

The Sociology Capstone Course for Outstanding Majors: The Sociology of Emotion

Course: SYA 4930
Spring 2008
Time: T 11-2pm
Building/Room: 519 Bellamy

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Description: I'm very excited about teaching this capstone course for outstanding sociology majors. This capstone course will provide an opportunity for you to synthesize and integrate the knowledge you gained about sociology from your previous courses, while learning about the exciting field of the sociology of emotion. Although most of us think that feelings are deeply personal and private experiences comprised of physiological and psychological elements, sociologists argue that they're heavily influenced by *social* factors. In this seminar, we'll explore the social side of emotion—including how emotions are socially shaped, learned, regulated, controlled, and patterned (i.e., social distributed in the U.S. population) as well as the consequences of emotion norms, emotion management, emotional labor, and emotional deviance for individuals, social groups, and society. Over the semester, we'll read and discuss five books. Three books focus on specific emotions (love, sympathy, and denial) while the other two books focus on various aspects of emotion—including emotion culture and emotion work in the family, workplace, and a volunteer search and rescue organization. In addition to the 5 books, we'll read a few journal articles and discuss the ways in which children learn norms about culturally appropriate emotions, the emotional expectations that students confront in medical school, the emotion work that disabled persons do in their everyday lives, and whether there are gender differences in the experience and expression of emotion in the U.S.

Throughout the semester we'll also view and discuss several films, which illustrate different aspects of emotion that we'll be reading about. Additionally, you'll also have the opportunity to apply your knowledge about sociology in general, and the sociology of emotion in particular, in a small research project on an aspect of emotion in which you're particularly interested. We'll talk about potential research projects for you to consider in the first part of the course; you will conduct your research during the second part of the course. Because this is a capstone course, I will *not* lecture. Instead, this course will be a seminar, which means that during our weekly meetings we'll discuss readings (including their strengths and limitations) and ponder questions for future sociological research on emotion. My goals for you are threefold: (a) develop an appreciation of sociological theory and research on the social causes and consequences of emotion; (b) integrate and synthesize your knowledge about sociology while applying it to your own research on emotion; and (c) further develop your analytic, speaking, and writing skills.

The success of the seminar depends on your active participation; with your active involvement, this class will be fun and a great learning experience. Because this course emphasizes the strength of sociological analysis for understanding all aspects of social life—including those that are highly personal and private such as emotion—this learning experience will hopefully inspire you to consider graduate school in sociology.

Requirements: You'll be expected to complete the following 7 course requirements: (1) read all assigned material each week prior to coming to class; (2) hand in a typed question that you had about the reading for that week at the beginning of each class; (3) write 5 short (2 page) summary-reaction papers based on the 5 books that we'll read as a class; (4) submit a short (1 page) description of the research project you're considering, (5) write and present a 10 page seminar paper based on your own research on emotion; (6) actively participate in seminar discussions on a regular basis; and (7) conduct yourselves in a professional manner, which includes *regularly attending class, regularly arriving to class on-time, and being respectful to me and the other students.* The short papers will constitute 50% of your course grade (10% each), the final seminar research paper and your class presentation of it will count towards 30% of your final grade, and 20% of your final course grade will be determined by your weekly questions and class participation.

Required Books:

- (1) Cancian, Francesca. 1987. *Love in America: Gender & Self-Development*. N.Y.: Cambridge University.
- (2) Clark, Candace. 1997. *Misery & Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- (3) Hochschild, Arlie. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. CA: University of California.
- (4) Lois, Jennifer. 2003. *Heroic Efforts: The Emotional Culture of Search & Rescue Volunteers*. NY: NYU.
- (5) Zerubavel, Eviatar. 2006. *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday Life*. NY: Oxford.

(1) Readings: There are five **required** (not optional) books for the seminar, which you should purchase. All of the books should be available at both Bill's and the University Bookstore. You could also get them through Amazon. There are also a few required readings from journal articles that will be available on Blackboard that's been set up for the course. You're required to read **all** of the assigned book chapters (and journal articles) **before** coming to class each week since they're the basis of our class discussions and your weekly questions and biweekly summary/reaction papers. To keep the workload for this seminar reasonable, you'll read each book over a two-week period; I have assigned 3-4 book chapters per week. Although the summary/reaction papers for each book are due every other week, I expect that you'll do the reading assigned for each week, even when a paper is not due. **Please be aware that I'll routinely ask each of you your thoughts and opinions about the readings each time we meet so make sure you do the reading each week.**

