

## ***Soc 3370: Money, Work, and Social Life***

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Time: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12:20-1:10pm  
Location: 106, Morrill Hall  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-3pm, 348 Uris Hall

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

How is our economic life connected to our social life? How do our choices from what courses to take in college to what jobs to apply for – or from what kinds of goods to consume to whom to date or marry – are shaped by our social networks and by the cultural context? This course will show you how the tools of economics (focus on individual choice) and sociology (emphasis on social structure and culture) can be combined to answer these questions and many others that lie right at the intersection of the two fields. In the course, we will cover different sectors of the economy from corporations and finance to households and informal markets and utilize a diverse set of media (academic books and papers, newspaper articles, movies and documentaries) and active-learning strategies where we apply our theoretical knowledge to real-life situations.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Using a diverse set of readings and other media, this course will offer a multi-disciplinary account of how our economic life (money and work) is intertwined with our social life (networks and culture). Through various requirements (readings, in-class participation, presentations, exams, and research papers), you should develop and demonstrate competency in:

1. explaining individual behavior in economic domains from multiple perspectives (economics and sociology),
2. discriminating different perspectives in terms of unit of analysis, assumptions, and methods of empirical inquiry,

3. evaluating the usefulness of different perspectives in explaining real-life phenomena,
4. designing a composite line of inquiry that takes elements from multiple perspectives to study a phenomenon of interest.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. One in-class midterm examination – short essays (25% of the grade).
2. One final examination during the final exam period – short essays (25%).
3. One research paper (1,500 to 2,500 words) (25%). Due on the last day of classes by 5pm.
4. Class participation (including in-class quizzes) and presentations (25%).

### **POLICIES**

1. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all meetings. More than three unexcused absences (including sick cases) will jeopardize the final grade. Excused absences (including recognized religious holidays, travel for official Cornell activities, family emergency, and serious illness documented with proof of medical care) are allowed as long as the instructor is notified beforehand and as long as the student completes all required work for the day of the absence. Each student is also expected to sign up for at least one individual conference during the instructor's office hours.
2. **Readings:** All required readings are available through Blackboard. Students must do the readings each week before the class meets. We will have short quizzes in the beginning of some lectures to test reading comprehension.
3. **Presentations:** Students will present at least once (individually or in groups) during the discussion sections (Friday meetings). Students will also present their research project to the class on Week 12 (April 17, 19 & 21).
4. **Research paper:** Students will write a research paper (1,500 to 2,500 words), and revise the paper at least once based on feedback from the instructor and peers. The final paper will be due on the last day of classes by 5pm. Students can identify the question for the paper themselves or choose from among the examples provided by the instructor. The paper should involve data analysis or suggest a research design (i.e., a strategy for collecting and analyzing data) to study the question of interest. The paper

should include a review of the existing literature, but cannot be just the review.

5. **Participation:** Students are expected to participate actively in class discussion and activities.
6. **Electronics policy:** Use of electronics (cell phones, tablets or laptops) are allowed in the class but as long as students remain focused on the course material and activities.
7. **Plagiarism:** Presenting the work or writing of others as your own is a serious offense at Cornell. Please familiarize yourself with the university's code of academic integrity as it relates to plagiarism:  
<https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>
8. **Collaboration:** Collaboration is permitted in class assignments. Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (for example, feedback on drafts), you must also acknowledge this assistance.
9. **Other policies:** In addition to the policies above, this course also abides by University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired student; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the instructor.

*Students with disabilities:* If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, provide the instructor with an accommodation notification letter from Student Disability Services within the first two weeks of the semester.

*Religious observances:* If there are conflicts in the course with a religious observance, students need to notify the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester to schedule accommodations.

*Diversity and inclusion:* In this class, we commit to creating an inclusive learning environment. We will be reading and discussing research on economic systems, inequality, ethnicity, immigration, and other topics that

can elicit diverse perspectives. We will embrace this diversity, but challenge hateful words and actions against social groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin, rural or urban upbringing, disability, or political beliefs.

*Contingencies:* I am here to teach and support you. If at any point during the semester you feel like you are experiencing life events or difficulties that affect your learning, please come talk to me.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### ***Week 1 (Jan 25 & 27).***

- No readings. No meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Week 2 (Jan 30, Feb 1 & 3). Competing Analyses of Economic Life***

- Richard Swedberg and Mark Granovetter, *The Sociology of Economic Life*, second edition. Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 2001, "Introduction," pp. 1-28.
- Gary Becker, *Accounting for Tastes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996, chapter 7, pp. 139-156, "The Economic Way of Looking at Life."
- Mark Granovetter, *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995 [1974], Introduction, pp. 3-22.
- Christine L. Williams, *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do Women's Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, chapter 1, pp. 1-5; chapter 5, pp. 81-108.

