COURSE INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS   SUMMER 5W1 2017

SOCI 4350-900.950 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION   Credit Hours 3

Internet Class   mandatory or optional online meeting times to be announced

Professor / Instructor Contact Information

Milan Zafirovski, Professor

Chilton Hall 397D

Office hours   online every day 9AM-9PM

Email address   Milan.Zafirovski@unt.edu

Teaching Assistant information   to be announced

About the Professor / Instructor

Milan Zafirovski is professor in the Department of Sociology at
the University of North Texas. He received his doctoral degree in sociology
from Florida International University, Miami in 1999. He teaches Social
Stratification, Community Organization, Social Problems for undergraduate
students and Sociological Theory and Social Stratification for graduate students.
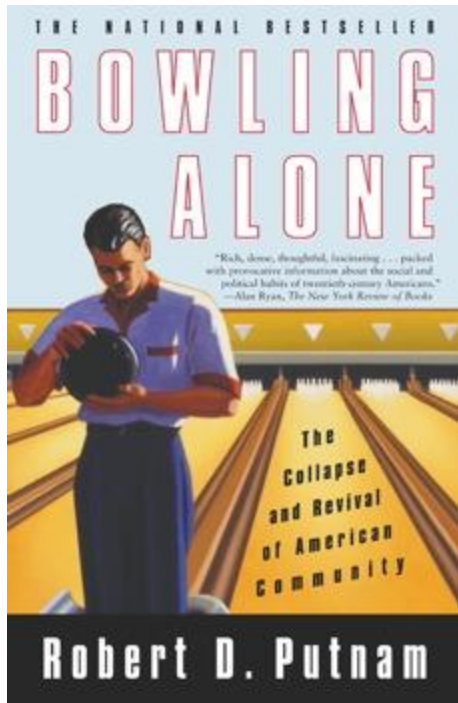
Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Pre-requisites   None

Instructor permissions   Not required

Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required materials   Robert Putnam. Bowling Alone: The Collapse And Revival
Of American Community. New York: Simon & Schuster. ISBN: 0-684-83283-6.

Course Description

Description of general content of the course. This is an undergraduate course about community organization. More particularly, the course examines the nature, structure and functioning of human or social communities. It applies a comparative-historical, including globalization, perspective on community organization, thus encompassing and comparing the United States and other contemporary societies. The course uses empirical evidence and theoretical conceptions alike to analyze, and when necessary suggest solutions to, questions of community organization and disorganization. Emphasis is placed on the real-life implications and applications of the frameworks for approaching community organization and social structure generally.

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 online lectures presenting main sociological concepts and empirical facts of community organization, especially American Community through course outlines, online 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.

Goals / Rationale of the course. The content of the course will benefit students by helping them better understand and make sense of community organization and processes in the United States and in part other contemporary societies, including real-life, topical, and publicized issues of community decline or civic crisis and the like. The course closely relates to the content, primary concepts and principles of sociology which has a long-standing tradition of studying community organization and related issues. The course will emphasize acquiring and applying a basic scientific and inter-disciplinary type of knowledge by providing the main sociological and related concepts, objective facts (including statistical data), and explanations of community organization in America and in part comparable societies. It will also emphasize a specific type of abilities such as comprehending, learn, applying, and connecting (rather than merely memorizing) concepts and facts. The course is organized in a specific sequence through learning modules because these are seen as the most appropriate ways to reach the goals and learning objectives of the course. Each particular course subject or lesson is presented by a learning module. A learning module includes learning objectives to be reached for that particular lesson, lesson content with sub-contents, summary, and assignments for students.

Learning objectives/outcomes. The learning objectives/outcomes for the overall course (also provided for each learning module) are the following.