(2) Questions: Each week, you'll submit one **thoughtful** question you had about the reading for that week. Your question may be about anything pertaining to the reading, including some aspect of the author's argument that you found confusing, terms or concepts that you didn't understand, some aspect of the research that you're uncertain about (e.g., the data or methods used in the study), your lack of clarity about the substantive issues the study focused on, or additional issues you feel the author left unanswered. I'll collect your **typed** questions at the **beginning** of each class and we'll try as a group to answer them. Make sure your name appears on the question since they'll count toward your course final grade. These questions are an important thinking exercise and will be the basis of our weekly discussions; you'll submit a total of 12 questions over the semester.

(3) Short Summary/Reaction Papers: Over the semester, you will write **5 short (no longer than 2 page) double-spaced typed** papers on the books we read and discuss as a class. These short papers will consist of a **1 page summary** of the author's main point about emotion (which should include definitions of key concepts, a brief discussion of the data used in the study and main research findings) as well as a **1 page reaction** to the book (which should include a brief discussion of what **you think** are its strengths and limitations, including the book's substantive insights into emotion, the data and methods used in the research, and/or unexamined or unanswered issues). The purpose of these papers is to help you think critically about substantive, conceptual, and methodological issues involved in sociological research on emotion. I'll collect your papers at the beginning of the class and return them to you with detailed comments the following week. I'll evaluate these papers with letter grades ranging from an A (which indicates that the paper is particularly thoughtful, insightful, articulate, and well-written), a B (which indicates a good but not great essay), a C (which indicates a satisfactory but not particularly strong paper), a D (which indicates a lack of preparation or an overly short or long, unfocused, careless, underdeveloped, and poorly written essay), or an F (which indicates that you did not do the reading). I ask that you **not exceed 2 pages** for this assignment and use a **12 point font with 1 inch margins**. Since I'm as interested in **your reactions** to the readings as in your summaries of the material, make sure that you include **your own** assessment of **both** its strengths and weaknesses. I strongly advise you to **reread** your papers before submitting them since they will be graded and a well-written paper is a well-thought out paper. Finally, read over **my** comments on your papers because they're intended to help you improve your thinking and writing over the semester. I'll look for (and reward you on) your improvement on these papers over the semester; the five papers count towards 50% of your final grade. Please make sure that you turn in **stapled hard copies** of your papers in class. Unless I've granted prior permission, I don't accept e-versions of your papers.

Some Questions to Think About When Preparing Your Short Summary/Reaction Papers:

- (a) What's the author's main point about emotion? What's his or her general argument? Do you think this an important issue for furthering our understanding of emotion? Explain why. What are the main concepts discussed in the reading? What's the author's main question or hypothesis?
- (b) What types of data and methods are used to illustrate or test the main questions or hypotheses? In your opinion, what are the strengths and limitations of the data and methods used in this research? Again, explain why.
- (c) What are the main findings of the research? Do you think these are important and/or surprising findings and, if so, why? Do these findings shed light on emotion processes? What are the insights of the research?
- (d) Finally, what are the implications of this article for future research on emotion? In other words, what existing questions remain unanswered and what new questions does this book raise?

(4) Short Description of your Research Project: You will turn in a 1 page description of your research project on *October 21st*. I'll give you extensive feedback on your proposed project before you embark on it.

(5) Seminar Research Paper: You will *write* a ***no longer than 10 page*** research paper, which will count toward 30 percent of your final course grade. This paper should be in a ***12 point font using 1 inch margins*** and should include a title page with your name (note that the title page doesn't count toward the 10 pages). The purpose of this paper is for you to get first hand experience conducting sociological research on any aspect of emotion (broadly defined) that interests you. Throughout the semester we'll read research that uses a variety of different methods of research to study various aspects of emotion—including *participant observation, in-depth interviews, surveys, and/or content analysis*. You may choose any one of these methods to study any topic related to emotion, but you should speak with me first about your intended topic to make sure it's doable by the end of the semester. You'll present a no longer than 5 minute description of your paper on the last day of class.

Your papers and your presentations of them will be educational and fun; some possible topics include: socioeconomic status, race, ethnic, or gender differences in students' feelings about any issue (e.g., politics, work, friendship, romantic relationships), the emotion culture of some group you're interested in (e.g., any organization or sports group on or off campus), emotional socialization for love, anger, or another emotion.

