

## UBC DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

### Graduate Course Offerings 2016-2017

For further information about any course listed below, please contact the instructor.

### TERM 1

#### **SOCI 500-001: Foundations of Sociological Thought**

*Tuesdays, 2:00-5:00pm, Dr. Ralph Matthews, [ralph.matthews@ubc.ca](mailto:ralph.matthews@ubc.ca)*

By the time that they reach graduate school, most sociology students have taken at least one course in Sociological Theory and so they generally 'know' the orientation of the major perspectives in the field. However, in their previous courses they have most likely focused on what key social theorist said about the nature of society and culture. But most sociological theorists also have something important to say about what were the appropriate approaches through which to collect and understand empirical evidence about society. This course focuses on this second set of issues and is about how one explains social life, not just conceptually but also empirically. In that sense it is a course in epistemology focusing on the foundations of explanation. As such, it provides an underlying link between social theory and sociological methods and research. The aim of this course is not to have you 'learn' who said what. Rather, it is about 'why' they said it. This involves a fourfold analysis: (1) The focus is on the **underlying explanatory issues**, from those that the early sociologists were grappling through to their manifestation in more recent sociological analysis; (2) The course is concerned with analysing the relative **traditions of social thought** and where individual sociologists fit into those tradition; (3) There will be a concern **with both the substantive and the epistemological concerns of sociological theorists**. That is, the course is not just about what they said about the nature of society, but also about what these theorists said about **the nature of how we achieve evidence and make explanations** with regard to the nature of society; (4) Finally, the course takes a **sociology of knowledge perspective to social thought**. That is, it sees social theory as a product of the society in which its creators are embedded.

#### **SOCI 501-001: Contemporary Sociological Theory**

*Thursdays, 2:00-5:00pm, Dr. Renisa Mawani, [renisa@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:renisa@mail.ubc.ca)*

This year's course in contemporary sociological theory is intended to introduce graduate students to critical approaches in social and cultural theory. Instead of offering a broad survey of the field, this course will focus on the theme of modernity and society. The course will explore modernity as a central problematic in social theory and its implications for the production of the (in)human. Over the course of the term, we will explore the work of scholars who have engaged with questions of modernity and (in)humanity from different ontological and epistemological vantage points and will read the following thinkers in some depth and detail: Hannah Arendt, Giorgio Agamben, Zygmunt Bauman, Walter Benjamin, Judith Butler, Jody Byrd, Michel Foucault, Paul Gilroy, Bruno Latour, Gayatri Spivak, Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. DuBois, Donna Haraway, and others. Throughout, we will assess the conceptual tools these thinkers have added to our understandings of modernity and to the shifting social, political, and juridical formations of (in)humanity in our global present.

#### **SOCI 502-001: Research Design and Techniques (Quantitative)**

*Fridays, 9:30am-12:30pm, Dr. Gerry Veenstra, [veenstra@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:veenstra@mail.ubc.ca)*

This course focuses on the processes of conducting surveys and producing sociological analyses of survey data. It includes consideration of theoretical and ethical issues, research questions, causality, research designs, measurement, sampling, weights, survey items, questionnaire formats, survey administration, response rates and missing data. Upon completion of the course you should be able to constructively critique results from survey research, demonstrate the applicability and limitations of various survey administration strategies and, hopefully, undertake a survey research project of your own. A practical goal of the course is the creation of a research

proposal based upon a planned analysis of secondary survey data which can be implemented in SOCI 514 Analyzing Quantitative Data in Sociology.

### **SOCI 503-001: Research Design and Techniques (Qualitative)**

*Mondays, 1:00-4:00pm, Dr. Amy Hanser, [hanser@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:hanser@mail.ubc.ca)*

As part of the first year curriculum in the graduate program for Sociology at UBC, this course is a very practical introduction to qualitative research methods, with an emphasis on field research. Of necessity, we will touch on some topics related to research design—such as how to develop an effective research question to guide your study, and when and why to use qualitative research to answer your research question—and research ethics, but the majority of the course will be devoted to issues related to such data gathering techniques as interviewing and participant observation/ethnography, and we will also devote time to methodological approaches broadly defined as historical/comparative and feminist. Over the course of the term, we will read both practical guides to carrying out research as well as exemplary works of most methods, and you will be asked to try your hand at both interviewing and observation.

### **SOCI 515-001: Qualitative Data Analysis in Sociology**

*Wednesdays, 2:00-5:00pm, Dr. Amin Ghaziani, [amin.ghaziani@ubc.ca](mailto:amin.ghaziani@ubc.ca)*

This course has 6 objectives: (1) You will do analysis in virtually every week. While we will read quite a bit throughout the course, we will focus on the analysis of your own data and how to think through the practical problems that you encounter; (2) you will learn basic techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing qualitative data; (3) you will receive basic training in the computer-assisted analysis of qualitative data using Atlas.ti; (4) you will also learn how to manually code such data; (5) you will learn how to identify patterns in your data; and (6) you will think critically about professional writing (how to produce an academic journal article) and presentations (how to craft a conference presentation).

