



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
SENIOR SEMINAR SOAN 4490.001
COURSE OUTLINE Fall 2011**

ALAN D. BROWN

EVARISTUS 440

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 1:00-2:30 AND BY APPOINTMENT

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TEACHING AND LEARNING PLATFORM:

Moodle login: <http://moodlelive.msvu.ca>

Moodle Student Guide: <http://moodlelive.msvu.ca/mod/resource/view.php?id=34234>

Technical Help: If you require assistance with Moodle, please first contact Distance Learning: (902) 457-6717; Email: online@msvu.ca

CLASS MEETS: MONDAY 4:30-6:59 (EVAR 367)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A seminar for advanced students. Students will examine topics in theory and methodology focusing on the ways empirical research is informed by theory, and on the challenges facing empirical researchers in both academic and applied settings.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES: SOAN 3313, SOAN 3314 and SOAN 4416

COURSE GOAL: This course has two main goals. First, it is designed to orient you to current debates on the state of social theory and research methodology. It is by no means an exhaustive introduction, but an orientation to help you in your own research. To that end, the second goal is for you to be able to apply some of these debates to the context of your own research and honour's thesis.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- Describe current debates in sociology and anthropology related to the structure, content and context of research.
- Critically assess these debates and
- Apply them to your own research as you conduct your honour's thesis

COURSE TEXT(S):

Clawson, Dan et al. (eds). (2007). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lieberson, Stanley (1987). *Making it Count: The Improvement of Social Research and Theory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland (2006). *Engaging Anthropology: The Case for a Public Presence*. NY: Berg

ADDITIONAL COURSE READING:

Students will be expected to take responsibility for directing one course conference to be held during regularly scheduled class time. The topic of these conferences will be based on the readings assigned, but ideally should be an opportunity for students to share their research interests, questions, struggles and achievements. Please see the course syllabus section entitled “Assessment and Evaluation” and “Deliverables and Expectations” for more information.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

From time to time additional supplemental materials will be posted to our course website on Moodle. I also encourage students to make use of the public forum and posting facilities available to them on our course webpage.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:

This course is designed to be a seminar. My role in the course is to facilitate and encourage discussion and debate. It is not the kind of course where you will necessarily take copious amounts of notes. Ideally, the readings and our discussions should assist you in the development of your honour’s project and should be seen as a resource to that end.

SYLLABUS (WHAT WE WILL BE DOING, LEARNING AND WHEN THROUGHOUT THE COURSE):

Date	Topic	Reading(s)
9-12	Introduction	Clawson "Introductory" and "Institutionalizing Public Sociology"
9-19	What went wrong...	Eriksen Chapters 1-4
9-26	Numbers....and?	Lieberson Chapters 1-2
10-3	Apples and moonpies	Lieberson Chapters 3-4
10-17	Give it up.....Control	Lieberson Chapters 5-6
10-24	Fixing it....	Lieberson Chapters 7-10
10-31	Integration	Eriksen Chapters 5-7
11-7	Public/private knowledges?	Clawson "Politics and the Profession"
11-14	Fractured knowledges?	Clawson "False Distinctions/Conceptual Reservations"
11-21	Combined knowledges?	Clawson "Interdisciplinarity"
11-28	If not this...then what?	Clawson "Rejoinder"
12-5	Final Thoughts	

In consultation with the class, the instructor reserves the right to amend the above course plan with reasonable notice to you.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

CRITICAL READING SUMMARIES (10 @ 7.5%)	75%
CONFERENCE PREPARATION	25%
TOTAL 100%	

ASSIGNMENTS: DELIVERABLES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Critical Reading Summary (10 total worth 75% of your final grade)

The reflection papers you will be handing in to me are your chance to add your own thoughts and analysis to what you have read. I do not want you to simply summarize the readings - I already know what the content of the readings is. You don't need to regurgitate it back at me. What you should do is use the readings as a "jumping off" point to write on your thoughts about the reading (see list of tips below).

Reflection papers are worth 7.5 points each and are used for discussion during the class they are due. As such, you need to have your reflection paper printed and in front of you on the day it is due. This is part of being prepared for class and your class participation grade will be lowered if you aren't prepared to share your ideas with the class when a reflection paper is due.