Your Research Papers Should Include the Following Elements:

- (a) Provide a clear introduction to your paper, which consists of a discussion of what emotion (or aspect of emotion) you studied and why ***you*** think this is an important topic for sociological research.
- (b) Clearly state your main research question or hypothesis. Also describe the method of data collection you used in your research to examine your question or hypothesis as well as your sample.
- (c) Discuss the main findings of your research as they relate to your original research question or hypothesis. Also indicate whether or not your "hunch" (or hypothesis) was supported by your data.
- (d) Finally, provide a conclusion to your paper, including a brief discussion of what you learned in the process of conducting the research and where you think research on this topic needs to go next.

Further Notes on All Seminar Papers: First, I expect you to follow both the page and formatting requirements for each paper that you submit over the semester. You should include a title page with your name on all course papers but the title page doesn't count as a page. Unless you get prior permission from me, I'll downgrade students for exceeding the page limitations. Second, unless we talked about this ahead of time, I will ***not*** accept *e*-versions of your papers and you must turn in ***stapled hard copies*** of your papers to me on the day they're due. Finally, all of your papers—including the weekly summary/reaction papers, the short paper assignment, as well as the final course paper—should be in ***12 point font and should be formatted with one inch margins***.

(6) Student Participation: Undergraduate students at FSU rarely have an opportunity to take courses in which they're encouraged to regularly discuss their own views, opinions, thoughts, and ideas about material encountered in courses. In this course, you'll have such an opportunity. Because this is a capstone course for outstanding majors, I will run this course as a *seminar*, which means that I will not regularly lecture. Instead, the course will be based primarily on class discussions. Since this is a student rather than faculty driven course, your participation is, therefore, *essential* for the seminars success and I expect you to *regularly participate* in classroom discussions. Since there are only a small number of students in the seminar, I hope we'll together create a learning environment in which all of you'll feel free to express your own views, opinions, thoughts and ideas. Regular high quality class participation will be rewarded and will improve your final course grade.

(7) Professionalism: I expect all seminar members to *behave professionally* throughout the semester, which includes *regularly attending class, regularly arriving to class on time*, and *being respectful* to myself and all other members of the class. Please be aware that students will be downgraded for any form of unprofessional behavior. In extreme circumstances, students will be asked to leave the course and will receive an F.

Regular Attendance: This honors seminar meets only one time per week. Regular attendance is, therefore, crucial and *required*. I will take attendance each time we meet. If you cannot make it to class due to illness, you must contact me *before* class. I consider more than 2 absences to be poor attendance. Students who miss 3 class meetings will be downgraded; students who are absent more than 3 class periods will receive a failing grade for the course. Do not take this course if you do not plan on being in class each time we meet.

Being On Time for Class: Similarly, I expect you to arrive to class on time each time we meet. Coming to class late is distracting to me and the other students. Contact me in *advance* if you must arrive to class late and only do so if you have a legitimate reason. Once again, students will be downgraded for coming to class late.

Being Respectful : I expect that you'll behave respectfully to me and all of the students in the seminar. Reflecting different personal backgrounds as well as different personal and academic goals and interests, students who enroll in honors seminars typically have diverse opinions about issues. The diversity of students' views adds depth and richness to these honors seminars and is welcomed. Although you may not agree with one another on a number of issues, I insist that you are respectful of my own and each other's views and that all discussions are scholarly. Students who are not respectful will be removed from class and will receive an F.

Below are the due dates for each assignment and the breakdown of your course grade:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>% of Your Final Grade</u>	<u>Date Due</u>
Short Paper #1	10%	September 9
Short Paper #2	10%	September 23
Short Paper #3	10%	October 7
Short Paper #4	10%	October 21
1 Page Description of Your Final Project		October 21
Short Paper #5	10%	November 4
<i>Thanksgiving Break: No Class</i>		<i>November 25</i>
Seminar Research Paper & In-Class Paper Presentation	30%	December 2
Weekly Questions, Classroom Participation & Professionalism	20%	Every Week
	100%	

Office Hours: Please feel free to come by during my office hours to discuss any questions you may have about the course or simply to chat about your interests in emotion, gender, sociology, or anything else for that matter.

If you can't make it during my office hours, I'm happy to arrange another time when we could meet.

