The Ohio State University
Rural Sociology 1500
Introduction to Rural Sociology
Spring Semester 2018 – 3 credits

Wednesdays and Fridays, 12:45-2:05 p.m. Room 9 Ramseyer Hall

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Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistant: Djeynaba Ba (ba.17@osu.edu)
Office Hours: Immediately after class or by appointment

Course Overview:
This is an introductory course which will focus on understanding key sociological concepts. Special emphasis will be given to rural populations, communities, issues, and trends. Topics include sociological theory and perspectives, culture, socialization, social structure, social control, stratification, institutions, and social change. We also will cover basic sociological research methods, as well as agriculture and the environment. The overall goal is to gain a better understanding of society, and the ways in which social processes influence individuals and groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Objectives: Through this course, students will:
• Obtain a basic knowledge and understanding of the major perspectives, concepts, and content areas in the discipline of sociology;
• Apply sociological concepts to issues and topics concerning relationships within various human groups;
• Apply sociological concepts to issues and topics concerning rural and urban places in American society, and of other societies around the world; and
• Critically examine social issues and topics affecting American society, and of other societies around the world.

This course meets a GEC requirement in Social Science. 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.”

Other Materials: Other required and recommended readings will be posted on Canvas.

Method of Instruction:
The course meets twice per week, with lectures, discussion, and special in-class activities. Current events and readings will be integrated into the course when relevant. Regular attendance is expected, in order to best learn the material and get the most from this course.

Exams:
There will be three exams. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Make-up or rescheduling of exams will be allowed only under extenuating circumstances, and with the prior permission of the instructor and appropriate documentation. The exams are worth 40 points each.

Assignments:
There will be three assignments for this class:
1. Short paper about your hometown (2-4 pages)
2. Short paper on rural life and culture (2-4 pages)
3. Podcast on a societal issue, trend, or rural place (2-3 minutes)

More information about the assignments will be presented in class. Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the designated dates or as noted. The assignments are worth 20 points each.

In-class activities and attendance checks:
On 12 occasions throughout the course, you will be asked to complete an in-class activity or attendance check for two points each. Attendance checks will be in the form of a short question about a topic covered in class or the textbook. These may or may not overlap with exam days. Ten (10) of these activities/attendance checks will count toward your final grade (20 points total).

Grading: Your grade will be based on the following:

1. First exam – 40 points
2. Second exam – 40 points
3. Final exam – 40 points
4. Assignment #1 – 20 points
5. Assignment #2 – 20 points
6. Assignment #3 – 20 points
7. Attendance – 20 points
   Total 200 points
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Class Policies:
1. No cell phones, surfing the Internet, checking e-mail or Facebook, game playing, or text messaging allowed in class. Any computers used in class must be for class purposes only.
2. Taking photos or recording of lectures during class is not allowed unless special permission is granted. If you are having difficulty with notetaking, please talk to the instructor or TA for assistance.
3. Late assignments will result in a loss of 10% of points for each day the assignment is late.
4. In the course, we will cover issues that can be controversial. You will need to examine your own experiences and assumptions—and think critically. Be respectful of others in class, even if you do not agree with them.
5. If you have concerns about the course, please schedule a time to meet with the instructor to discuss them.
6. Any questions regarding grades must be received within one week of receiving the grade.
7. Some of the concepts can be challenging to understand. Ask for assistance from the instructor or teaching assistant if you would like extra help.

Accommodation of students with disabilities:
Any student with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should let the instructor know as early in the quarter as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations. The office for Disability Services (98 Baker Hall; 292-3307; VRS: 614-429-1334; slds@osu.edu) verifies the need for accommodations and assists in the development of accommodation strategies.

