

SOCI 498 (Senior Seminar) Sections, Spring 2022

Each SOCI 498 section has its own topic and research method. Students will design and conduct an individual research project using the topic and method for their section.

TEACHING MODALITIES

SOCI 498.1: In Person

SOCI 498.2: In Person

SOCI 498.3: In Person

SOCI 498.4: Online (synchronous)

SOCI 498.5: Online (synchronous)

Prerequisites: Before enrolling in SOCI 498, students must complete SOC 201, SOCI 300, and SOCI 375, and MATH 165/SOCI 301, each with a minimum grade of C-, and 12 additional sociology units.

Registration: allowed only for students with an approved Senior Seminar application.

SOCI 498.1: Senior Seminar: Medicine, Health, & the Body

Instructor: Prof. Debora A. Paterniti, PhD

Method: **Intensive Interviewing & Grounded Theory**

Time: Tuesday, 8:00 -11:40 am

Modality: In Person

This course will focus on the topic of medicine, health, and bodies. We will use theories and concepts in medical sociology to examine bodies and health as *symbolic social processes*, including the ways individual and public bodies are defined, how health and illness are understood and represented in the body and bodily states, and on definitions of risk and risky behaviors and social restrictions and sanctions. We will discuss the institution of medicine and its role in characterizing and shaping understandings of bodies and their parts.

We will engage in intensive interviewing and grounded theory to craft original research. In this seminar, you will learn to develop a sociological research lens and "voice" through participation in a variety of exercises and assignments, including engagement in data collection, analysis, and presentation of original research on the topic of interest to you related to medicine & the body. Weekly writing assignments and course exercises will require intensive reading and literature review relevant to your topic. We will create an interview guide to elicit meaningful reflections from interviewees about relationships, institutions, and processes connected to medicine, the body, and social interactions. And we will practice grounded theory and data analysis by considering the empirical content of each interview through writing memos. The final research

project will develop out of the inductive analysis of your data and the formulation of a sociological work that contributes to understanding medicine, health, and the body.

SOCI 498.2: Senior Seminar: Racial Inequality at Work

Instructor: Prof. Kyla Walters Doughty, PhD

Method: **In-Depth Interviews**

Time: Tuesday and Thursday 3:00-4:50 pm

Modality: In Person

Work is central to life in capitalist society. People perform their labor and inhabit their workplaces as embodied, intelligent, emotional beings. Labor market outcomes, workplace experiences, and opportunity hoarding practices often reproduce racial inequality. This is true even when organizations are implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. Why; what gives?

In this senior seminar we will analyze how racial dynamics shape key dimensions of work, from expectations around workplace appearance and emotional labor to worker solidarity and exclusionary practices. Three core questions will guide the course:

- (1) How does race shape workers' experiences?
- (2) How does racial exclusion happen in the workplace?
- (3) Under what conditions do anti-racist practices succeed at work?

We will explore these questions from a critical sociological perspective, recognizing race as a complex, power-imbued social phenomenon and constellation of interlinked political, economic, cultural, and social processes that significantly affect life chances.

Students will be guided through the completion of an independent research project. Over the course of the semester, students will select a topical focus, develop a sociological research question, prepare a literature review, conduct interviews, analyze original data, practice writing skills, and produce a polished research essay.

Required reading will be a mix of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other sources about how racial inequality and resistance happens at work. Some assigned reading will be determined in consultation with students and based on their research projects.

SOCI 498.3: Senior Seminar: Family & Inequality

Instructor: Prof. Soo-Yeon Yoon, PhD

Method: **Statistics & Secondary Data Analysis**

Time: Monday and Wednesday 10:00-11:50 am

Modality: In Person

For this section of senior seminar, the theme of the course is the sociology of families. Students will learn how to conduct research on families and become an intelligent and critical consumer of research on families. The course will focus on understanding changing family and demographic behavior in the United States and beyond. Students will conduct research projects drawing upon sociological perspectives on family and social stratification. Research projects will examine how family behavior and family relationships vary by race/ethnicity, age, gender, class and across the life course with the use of the statistical analysis of survey data. Learning outcomes include 1) how to frame research questions and formulate them into testable research hypotheses; 2) critically evaluate previous studies and write a literature review; 3) analyze quantitative survey data to answer the research questions; and 4) produce an original research paper. In this course, students will not collect their own data, but will analyze the General Social Survey, a nationally representative adult sample. The course will cover core topics in descriptive and inferential statistics. Students will use SPSS, a statistical software program, to analyze the data.

SOCI 498.4: Senior Seminar: US Housing Policy

Instructor: Dr. Roxanne Ezzet, PhD

Method: **In-Depth Interviews & Content Analysis**

Time: Friday, 9:00 am – 12:40 pm

Modality: Online (synchronous class meetings)

For this section of senior seminar, the emphasis will be on urban sociology as it relates to housing and social services. Your project will focus on the use of interviews to understand the role of housing (e.g., housing policies, affordable housing, homelessness) and the link to social services in urban areas.

Specifically, this course will focus on the role of housing in shaping the quality of life in various parts of society. We will examine housing issues in urban areas while also focusing on the broader history and social impact of housing and affordable housing policies. This course will examine past and current housing policies and their influence on American society. We will also spend a significant amount of time discussing proposed policy issues to persistent affordable housing issues as well as strategies that community-based organizations and social movements are using to bring about change. We will use interviews with members from the public sector, private sector, non-profit groups and the community to understand housing problems and address policy solutions. Students will conduct in depth interviews and use content analysis to examine the interview data.

SOCI 498.5: Senior Seminar: Identity, Biography, & Society

Instructor: Prof. Debora A. Paterniti, PhD

Method: **Ethnography**

Time: Monday, 8:00 – 11:40 am

Modality: Online (synchronous class meetings)

This course focuses on the topic of identity. We will use theories and concepts in social psychology to examine individual and social group identity as *symbolic social processes* that include the ways identities emerge, develop, and change. Weekly topics will emphasize the role and impact of narrative accounts and their interpretations on identity, social groups, institutions, and public/collective action.

We will engage the ethnographic method and learn to develop a sociological lens and narrative "voice" through active and intentional participation in a variety of exercises and assignments, including engagement in data collection, analysis, and presentation of original research on a focused identity-related topic of interest to you. Weekly writing assignments and course exercises will require intensive reading and literature review relevant to your topic. Practice writing and detailing field notes from observations and engagement in ethnographic interviews will help elicit meaningful empirical data about identity and the individual interpretations related to participation in social processes and institutions that create it. The final research project will develop out of inductive analysis and triangulation of your data and result in the formulation of a sociological work that contributes to understanding identity.