SOC 425

Markets & Society
MWF 2-2:50 pm, 3716 HBLL

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Office Hours: M 3–5 pm, W 4-5 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to a course designed to introduce students to the sociological study of economic phenomena.

MATERIALS

Books

How Markets Fail, by John Cassidy
Sex Cells, by Rene Almeling
Charismatic Capitalism, by Nicole Woolsey Biggart

Case Studies

Hewlett-Packard and a Common Supplier Code of Conduct, Anne T. Lawrence
The Black Rhino, R. Edward Freeman, Jared Harris, Jenny Mead, Sierra Cook, Trisha Bailey

Cases will be purchased from the Harvard Business Review site at hbr.org/case-studies. Please do not purchase them until a week or so before they are due.

BRIEF ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

There are 375 points available to earn over the course of the semester. This is how they are distributed across the assignments:

Project - 120
PBL memos - 120
Checkpoints - 60
Reading notes - 50
Participation - 25
And here is a description of each:

**Project:**

The culminating activity for the course will be an individual or group project, which will have a presentation and paper component. The paper (due at the beginning of the final exam period) is worth 100 points; the presentation (given on one of the last two days of class) is worth 20 points.

The topic must be related to themes we cover in class. Beyond that requirement, you may focus on anything. Details will be provided as the semester progresses, but you will select from among three options, each of which focuses on a different skill set:

- Research paper (for individual work or groups with no more than three members). You may choose to write a research paper based on original data collection. The emphasis here is on data collection and analysis, so there will be lower expectations in terms of a comprehensive literature review. The paper may use one of the following approaches:
  - Survey-based paper. Use Qualtrics to create a survey, administer it to at least 50 people, perform some basic data analysis, and write up the results.
  - Interview-based paper. Conduct and record qualitative interviews (at least two per group member, one of which is transcribed), analyze them, and write up the results. (See me if you want to select this option but are working alone.)
  - Historical/archival paper. Write a paper based on primary and secondary historical material.

- Review paper (for individual work or groups with no more than three members). You may choose to write a paper that presents a question, surveys a literature for answers, and proposes future research. The emphasis here is on linking literatures and suggesting contributions for future research, so there are no expectations for actually collecting and analyzing data. Each member of the group will summarize five to ten high-quality peer-reviewed articles. The summaries will be turned in as an appendix to the full paper, which focuses on synthesizing the material.

- Wikipedia entry(ies) (for individual work or groups with no more than three members). You may choose to create or contribute to one or more Wikipedia articles. The emphasis here is on identifying a gap (or gaps) in understanding and filling it/them in with solid, well-cited material. You will take snapshots of the Wikipedia entries before and after their contribution(s) has been made. There will be minimum word, section, citation, and image requirements.

**Problem Based Learning (PBL) Memos:**

I learned about problem based learning from my brother-in-law, who attended dental school at the University of Southern California. During his time as a student, the dental program was structured almost entirely around the philosophy of problem based learning, which went something like this: Instead of coming to class two or three times a week and listening to professors lecture about dentistry, the professors would provide the students with a case (e.g., a man comes in with a tooth abscess, what do you do?) and, the students would have to figure out how to deal with things. This meant that they had to go directly to the journals and
standard texts to figure out how to address the problem. They would meet in groups (along with a facilitator) to discuss what they were learning, and they would report back in class to the professor. The professor would then reveal new aspects of the case (e.g., while extracting the tooth you find signs of gum disease, what do you do now?), and the process would continue.

Class time, in this model, was rarely spent learning the basics of dentistry in the typical teacher-centered model. The real learning was done outside of class, and class time was reserved for reporting on the case and getting feedback from the instructor. As you might imagine, this was incredibly frustrating at times for the students, but it also prepared them well for the “real” world, where they would be confronted with perplexing problems and would have to rely on the available literature (not a professor) to get by.

In our class, we will adopt certain elements of this model. For example, instead of using a class period for me to tell you about the basic ideas of economic sociology, I’ll ask you to figure that out on your own. We’ll then use class time to share what you’ve learned. Organizing the class in this way puts you in the driver’s seat of your education and gives you experience locating and distilling large amounts of information and presenting it in a clear way.

This is how we’ll do it:

- On the schedule, you will see that there are eight days on which a “PBL memo” is due. Each memo has a number attached, which references the question that you will need to write on. For full credit, you will need to complete all of the memos.
- I encourage you to work in pairs or groups, but each student must submit his/her own memo.
- The memo will be short—one page long (no more). The goal is not to write a lot but to pack in a lot of information while also presenting it in a very clear way.
- I will at times provide you with some resources to get you started. They may be more or less useful, and you are not required to use any or all of them. (You should not regard them as comprehensive or representative of the best that’s out there.) If you do choose to cite these resources, only some will count toward the required number of sources, so some will need to come from your own research.
- Most of the memos will require you to have a certain number of reputable sources. Since these are memos and not fully developed essays/papers, the standards for what counts as “reputable” is somewhat looser than would be expected for a formal paper. (See my statement on reputable sources for PBLs.)
- Likewise, since this is not a formal paper, you do not need to follow a style guide for citing your sources. You do need to cite all of your sources, however, and you must not simply copy and paste someone else’s text as if it was your own. Instead of following ASA or APA guidelines, insert a footnote and paste the website link or information on the author and book, journal article, or whatever. You just need to make sure that your reader can trace the origins of your information.
- The memo will be due at noon on the day the assignment is due, which will allow me to preview your work before class begins.
- On every day that a memo is due, plan on spending the first part of class discussing what you wrote with your colleagues (likely in pairs or small groups).
• The memo should be written in Word and sent to the class email account (soc425.child@gmail.com). The subject line should contain only “PBL memo #1” (or whichever number applies).
• Each memo will be worth 15 points, for a total of 120 points. A grading rubric will be provided during the first weeks of class.

Checkpoints:

At three points during the semester, we will take a break from the regular class routine so that I can assess how well you are learning the material and to reward students who are keeping up with things. These are meant to be low-stakes, low-anxiety learning opportunities. There are three checkpoints, each worth 20 points (for a total of 60 points).

Reading Notes:

This class is organized in such a way that you cannot do well if you do not read the assigned material. The required readings are listed on the schedule according to the date they are due. I expect you to have them read before coming to class.

For every assigned reading, you will need to write six or fewer sentences that distill the text’s central argument. (Of course, you are welcome to write more for your own records.) I don’t want you to focus on the extraneous material, and if you do then you will not receive full credit. Rather, focus on the reading’s main point, and try to summarize it in a sentence or two. The other sentences might note the data used and/or how the argument is defended.

You will submit your summary to me by email (with the notes typed directly into the email). The email for this and other assignments is always soc425.cchild@gmail.com. (Use this address only for submitting assignments. All questions or other correspondence should be sent to my regular BYU account: cchild@byu.edu). The subject line for your email should contain only “Reading notes #1” (or whatever number applies). Failure to follow this precisely will result in a “P-”, explained below.

Send me your reading notes prior to the start of class. Assignments received after the beginning of class will be penalized. I will not read your summaries every time a reading is due. Instead, every few weeks I will look over all of the summaries submitted since the last review. Acceptable summaries will be given a “P” for pass. Summaries that are poorly written or do not provide sufficient evidence that you completed the reading will be given a “P-”. You are permitted three “P-” scores, after which any more “P-” scores will be counted the same as if the summary was not completed at all. At the end of the semester, I will take the number of acceptable reading notes and multiply that by 2.5; the product will be your score for the reading notes portion of your grade (with 50 as the highest possible point value).

Note: Writing a reading summary presumes that you made at least a minimal effort to engage with the reading. You cannot (and should not) write a summary if you did not attempt the reading.
Participation:

The success of this course requires that you see yourself as an active member of a community of learners and not merely a passive receptacle of information. In this course, we teach each other, so you need to come to class prepared to learn and share.

The participation points will be based primarily on attendance. Because we will be doing collaborative work, attendance is required and will be recorded. You may miss the following number of days in order to receive the corresponding points at the end of the semester:

- 0-3 days missed: 25/25 pts
- 4-6 days missed: 12.5/25 pts
- 7+ days missed: 0/25 pts

I do not generally distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. If you are not present, I will assume you have a good reason for being away, and it is your responsibility to get lecture notes from someone who was in class. I do not provide my notes or slides to students, and I do not regard it as my responsibility to fill you in on what you missed.

I reserve the right to additionally penalize nonparticipation in class, as well as over participation. This means that even if you have perfect attendance, then you may not receive full participation points if you never (or rarely) participated in class discussion and groupwork or, on the other hand, participated in a way that is disruptive.

PHILOSOPHY

Teaching:

If it isn’t already clear, I have designed this course in a way that de-centers me as the One True Fountain of Knowledge and Entertainment. I see my role primarily as a facilitator: I provide you with raw stuff—readings, assignments, a schedule, etc.—necessary for learning to take place. I set them in front of you and ask you to help build something interesting, but you will ultimately need to decide if you are going to accept the invitation. The truth is this: The most important learning you will do this semester will come as you engage with reading material and course-related assignments outside of the classroom. You need to see class time, then, as an opportunity to clarify and supplement the real education that is happening away from the classroom, not as the alpha and omega of your learning experience.

