SOCILOGY 4373-01: Visual Sociology

Fall 2015

Prerequisite: Introductory Sociology (SOCI 1101)

Instructor: Tiffany A. Parsons
Office: Pafford, 207
Office Hours: M/W 1 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Phone: 678.839.6335
Email: tparsons@westga.edu

Class Meetings: M/W 11 a.m.
Final Class Meeting:

Course Description: A qualitative research course focusing on the interpretation and analysis of photographic and other images as a means for studying and critiquing social life. Student photographic projects are a major component of course work. Technical photographic skills not necessary. Course combines ethnographic research and critical sociology to develop visual literacy skills.

NOTE: This is a workshop course. Therefore, the structure of the class is you read, I lecture (occasionally), I facilitate learning, you practice, we all give feedback, and then you do. All parts of the structure are essential for improving your abilities as a visual sociologist. Failing to complete any component will result in less than adequate skills.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Utilize the methodology of visual sociology as a type of qualitative sociology that produces and interprets visual images.
2. Complete visual sociological analyses of concrete situations and issues.
3. Demonstrate compositional and critical skills related to the analysis of the images produced by others and by you.
4. Exhibit visual literacy skills
5. Critique contemporary social life
6. Identify how photographs and similar images in a media oriented culture organize, structure, and transform social and personal life.
7. Identify social forces which produce, distribute, and utilize images.
8. Develop writing skills and demonstrate high-level, academic composition proficiency
9. Develop oral presentation skills and demonstrate the ability to present scientific data to an audience in a professional way.

Required Material:
- PAPER folder with pockets on each side
- Guide to Writing Sociology Papers 7th Edition; 1429234792
Required Technology:
- Access to digital camera
- Access to reliable computer and internet

Attendance & Participation Policy: There is no attendance policy, but active and engaged participation in both face-to-face and online classes is required. (As this is a workshop class, one cannot do well if one is not in class. I hypothesize that missing more than 1 class will result in a final grade of no higher than a C.)

Communication:
- Westga.edu email: Only use this address for non-course related communication & emergencies.
- CourseDen email: You should only email me to set up a one-on-one meeting with me in the event office hours conflict with your class schedule. Use the subject line “Meeting Request.” Your message should include at least two times when you would like to meet and a brief (one to two sentence) description of the reason for the meeting. Unsolicited email for any other reason will not be considered or acknowledged. I will respond to appropriate CourseDen emails within 24 hours, Monday – Friday.
- Class Lounge: Post and reply to questions or advice pertaining to the class, teacher, texts, instructions, schedule, content, lectures...

Changes, Notices, etc.: I reserve the right to change the schedule, assignments, or requirements. I will announce changes in class, in the News, or via CourseDen email within the course. You are responsible for knowing changes.

Technology: This is a technology enhanced class. You are 100% responsible for access to reliable and properly working technology and knowing how to use CourseDen as well as the technology and software required for this course. You will need
- basic computer literacy skills. You will be required to do the following:
  - upload a photo,
  - post/reply in discussion boards,
  - take timed quizzes,
  - read text in html, and
  - watch linked videos.
- Tablets, Smart Phones, and Internet Explorer are NOT compatible with CourseDen.
- The following is a link to UWG Online Connection website (includes links to Orientation, basic software/hardware requirements, Online Student Guide, and all student services) - http://www.westga.edu/~online/
  - If you have a computer, software, or CourseDen questions, contact distance education: 678.839.6248 or http://www.westga.edu/~distance/webct1/help/
**Academic Integrity & Honesty:** You read and agreed to the UWG Honor Code, which includes academic honesty and integrity, when you applied to UWG. You are responsible for knowing and understanding this policy. You will be held to this standard. A copy of the Academic Honor Code Pledge Statement that you signed is available for review in the student handbook.

- Student Handbook: http://www.westga.edu/~handbook/index.php. (for more information and definitions on cheating, plagiarism, and academic honesty and integrity, click the Honor Code and Appendix A.)

Any incident of academic dishonesty, intended or unintended, whether the assignment is worth 1% or 75%, will result in an F for the course and a letter to the VPAA. If you already have a violation of Academic Honesty on your record, I will seek your expulsion from the University.

**Late/Make Up Work:** Under most circumstances, I will not accept late work and do not give make up work. I will, however, accept work early – via snail mail or in person during office hours.

