

SOCC103 The Human Community: The Individual and Society
Sacred Heart University
Fall 2011

SYLLABUS

Instructor

Dr. Stephen Lilley, Professor of Sociology
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AC237 Administration Building (next to Chapel & Library), 2nd floor
Office Hours: M 9:00-12:00, T 12:30-2:30 & Th 1:45-2:45
Class: T/Th 9:30-10:45 HC104

Readings

All readings are available through Blackboard.

Course Description

This course is the third part of a four-course sequence which constitutes the University's Common Core: The Human Journey. As with the other courses in the sequence, we will take up these enduring questions of human existence:

- 1) What does it mean to be human?
- 2) What does it mean to live a life of meaning and purpose?
- 3) What does it mean to appreciate and understand the natural world?
- 4) What does it mean to forge a more just society for the common good?

Through the use of textbooks, journal articles, media, and news reports of current events we will explore how sociology, natural sciences, and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition (CIT) address these questions. I am a sociologist and I will share relevant insights from my discipline regarding the social nature of human beings and the structure of society.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply sociological, natural-scientific, and faith-based paradigms to make sense of the human condition;
2. Identify structures and systems that promote or diminish the natural world;
3. Identify structures and systems that promote or diminish social justice and the common good.

Coursework

Review & Reflect Assignments (20 assignments) (200 points toward course total)

The review and reflect assignments are designed to guide you through the readings and videos, reflect on what you read and watch, and become aware of your own thoughts about the various concepts and issues. Your response to each question must be at least 200 words. Your response must demonstrate understanding of the assigned reading or media and it must be well written: proper sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Your response should be insightful, thoughtful, and analytical. Late review and reflect assignments are not accepted. Review the assessment rubric for grading criteria.

Ethics Case Papers (2 assignments) (200 points toward course total)

For each paper you will be required to take different perspectives, for example, that of a natural scientist, Catholic intellectual, or sociologist. You will respond to an ethics case in a manner consistent with the respective paradigms. Late penalty is ten points per day late. See the respective course documents for instructions and the rubric.

Tests (2 exams) (200 points toward course total)

At the midterm and the end of the course you will be tested on your understanding of paradigms and ethical theories and your ability to accurately apply them.

Common Core Colloquia (10 points toward course total)

Colloquia are held as part of the University's Common Core: The Human Journey. To earn ten course points, attend two of the presentations and make reference to them in any of the course assignments.

Written assignments must be posted to Blackboard's journal prior to the start of the class on the day assigned. (To get to the journal, enter Blackboard, select Journal from menu, click on View under your name, in the column on the right side of the page click Add New Entry.) Always create and save a WORD file and then cut & paste the assignment into the journal. When the entry is complete, make sure to click the button "Save & Exit" or "Save." If there appears to be a problem with posting an assignment, it is the responsibility of the student to either send the WORD file to me via email or bring a hard copy to class. A request for an extension must be made *prior* to the assigned due date.

Course Grading

Your course score is calculated using this formula: $\frac{\text{earned points}}{610} \times 100$

This table shows the letter grade assigned to the final course score:

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	60-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	0-59

Course Policies

Laptop Computer

Laptops are required for some in-class exercises. Laptop use is restricted during the discussion period of class time. Instant messaging and other nonacademic uses are prohibited during class time.

Attendance

A class absence occurs when a student 1) misses class or 2) fails to adequately complete in-class work. For every absence after a third, 2 points are deducted from the course score. Seven or more absences are grounds for a failure grade. Plan to attend class on time so as to avoid disrupting class proceedings.

Academic Integrity

In the University's Undergraduate Catalogue, academic integrity is described as "a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility." These values are upheld when students complete homework assignments and tests through their own preparation and writing. These values are violated when a student copies (or paraphrases) another person's homework assignment or cheats on a test. Violators will be penalized: A failure grade for the course for cheating on a test; loss of all points for the entire assignment set (for example, all 20 points for the reading-response set) for plagiarism or for providing an assignment "with the reasonable expectation that it will be used for the purpose of plagiarism." A student should not share an assignment before the due date.

Plagiarism, the misrepresentation of another person's writing and work as one's own, may also entail copying from a published or Internet source. If a passage is to be used (quoted or paraphrased), proper citation is required. If an assignment is plagiarized, violators will lose all points for the entire assignment set. See the respective course document for more information on the academic integrity policy.

