, especially for women and students of color. And yet, we’re here. Students, instructors, and staff continue to look to the university as a productive space for thinking and working. As an academic field dedicated to a collective engagement with the ways power constitutes bodies, knowledge, and ways of being in the world, sociology is a key venue for contending with these processes. This course will introduce students to the emerging field of critical university studies through a feminist, queer, and anti-racist frame. What, we will ask, does it look like to think in and about the university at this historical moment? What does it mean to consider the university’s history in relationship to power and the nation-state? What are the gender, sexual, class, and racial politics of knowledge production? And how can we most productively take up the university itself as an object of scholarly inquiry?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC

Prereq: SOC151

SOC399K Advanced Research Seminar: Assembling the Self
This advanced research seminar is open to sociology majors in their senior year or in the second semester of their junior year and fulfills the capstone requirement for the major. The course is divided in two halves. In the first half, we will read a variety of autoethnographic texts, in which the authors use personal experience as a foundation for sociological reflection and insight. We will spend time thinking about the political and methodological benefits and limitations of autoethnography, surveying a range of approaches to incorporating one’s experience into scholarship, and attending to the ways that autoethnographic texts respond to existing research and theory. In the second half of the class, students will develop a substantial and original autoethnographic essay, with class sessions focused on workshop and presenting writing in progress.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151

SOC399I Advanced Research Seminar: Assembling the Self
This advanced research seminar is open to sociology majors in their senior year or in the second semester of their junior year and fulfills the capstone requirement for the major. The course is divided in two halves. In the first half, we will read a variety of autoethnographic texts, in which the authors use personal experience as a foundation for sociological reflection and insight. We will spend time thinking about the political and methodological benefits and limitations of autoethnography, surveying a range of approaches to incorporating one’s experience into scholarship, and attending to the ways that autoethnographic texts respond to existing research and theory. In the second half of the class, students will develop a substantial and original autoethnographic essay, with class sessions focused on workshop and presenting writing in progress.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-SOC
Prereq: SOC151
Critical university studies, and the popular cultural imaginary are predicated upon an often romanticized and fundamentally limited geographic and historical understanding of the work of colleges and universities. In response, the course cultivates a more capacious conceptualization of the historical and contemporary function of the university as a social form. In taking up abolitionism as both a method and critical analytic, the course will challenge students to imagine the revolutionary possibilities of an abolition university that aligns itself with movements beyond the institution, while reflecting on the particular importance and challenge of enacting such a vision in our current political moment.

**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-CHUM  
**Identical With:** AMST270, FGSS311  
**Prereq:** None

**SOC401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**  
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** OPT

**SOC402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**  
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** OPT

**SOC403 Department/Program Project or Essay**  
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F

**SOC404 Department/Program Project or Essay**  
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F

**SOC405 Sociology Thesis Seminar**  
The purpose of the seminar is to help senior sociology majors develop their senior thesis projects by introducing them to the conceptual challenges and practical problems of sociological research. The seminar meetings will be devoted primarily to helping students advance their own research projects.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** Amp Graded  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-SOC  
**Prereq:** (SOC151 AND SOC212 AND SOC202)

**SOC406 Sociology Thesis Seminar**  
The purpose of the seminar is to help senior sociology majors develop their senior thesis projects by introducing them to the conceptual challenges and practical problems of sociological research. The seminar meetings will be devoted primarily to helping students advance their own research projects.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F  
**Credits:** 1.00  
**Gen Ed Area:** SBS-SOC  
**Prereq:** (SOC151 AND SOC212 AND SOC202)

**SOC407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)**  
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.  
**Offering:** Host  
**Grading:** A-F

**SOC408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)**  
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.  
**Offering:** Host
SOC409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC419 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

SOC420 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

SOC420A Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U

SOC465 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC466 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC469 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

SOC492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT