

Lakehead University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 4305 YA
Honours Thesis Seminar

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2019-2020

Friday 8:30-11:30pm

Room: AT5041

Office Hours

Tuesdays 1:00 to 2:00 pm or by appointment

Course Objective:

Students will design a sociological study, examine evidence, and report the results in a major undergraduate honours thesis paper.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Plan a sociological research project around a central social issue.
2. Understand the processes under which current sociological research projects are decided on, designed, organized, funded, and undertaken.
3. Understand the current ethics regime for social research in Canada
4. Analyze various contemporary research methodologies in order to determine which are most appropriate for different research questions.
5. Have knowledge of the various ways in which sociological research results are mobilized and shared.
6. Write a senior sociological honours thesis.

Texts:

There will be no required texts. Students will be required to read articles to be downloaded off the internet.

Basis of Evaluation:

Research Proposal.....	20%
Research Proposal Presentation.....	5%
December Take-home Assignment	15%
Participation.....	10%
Presentation of Thesis	10%
Honours Thesis.....	40%

December Take-home Assignment: Participants will be given a take home assignment on November 29th to be completed and handed in by January 10th. The assignment will

be comprised of a list of short essay questions relating to material dealt with in the first part of the course.

Research Proposal: One of the main requirements of this course is to prepare an honours thesis research paper. The paper itself is described below but to ensure that you are prepared to write this paper you will be required to hand in a 10 – 15 page proposal on November 29th. This proposal should contain a section with a background section explaining why the topic you chose is important (why you chose it), a section containing a clear hypothesis/research question, a literature review, a section describing how you will examine your hypothesis/research question (ie a road map of the paper), and a suggested bibliography with at least 10 key sources. The proposal will also include an application to the Research Ethics Board of Lakehead University.

Participation: This course will be run as a seminar. For this reason, it is important that all participants are actively involved in the discussions. This means that readings should be completed before each session and that participants arrive with questions and points of interest to discuss. Participation marks will be based on attendance, level and quality of participation in discussions, and level of preparedness for each session. The more a participant contributes to creating an interesting, informative, and supportive leaning environment during the seminar the higher the participation mark.

Presentations: Participants will be required to organize and undertake a presentation for both the research proposal and the honours thesis. These presentations will take place in final classes of each term. Presentations should be approximately one hour in length and allow for at least 15 minutes of questions.

Honours Thesis: Participants will be required to write a 30 to 40 page research paper on a contemporary social issue. Topics should be chosen in consultation with the professor. The completed paper is due on April 3rd. Research papers should use the manuscript format suggested by the American Sociological Association.

Please note that plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. Please see the university regulations section on academic dishonesty in the Calendar. For advice to avoid plagiarism please see <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>

Soc 4305 Course Structure and Readings

Term One: Concepts and basic structures

Session 1: Introduction and Planning the Course

Session 2: What did Howard Becker say about writing a thesis? 1

Becker, H. S. 2008. *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1 to 5)

Session 3: What did Howard Becker say about writing a thesis? 2

Becker, H. S. 2008. *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 6 to 10)

Session 4: What did Emile Durkheim say about doing sociological research? 1

Durkheim, E. 1938. *The rules of sociological method*. New York: Free Press. (Chapters 1 to 3)

Session 5: What did Emile Durkheim say about doing sociological research? 2

Durkheim, E. 1938 (1895). *The rules of sociological method*. New York: Free Press. (Chapters 4 to 6)

Session 6: What advice would Max Weber give you?

Weber, M. 1946 (1919) "Politics as a Vocation" in Gerth, H. and Mills, C.W. (eds.) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 77-128.

Weber, M. 1946 (1919) "Science as a Vocation" in Gerth, H. and Mills, C.W. (eds.) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 129-156.

Session 7: And what about the Sociological Imagination?

Mills, C. W. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Session 8: Basic Elements of Research and Choosing a Method

TBA

Session 9: How to write a research proposal

TBA

Session 10: Ethics in Social Science Research

Panel on Research Ethics. 2018. *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. 2nd Edition. Ottawa.

Session 11: Presentations

Session 12: Presentations

Terms Two : Practicalities of Sociological Research

(Readings to be decided at the beginning of the term)

Session 13: How to write an Honours Thesis

Session 14: Research Designs

Session 15: Research Methods and Collecting Data 1

Session 16: Research Methods and Collecting Data 2

Session 17: Getting funding for sociological research

Session 18: Partnerships in sociological research

Session 19: Academic publishing

Session 20: Knowledge sharing

Session 21: Sociological Research and Indigenous Communities

Session 22: The Future of Sociology

Session 23: Presentations

Session 24: Presentations