

COURSE INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
SOCI 4350-001 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
In-person Class Tu/Th 2:00PM - 3:20PM

SPRING 2025
Credit Hours 3
BLB 050

Professor / Instructor Contact Information

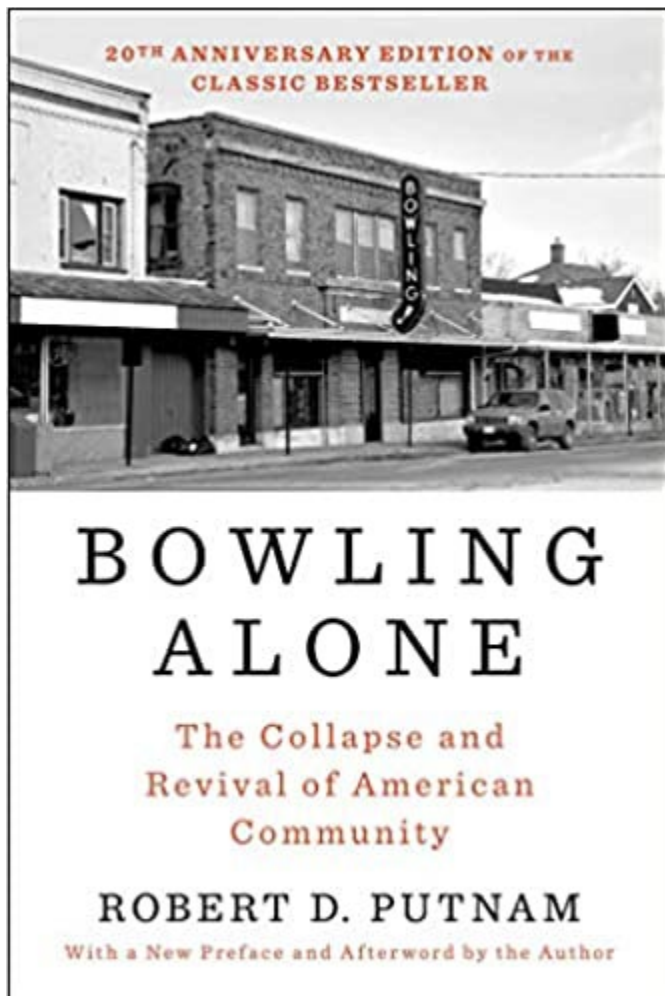
Milan Zafirovski, Professor
SYCAMORE 288G
Office hours Tuesday 3PM-5PM
Email address Milan.Zafirovski@unt.edu
Teaching Assistant information to be announced

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

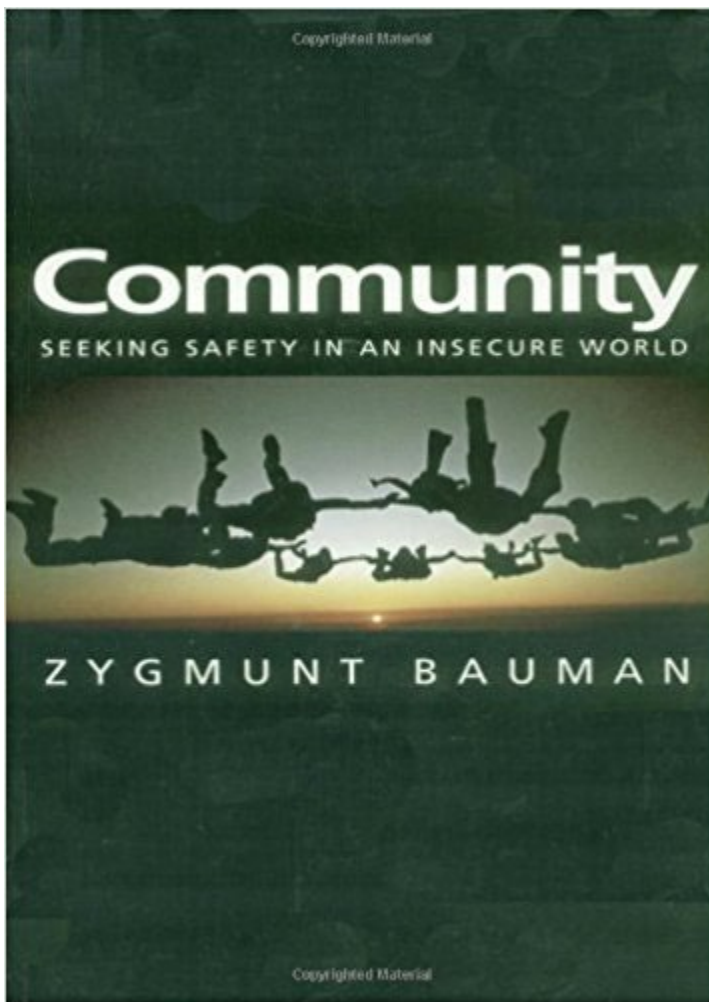
Pre-requisites None
Instructor permissions Not required

Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required materials/ textbook Robert Putnam. Bowling Alone: The Collapse And Revival Of American Community. 2020 edition. New York: Simon & Schuster. ISBN: 9781982130848



Supplementary readings (recommended). Bauman, Zygmunt. Community: Seeking Safety In An Insecure World. Cambridge: Polity Press (Blackwell Publishers). ISBN: 9780745626352.



Course Description

Description of general content of the course. This course provides an historical and sociological overview of community organization. More specifically, it applies a historical and sociological perspective on community organization in the United States. The course uses empirical evidence and theoretical concepts to analyze, and when necessary suggest solutions to, questions of community organization. Emphasis is placed on the real-life implications and applications of the frameworks for approaching community organization. Therefore, the course focuses on the history and sociology of American community since postwar times through the early 21st century, focusing on its observed decline and potential of its renewal during the last part of the 20th century, including the expansion and community impact of the Internet from 2000 to 2020 (see the last chapter of the textbook, Afterword: Has the Internet Reversed the Decline of Social Capital?). Above all, it provides a useful historical picture of how and why American community has developed during this specific time, specifically as its growth during postwar times of the 1940-60s and its relative decline during the following decades until the late 20th and early 21st century, including the time from 2000 to 2020 (see preface to the 2020 edition of the textbook). It will help students acquire an historical knowledge, appreciation, and sense of the development of American community in longer terms, combined with sociological and related concepts explaining this process.

Instructional methods. In general, the course combines sociological methods and concepts with empirical observations and facts to objectively examine issues in community organization, with an emphasis on American Community. Sociological methods, concepts, and data are used for the sake of a better understanding and explaining recent trends, i.e., decline and revival, in contemporary American communities. Specific instructional methods include in-person lectures presenting main

sociological concepts and empirical facts of community organization, especially American Community through course outlines, in-person discussions, and the like. The profile and perspective of this course is mostly sociological. Nonetheless, this sociological perspective on community organization will often be combined with those of other social sciences, especially anthropology, political science and history. In this regard, the course will have a thorough inter-disciplinary orientation, which is necessitated by the (multi-disciplinary) character—economic, political, historical, and cultural--of the subject of community organization. Given this orientation, the course can be interesting and challenging both for students with majors/minors in sociology and for those majoring in such social sciences as anthropology, history, political science, as well as psychology, economics, business, etc. However, the course is not limited to social-science students, but can also be of interest and use for those in the physical and other sciences. Preferably, students should possess some elementary preparation in sociology and related social sciences at the introductory level. Given its intermediate character, the course can serve as a stepping-stone for further studies of community organization on undergraduate as well as graduate levels.

Course Requirements

Exam Requirements

This course has simple exam requirements, namely objective exams that make the grading process as simply and objective as possible. In this course there will be three exams, including the first, midterm and final examination (see course schedule). The format of the exams will have short, clear multiple-choice questions (usually 50). The exams will be objective such to evaluate students' reading, knowledge, and grasp of the readings. Exam scores will be objectively generated and so will be the final grade. Therefore, there will be no subjective elements in how exam scores and the final grade are determined. The worth of each exam will be 100 points (maximum). Exams will be given and taken during the specified time period and with specific time limits (e.g., 75 minutes).

