SOC 471/ 571: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
(Four credits)

Instructor: Dr. Vogt
E-mail: vogtbl@onid.orst.edu

Catalog Description: Introduces core theoretical and methodological issues related to social movements in the US and abroad. Emphasizes social forces giving rise to movements, tactics employed by movements, and impacts of them on society. PREREQS: SOC 204 or SOC 204H

Expanded Description: This course introduces students to social movements, and sociological theories and scholarship about social movements. What constitutes a social movement? Who joins movements and why? How are movements organized, and what strategies and tactics do they use? How do institutions such as the media and the state affect movements? How effective are movements as agents of social change? Why do they decline? What impacts have they had on law, policy, culture, and the social imagination?

Studying a range of movements will allow us to reflect on these questions, and reflect also on broader questions about inequality, power, and the relationship between social structures, human agency, and social change. We will be investigating theoretical perspectives that allow us to critically evaluate the relevance of concepts such as identity, political opportunity structures, and framing. We will consider the relationships between movement actors and other actors such as coalition allies, counter-movements, institutional allies and opponents, and various publics.

Although social movements in the US will be our primary reference point, we will consider the rise in international movements and their importance on the global stage. The course is designed around readings that engage theory while investigating the dynamics of particular movements and those who participate in them.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, undergraduate and graduate students should be able to:
- explain the basic sociological concepts and theories related to social movements
- identify the main methodological issues related to the sociological study of social movements
- critically recount historical and contemporary events and trends as they reflect the activity of social movements
- articulate how social movement activism can challenge worldviews, commonsense assumptions about power, and actual social structures
- demonstrate an awareness of the continuous presence of organized social movements both in, across, and beyond US borders
- describe how those who participate in social movements experience their role as (and their commitment to being) social change agents

Additionally, graduate students in SOC 571 who choose this option for the Social Movements portfolio will be able to:
- articulate a research design that promises to illuminate something new or under-studied about one or more social movements.

Required Texts:
Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Social Movements by Suzanne Staggenborg (Oxford University Press, 2011)

Textbook Information: NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website (http://osubeaverstore.com/). Sample syllabi may not have the most up to date textbook information!

In addition to readings from the texts, there will be required on-line readings and videos.

Evaluation of Student Performance:

Undergraduates

- Participation in discussion board forum – 25% of final course grade
- Social movement portfolio (includes term paper) -- 25% of final course grade
- Midterm Exam → 25% of final course grade
- Final Exam -- 25% of final course grade

Graduate Students

Graduate students will complete the same basic requirements as undergraduates; however, graduate requirements for the Social Movement portfolio will be more extensive in the ways outlined in the description of the portfolio assignment on our Blackboard site.

- Participation in discussion board forum – 25% of final course grade
- Social Movement Portfolio (includes paper or research proposal) -- 25% of final course grade
- Midterm Exam → 25% of final course grade
- Final Exam -- 25% of final course grade

* Note: Graduate student performance on exams and portfolio will be evaluated at a higher standard of assessment.

On our Blackboard course site, I will post a description of the undergraduate course paper and social movement portfolio requirements. I will also post a description of the more substantial graduate student project (with the option of either a term paper, or a research proposal that reasonably promises to illuminate something new or understudied about one or more social movements).

The midterm and final exams will consist of true/false, fill in the blank, short answer, and short essay items. The final exam is NOT cumulative – it will only address those readings, videos, and lectures from the final half of the course.

Students with 90% and higher will earn A’s; 80% and higher will earn B’s; 70% and higher will earn C’s; 60% and higher will earn D’s; scores below 60% will receive F’s.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities: Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct (policies about plagiarism, cheating, etc.):

http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/regulations/index.php#acdis

Student Evaluation of Teaching:
We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions through ONID. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.
CONTROVERSY AND CONVERSATION: A certain amount of discomfort as well as excitement comes with exploring the unfamiliar, or with taking new approaches to what you thought of as familiar. Our common ground for the course is the readings we share, so try to relate your statements thoughtfully to the readings, since this is something we all have as a point of reference. Be open to change and surprise. I expect us all to treat each other online with respect, and to honor the differences in experience and perspectives that we bring to this course.

DISCUSSION BOARD PARTICIPATION: There is a course discussion board or forum on Blackboard for weekly postings. Weekly participation in the forum constitutes a hefty 25% of your final grade (if you are an undergrad) and 20% of your grade (if you are a grad). Participation means posting two reflections on, or discussion of, the assigned readings for that week (including any video assigned for that week), and also responding thoughtfully twice a week to postings by classmates. So each week before midnight on Sunday (new weeks begin each Monday), you are responsible for four postings – two substantial reflections on the readings for that week, and two thoughtful responses to a classmate. This requirement includes all weeks of the course, except the eleventh week (finals week).

TIMING OF YOUR WEEKLY POSTINGS: As you will see in the final section of the syllabus, the reading assignments for each week are grouped into two “bundles” or clusters; you should plan on reading the first cluster earlier in the week, and posting a discussion or reflection about it no later than midnight each Thursday, and do the same for the second cluster of readings before midnight on Sunday evening. You should also have responded substantially and thoughtfully to two classmates on the Discussion Board by Sunday evening.

