RURAL SOCIOLOGY 1500
INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Autumn Semester, 2016 (30287)
Tuesday & Thursday from 11:10 AM – 12:30 PM // Postle Hall, Room 1184

INSTRUCTOR: Joseph F. Donnermeyer, Professor Emeritus
School of Environment and Natural Resources
Room 408C, Kottman Hall, 2021 Coffey Road

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Lauren Bates (.375)

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OFFICE PHONE: 292-9167         E-MAIL: donnermeyer.1@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment only. I will, however, be available before and after class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, I will expect you to demonstrate: (1) basic knowledge and understanding of concepts and content areas in the discipline of Sociology; (2) an ability to apply sociological concepts to issues and topics concerning you and your relationships within various human groups anywhere in the world; (3) an ability to apply sociological concepts to issues and topics concerning rural and urban places in American society, and of other societies around the world, including the application of sociological principles to agricultural, food and environmental issues; (4) an ability to think critically about issues and topics affecting U.S. society, and of other societies around the world. **Thinking critically means** (a) understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different and/or opposing points of view (b) no matter how strongly you believe that you are right and everyone else is wrong.

This course meets a GE requirement in Social Science – Groups and Politics, and a GE in Social Diversity in the United States. According to the OSU guidelines: “Social science develops students’ understanding of the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; of the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and of the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in the contexts of human existence (e.g., psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political), and the processes by which groups, organizations, and societies function. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving.”
NO REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: No textbook is required, however, pdf versions of chapters related to each topic in this course can be found on the RS 1500 Carmen site. Each chapter posted on the content page – (under “supplemental materials”) supports/”backs up” the lectures, providing a broader framework for how sociology addresses important dimensions of peoples and societies.

COURSE POLICIES:

1. REGULAR CLASS ATTENDANCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. A substantial proportion of the final grade for this course is based on attendance checks, all of which require that you be here. Summary and note-taking pages of course lectures will be posted on CARMEN at appropriate times. Print them out and use them, please! Some of you learned how to take notes in high school, but some of you are not very good at it or were never asked/required to do much of it. It is now time to learn, since note-taking is an essential skill for the workplace.

2. MID-TERM: This mid-term includes everything covered during the first 12 class sessions, and is scheduled for administration during the 13th class session on Tuesday, October 4. The first mid-term is worth 30 percent of the final grade. It will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions. Make-up exams will be allowed only under extreme circumstances, and only for an excused absence (i.e., documented, on official letterhead, and judged by me to be legitimate – see attendance checks below). The make-up exam will be in essay format.

3. FINAL EXAM: The final exam is multiple-choice in format and will be given during the scheduled exam period designated for this class during finals week – Monday, Noon – 1:45 PM, December 12 (in this classroom!). The final exam represents 46 PERCENT of the final grade. It will consist of 46 multiple-choice questions. It is comprehensive, covering materials from the very beginning of class through the final minute of the final class session. Questions will be distributed (to be best of my ability) as follows: 12 questions from course material covered up to the first midterm, and 34 questions from course material covered after the first midterm (beginning the 14th class session). Make-up exams will be allowed only under extreme circumstances, and only for an excused absence (i.e., documented, on official letterhead, and judged by me to be legitimate – see attendance checks below). The make-up exam will be in essay format.
4. ATTENDANCE: On ten (10) random occasions, attendance will be taken. Attendance checks mostly will be in the form of a short question on a current topic. Checks can occur more than once during a single class session. The content of attendance checks will be either about a sociological/social change issue or will be multiple-choice questions about course content (usually the previous class session) that will function as mini “practice” exams.