Academic Misconduct:
For activities of this course, the Code of Student Conduct of The Ohio State University applies. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Specifically, plagiarism is the representation of another’s work or ideas as one’s own, including the unacknowledged word-for-word and/or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas. It also includes submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course, without permission of the instructor for which the work is being submitted. Faculty Rule 3335-5-487 will be followed in cases of academic misconduct – “Instructors shall report instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (on academic misconduct).” For more information, please refer to: [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).
Environmental and Social Sustainability Research Experience Program (ESSREP)
The goal of ESSREP is to enhance student’s understanding of social scientific research methods and help apply class lessons to their lives. As a way to gain extra credit for this class you can get hands-on experience participating in research studies conducted by Faculty and Graduate Students in the Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) Lab in SENR. Research studies may take the form of online or in-person surveys, interviews, or focus groups and will be related to a current research in a variety of topics in resource management, environmental science, psychology, and rural sociology.

- In order to sign up for research opportunities you will first need to create a Sona account using your .osu email address at [https://osu-essrep.sona-systems.com](https://osu-essrep.sona-systems.com). You will then be able to view and sign up for studies and monitor your credit accumulation through Sona Systems. Please see our website [https://ess.osu.edu/essrep/research-option](https://ess.osu.edu/essrep/research-option) for more detailed sign-up instructions, credit amounts, policies, and Frequently Asked Questions.
- If you do not wish to participate in research OR are under the age of 18, a written assignment alternative is also available. Papers will be based on approved research articles and due at set dates throughout the semester. See our website [https://ess.osu.edu/essrep/paper-option](https://ess.osu.edu/essrep/paper-option) for grading criteria and other information about the ESSREP paper option. If you wish to select the paper option, enroll by emailing the lab manager at walpole.31@osu.edu by January 22nd.

A total of **up to 2 research credits** will be possible as extra credit for this course, constituting 2% of your final grade or 4 points of your final score. If you have any questions about the research or paper options, or encounter difficulties with Sona systems please contact the lab manager Emily H. Walpole at: walpole.31@osu.edu. **Your instructors and TAs do not have access to Sona systems and will not be managing the paper option; please direct all ESSREP-related questions to the lab manager.**

Class schedule, readings, and important dates:

- **Week 1: January 10 & 12**
  - Introduction to rural sociology; the sociological imagination
  - What is rural? Witt, Chapter 1
  - Kellogg Foundation (2001). *Perceptions of Rural America*

- **Week 2: January 17 & 19**
  - What is rural? Three sociological perspectives Witt, Chapter 1

- **Week 3: January 24 & 26**
  - Sociological research, Witt, Chapter 2

- **Week 4: Jan. 31 & Feb. 2**
  - Culture; socialization Witt, Chapters 3 & 4
  - Klose, R. Bring Back the Phone Booth, *Christian Science Monitor Weekly*, 10/24/16
  - **Assignment #1 due, Wednesday, January 31**

- **Week 5: February 7 & 9**
  - Social structure and interaction, Witt, Chapters 4 & 5
  - **Exam #1, Friday, February 9**

- **Week 6: February 14 & 16**
  - Social structure and interaction; models of society Witt, Chapter 5

- **Week 7: Feb. 21 & 23**
  - Social control, crime, and deviance Witt, Chapter 6
Week 8: Feb. 28 & Mar. 2  Families in society, Witt, Chapter 7  

Week 9: March 7 & 9  **Exam #2, Wednesday, March 7**  Families in society, Witt, Chapter 7

Week of March 12  **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

Week 10: March 21 & 23  Social class: Stratification, inequality, and poverty  Witt, Chapter 10  
Rural Opportunity Zones, *PBS Newshour*

Week 11: March 28 & 30  Gender, race, and ethnicity  Witt, Chapters 12 & 13  
**Assignment #2 due, Friday, March 30**

Week 12: April 4 & 6  Social change  
*From Congress with Love; Serving Central Ohio and Beyond: The Voice of Congressional Leadership, Youth Beat Radio WCRS Columbus*

Week 13: April 11 & 13  Agriculture and environment  
González, E. *Migrant Farm Workers: Our Nation’s Invisible Workers*. eXtension, October 5, 2015

Week 14: April 18 & 20  Agriculture and environment  Witt, Chapter 14 (pp. 347-354)  
**Assignment #3 due, Thursday, April 20 (last day of class)**

**Final exam, Thursday, April 26  12-1:45 p.m.**