- students will learn, comprehend, and connect principles, concepts, and empirical facts of community organization and processes in contemporary especially American society;

- students will be able to analyze, understand, and explain how and why community has declined or in crisis and its possible revival in contemporary American society;
- students will be able to relate and compare community organization and trends to society as a whole, including economy, politics, and culture;
- students will be able to place and analyze community organization and processes within a larger comparative-historical and global context by comparing the United States with other contemporary societies;
- students will be able to apply sociological concepts, principles, and methods to better understanding and addressing current issues of community organization, in particular its recently crisis in the United States;
- students will be able to increase their capacities and motivations or interests in further studying community organization and related sociological subjects at undergraduate and graduate levels

Teaching Philosophy

I emphasize that teaching and education overall is based on science and research such as sociological and other scientific studies, as complementary in relation to each other. Therefore I emphasize and reiterate that scientific knowledge represents the basis of teaching and education and really 'power' for students and society as a whole. I stress practical applications of concepts and principles to understanding, analyzing and helping resolve contemporary social issues. I use a variety of teaching methods, including both traditional and modern ones. I strive for maximum student-teacher communication, interaction and cooperation. I pursue justice in evaluating students through an equality between performance/merit and grades.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS / ASSISTANCE
The following information has been provided to assist you in preparation for the technological aspect of the course.

UIT Help Desk: http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm
Hardware and software necessary to use Bb Learn:
http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/bblearn/
Browser requirements:
http://kb.blackboard.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=84639794
Computer and Internet Literacy:
http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit

Headset/Microphone (if required for synchronous chats)
Word Processor
Other related hardware or software necessary for the course

Minimum Technical Skills Needed:
Examples include:
Using the learning management system
Using email with attachments
Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats
Copying and pasting
Downloading and installing software
Using spreadsheet programs

ACCESS & NAVIGATION
Access and Log in Information
This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas' Learning Management System, Blackboard Learn. To get started with the course, please go to: https://learn.unt.edu
You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to: http://ams.unt.edu.

Student Resources
As a student, you will have access to:
·   Student Orientation via Blackboard Learn. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within the Orientation to better equip you in navigating the course.
·   Blackboard's On Demand Learning Center for Students. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials to better equip you to navigate the course.
·   From within Blackboard, you will have access to the "UNT Helpdesk" tab which provides student resources and Help Desk Information.

How the Course is Organized
The course information is organized by using learning modules consisting of learning objectives to be reached, content and sub-contents, summary, and assignments (see above). It is structured by week or part of it such that for each week or part of it a learning module is used.

What Should Students Do First?
Students should first, once they have accessed the course, read carefully the syllabus. Also, they need to complete an introductory assignment, discussion post, and a Zip Code survey. In addition, they need to send contact information to the instructor via the email tool and introduce themselves to each other.

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities
Students will be able to access the materials each week in order to successfully complete the course activities, including exams, participation in discussions, and other assignments. Necessary files such as lecture materials are located in Course Content, exams in Assessments, and discussion topics in the Discussion Forum. A class activity schedule has been created to track student activities, including participation in discussions and other assignments.

Student Technical Support
The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Blackboard and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940.565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130
Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Please refer to the website (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm) for updated hours.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students will access and follow all course instructions found in the weekly content area of the Blackboard course. Students will follow and access all online lectures provided in Course Content. Students will complete the assigned 'online' exams by accessing the 'assessment' tool in the Blackboard course. Exams are located in Assessments. Students will respond to posted online course discussion questions using the Blackboard discussion tool. Online participation through discussions is optional (not required) but useful as a way to better prepare for the exams.

This course has simple requirements, namely objective exams, simplifying and objectifying the grading process as much as possible. In this course there will be two exams, a midterm exam and a final examination (see course schedule). The format of midterm and final 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 computer-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 only online (UNT Blackboard) during the specified time period and with specific time limits (e.g., 1 hour).

Failure to take an online 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 online exam is missed with documented justification during the specified period, make-up exams can be taken either online or in person (*closed* books and notes) in the department of sociology no later than 2 days after the specified exam period. This applies only to *midterm* exams, *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. Exams *cannot* be retaken or continued either online or in person because of 'bad' Internet connection and other computer 'problems'. It is student responsibility to have a proper Internet connection and computer. Online computer-generated exam scores are final and *cannot* be changed by professor under any circumstances (just as SAT or GRE scores cannot be changed). Each exam may be taken only ONCE (in one attempt), and any attempts to take the exam again will be an act of academic dishonesty and pursued accordingly. Exams must be taken by each student *individually* and independently of other students, and not in groups and collaboratively; if it is determined that an online exam is taken in groups and collaboratively, this will be treated as academic dishonesty and pursued accordingly. There is no 'curving' of exam scores.