Attendance checks are worth **24 percent** of the final grade (**3 points each**), that is, up to 8 attendance checks will count. **This policy allows you to miss 2 attendance checks without asking for a special exemption.** I reserve the right to deny an attendance check to anyone who walks in late, that is, once the class begins. The class begins when I start talking. **An exemption can be requested ONLY after you miss 2 attendance checks.** To be exempted, the absence must be a documented illness, a student organization/sports related activity, or for some other legitimate reason. **Two essential rules for special exemptions:** (1) exemptions should be requested BEFORE the class session for which the exemption will apply; and (2) the exemption requires documentation which must be on official letterhead, a legible signature, and a phone number to the clinic /coach / student organization advisor etc. for verification.

5. **TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES WHILE YOU ARE IN MY CLASS!** Remind me to turn off mine.

6. **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** For all assignments for this course, the Code of Student Conduct of The Ohio State University applies. Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the university or subverts the educational goals of this course. **In this class, the most frequent occasion upon which academic misconduct charges are brought up is when two or more students attempt to communicate during or immediately after handing in an exam.** My strict rule is no talking or conversing once the exam has begun all the way through when the student hands in the exam and leaves the room. Since students in this class speak a number of different languages, I only have to see students talking to file charges, even though I do not understand the words exchanged between those students. I do not have time to learn the native language of everyone in this class, hence, it is the only way for me to apply a **fair and consistent policy for all students.** The Code of Student Conduct can be found under “Resources” on webpage for the Committee on Academic Misconduct/Office of Academic Affairs.
7. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: All students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in Room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Or visit the internet address of this office at http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu for more information.

8. INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS: By its nature, any course in sociology focuses on issues that can be controversial, emotional and/or political. For example, this class may touch on issues related to abortion, terrorism, gay rights, gun control, animal rights, human consumption of foods with GMO’s, the death penalty, ethnic/race prejudice, substance use, environmental regulations, factory farming, animal welfare/rights etc. In addition, there are students in this class from a variety of backgrounds. You may have strong, even uncompromising feelings about particular issues. That is terrific!!!!! However, in my class, there is no room for remarks that show intolerance for the points of view of others, or remarks that are explicitly prejudicial to other groups (especially along the lines of race, ethnicity, lifestyles etc.). Remember, one goal of this course is to learn how to think critically. That means understanding opposite points of view even as you hold firm to your own opinions/values/beliefs.

9. GRADING PHILOSOPHY: I use the standard OSU scheme.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93+ PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-66 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>UNDER 60 PERCENT AVERAGE</td>
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10. There are no extra points earned from extra work. Don’t even bother to ask!

11. NOTE: If you attend class regularly, take good notes in handwritten form or on a computer/i-pad (and do NOT do on-line shopping, facebook, texting, go to the “meet other single students” on-line site etc.) and read the textbook, you should do okay in this course. However, if you are having trouble with this course, please see me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the semester.
12. COURSE OUTLINE: RURAL SOCIOLOGY 1500

SESSIONS 1 THROUGH 13 (August 23 through October 4)

Introduction to RS 1500 & Theme of the Course//Defining Social//Definitions of Sociology and Rural Sociology//Six Core Sociological Concepts//Defining Rural & Urban//The Triangle and the Hourglass//The 7 Big Changes (top of the hourglass)//Three Sociological Theories//Ways to Study Societies and Peoples//Culture and Elements of Culture//Examples of 4 Different Cultures//Socialization//The midterm is on Tuesday, October 4, during regular class time (in this classroom!).

Read: Chapter 1 (People, Place and Society: An Introduction to Sociology), Chapter 2 (Sociological Research), Chapter 3 (Culture), and Chapter 4 (Socialization)

SESSIONS 14 THROUGH 29 (October 6 through December 6) (Autumn Break – October 13-14 – no class)

The Three Sociological Universals – (1) The Family; (2) Social Class and Inequality in American Society; and (3) Religion (with a rural emphasis). (special focus on the Amish).

The Sociology of Food and Agriculture (no chapter)

Crime with a rural emphasis

Read: Chapter 5 (Families), Chapter 6 (Social Class), and the religion section of Chapter 7 (Education and Religion), and Chapter 9 (Deviance).

FINAL: Monday, December 12, Noon – 1:45 PM (in this classroom!)