Blackboard Support: This course is supported by Blackboard, which allows for faster communication between course members. Please check Blackboard daily for course updates and announcements. The quickest way to contact me is through e-mail (rsimon@fsu.edu). I check e-mail several times a day.

Some Final Notes: In addition to my own policies for classroom comportment described above, you are expected to abide by the following policies that have been developed by the College of Social Sciences at FSU:

Academic Honor Policy: Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in The Florida State University General Bulletin . The Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of these expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Policy: <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>

Academic Dishonesty: Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor's discretion. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy (<http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf>).

Americans with Disabilities Act : Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities go to <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/> and contact:

Student Disability Resource Center
108 Student Services Bldg., Florida State University
(850)644-9566 (voice), (850)644-8504 (TDD)
E-mail: SDRC@admin.fsu.edu

Classroom Courtesy: Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. This means no cell phones, talking during lectures (unless recognized by the professor or discussion leader), reading newspapers, etc. during class. If you must have a cell phone to receive emergency calls about children or other family members, keep it on vibrate. See <http://www.e-soc.net/7/30/2006>.

Religious Holidays: Students will be allowed to miss class due to observance of religious holidays but they are still responsible for all materials assigned outside and covered in class on the day(s) missed. You must talk with your instructor in advance of missing a class for religious holiday observance reasons.

Excused Absences: The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused.

Incomplete Grades: Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The College of Social Science requires that students seeking an "I" must be passing the course.

Tentative Class Schedule

(Note that the class schedule is tentative and may be modified over the course of the semester. I'll keep you posted about any changes as soon as I'm aware of them through Blackboard.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
August 26	Introduction & Overview of the Course	
September 2	Feeling Rules & Emotion Management	Hochschild, <i>The Managed Heart</i> Chapters 1, 3, & 4
September 9	Emotion Management at the Work Place	Hochschild, <i>The Managed Heart</i> Chapters 6, 7, & 8

****First Book Summary Due at the End of Class on September 9***

September 16	Historical Changes in Love	Cancian, <i>Love in America</i> Chapters 1, 2, & 3
September 23	Gender & Love in our Culture	Cancian, <i>Love in America</i> Chapters 5, 7, & 8

****Second Book Summary Due at the End of Class on September 23***

September 30	Sympathy	Clark, <i>Misery & Company</i> Chapters 1, 2, & 3
October 7	Sympathy Etiquette & Sympathy as Social Exchange	Clark, <i>Misery & Company</i> Chapters 4, 5, & 6

****Third Book Summary Due at the End of Class on October 7***

October 14	The Emotion Culture of Search & Rescue Volunteers	Lois, <i>Heroic Efforts</i> Chapters 1, 2, & 3
October 21	Emotion Management among Rescuers, Victims, & Families	Lois, <i>Heroic Efforts</i> Chapters 4, 5, & 7

****Fourth Book Summary Due at the End of Class on October 21***

****The 1 page description of the topic you are considering for your research paper is due on October 21.***

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
October 28	The Rules, Politics, & Social Structure of Denial	Zerubavel, <i>Silence & Denial in Everyday Life</i> Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4
November 4	More on Denial	Zerubavel, <i>Silence & Denial in Everyday Life</i> Chapters 5, 6, & 7

Fifth Book Summary Due at the End of Class on November 4

*November 11	Emotional Socialization & Emotion Management	Smith & Kleinman, 1989. "Managing Emotions in Medical School: Students' Contacts with the Living and the Dead" <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 52: 56-69. Cahill & Eggleston. 1994. "Managing Emotion in Public: The Case of Wheelchair Users." <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 57: 300-312.
* November 18	Gender & Emotion	Simon, et al. 1992. "The Development of Feeling Norms Underlying Romantic Love Among Adolescent Females." <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 55: 29-46 Simon & Nath. 2004. "Gender & Emotion in the U.S.: Do Men & Women Differ in Self-Reports of Feelings & Expressive Behavior?" <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 109: 1137-1176.

November 25th No Class: Thanksgiving Break

December 2 Student Presentations of Final Research Paper

****Research Paper Due at the End of Class on December 2nd***

** Note that I have not asked you to write summary papers for these final two sets of readings so that you could instead work on your final research papers. I do, however, expect that you'll read these materials so that we could discuss them as a group. I also expect you to turn in a question about these two sets of readings as you did for the other readings. All of the articles are available on the blackboard that's been setup for the course.*