**SOCI 5341: Cultural Sociology**

**Spring 2017**

Instructor: Professor David Arditi

Meets UH 13

Thursday 2PM -4:50PM

contact information

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Office | University Hall Room 423 | Email | darditi@uta.edu |
| Office Hours | By appointment and  Tuesdays and Thursdays  1-2pm  and by appointment |  |  |

Description of Course Content

Culture is the process through which people construct symbolic meaning out of everyday objects. The emphasis here is on process; it is not static; it is always changing. We do not place culture on a pedestal to be examined and revered. We create culture, and are deeply embedded in it. Part of being social (i.e. interacting with other people) involves using language, signs, symbols, art, etc. to be able to communicate with one another. Conflict arises when people misinterpret symbolic meaning; but it also occurs around the usage of signs that denigrate others. We form bonds around culture. We create culture together.

We will discuss different bodies of theory around culture. Some of these areas agree, while others disagree. Most of what we will read and discuss will be oriented to theory, but we will also explore a variety of empirical approaches. The course will pay special attention to case studies about music.

Student Learning Outcomes for Course

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

* Identify the traditions of studying culture.
* Critically examine the way culture is produced.
* Analyze cultural works from a sociological perspective.
* Show awareness of various theoretical threads of thought.

## Textbook and Other Course Materials Requirements

Books:

* Debord, Guy. 1994. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books.
* Kellner, Douglas. 2003. *Media Spectacle*. 1 edition. London ; New York: Routledge.
* Hebdige, Dick. 1979. *Subculture, the Meaning of Style*. London: Methuen.
* Anderson, Tammy. 2009. *Rave Culture: The Alteration and Decline of a Philadelphia Music Scene*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
* Lefebvre, Henri. 2013. *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
* Peterson, Richard A. 1997. *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
* Cornfield, Daniel B. 2015. *Beyond the Beat: Musicians Building Community in Nashville*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
* Other Readings on Blackboard

Grading Policy

The following scale will be applied to both individual assignments and to the course grade as a whole:

**A= 90-100** points. An “A” reflects consistent excellence in the course, strong initiative, and the student’s commitment to their own learning and success.

**B=80-89** points. A “B” reflects work that is consistently above the minimum.

**C=70-79** points. A “C” reflects minimum proficiency in the main objectives of the course needed to proceed to INTS 4391.

**D=60-69** points. A “D” reflects the fact that a student has not mastered material essential for success in INTS 4391 or has not given the instructor a sufficient basis for judgment because of unexcused failure to complete course work.

**F=<60** points. A failing grade will typically reflect missed assignments, academic honesty violations, and/or a lack of engagement with the course.

Grading rubrics will be made available for each assignment and will be posted in electronic form on the Blackboard page for each assignment. Students should consider the rubrics as guidelines for the expectations of the assignment and be aware that their grade will depend on fulfilling the criteria set forward in the rubric.

The student’s grade for the course will be based on the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Individual** | **Value** |
| Final Paper | 40 |
| Participation | 20 |
| Memos | 40 |
| **Total** | **100** |

**The Instructor reserves the right to modify assignments with due notice.**

**Memos:** You are required to write 10 memos over the course of the semester (5 for undergraduate students). Memos should be around 700 words (500 words for undergraduate students). Please use memos as writing/thinking exercises, not as finished products. Use them to engage the week's materials, respond with questions, criticisms and new ideas they suggest, and put into words impressions that seem worth developing. They should be a critical interrogation of the readings for a class.

**Final Paper**: You will write a theoretically informed paper about culture from a sociological perspective. The topic is of your choosing (with my approval). Papers should be at least 15 pages (8 for undergraduate students).

**Paper Reuse Policy**. You are not allowed, under any circumstances, to reuse papers from prior classes in this course or any other course that you have taken at any institution.  Reusing papers does not demonstrate any advance in knowledge or skill, and so would not be helpful for you either in terms of your learning this semester, or for me in terms of assessing this learning.  If you feel your situation constitutes a clear or significant exception to this rule, you must discuss this with me prior to the due date of the first draft.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance at class meetings is vital to student success and attendance at every session is the default expectation for the course. However, I allow students to attend class at their own discretion, and I will not take attendance. Attending and participating in class discussions are important in the learning process, and will greatly improve test scores.

**COURSE CALENDAR—Spring 2017**

\*Note – Reading assignments should be done by the day that they are listed on the syllabus

1/19 Thursday

**Introductions**

1/26 Thursday

Culture and Thick Description

* Raymond Williams – “Culture” in “Keywords” (see p.87)
* Clifford Geertz – “Thick Description”
* Clifford Geertz – “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight.”

