

Course Syllabus
SOCIOLOGY 126: STUDY OF NORMS
Winter 2017

Instructor: Pat Reilly

Time and Location: Monday and Wednesday, 12:00PM-1:50PM in Dodd 121

Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00PM-3:45PM (and by appointment) in Haines 285

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Course Website: <https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/17W-SOCIOL126-1>

Overview:

This course explores the formation, evolution, reproduction, and enforcement of social norms. Social norms are informal understandings shared among members of a social context that govern behavior and establish expectations for social action. While we regularly evoke this concept to understand the social world, we generally do it without real sensitivity to how nuanced social norms are. Throughout these weeks, we will scratch the surface of the complexity and dynamism of social norms.

The first component of the course covers a genealogy of the development or application of the concept of social norms in sociology, and we will also briefly delve into anthropology, philosophy, and psychology. This segment of the course requires you to revisit some concepts and works that you may have read in your classic or contemporary sociological theory courses. However, you will not be at a disadvantage if you have not yet taken the theory courses or do not fully remember what was covered. The second part of the course covers more current and theme-specific approaches to social norms.

This course is rather reading-intensive. Some of the readings for certain sessions might be slightly dense or abstract. Some of the other sessions may require you to read a rather sizable quantity of pages. For the former, I urge you to give a strong, honest try to discern the author's main ideas. We will clarify them during the lecture. One of my objectives is to help you learn how to read academic work, which is a useful skill. Concerning the issue of quantity, the number of pages per week is unavoidable, as this is a course oriented toward critical engagement and knowledge development.

Course Materials:

There are no textbooks for this class. The articles, book excerpts, videos, and podcasts will be linked on the course website. The only exception is Part One of *Prohibition*—the episode titled “A Nation of Drunkards.” You can purchase the episode on the iTunes Store for \$7 (although it may be on Netflix or some other streaming service for less/free). The readings are listed in the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Grading:

For this course, there will be three parts of your grade:

Reading Quizzes (20%): I will give six pop quizzes throughout the quarter on random sessions. These quizzes are multiple choice and cover major points from the readings. I will use them to account for your attendance and to judge whether or not you are doing the assigned readings. I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

Midterm Examination (40%): The midterm examination is on February 13. It will be short essay format. The test will cover the readings and sessions up until that point.

Final Examination (40%): The midterm examination is on March 23. It will be short essay format. The test will cover all the readings and sessions from February 15 to March 15.

Grade Breakdown:

The letter grade breakdown is as follows:

A: ≥ 92.0
A: 91.9-90.0
B+: 89.9-88.0
B: 87.9-82.0
B-: 81.9-80.0
C+: 79.9-78.0
C: 77.9-72.0
C-: 71.9-70.0
D: 69.9-60.0
F: < 60.0

Note: I will round-up to the next tenth of a point.

E-Mail Protocol:

The best way of getting into contact with me is through e-mail. If you have any questions about the course material or readings, do not hesitate to e-mail me. Also, if you plan on missing a session, please contact me, so we may find a way that you can catch up. I tend to respond to e-mails quickly, usually within a few hours; the only exceptions are on weekends, nights, or when I do not have access to a computer.

In the subject line of your e-mails, please put "SOC126." Doing this will make sure that you get past my e-mail filter and to prevent my e-mail client from mistakenly thinking that your e-mail about the class is a sales pitch for discount pharmaceuticals, a cache of fake Rolexes, or a fantastic financial opportunity involving a Nigerian prince.

Cell Phones and Computers:

Following the practice of many professors in this department, there will be no laptops or tablets in class. While this minimizes distractions, it also encourages you to take better notes. Research shows that students actually perform better in courses, retain information better, and engage more when there are no laptops in class. Because recordings of each class session are available as podcasts, do not worry if you miss anything, or you can ask me to repeat any points. You do not need to transcribe every word of the lecture. Exceptions can be made in certain circumstances, especially if there are issues that prevent you from handwriting. Please let me know ahead of time, and I recommend contacting the Office for Students with Disabilities regarding any issues. Furthermore, please refrain from texting in class.

Office Hours:

My office hours will be on Wednesday from 2:00PM to 3:45PM in Haines 285. Furthermore, I am available by appointment. I encourage you to come to office hours to address any questions that you may have with the content or the class in general.

Disabilities Issues:

In the interest of fairness, please tell me about any disabilities or medical issues that may require any special accommodations and provide to me documentation to us from the Office for Students with Disabilities, so we can make proper arrangements.

Podcasting:

Course sessions will be podcasted, which will aid in your studying and will help you to keep pace with any classes that you miss. This *should not* be a substitute for attending class, since excessive absences will adversely affect your grade and will prevent you from participating and maximizing what you get out of the class.

Additional Notes:

You *must* adhere to the UCLA Honor Code with your response papers and final exam. All cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to the Dean's office.

Lastly, enjoy the course! I constructed this class to enrich your knowledge of social norms—which will allow you to achieve a more robust understanding of society, social action, and our expectations of each other. Furthermore, since the themes or content can be a struggle at times, I designed this course to be enjoyable as possible.

Thanks for signing up! It is my privilege to have you as a student. It is my honor to be your instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

JANUARY 9: INTRODUCTION/WHAT ARE SOCIAL NORMS?

JANUARY 11: DURKHEIM AND ANOMIE

Lewis Coser. 1984. Introduction to Emile Durkheim's *Division of Labor in Society*

Emile Durkheim. 1897. "Anomic Suicide" in *Suicide*

JANUARY 16: NO SESSION TODAY FOR THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HOLIDAY

JANUARY 18: FUNCTIONALISM

Talcott Parsons. 1959. "The School Class as a Social System: Some of Its Functions in American Society." *Harvard Educational Review* 29:297-318.

Dennis Wrong. 1961. "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 26:183-193.

JANUARY 23: EXAMPLES FROM ANTHROPOLOGY

“Witchcraft Among the Azande.” 1982. Installment in Granada Television’s *Disappearing World*.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rmug_qvO15s

Mary Douglas. 1966. “The Abomination of Leviticus” from *Purity and Danger*.

JANUARY 25: SYMBOLIC INTERACTION

Gary Alan Fine. 2005. “Enacting Norms: Mushrooming and the Culture of Expectations and Explanations.” In *Social Norms*, edited by Michael Hechter and Karl-Dieter Opp.

The Outsider: The Story of Harry Partch. 2002. BBC Four.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKD3zm0WZjA>

JANUARY 30: ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Harold Garfinkel. 1967. “Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities.” in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*

FEBRUARY 1: SUPERSTRUCTURE (AND DEFIANCE)

Paul Willis. “Having a Laff” from *Learning to Labor: Why Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*

FEBRUARY 6: RATIONAL CHOICE AND GAME THEORY

David Axelrod. 1984. *The Evolution of Cooperation*, excerpts.

FEBRUARY 8: LAW AND ECONOMICS

Dotan Oliar and Christopher Sprigman. 2009. “There’s No Free Laugh (Anymore): The Emergence of Intellectual Property Norms and the Transformation of Stand-Up Comedy.” *Virginia Law Review* 94:1787-1867.

FEBRUARY 13: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

FEBRUARY 15: RELATIONAL MODELS AND ZELIZER CIRCUITS

Viviana Zelizer. 2010. “The Purchase of Intimacy.” in *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy*.

Diana Hefley. 2014. “Coffee Stands Raked in Millions Through Sex Trade, Prosecutors Say.” August 28. <http://www.heraldnet.com/news/coffee-stands-raked-in-millions-through-sex-trade-prosecutors-say/>

FEBRUARY 20: NO SESSION TODAY FOR PRESIDENT’S DAY

FEBRUARY 22: DUAL PROCESS MODELS

Jonathan Haidt. 2012. *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Chapter 1.

FEBRUARY 27: THE EXAMPLE OF GENDER

Candace West and Don Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender and Society* 1:125-151.

Robb Willer, Christabel Rogalin, Bridget Conlan, and Michael Moynowicz. 2013. "Overdoing Gender: A Test of the Masculine Overcompensation Thesis." *American Journal of Sociology* 118:980-1022.

MARCH 1: MORAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Howard Becker. 1963. "Moral Entrepreneurs." in *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*.

Prohibition. 2011. *Prohibition*. Directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick for PBS. Episode 1: "A Nation of Drunkards."

MARCH 6: SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Peter Bearman and Hannah Bruckner. 2001. "Promising the Future: Virginity Pledges and First Intercourse." *American Journal of Sociology* 106:859-912.

Beth McMurtie. 2014. "Why Haven't Colleges Stopped Binge Drinking." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. December 2. http://www.chronicle.com/interactives/alcohol_binge/

MARCH 8: UNPOPULAR NORMS

Robb Willer, Ko Kuwabara, and Michael Macy. 2009. "The False Enforcement of Unpopular Norms." *American Journal of Sociology* 115:451-490.

Janny Scott. 1996. "Postmodern Gravity Deconstructed, Slyly." *New York Times*. May 18. <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/18/nyregion/postmodern-gravity-deconstructed-slyly.html>

MARCH 13: MOTIVATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Oliver Hahl and Ezra Zuckerman. 2014. "The Denigration of Heroes? How the Status Attainment Process Shapes Attributions of Considerateness and Authenticity." *American Journal of Sociology* 120:504-554.

Lily Rothman. 2014. "The 70's Cocaine Scandal That Could Have Rocked the White House." *Time*. September 3. <http://time.com/3207118/studio-54-cocaine-carter-white-house/>

MARCH 15: COMMUNITIES AND ENFORCEMENT

Pat Reilly. 2017. "No Laughter Among Thieves: Informal Intellectual Property Rights and Community Dynamics in Stand-Up Comedy." Working Paper.