### ***Week 3 (Feb 6, 8 & 10). Sociological Toolkit for Understanding the Economy***

- Mark Granovetter. "Economic Action and Social Structure," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1985, 91(3): 481-510.
- Paul DiMaggio. 1994. "Culture and Economy." Pp. 27-57 in *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, first edition, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Viviana Zelizer. 2005. "Circuits within Capitalism." Pp. 289-322 in *The Economic Sociology of Capitalism*, edited by Victor Nee and Richard Swedberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Frank Dobbin. 2004. "The Sociological View of the Economy." Pp. 1-7 in *The New Economic Sociology: A Reader*, edited by Frank Dobbin. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

**Week 4 (Feb 13, 15 & 17). Consumer Markets**

- Benjamin Barber, *Consumed*. New York: Norton, 2007, chapter 1, pp. 3-37, "Capitalism Triumphant and the Infantile Ethos."
- Viviana Zelizer, "Culture and Consumption," pp. 331-54 in *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, second edition, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, and New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005.
- Elizabeth Cohen, "From Town Center to Shopping Center: The Reconfiguration of Community Marketplaces in Postwar America." *American Historical Review*, 1996, volume 101, pp. 1050-81.
- Christine Williams, *Inside Toyland*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006, chapter 5, pp. 137-84, "Kids in Toyland."
- Elizabeth Warren, "The Middle Class on the Precipice," Harvard Magazine, January-February 2006, <http://www.harvardmagazine.com/online/010682.html>

**Week 5 (Feb 22 & 24). Firms and Corporations**

- Annalee Saxenian, *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994, Introduction, pp. 1-9; chapter 2, "Silicon Valley: Competition and Community," pp. 29-57.
- Nicole Woolsey Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism: Direct Selling Organizations in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989, chapter 4, pp. 70-97.

- Frank Dobbin and Dirk Zorn, “Corporate Malfeasance and the Myth of Shareholder Value,” *Political Power and Social Theory*, 2005, volume 17: pp. 179-98.
- Rakesh Khurana, “The Curse of the Superstar CEO,” *Harvard Business Review*, September 2002, pp. 3-8.

**Week 6 (Feb 27, Mar 1 & 3). Household Economies**

- Julie Brines, “Economic Dependency, Gender, and the Division of Labor at Home,” *American Journal of Sociology*, volume 100, 1994, pp. 652-688.
- Alexandra Killewald and Margaret Gough, “Money Isn’t Everything: Wives’ Earnings and Housework Time,” *Social Science Research*, volume 39, 2010, pp: 987-1003.
- Kathryn Edin, Timothy J. Nelson, and Rechelle Paranel. “Fatherhood and Incarceration as Potential Turning Points in the Criminal Careers of Unskilled Men.” pp. 46-75 in *Imprisoning America: the Social Effects of Mass Incarceration*, edited by Mary Patillo, David Weiman, and Bruce Western. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004.
- Christopher Carrington, “Domesticity and the Political Economy of Lesbian Families,” pp. 82- 107 in *Families at Work*, edited by Naomi Gerstel, Dan Clawson, and Robert Zussman. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002.
- Katherine Newman, *Falling From Grace*. New York: Vintage, 1989, Preface, pp. ix-xii, chapter 4, “The Downwardly Mobile Family,” pp. 95-142.
- Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, “The Work Kids Do: Mexican and Central American Immigrant Children’s Contributions to Households and Schools in California,” *Harvard Educational Review*, 2001, volume 71, pp. 366-89.

**Week 7 (Mar 6, 8 & 10). Money and Finance**

- Viviana Zelizer, “Official Standardization vs. Social Differentiation in Americans' Uses of Money.” pp. 82-96 in Emily Gilbert and Eric Helleiner, editors, *Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present and Future of National Currencies*. London: Routledge, 1999.

- Peter Bearman, *Doormen*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005, Preface, pp. ix-xii; chapter 6, pp. 171-205, “The Bonus.”
- Mitchel Y. Abolafia, *Making Markets*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996, Introduction, pp. 1-13; chapter 1, pp. 14-37, “Homo Economicus Unbound: Bond Traders on Wall Street.”
- Charles Smith, "Auctions: From Walras to the Real World," pp. 176-192 in *Explorations in Economic Sociology*, edited by Richard Swedberg. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1993.

