

**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Department of Sociology**

**Sociology 493
Capstone
M 4:30-7:10 Spring 2008
email: jajordan@uwm.edu**

**Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Jordan
Office: Bolton 732
Office Phone: 229-5074
Office Hours: Monday 1-3
and by appointment**

READINGS:

Required: Lisa J. McIntyre, *The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology*.
(McGraw-Hill) (Please note that we will be using the 3rd Edition)

Optional: William A. Johnson, Jr., et. Al. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual*.
(Edition 2 or 3) On reserve in the Library

Optional: Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Clockwork Muse*

The readings are available at the bookstore and on reserve at the library. Other readings will be available on the D2L site or on the library's online databases.

OVERVIEW:

The capstone seminar provides an opportunity for you to develop a research paper on a topic of your choice, demonstrating and strengthening your skills of sociological analysis. The paper will also allow you the chance to reflect on your sociological education, and to develop your research project in discussions with me and with your fellow students. This is a chance to bring together the theoretical and methodological foundations you have received with sociological questions that you find especially compelling.

In the first weeks of the semester, you will decide on a topic for your final paper. You will meet with me at least twice in designing the final paper, and the final weeks of the semester will be devoted to presentations. In addition to the intensive work on the final paper, this class will also offer opportunities to hone your research skills, and to examine possible career paths to follow with your sociology degree (including graduate school).

Active participation in the seminar is necessary for the benefit of everyone—your contributions will be valued by your fellow students, and this type of discussion is a chance for you to learn not only from me but also from each other. We will also definitely use D2L in this course, so please be sure you have easy access to D2L, and check the site regularly!

GRADES:

Attendance and Participation:	20%
D2L Assignments:	15 %
Preliminary Presentation:	10%
Final Presentation:	15 %
Final Paper:	45%

ASSIGNMENTS:

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance AND participation are both mandatory. Especially given that we only meet once a week, and that there will be several weeks with no in-person meetings, you **MUST** not miss class. In addition, your active contribution to class discussion is part of what will make this class a fruitful experience for all of us. Your classmates and I are all interested in what you have to say!

D2L Assignments:

Throughout the semester there will be various assignments that will be due on D2L in advance of our Monday meetings—I will give you plenty of advance notice, and often these will include discussion questions related to the week's readings, or to your ongoing research and writing.

Preliminary Presentation:

You will be expected to give a preliminary presentation on your final paper topic—I will give you some guidelines for this presentation a bit later in the semester.

Final Presentation:

The last two weeks of the course will be devoted to student presentations. In my experience this is a fascinating part of the course! You will be required to use Powerpoint for your final presentation, and the presentation will address the central points of your final research papers.

Final Paper:

The largest portion of your grade will be for the final paper, a serious research paper on a topic of your choosing. We will work on the design of the research and the paper together, both in class and in individual meetings.

Seminar Schedule and Outline:

PLEASE NOTE: This schedule is approximate and subject to change!

January 28 **Introduction to the seminar**

February 4 **McIntyre 1-93**

February 11

McIntyre 95-243

February 18

Examples of research: The Sociology of Music

1. Sullivan, Rachel. "Rap and Race: It's Got a Nice Beat, but What about the Message?" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 5 (May 2003), pp. 605-622.

2. Richard Peterson and Roger Kern, "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore," *American Sociological Review* 61: 900-907.

3. Bryson, Bethany. 1996. " 'Anything But Heavy Metal': Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes." *American Sociological Review* 61: 884-899.

February 25

Examples of research: The Sociology of Food

1. Rick Fantasia, "Fast Food in France," *Theory and Society* 24:2 (April 1995), 201-243.

2. Jennifer Jordan, "The Heirloom Tomato as Cultural Object: Investigating Taste and Space." *Sociologia Ruralis* 47:1 (January 2007), 20-41.

3. Priscilla Ferguson and Sharon Zukin, "What's Cooking?" *Theory and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Apr. 1995), pp. 193-199.

All students are required to meet with me either this week or the following week, and to submit a one-page discussion of possible final paper topics (including themes and guiding research questions, in preparation for the library seminar the following week).

March 3

LIBRARY SEMINAR

All students are required to meet with me this week or during the previous week.

March 10

Preliminary presentations

Discussion of Writing and Research Strategies

Introduction to Bourdieu (Reading available on D2L)

March 17

SPRING BREAK

March 24

NO MEETING

**TENTATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESEARCH
QUESTIONS DUE ONLINE**

This portion of the seminar will be dedicated to the design, research, and writing of the final paper. You might want to consult one or both of the optional books to guide the writing process. During this period you will also be required to meet with me individually, and we will not be meeting as a group in person.

March 31 **NO MEETING
PROPOSAL DUE ONLINE**

Individual research continues, as well as online meeting.

April 7 **NO CLASS MEETING
All students are required to meet with me in person this week.**

April 14 **Further models of writing and research
(Readings TBA)**

April 21 **Visit to the career center
Intro to Grad school
What can I do with sociology
Resume writing**

April 28 **PRESENTATIONS**

May 5 **PRESENTATIONS**

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE ONLINE IN THE D2L DROPBOX

BY 4:30 PM ON MONDAY, MAY 12

Warning

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind are unacceptable, and will be penalized both with a 0 on the relevant assignment, **and** according to UWM Academic Disciplinary Procedures. I take these procedures very, very seriously. If you have any doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, feel free to ask me or to consult university regulations.