Failure to take an in-person exam, without proper documented justification, during the specified time period (see below) will result in a zero (0) score for the missed exam. If an exam is missed with documented justification during the specified period, make-up exams can be taken in-person (closed books and notes) in the UNT Department of Sociology no later than 2 days after the specified exam period. This applies only to the first two exams, but no final make-up exams will be given after the specified time period. Therefore, no incompletes will be given in case of a failure to take an exam during the specified time period without documented justification. The only basis for dispensing credits/grades is objective performance and merit. This ensures maximum fairness in grading. It is students' own responsibility for class notes, outlines, announcements, etc. The professor will be always and maximally available to students in-person and in office to address their queries and concerns.

Additional Course Requirements

Additional course requirements include quizzes, participation in class discussions and an optional assignment for extra-credits

Quizzes

Quizzes are given every week (see the weekly schedule in the last part of the syllabus) and cover the reading assignments for that week. Quizzes are required and provide additional points that will be added to and thus increase total exam scores. The format of quizzes will be short, clear multiple-choice questions (usually 4). Quizzes test students' reading, knowledge, and recall of the readings. Quiz scores will be objectively generated and there will be no subjective elements in how they are determined. The worth of each quiz will be 4 points (maximum) with a correct answer being worth 1 point. Quizzes will be given and taken in-person during the specified time and time limits (e.g., 15 minutes).

Discussions

Discussions will take place after lectures and discuss the reading assignments for the week. Discussions are also required and provide additional points that will be added to and increase exam scores. Discussions will take in groups during *each* class session and are worth 2 points per discussion, with a maximum total of 4 points.

Optional Assignment for Extra-Credits

A semester optional (not required) assignment or project consists of an extensive and in-depth review of supplementary reading, Zygmunt. Community: Seeking Safety in An Insecure World. Instructions for the review are writing between 4 and 10 full pages, double-spaced, font 12, margin 1, covering the entire reading, minus tables, numbers, and notes, extensively cite the reading, though the review should not be a full literal copy of the book. The completed review should be submitted by the due date specified below.

The review of supplementary reading is worth between 1 and 10 points depending on its quantity and qualify as specified below.

A review that is long less than 4 pages and without any book support such as citations or data is worth between 1 point.

A review that is long less than 4 pages and with book support such as citations or data is worth between 2 points.

A review that is long 4 pages and without any book support such as citations or data is worth 3 points.

A review that is long 4 pages and with book support such as multiple citations or data is worth 4 points.

A review that is long between 5-9 pages and without any book support such as citations or data is worth between 4 and 8 points depending on length.

A review that is long between 5-9 pages and with book support such as multiple citations or data is worth between 5 and 9 points depending on length.

A review that is long 10 pages and without any book support such as multiple citations or data is worth 9 points.

A review that is long 10 pages and with book support such as multiple citations or data is worth 10 points.

Class Attendance

Class attendance is needed to take required quizzes once a week and participate in required discussions twice a week.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Accommodation Statement. UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu

Grading

Grades will be determined as follows:

Maximum Points From Exams = 300 (required)

Maximum Points From Quizzes = 52 (required)

Maximum Points From Discussions = 52 (required)

Total Points Possible From Course Requirements = 404

Maximum Extra-Points From Review Of Supplementary Reading = 10 (Optional)

Total Points Possible for Semester From All Class Activities = 414

Grades will be determined according to the grading scale below.

Total Points 400-360 = A
Total Points 359-320 = B
Total Points 319-280 = C
Total Points 279-240 = D
Total Points 239-0 = F

Grading Scale by total points/4 for easier understanding	
Average Points 90-100	A
Average Points 80-89	B
Average Points 70-79	C
Average Points 60-69	D
Average Points Below 60	F

Tentative Assignments by Weeks

(Please note that course schedule is subject to change)

Week 1, January 14-16, 2025

Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics

Preface, Putnam, pp. 9-19

Introduction: Social Change in America, Putnam, pp. 21-38

Discussions 1 (required)

Quiz 1 (required)—in person or on Canvas depending

January 16, 2025

on student preferences

Week 2, January 21-23, 2025

Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics

Political Participation, Putnam, pp. 41-56

January 23, 2025	Civic Participation, Putnam, pp. 58-73 Discussions 2 (required) Quiz 2 (required)
Week 3, January 28-30, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Religious Participation, Putnam, pp. 74-89 Informal Social Connections, Putnam, pp. 105-124 Discussions 3 (required)
January 30, 2025	Quiz 3 (required)
Week 4, February 04-06, 2025	Review, study for and take Exam 1
February 06, 2025	Exam 1--covers previous chapters (required), in person or on Canvas depending on student preferences
Week 5, February 11-13, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Altruism, Volunteering and Philanthropy, Putnam, pp. 125-139 Reciprocity, Honesty and Trust, Putnam, pp. 140-152 Discussions 4 (required)
February 13, 2025	Quiz 4 (required)
Week 6, February 18-20, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Against the Tide?, Putnam, pp. 154-188 Discussions 5 (required)
February 20, 2025	Quiz 5 (required)
Week 7, February 25-27, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Why? Introduction, Putnam, pp. 191-197 Pressures of Time and Money, Putnam, pp. 199-213 Mobility and Sprawl, Putnam, pp. 214-225 Discussions 6 (required)
February 27, 2025	Quiz 6 (required)
Week 8, March 04-06, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Technology and Mass Media, Putnam, pp. 227-252 Discussions 7 (required)
March 06, 2025	Quiz 7 (required)
Week 9, March 10-16, 2025	Spring Break
Week 10, March 18-20, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics What Killed Civic Engagement?, Summing Up, Putnam, pp. 283-291 So What? Introduction, Putnam, pp. 293-301 Discussions 8 (required)
March 20, 2025	Quiz 8 (required)

Week 10, March 25-27, 2025	Review, study for and take the Midterm Exam
March 27, 2025	Midterm Exam--covers chapters after Exam 1
Week 11, April 01-03, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Children's Welfare and Education, Putnam, pp. 303-313 Safe and Productive Neighborhoods, Putnam, pp. 314-327 Discussions 9 (required) Quiz 9 (required)
April 03,, 2025	
Week 12, April 08-10, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Economic Prosperity, Putnam, pp. 328-337 Health and Happiness, Putnam, pp. 338-347 Discussions 10 (required) Quiz 10 (required)
April 10, 2025	
Week 13, April 15-17, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Democracy, Putnam, pp. 348-364 The Dark Side of Social Capital, Putnam, pp. 365-378. Discussions 11 (required) Quiz 11 (required)
April 17, 2025	
Week 14, April 22-24, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Lessons of History: The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, Putnam, pp. 380-418 Discussions 12 (required) Quiz 12 (required)
April 24, 2025	
Week 15, April 29-May 01, 2025	Reading Assignments And Discussion Topics Afterword: Has the Internet Reversed the Decline of Social Capital?, Putnam, pp. 435-468. Discussion 13 (required) Quiz 13 (required)
May 01, 2025	
Week 16, May 06-00, 2025	Review, study for and take the Final Exam
May 04-05, 2025	Pre-Finals days
May 04, 2025	Last class day, review of supplementary reading due (optional)
May 06, 2025	Final Exam--covers chapters after the Midterm Exam, mandatory activity for grade

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

COVID ADDENDUM

Attendance Syllabus Statement:

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the professor and the instructional team prior to being absent, so you, the professor, and the instructional team can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform the professor and instructional team if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

Remote Instruction Statement:

Remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. Students will need access to a computer to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn>. Online Office Hours: Wednesday 3:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.

Face Covering Statement:

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.