2/2 Thursday

Ideology

* Karl Marx – “[German Ideology](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_German_Ideology.pdf)”
* Antonio Gramsci – From Reader – Chapter VI Hegemony, Relations of Force, Historical Bloc (p.189-221 esp. information on Ideology)
* Louis Althusser, ["Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm)

2/9 Thursday

**Cultural Studies**

* Stuart Hall, "Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies"
* Raymond Williams, “Culture is Ordinary”
* Stuart Hall, “Encoding/DeCoding”
* Raymond Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory"

Recommended Reading

* Jim McGuigan and Marie Moran – “Raymond Williams and Sociology”

2/16 Thursday

**Subculture**

* Dick Hebdige – *The Meaning of Style*

Recommended Reading:

* Paul Willis – *Learning to Labor*
* Angela McRobbie – *British Fashion Design*
* Tricia Rose – *Black Noise*

2/23 Thursday

**Everyday Life**

* Lefebvre, Henri. 2013. *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*

Recommended Reading

* De Certeau, Michel – *The Practice of Everyday Life*
* Lefebvre – *Everyday Life in the Modern World*
* DeNora, Tia – *Music in Everyday Life*

3/2 Thursday

**Spectacle I**

* Debord, Guy. 1994. *The Society of the Spectacle*

3/9 Thursday

**Spectacle II**

* Kellner, Douglas. 2003. *Media Spectacle*

**3/17 Spring Break**

3/23 Thursday

**Status and Taste**

* Bourdieu, Pierre. 1993. "The Field of Cultural Production." Pp. 29-73 in *The Field of Cultural Production.* N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press
* Schudson, Michael. 1989. “How Culture Works: Perspectives from Media Studies on the Efficacy of Symbols.” *Theory and Society* 18: 153-180.
* Richard A. Peterson and Roger M. Kern. 1996. “Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore.” *American Sociological Review* 61: 900-907.
* Lamont, Michèle, and Annette Lareau. 1988. "Cultural Capital: Allusions, Gaps and Glissandos in Recent Theoretical Development.” *Sociological Theory* 6: 153-168.

3/30 Thursday

**Culture Industry**

* Walter Benjamin – “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”
* Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer – “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception”

Recommended Reading

* Bernard Miège and Nicholas Garnham – “The Cultural Commodity”

4/6 Thursday

**The Reception and Consumption of Expressive Goods**

* Press, Andrea L. 1994. “The Sociology of Cultural Reception: Notes Toward an Emerging Paradigm.” Pages 221-245 in *The Sociology of Culture: Emerging Theoretical Perspectives*, edited by Diana Crane. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
* Hanrahan, Nancy Weiss. "If the people like it, it must be good: Criticism, democracy and the culture of consensus." *Cultural Sociology* 7.1 (2013): 73-85.
* Jacobs, Ruud S., Ard Heuvelman, Somaya Ben Allouch and Oscar Peters. 2015. “Everyone’s a Critic: The Power of Expert and Consumer Reviews to Shape Readers’ Post-Viewing Motion Picture Evaluations.” *Poetics* forthcoming.

Recommended Reading

* Knudson, Sarah. 2013. “Crash Courses and Lifelong Journeys: Modes of Reading Non-Fiction Advice in a North American Audience.” *Poetics* 41: 211-236.
* Shively, JoEllen. 1992. “Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of WesternFilms among American Indians and Anglos.” American Sociological Review 57: 72-734.

4/13 Thursday

**Production of Culture Perspective**

* Peterson, Richard A. 1997. *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*

Recommended Reading

* Peterson, Richard A. and N. Anand. 2004. “The Production of Culture Perspective.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 30:311–34.

4/20 Thursday

**Creating Community and Solidarity**

* Cornfield, Daniel B. 2015. *Beyond the Beat: Musicians Building Community in Nashville*

Recommended Reading

* Durkheim, Emile. 1984. *The Division of Labor in Societies.* New York: The Free Press. Selections.
* Madsen, Richard. 2009. “The Archipelago of Faith: Religious Individualism and Faith Community in America Today.” *American Journal of Sociology* 114: 1263-1301.
* Shrum, Wesley and John Kilburn. 1996. “Ritual Disrobement at Mardi Gras: Ceremonial Exchange and Moral Order.” *Social Forces* 75: 423-458.

4/27 Thursday

**Sociology of Culture**

* DiMaggio, Paul. 1997. Culture and Cognition. *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 24
* Martin, Karin. 1998. “ Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools.” *American Sociological Review* 63: 494-511*.*
* Fine, Gary Alan. 1979. "Small Groups and Culture Creation: The Idioculture of Little League Baseball Teams." *American Sociological Review* 44: 733-45
* John Mohr. 1998. “Measuring Meaning Structures.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 345-70.

5/4 Thursday

**Last Day of Class**

* Tammy Anderson, *Rave Culture*

5/11 Thursday

**Final Paper Due before 4:30pm**

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Academic Integrity:** students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Disability Accommodations:** UTArlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit*[*uta.edu/eos*](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php)*.*

To create a safe environment, I personally extend the non-discrimination policy to include: gender-identity or expression, low-income, generation-related education opportunities, marital status, parental status and/or criminal record.

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated.*For information regarding Title IX, visit* [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](file:///C:\Users\arditi\AppData\Local\Temp\jmhood@uta.edu).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Surveys**: At the end of each term, students will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located as discussed in class. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.