Craftsmanship in Writing

Always strive to write with clarity and sound argumentation, and make sure to avoid spelling and grammatical mistakes. One's writing improves through practice, so don't rely on quotations.

**SOCC103 The Human Community: The Individual and Society
Fall 2011 Course Schedule**

Questions Concerning Paradigms, Meaning and Ethics

- September 6 Why study the Human Journey questions?
- September 8 What perspective should we use to make sense of life?
Reading: Orenstein, *Your Gamete, Myself*
Reading: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops statement, *Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology*
- September 13 Online Assignment; No class meeting
What is more important, consequences or ideals?
Lecture: Sandel, *Moral Side of Murder*
- <http://academicearth.org/lectures/morality-of-muder-and-cannibalism>
or
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBdfcR-8hEY&feature=PlayList&p=56BDAAEAEA84FAD0&playnext_from=PL&index=0&playnext=1
- Reading: Singer, *Voluntary Euthanasia*
- September 15 Online Assignment; No class meeting
Which takes priority, individual or community?
Lecture: Sandel, *Claims of Communities*
- <http://academicearth.org/lectures/obligations-and-loyalties>
or
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOotE9_OGGs
- Reading: John Paul II, *On Life-sustaining Treatments*
- September 20 Must science and religion be at odds?
Readings: Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*
Ramachandran, *Pain in the Brain*
- September 22 What is the sociological perspective?
Readings: Mills, *Sociological Imagination*
Durkheim, *Social Facts*
- September 27 Ethics Case Debate (Paper 1 due)

Questions Concerning Human and Non-Human Life

- September 29 How are humans different from other species?
Readings: Siebert, *The Animal Self*
Cochran & Harpending, *10,000 Year Explosion*
- October 4 Why do humans harm other species and ecosystems?
Readings: Diamond, *Collapse*
Peck, *Buzz Off*
- October 6 Do we have an obligation to protect other species and the environment?
Readings: Kaczynski, *Hit It Where It Hurts*
McKibben, *The End of Nature*
- October 13 How are humans different from our technological creations?
Readings: Markoff, *Computer Wins at Jeopardy*
Fox, *Thinking Machine*
- October 18 Should we create autonomous, intelligent beings?
Readings: Weng, *Human-Robot Co-Existence Society*
Moravec, *Rise of the Robots*
- October 20 Midterm Test

Questions Concerning a Just Society

- October 25 Why do we fight?
Readings: Beah, *Child Soldier*
Zimbardo, *Lucifer Effect*
- October 27 What about a "Just War"?
Readings: Hesse, *Thou Shalt Not Kill*
Moseley, *Just War Theory*
- November 1 Why is there discrimination on the basis of class?
Readings: LeDuff, *At a Slaughterhouse*
Kahn & Yardley, *Amid China's Boom, No Helping Hand*
- November 3 Why is there discrimination on the basis of gender?
Readings: Corbett, *The Women's War*
Hughes, *Men Create the Demand, Women Are the Supply*
- November 8 Why is there discrimination on the basis of race?
Readings: Obama, *A More Perfect Union*
Bachrach, *Deadly Science*
- November 10 Why do people still suffer from hunger and treatable disease?
Readings: Gardner & Halweil, *Escaping Hunger, Escaping Excess*

Siegal, *Withholding the Cure*

November 15 Ethics Case Debate (Paper 2 due)

Questions Concerning the Common Good

November 17 How do we become responsible consumers?

Readings: Mooallem, *Hyperhydration*

Hitt, *The Dollar-Store Economy*

November 22 Should we trade freedom for the security of surveillance?

Readings: Vlahos, *Welcome to the Pan Opticon*

Anonymous, *China and the Internet*

November 29 Can we prevent technological disasters?

Readings: Kollin, *The Incorporated Man*

Joy, *Why the Future Doesn't Need Us*

December 1 Should humans become transhumans?

Readings: Kurzweil, *Reinventing Humanity*

Kass, *The Age of Genetic Technology Arrives*

December 6 How do we build God's kingdom on Earth?

Readings: Sachs, *Our Generation's Challenge*

John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*

December 8 Conclusion

December 13 Cumulative Test (1:00-3:00)