This will encourage you not only to keep up with the reading, but also, through this weekly writing, to engage with the ideas presented each week. Reflections on the readings should demonstrate that you’ve read and are familiar with the main insights, specific arguments, terminology, and themes in the readings for that week (and also any video assigned for the week). Please avoid the kind of posting that you could write without ever having done the reading, or postings that sound as if you quickly skimmed the reading, but gave it no serious thought.

The document “How to Approach Weekly Postings” provides guidelines for developing your posting. You can find that document in the “Course Information” section, and also in the Week One learning module in the “Weekly Assignments” section.

You should post your second weekly critical response/discussion no later than Sunday, the last day of the academic week, at 11:55 PM (Pacific Standard Time). After that a new week and a new round of readings begin. Late postings about readings from a week that has passed will not receive full credit, and no posting at all for the week will likewise detract from your final grade.

Again, each and every week also respond to at least two of your classmates’ postings. The point is to engage in a conversation on the Discussion Board relevant to the week’s readings. The responses should be more that “I agree.” Dialogue is the soul of learning, and certainly any sense of belonging to a real learning community, where the ideas matter and relate to your own life, is partly dependent on your willingness to initiate or enter into on-line conversations with your classmates.

Respect for the process you are entering into is crucial – considering the ideas of authors and classmates with an open mind, and extending basic courtesy to everyone in our learning community. I will attend to any major infractions of Internet etiquette (“flaming”), with whatever I consider the appropriate measure. All students should find a site that describes the protocol for on-line discussion groups and learn the major points. Please observe common courtesy rules of Web use.

Informal lectures: Each week I will post comments and questions (an informal lecture) based on the week’s readings. Please consider these comments and questions required reading for the week. Allow time to answer for yourself the questions I pose. Consider time spent reading the informal lectures, and answering the questions posed...
there, as part of the eight to twelve hours you should expect to devote each week to this course. Though I do not expect you to write down your answers and send them to me, keeping a course journal for such purposes is a very good idea. It’s not just “busy work” to do so, but will allow you to check and develop your comprehension, help prepare you for the two exams (midterm and final), and should be very useful in helping you compose your weekly responses.

Videos: Videos will be required viewing throughout the course. They will be posted under the appropriate weeks in the “Assignments” section of the course site. You’ll be able to access these on-line as streaming videos. These are required viewing for that week, and are intended to deepen understanding and elaborate upon themes for that week. Your weekly response should include these videos, but also the readings – What is the relation between the two? In what ways do the videos broaden your understanding of some of the themes and specific ideas presented in the readings?

* * * CAUTION, LEARNING CURVE AHEAD: On-line classes aren’t less work than face to face classes; in fact, they are harder in some ways because you don’t have the extra motivation that comes with meeting regularly in a classroom. You should expect to spend at least eight to twelve hours a week on this course, often more (to complete all the reading, compose your weekly postings, and respond to classmates). Spend as much time necessary each week to complete all readings and assignments.

THE NUMBER ONE DANGER IN TAKING AN ON-LINE CLASS IS THAT AS TIME Passes, STUDENTS RISK LOSING TRACK OF THE LEARNING TRAJECTORY, FALLING BEHIND IN THE READINGS, AND DISENGAGING FROM WEEKLY DISCUSSIONS. FINALLY THEY RISK BECOMING SO DISCONNECTED FROM THE CLASS THAT THEY DROP OUT.

PLEASE DON’T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU. AND PLEASE NOTE THAT I WILL NOT GIVE AN INCOMPLETE FOR THIS COURSE EXCEPT FOR THE MOST DRASTIC OF REASONS, SUPPORTED BY THIRD PARTY EVIDENCE. PLEASE DON’T ALLOW YOURSELF TO FALL BEHIND IN THE READINGS OR YOUR WEEKLY POSTINGS. COMMIT YOURSELF TO THE TIME THIS COURSE ASKS OF YOU EACH WEEK. If you cannot devote the minimum of eight hours to twelve a week to this course that it requires, you are at great risk of falling behind. Please consider taking the course when you can honor the time commitment.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE: SUGGESTIONS

In addition to taking notes, summarize each reading for yourself in one to three paragraphs in a course journal as soon as you’ve read it. What was the reading about? What were the major arguments or analyses? How did the author support the argument or analysis? What questions emerged for you as you read? If you do this kind of short summarizing of each reading, you are likely to be very well prepared for exams and online discussions.

Other suggestions: Spend as much time as you need each week to complete readings and assignments (expect an absolute minimum of eight to twelve hours a week – a four credit classroom course would require four hours of classroom attendance a week, and up to double that much time for activities outside the classroom – reading, completing assignments, preparing for class discussions). Whether in written work or in online discussions, back up your judgments as specifically and thoroughly as you can, and relate them thoughtfully to class readings, on-line discussions, and/or videos. Don’t just agree or disagree: support your assertions with good scholarship, with evidence, and with reasoning.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1) How soon will you respond to e-mails? I will respond to your e-mail within 48 hours, and usually within 24 hours. If you use my onid e-mail address to contact me, be sure to put “SOC 471” in the subject line or I may not notice it among the many e-mails I receive each day.

2) How do I contact you? Contact me at vogtbl@onid.orst.edu - again, be sure to put “SOC 471” in the subject line or I may not notice your email among the many I receive each day.

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information, contact:
Web: ecampus.oregonstate.edu  Email: ecampus@oregonstate.edu  Tel: 800-667-1465
3) **Will there be any lectures?** I will post “Comments & Questions” based on the readings each week. These informal lectures are required reading. You can access them in the “Assignments” section of the site, which is organized by weekly learning modules. You may use the questions as springboards for your own weekly discussions on the Blackboard forum (though you are not required to do this), but please do not simply answer the questions one by one – using them as “springboards” means using them as a starting point to develop your own further reflections and discussion.

4) **How often should I check the course site on Blackboard?** You should check at least three times a week (beginning, middle, and end of the week) for announcements, discussion board or other class postings, and any other developments -- and of course to post your weekly reflections and responses. It’s important to check under the current week in the “Assignments” section early in the week to see if there are required videos to watch (on-line) for that week. I also expect you to read all postings by classmates each week on the discussion board – these are essentially classroom discussions for this course, and need your attention just as if we were meeting face to face each week.

5) **Are there specific times when I will be expected to post discussion board items?** I will expect you to post a thoughtful reflection on the readings each week – for full credit, the first reflection should be posted no later than Thursday evening at 11:55 PM, and the second reflection no later than Sunday evening at 11:55 PM. By that same time on Sunday you should also have responded thoughtfully to at least two postings by classmates.

6) **Will I need to access videos on-line for this course? How do I do that?** Yes, there are a few assigned videos important to this class. There will be a link to each one on Blackboard (by week, in the “Weekly Assignments” section, where the reading assignments are also listed by week), and you can access them as streaming video. There are players you can download for free that will allow you access.

7) **How will the two exams for the course be given?** They will be given on-line. Though I will be changing the format for the exams somewhat each term, you can probably expect a mixture of short essay, true or false, and fill in the blank questions. It will not be an open book exam. If I use the format I now intend, you will have two hours to complete the exam once you open it, after which the exam will automatically close. I will post study guides for each exam.

8) **Where can I find a description of the social movements portfolio assignment for undergrad credit, or the research design project for grads?** I will post both of these posted in learning modules in the “Weekly Assignments” section of our course site. I will also post an announcement when the descriptions of the assignments are available, in the early weeks of the course.

9) **Where can I go for technical help?** Here is a very useful site: 
   http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/services/technical-help.htm

**PLEASE NOTE:** At any time, I reserve the right to modify, change, or alter any aspect of the syllabus, the schedule of readings and assignments, and the requirements for this course. If I do so, I will make timely announcements of any significant changes.

**REQUIRED READINGS AND COURSE OUTLINE**

THE ACADEMIC WEEKS BELOW BEGIN ON MONDAY, AND END AT 11:55 PM (PST) EACH SUNDAY. THE READING ASSIGNMENTS BELOW ARE ARRANGED BY WEEK. AS NOTED SEVERAL TIMES ABOVE, YOU SHOULD POST YOUR FIRST WEEKLY REFLECTION AND WEEKLY RESPONSE TO A CLASSMATE NO LATER THAN 11:55 PM ON THURSDAY EACH WEEK, AND YOUR SECOND WEEKLY POSTING AND RESPONSE NO LATER THAN 11:55 PM ON SUNDAY.

Each week look for the comments and questions (“informal lectures”) about the readings for the week in the “Weekly Assignments” section, in the learning module for current week. These comments and questions are part of each week’s required reading, along with the reading assignments listed below.

Any videos you find under the “Weekly Assignments” section of the course site, in the weekly learning module, are required viewing for that week. Always check under the appropriate week in that section at the beginning of each week for videos. You are required to watch them in their entirety, and include them in your weekly reflections. You
are responsible for completing all readings each week, along with viewing in its entirety any video posted in the week’s learning module. All readings assigned below are from the textbooks unless designated as on-line readings.

The “breaks” or spaces between assigned readings in the weeks below indicate that you should treat readings as related “blocks” or “bundles” within a given week. Writing and thinking about the readings in two “blocks’ or “bundles” will help you organize your thoughts and your postings about them. Read and write about part of the readings earlier in the week (by Thursday), and the second part later (by Sunday), rather than trying to read all of them at once (the point is to learn, not to overwhelm yourself).

SMR – Social Movements Reader edited by Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper
SM – Social Movements by Suzanne Staggenborg
On-line readings – these will be accessible through URL links, PDFs, or HTML documents found in the learning modules organized by week in the Weekly Assignments section of our Blackboard course site.