Practically speaking, this means that you will get out of the course what you put into it. If you want to learn something, don’t wait around for me. If you want to have fun, well, make it fun. The responsibility (and opportunity) is yours, and I hope you will take advantage of it.

Grading:

I try very hard to make grading as transparent as possible by setting clear expectations, grading carefully, and providing a rubric for most assignments. If you aren’t interested in messing with all of that, here is the shorthand for how I grade:
I reserve “A” grades for truly exceptional work. “A” work is rare. It is incredible. It represents the absolute best of what I could expect from a student.

Work that is good will receive a “B.” And when I say “good,” I mean it. I give a “B” for a job well done. I am happy with your performance (and hope that you are as well).

A “C” grade means that your work isn’t great. I’ve certainly seen worse, but it has some problems that disqualify it from being labeled “good” work.

A “D” grade means that your work is pretty bad.

Anything lower means that your work is unacceptable.

Typically, when it comes to grading, I imagine that your work is in the “B” range before I even look at it. (That is, I give you the benefit of the doubt and assume that your work is pretty good.) Then I evaluate the material and decide if there is positive evidence that you actually deserve more than a “B”—that your work is not just pretty good. Or, perhaps there is evidence to suggest that a “B” is too generous, in which case a “C” or lower will be recorded.

I understand that this is different than how some professors assign grades, where good work (and sometimes even good effort) gets an “A.” However, I am committed to rewarding exceptional performance. I want an “A” in my class to really mean something. If every decent performance is rewarded with an “A,” then the letter loses its value and everyone is hurt.

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.9</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69.9</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.9</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66.9</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.9</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62.9</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.9 or lower</td>
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POLICIES

Online Priority:

I will try to make as few changes to the syllabus as possible. That said, it is possible that some modifications will be necessary. I will announce any changes and alter the online content accordingly, but I will not reprint paper copies of the syllabus. Students should therefore give priority to the online official course documents over the printed documents distributed at the beginning of the semester.

Attendance:

It is the responsibility of students who miss class to get lecture notes from someone who was in class. I do not provide my notes or slides to students, and I do not regard it as my responsibility to fill them in on what they missed.
Contesting Grades:

Regardless of the assignment, all grade contestations must be made within 10 days of the grade being posted/distributed (regardless of when, if at all, the hard copy of the assignment, quiz, or exam is returned). After these 10 days, the grade is considered final and no changes to it can be made. If students want to contest a grade, they need to express their complaint(s) in writing (by email to cchild@byu.edu).

Technology:

Turn off cell-phone ringers. Do not use cell-phones at all during class (i.e. no text-messaging, games, etc.). Laptops are permissible as long as students use them to take notes or otherwise contribute to course instruction. I will revoke this allowance on a case-by-case basis if a student uses a laptop to play games, visit social media sites (Facebook, Google+, Twitter, etc.), check email, or carry on any activity that is not related to the class (or is in any way distracting to other students)—regardless whether s/he is also taking notes.

Late work:

Instructions for submitting assignments are on the syllabus or will be given in class. If there is a problem uploading/sending an assignment, then you should notify me by phone or email before the start of class. Work received after the assignment has been collected, or after the due date and time has passed, is considered late. Work will be penalized that is submitted by hard copy when electronic copies are requested.

Late work that is submitted after the due date and time, but on the same day as the assignment is due, will receive a 10 percentage point penalty. Late work that is turned in any time after the due date and up to one week following the due date will receive a 30 percentage point penalty. Work turned in after one week following the due date will receive a 50 percentage point penalty.

Note: Assignments that can be completed easily after the class period has passed will not be accepted after the class period ends. For example, you will not receive points for submitting a reading summary after the class period in which we discussed the reading has passed.

Classroom Behavior:

I expect all class members to interact with their fellow students in a professional, respectful, and considerate manner.

Sexual Harassment:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you
encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor or contact one of the following: the Title IX Coordinator at 801-422-2130; the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847; the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895; or Ethics Point at http://www.ethicspoint.com, or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours).

Student Disability:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC), 2170 WSC or 422-2767. Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-285 ASB.

Academic Honesty:

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to “be honest.” Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life’s work, but also to build character. “President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education” (The Aims of a BYU Education, p.6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

Plagiarism:

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law. Intentional Plagiarism-Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one’s own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote. Inadvertent Plagiarism-Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but non-deliberate, use of another’s words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Although not a violation of the Honor Code, inadvertent plagiarism is a
form of academic misconduct for which an instructor can impose appropriate academic sanctions. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance. Examples of plagiarism include: Direct Plagiarism-The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source. Paraphrased Plagiarism-The paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author’s own. Plagiarism Mosaic-The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one’s own without acknowledging the source. Insufficient Acknowledgement-The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source. Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student’s work and submitting it as one’s own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

**Honor Code:**

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.