You should be writing your reflection paper on the reading you did from the last reflection paper on. If there are numerous readings, you don't need to discuss every single article or chapter if you can write intelligently about one specific topic/article. It's up to you. Regardless of how many articles you write about, you are still expected to have all the readings done that are due.

How to get full credit for your reflection papers

- Make sure everything is grammatically correct, spelled correctly and makes linguistic sense. This is the biggest thing I will take off points for in most cases. You may have great ideas in your paper, but if I can't understand what you are trying to communicate due to horrible grammar and spelling, then you are looking at 12 out of 15 points at the most.
- Go into detail in explaining yourself and your ideas. I am looking for depth of thought in your writing. Show me you truly understand the concepts in the reading.
- Don't summarize the readings. You may refer to something in the reading, but I don't want the entire reflection paper to be a summarization of the reading. Instead, comment on your thoughts regarding the reading - do you agree or disagree with what was written? Why or why not? Did the reading make you question or think about something else? What questions were you left with after doing the reading? Can you relate the reading to something going on in the media today? Does the author of a given reading have a valid and logical argument? If an article details a study that was done, was the study done in a manner that is valid?
- Length of reflection papers should be at least 1 page long. A 1 page paper should be extremely well-written and concise (in other words, not just rambling about nothing for the sake of getting a page worth to hand in). Most students tend to write about 2 pages I encourage students to make use of the public forum and posting facilities available to them

CONFERENCE RESPONSIBILITY (25% of final grade)

You are responsible for providing the structure for the particular meeting your select. At a minimum, it should give the class time some structure (i.e., having some "lecture" type summary component to it and having a set of questions for discussion/evaluation). I don't expect you to talk for the entire 3 hours, but simply act as a facilitator and stoke our collective fires!

UNDERGRADUATE GRADING SCHEME:

The Mount's Undergraduate Course Guidelines for Marking can be read at: <http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/gradingexaminations.aspx>

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Given the structure of this course, it is imperative that you keep up with assignments. To that end, I will generally not accept late work, except under exceptional circumstances.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

You must submit all written assignments to receive a final grade. You must submit a hardcopy and/or an electronic version of your written assignment, which should be an example of an original, acceptable piece of scholarly work and follow the minimum/maximum page range indicated in the assignment details.

Your written assignment must include the following information:

- a cover page that states:
 - your name
 - course title/name/number
 - your student I.D. #
 - title of assignment
 - date

Format:

- Times Roman text font
- 12 point font
- 1" margin
- double-spaced
- paginated (numbered)
- citation style as per MLA, APA, etc.

You are responsible for keeping a back-up copy of all your written work.

LANGUAGE:

Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

You play a vital role in contributing to and maintaining the culture of academic integrity expected of everyone at MSVU. Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating: University regulations on Plagiarism and Cheating and academic offenses will be strictly enforced. These regulations including applicable procedures and penalties are detailed in the University Calendar and are posted on Department notice boards and on the Mount website at:

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/academicoffenses.aspx>

Read them!

If you have any questions, please contact me.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students who have a disability and who require academic accommodations must register with Disability Services (<http://www.msvu.ca/disabilityservices>) as early as possible in order to receive accommodations.

RESEARCH:

Students who conduct research involving human participants must have their research reviewed in accordance with the *MSVU Policies and Procedures for Ethics Review of Research Involving Humans* before starting the research. Check with your course professor or Chair of the Department about proper procedure.

Class Attendance:

Regular attendance is expected of students at all classes; the Mount recognizes the significance of attendance by stating it in the Academic Calendar at:

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/classattendance.aspx>

HELPFUL MSVU ONLINE RESOURCES FOR YOU:

Distance Learning and Continuing Education

<http://www.msvu.ca/Distance/index.asp>

For course-related/administrative inquiries, textbook inquiries, proctor inquiries, etc.

Email Distance Learning: distance@msvu.ca or call (902) 457-6511, toll free 1-800-665-3838.

Undergraduate Academic Calendar

<http://www.msvu.ca/calendar/undergraduate.asp>

Library

<http://www.msvu.ca/library/>

Writing Resource Centre

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/student-services/academic-advising-support/writing-resource-centre/default.aspx>

Student Services

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/student-services/default.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE:

Class Cancellation Line: (902) 457-6566