Technical instructions (from UNT CLEAR). Avoid using a wireless connection for exams unless one is certain of its reliability. Take exams using a supported web browser on a computer or laptop rather than using an iPad. If using an iPad, the Chrome browser is recommended. Contact the UIT Helpdesk at 940-565-2324 for assistance in the event of technical problems affecting the ability to access or complete a test.

It is the policy of this course that *no* extra-credits or 'special treatments' will be given to any students—No additional assignments, chances, requests, and exceptions. Discussions are optional (not required) and posted in the Discussion Forum. Discussions while not for extra points also can be very useful in preparing for the midterm and the final exam. The only basis for dispensing credits/grades is objective performance and merit rather than needs, desires and other subjective considerations. 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 to address their queries and concerns.

COMMUNICATIONS
The communication tools in the course are:
- Announcements at least weekly and more frequently as needed
- GoToTraining
- Email / Messages
- Discussions by week on a particular topic

Interaction with Instructor Statement. The primary tool to communicate directly with students is Email / Messages. Students should send personal concerns or questions to the email tool. Students can expect to receive a response to course e-mail and discussion board postings the same day (if they sent and posted by 9PM), at the latest following day. The time frame in receiving feedback on assignments will be 2 days. Grades will be posted 1 day after the exam is over. For student behavior online see 'netiquette.'

ASSESSMENT & GRADING
Exams: 100 points each
Course Objective/Learning Outcomes: students will demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and explanation of basic concepts and facts of community organization. The exams are closed-book and taken individually. The exams will cover the required textbook reading and the content of the online lectures. Complete the exams online by accessing the Blackboard exam tool in Assessments. The exams will be timed and grades made available to students following the submission of the exam. If you lose Internet connectivity during the exam, log back in immediately and continue on with the exam. Save your answers often (every 5-10 minutes). If you experience any issues while taking the exam, you must contact the Blackboard Helpdesk immediately so that your issue is documented with a helpdesk ticket number. Considerations regarding exam issues will be made by the instructor on an individual basis based on the documentation. Assessment Method: Multiple Choice

Grading
Grades will be determined as follows:

Total Points Possible for Semester = 200 from exams

200-180 = A
179-160 = B
159-140 = C
139-120 = D
119-0 = F

Grading Scale	
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 60	F

Tentative Assignments by Weeks

(Please note that course schedule is subject to change)

June 05-12, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subjects
	Social Change in America, Putnam, pp. 15-28
	Political and Civic Participation, Putnam, pp. 31-64
	Religious Participation, Putnam, pp. 65-79
June 12-19, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subjects
	Lecture Subjects and Reading Assignments
	Informal Social Connections; Altruism, Volunteering and Philanthropy, Putnam, pp. 93-133
	Reciprocity, Honesty and Trust; Against the Tide?, Putnam, pp. 134-180
June 19-26, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subjects
	Pressures of Time and Money; Mobility and Sprawl, Putnam, pp. 184-215
	Technology and Mass Media, Putnam, pp. 216-246

	Review for the Midterm Exam
June 25, 2017	**Midterm Exam** (covers previous chapters) on Blackboard from 12AM-8PM
June 26-30, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subjects
	What Killed Civic Engagement? Putnam, pp. 277-306
	Safe and Productive Neighborhoods; Economic Prosperity; Putnam, pp. 307-325
July 01-03, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subjects
	Health and Happiness; Democracy, Putnam, pp. 326-349
	The Dark Side of Social Capital, Putnam, pp. 350-363.
July 05-07, 2017	Reading Assignments and Lecture Subject
	Lessons of History: The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, Putnam, pp. 367-402
	Review for the Final Exam
July 07, 2017	**Final Exam** (covers chapters since midterm)
	on Blackboard from 12AM-8PM

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