***Week 8 (Mar 13, 15 & 17). Review and Midterm***

- No readings. Midterm on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Review of the midterm on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

***Week 9 (Mar 20, 22 & 24). Labor Markets***

- Chris Tilly and Charles Tilly, *Work Under Capitalism*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1998, chapter 2, pp. 21-35.
- Paula England and Nancy Folbre, “Gender and Economic Sociology,” pp. 627-49 in *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, second edition, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Deirdre A. Royster, *Race and the Invisible Hand*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, introduction, pp. 1-15; chapter 7, pp. 144-78, “Networks of Inclusion, Networks of Exclusion.”
- Alex Stepick III and Guillermo Grenier, “Cubans In Miami,” pp. 79-100 in *In The Barrios*, edited by Joan Moore and Raquel Pinderhughes. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1993.

***Week 10 (Mar 27, 29 & 31). Informal and Illegal Economies***

- Alejandro Portes and William Haller, “The Informal Economy ,” pp. 403-25 in *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, second edition, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

- Mitchell Duneier, *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1999, Introduction, pp. 3-14, part I, “The Magazine Vendors,” pp. 43-60.
- Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, *Off the Books*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, prologue, ix-xix; chapter 2, “Home at Work,” pp. 21-37.
- Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics*. New York: William Morrow, 2005, chapter 3, “Why Do Drug Dealers Still Live with Their Moms?” pp. 89-114.

***Week 11 (Apr 10, 12 & 14). Intimate Economies***

- Richard A. Posner, *Sex and Reason*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992, chapter 5, “Sex and Rationality,” pp. 111-145.
- Viviana A. Zelizer, *The Purchase of Intimacy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005, prologue, pp. 1-6; chapter 3, “Coupling,” pp. 94-157.
- Arlie R. Hochschild. 1989. "The Economy of Gratitude," pp. 95-113 in *The Sociology of Emotions: Original Essays and Research Papers*, edited by Thomas Hood. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Nancy Folbre and Julie Nelson, “For Love or Money – or Both?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (2000) 14: 123-140.

***Week 12 (Apr 17, 19 & 21). Research projects.***

- Student presentations.

***Week 13 (Apr 24, 26 & 28). Globalization and Local Economic Life***

- James Watson, “Transnationalism, Localization, and Fast Foods in East Asia,” pp. 1-38, in *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia*, edited by James Watson. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2d. edition, 2006.
- Alejandro Portes, “Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities,” pp. 253-270 in *The Ends of Globalization: Bringing Society Back In*, edited by Don Kalb et al. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000.



- Annalee Saxenian, *The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, introduction, pp. 1-21; chapter 3, 82-96.
- Arlie Hochschild, "The Nanny Chain," *The American Prospect* 2000, 11, pp. 32-36.
- Mary Blair-Loy and Jerry A. Jacobs, "Globalization, Work Hours, and the Care Deficit Among Stockbrokers," *Gender & Society*, 2003, 17, pp. 230-249.

***Week 14 (May 1, 3 & 5). Markets in Human Goods***

- Kieran Healey, *Last Best Gifts. Altruism and the Market for Human Blood and Organs*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006, chapter 1, "Exchange in Human Goods," and chapter 2, "Making a Gift," pp. 1-42.
- Rene Almeling, "Gendering Commodification: How Egg Agencies and Sperm Banks Organize the Medical Market in Genetic Material." *American Sociological Review*, 2007, volume 72, pp. 319-40.
- S. M. Rothman and D. J. Rothman, "The Hidden Cost of Organ Sale," *American Journal of Transplantation* 6, 2006: 1524-28.
- E. A. Friedman and A.L. Friedman, "Payment for donor kidneys: Pros and cons," *Kidney International*, 2006, volume 69, pp. 960-962.
- Debora L. Spar, *The Baby Business. How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press, 2006, chapter 6, "Trading Places. The Practice and Politics of Adoption," pp. 159-193. Spring Recess

***Week 15 (May 8 & 10). The Future of Economic Life***

- Charles Tilly, "Global Connections and Disturbances, 1980-2050," in *Politics, Exchange and Social Life in World History* co-authored by John Coatsworth, Juan Cole, Michael Hanagan, Peter Perdue, Charles Tilly and Louise Tilly, forthcoming, 2008.
- William Easterly, "The Big Push Déjà Vu: A Review of Jeffrey Sachs' *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*," *Journal of Economic Literature*, March 2006, XLIV, 96-105.

- Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000, Introduction, pp. 15-28, chapter 19, “Economic Prosperity,” pp. 319-25.
- Clive Thompson, “Game Theories,” *The Walrus*, 2004, pp. 1-14.  
<http://www.walrusmagazine.com/article.pl?sid=04/05/06/1929205&tid=1>