**If one has had a tragedy or medical situation etc. that qualifies her/him for an incomplete in the course, I will be happy to work with the student in the following semester to complete the course.**

**Images for this course:** Photography projects: Students must personally take all photographs specifically for this course; students may not use photographs taken prior to the first day of class. Using images taken prior to the first day of class or by someone else constitutes academic dishonesty and will be treated as such. Photo Elicitation and Content Analysis projects: Students must personally collect all photographs (as data) specifically for this class; students may not use photographs acquired prior to the first day of class. Use of images collected prior to the first day of class constitutes academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.

**Classroom Policies:**

**Technology in class:** You may use laptop computers in class. All other personal electronic technology in class – other than that which is permissible under the ADA – is prohibited. This includes tablets, cell phones, ipods, as well as headphones/earbuds/Bluetooth ear pieces, etc. Any sighting of, sounds made by, or distracting use of (eg. flashing lights when ringer is on silent, texting in your lap…) personal electronic technology in class will result in the deduction of 5 points off your final grade. BEFORE ENTERING THE CLASSROOM, turn off cell phones, take off ear phones, and put all personal technology out of sight.

**Respect for others:** You are expected to be respectful to all other students, including when you disagree with or have had an alternate experience than the one being shared, and interrupting or speaking while others are speaking…

**Entering & Exiting the Classroom:**
Class begins at 11 a.m. You may enter the classroom any time after the previous class has completely vacated the room or at 10:55 a.m. (whichever comes first). You should be in your seat and ready to begin class at 11 a.m., not arriving. Do not enter the classroom if you cannot be in your seat and ready to begin class at 11 a.m. Doing so will result in the deduction of 5 points off your final grade.

Class officially ends at 12:50 p.m. Therefore, you may exit the classroom after class has ended or when you have been dismissed (whichever comes first). Packing up belongings and/or leaving the classroom before 12:50 p.m. or after you have been dismissed (whichever comes first) will result in the deduction of 5 points off your final grade.

If you must leave the classroom before this time, without disturbing anyone, pack and take all of your belongings with you and do not return to the class until you have met with me during office hours. It is your responsibility to schedule an appointment with me if your schedule conflicts with my office hours. The penalty will apply, except in the case of an emergency.

In the case you are pregnant, have a family member in the hospital, are a volunteer firefighter, etc. and may need to leave class early at some point in the semester, visit me during office hours. You will be allowed to leave class without penalty.

**Food & Beverages:** You may have and drink beverages in class, but since laptops will be in use, you must be very careful. You will be held liable for damages to fellow students’ electronics that your beverage causes.

You may not eat any food and you may not have foods that are distracting (smelly, etc.) in the classroom.

**Tasks:**

- **Mini Projects:** Writing is a critical component of this course. Throughout the semester, students will complete 3 mini visual sociology projects: 2 photography (one of which will be a poster presentation), 1 photo elicitation. Details for each are located in CourseDen.

- **Presentations:** Each student will present two mini projects in conference style: one poster and one of the remaining two projects. Presentations should be approximately five minutes in duration and consist of displaying images, sharing thematic core and sociological relevance, explicitly stating main findings, and explaining evidence. Students are expected to meet standards of professional presentations: dress, organized content, clear enunciation, proper pronunciation, lacking fillers, good posture, etc.

- **Full Project:** Students will complete a full visual sociology research project (either ethnographic or critical.) It should include 10 images and 12 pages (approx. 3000 words) of text.

- **Presentations:** Students will present their full projects conference style. Presentations should be 8 minutes in duration and consist of displaying images, sharing thematic core
and sociological relevance, explicitly stating main findings, and explaining evidence. Students are expected to meet standards of professional presentations: dress, organized content, clear enunciation, proper pronunciation, lacking fillers, good posture, etc

**Grading:** Notice that I do not round up.

Mini Projects – 45%
- Photo Elicitation: 15%
- Photo Social Problem/Issue: 15%
- Photo Ritual, landscape, or Group: 15%

Mini Project Presentations – 10%

Full Project – 30%
Full Project Presentation: 15%

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<tr>
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**NOTE:**
- Poor behavior and/or participation may result in the loss of points from your final grade.
- Excellent participation may result in the addition of points to your final grade.
- Academic dishonesty will result in failing the class.

Library: [http://www.westga.edu/library/](http://www.westga.edu/library/)


**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:**
If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services. A CDS Counselor will coordinate those services: [http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php](http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php)

**If you are entitled to and desire accommodation:** Email me your packet immediately – before the end of day Monday, August 31 – along with a list of the accommodations you desire for this class.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:**
No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by UWG.

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT:**
University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.

The following link provides important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class: http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf