Institutional Ethnography
SOCI 6660-01 (81033)
SYLLABUS
Fall 2014

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Office hours: M 2-4:00; T and Th 10-noon & 3:30-5:00, and by appointment

Class time and place: Monday, 5:30-8:00; Pafford 202

Course Description:
Examination of institutional ethnography, a way of exploring the particular and generalized social relations that shape people’s everyday experiences.

This course explores an alternative way of doing sociology that was initiated by distinguished sociologist Dorothy Smith and has been further developed by a number of her colleagues and protégés in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere. Institutional ethnography is a way of understanding the social determinants of our everyday lives. Explorations often begin with knowledge of the subjects’ experiences (how experience is talked about) and include descriptions of coordinated activities in the everyday world, connections to ideological accounts which define experiences institutionally, and examinations of the broader social relations in which our activities are embedded.

Course objectives for students
1. Students will identify the significant features of institutional ethnography.
2. Students will recognize the ways in which institutional ethnography is different from standard sociological practices.
3. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of institutional ethnography through tests, class discussions and a research project.
4. Students will analyze social relations using institutional ethnography.

Learning outcomes:
The above objectives, assignments, and class activities contribute to the following learning outcomes:
1. Understand and apply sociological theories.
2. Understand and apply qualitative research methodologies

Link to the Common Course Syllabus:
http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf
Required readings

Books
Campbell, Marie and Fran Gregor. Mapping Social Relations: a Primer in Doing Institutional Ethnography


Smith, Dorothy E. The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology.
   —. (Ed.). Institutional Ethnography as Practice.

Chapters


Suggested Readings:


Evaluation:
Students’ grades will be based on the following:
1. Two examinations based on the readings (100 points each)
2. Class participation (100 points)
3. Research project/proposal (200 points)
   Proposal ideas (10 points)
   Progress report (20 points)
   Written project/proposal (150 points)
   Oral report (20 points)

Semester Grades
A = 450-500
B = 400-449
C = 350-399
D = 300-349
F = 0-299
1. **Tests:** Tests will be based on the required readings and all material presented in class. Students are to demonstrate their command of the material. They are to be typed and double-spaced. Make-up tests will be given only in extreme circumstances.

2. **Written assignments:** Written assignments are to be typed and double-spaced. Late assignments will result in penalties.

3. **Attendance Policy:** Attendance is expected for all classes. It will directly affect the semester grade because it relates to class participation.

4. **Inappropriate conduct.** Inappropriate conduct, e.g., rudeness toward others, making noise, class disturbances, dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism, will result in a grade reduction or receiving an F for the course. Communication devices should be turned off and removed from sight unless they are first approved by me.

   Sociology invariably involves discussion of controversial and sensitive topics. We will not shy away from these matters. In an academic environment, however, it is important that we show respect for others in our discussions, even when we disagree with their ideas. Conflict surrounding ideas is normal, but we should avoid personal attacks and words which threaten or make people feel unduly uncomfortable.

**Tentative Class and Reading Schedule**

EWAP = *The Everyday World As Problematic*
MSR = *Mapping Social Relations*
IEP = *Institutional Ethnography as Practice*
MGG = *Making Gray Gold*

8.25  Introduction. Where to Begin and More

9.1  Labor Day Holiday

9.8  As Good a Beginning as Any  
    MSR, “Introduction” and chapters 1-6  
    MSR, Chapter 1, Finding a Place to Begin

9.15  Research Strategies  
    EWAP, introduction to Part III, “Research Strategies for a Sociology for Women”  
    EWAP, Chapter 4, “Institutional Ethnography”  
    EWAP, Chapter 5, “Reseaching the Everyday World As Problematic”

9.22  The Everyday World As Problematic  

**Proposal Ideas Due**  
EWAP, introduction to Part II, “A Feminist Sociology”  
EWAP, Chapter 2, “A Sociology for Women”  
EWAP, Chapter 3, “The Everyday World as Problematic”
9.29 Feminist/Materialist Sociology
EWAP, “Introduction,"
EWAP, Chapter 1, “A Peculiar Eclipsing”
MSR, Chapter 2, "Theory 'In' Everyday Life
“The Ideological Practice of Sociology.” (comps)

10.6 Investigating Social Reality
MSR, Chapter 3,"Beginnin an Institutional Ethnography"
MSR, Chapter 4, "Collecting Data for an Institutional Ethnography"
IEP, Chapter 2, “Institutional Ethnography: Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations”

10.13 Midterm Due
Introduction to Institutional Analysis
No assigned readings

10.20 Observation and Analysis
IEP, Chapter 3, “Where Did You Get that Fur Coat, Fern?”
IEP, Chapter 8, “Mapping Institutions as Work and Texts”

10.27 Textually Mediated Social Organization
IEP, Chapter 4, “Incorporating Texts into Ethnographic Practice”
MSR, Chapter 5, "Analyzing Data in Institutional Ethnography"

11.3 Discourse, Texts and Ruling Relations
Progress Report Due
“Femininity as Discourse”

11.10 Other skills
IEP, Chapter 5, “Institutional Ethnography and Experience as Data”
IEP, Chapter 6, “Keeping the Institution in View”
IEP, Chapter 9, “A Research Proposal”

11.17 Applying IE
MSR, Chapter 6, "Putting Institutional Ethnography into Practice."
EWAP, Chapter 6, "Beyond Methodology: Institutionalization and its Subversion"

12.1 Written project proposal due
Oral Proposal Presentations

12.8 Second examination due.