## **TERM 2**

### **SOCI 508A-002: Advanced Methods Seminar in Qualitative Textual and Media Analysis *Tuesdays, 2:00-5:00pm, Dr. Dawn Currie, [dawn.currie@ubc.ca](mailto:dawn.currie@ubc.ca)***

Developments in communication technology have intensified the colonization of everyday life by media, both commercial and ‘social’. Until recently sociologists have largely ignored the implications of this colonization for how we come to understand our social world. Taught from a materialist feminist perspective, this seminar will explore how Dorothy Smith’s notion of ‘textually-mediated discourse’ enables us to study the textual nature of life as a contemporary condition of our existence. In this analysis ‘text’ refers to “not only written or spoken words but to any aspect of culture whose predominant purpose is to signify, i.e. to produce meaning” (Milestone and Meyers 2012: 3). ‘Discourse’ extends beyond thinking and speaking; it refers to a practice of symbolic communication through which people make meaning of their existence. By drawing on symbolic resources, meaning making – even as solitary engagement with a text -- is a social activity and can be studied as situated practice. From critical realism we will explore three layers of analysis: the text as a concrete instance of signification and ‘object’ of researcher attention; the text as site of symbolic communication where meaning is constituted (and contested); and the social relations, hidden but operating as meaning making. As researchers we will discuss the implications of recognizing our own texts as textually-mediated discourse taking the form of ‘knowledge’. Emphasis will be given to learning through ‘doing’ media analysis; as well as assigned readings and class discussion, the seminar will include workshops during which we will collaborate on analysis of various media. Participants will be invited to bring their own research into seminar discussions and activities.

## **SOCI 508A-202: Advanced Methods Seminar in Research Design & Applied Quantitative Data Analysis**

***Mondays, 2:00-5:00pm, Dr. Richard Carpiano, [richard.carpiano@ubc.ca](mailto:richard.carpiano@ubc.ca)***

This course is for students interested in augmenting their existing research method and data analytic knowledge and developing valuable, practical research skills for their dissertation/thesis and professional careers. It will (a) cover advanced design and analytic topics and (b) provide practical research tools for formulating, conducting, and writing up quantitative research. **Enrollment is open to graduate students in the social, behavioral, and health sciences**, including, but not limited to Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, Education, Nursing, and Population and Public Health. **The general focus will be on application** (versus theory) and include topics such as: formulating conceptual models to identify empirically-testable hypotheses; quasi-experimental research designs; measurement of study constructs, scale construction and validity assessment; missing data analysis and multiple imputation techniques; testing for moderation and mediation; a survey of advanced modeling approaches for linear and nonlinear data; and effective written and oral presentation, and peer review of empirical research. Class meetings will consist of lectures, discussions, and lab exercises for students to gain “hands on” experience with different analytic techniques. Over the term, each student will develop an empirical study, for which they will select and use a study-relevant dataset in course exercises and assignments, and ultimately prepare a solo-authored manuscript suitable for conference presentation and journal submission. **Prerequisites:** The course assumes students have prior graduate coursework preparation in multivariable linear and binary logistic regression. Familiarity with using Stata data analysis software is highly recommended, as course exercises and assignments will utilize it.

## **SOCI 599A-002: Special Topics Seminar in Aging and Society**

***Fridays, 12:00-3:00pm, Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews, [amm@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:amm@mail.ubc.ca)***

This seminar course examines the myriad ways in which population aging transforms societies and a lengthening life course transforms lives. Class discussions and readings explore conceptual and methodological issues in the social construction of aging and old age, and challenge the homogenization characteristic of popular discourse about aging in society. We consider the emergence of cultural gerontology in moving discourses on aging away from frailty and the dominance of medical and social welfare perspectives. This course examines experiences in later life and ‘deep old age’ in the broadest sense – focusing on ways in which gender, ethnocultural diversity, socio-economic status and life course circumstances intersect with age. We will also consider how diverse methodologies – textual, visual and literary – contribute to ‘ways of knowing’ about aging and later life.

## **SOCI 599B-001: Special Topics Seminar in Urban Sociology**

***Wednesdays, 1:00-4:00pm, Dr. Nathanael Lauster, [nlauster@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:nlauster@mail.ubc.ca)***

This course is meant to provide students with a broad survey of Urban Sociology as a field, with readings from Georg Simmel to Mitch Duneier and Jane Jacobs to Mariana Valverde. It will provide theoretical grounding and support for research and fieldwork set within or otherwise concerning cities. Central questions include: What is urban and why does it matter? How do cities generate difference, and how do people deal with the consequences? How are urban environments built and regulated? How can they be variously understood as places, arenas, habitats, networks, and actors? Vancouver and other North American cities provide ready laboratories for investigating research questions, but historical and international breadth of discussion will be encouraged. Also encouraged where possible: fieldtrips!