

## CF3404.001H SOCIAL CLASS AND DEMOCRACY Spring 2012

**DAYS & TIMES:** Tuesday, Thursday 2-320pm

**LOCATION:** Fondren Science 157

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr JM Cruz, (Office of General Education, Clements Hall G02A)

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday, Thursday 12-2p and by appointment. 214.768.4852. jmcruz@smu.edu

### REQUIRED TEXTS:

- ❖ C Wright Mills, 2000, *The Power Elite*, ISBN 0195133544, Oxford University Press
- ❖ From the Editors of *Dollars and Sense*, 2009, *The Wealth and Inequality Reader* (3rd ed), ISBN 9781878585530, *Dollars and Sense* [[www.dollarsandsense.org](http://www.dollarsandsense.org)]
- ❖ From the Editors of *Dollars and Sense*, 2010, *The Economic Crisis Reader* (2nd ed), ISBN 9781878585844, *Dollars and Sense*
- ❖ G William Domhoff, 2010, *Who Rules America* (6th ed), ISBN 978007811563, McGraw Hill
- ❖ Allan G. Johnson, 2006, *Privilege, Power, and Difference* (2nd edition), ISBN 139780072874891, McGraw Hill
- ❖ James Lardner and David Smith, 2005, *Inequality Matters*, ISBN 9781595581754, The New Press

### COURSE OVERVIEW AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course explores the concept of class in American life and investigates the effects of class differences and tensions on American democratic institutions.

Learning Outcomes for this course are:

- Students will be able to discuss current American socioeconomic inequality.
- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role that particular social statuses have in providing opportunities to some that are denied to others.
- Students will be able to identify various factors contributing to socioeconomic status (wages, education, occupation).
- Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to use inter/multi-disciplinary approaches for understanding the complex issues of poverty, homeless, hunger within the larger context of social inequality.

### SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION:

**Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both. Yet men do not usually define the troubles they endure in terms of historical change and institutional contradiction. ... The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. ... The first fruit of this imagination--and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it--is the idea that the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within this period, that he can know his own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his circumstances. ... We have come to know that every individual lives, from one generation to the next, in some society; that he lives out a biography, and that he lives it out within some historical sequence (Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 1959:3-10).**

### CLASS ORGANIZATION AND ATTENDANCE:

Very generally I organize my classes and teach via the Socratic Method. Thus, while I do have a lecture and particular points to cover during each session, I often use the question/answer format to draw students into the discussion and to get those points across. Students are expected to read each book chapter and contribute to the class discussion. If you are not prepared discussion is impossible. Come prepared.

Again, students are expected to read each chapter and come to class prepared. I will primarily carry the class on lecture days; however I do ask questions about particular examples in the text or alternatives to a particular perspective. If students are unprepared you will be unable to respond, and this never makes for a productive teaching/learning

environment. Note that a CF is by design, required to have 100 pages of reading per week and multiple writing assignments. As such, this course is appropriately packed with information that students are expected to read/learn. There may not be ample time to go over every single thing in class, so appreciate that some of the material you are responsible for on exams may not be discussed in class.

I use Blackboard. Be aware of your university ID. Grades and assignment specifics are at <https://courses.smu.edu/webapps/login/>. Your login name should be your student ID number. If you are unaware of your ID number or have problems logging in call 214.768.HELP. Please note that email is generated in Blackboard and students are responsible for the information in my email messages. If you do not receive email messages you need to make sure the email address in Blackboard is the one you check regularly.

Additionally, I believe in starting class on time, so do not be late. This class begins at 2pm and runs until 320pm. Please get here on time and plan to stay the entire period. **Missing part of the class will result in an absence.** (Schedule doctors appointments and travel arrangements on your own time or you will be marked absent.) **\*If tardiness becomes an issue I will at that point start counting students absent for being late.**

Please note that because there is a strong correlation between doing well in class and having good attendance our department collectively believes that students should attend class and so we have a policy that generally allows students to miss 10% of class before being dropped. **In terms of your Attendance Grade, missing 3 classes results in a B/85, 4 is a C/75, and missing 5 means you will be dropped from the course.** (Missing 0 earns 100; and missing 1-2 is a 95.) Please do not call or email to let me know you are not going to be in class. **I do not need to know why you miss class, as there are no "excused absences" other than those related to University sponsored/sanctioned events or religious observances- so please do not contact me about being absent. (Do not call or email asking what you missed either.)**

Students are responsible for attending each class period IN ITS ENTIRETY and for getting notes from another student in the event of an absence. **If you have work, family, or health issues that may keep you from attending class regularly, then drop the course and take it at a more convenient time.**

\*NOTE: There are absolutely NO concessions made at the 5th absence. A student will be dropped with no questions asked regardless of current grade, reason for your absences, or time left in the semester. If it is past the drop date (4.04.11) then 5 or more absences results in the grade of 0 for attendance.

\*NOTE ALSO- your attendance grade is worth 10% of your course grade.

#### **EXAMS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADING SCALE:**

Students are tested twice. On exam day, students should be in their seats and taking the exam at least 15 minutes into the class period. If a student shows up later than this, you will not be allowed to test and you will receive a 0. **\*Please note that make-up exams are all essay and are given during the last week of class. They are ONLY given in the event of a UNIVERSITY SPONSORED AND DOCUMENTED excused absence. If you miss, be prepared with a university accepted reason for having done so. It is in your best interest to not miss an exam.** (Prior arrangements can be made on an individual basis if you will be absent on exam day and you know that ahead of time.) Also on exam day students are free to leave after finishing the test. There are no test reviews. Exams generally cover concepts and themes addressed in the text, my lecture notes, and any \*.ppt slides.

*Note this is a service-learning course and students will be required to engage in 20 hours of service work over the duration of the semester. The goal of this assignment is for sustained engagement- so that I will ask to you remain in the field for at least 7 weeks and do no more than 3-4 hours per week (you can do more if you'd like but you need to be in the field for at least 7 weeks). You will have 4 options to choose from with populations served from children to adults, and available times from weekday mornings/afternoons to weekend days. There is NO alternative to this assignment. If for whatever reason you are not interested in doing this, I can appreciate that completely and ask that you drop the course.*

I believe that students learn sociology better when they think critically, process the information, and write about readings, movies, lectures, their own socialization, etc. Thus, writing assignments weigh more heavily in my classes than exams do. In addition to exams, students are required to do several writing assignments. Please note that hard copies of the assignments are due in class and electronic versions of the same paper are to be uploaded to SafeAssign within 24 hours of the due date. Not uploading assignments by the 24-hour deadline will result in a -10 for each day that the paper is late. Writing assignments are as follows:

- 1) Speaker paper (10%) This paper is about one of the two guest speakers- and in particular the issue that they present to class. What I'd like is a paper written in two parts- summary and critique, where the critique fleshes out the issues presented, using relevant course material. **DUE IN CLASS 3.06, DUE IN SAFE ASSIGN 3.07.**
- 2) C Wright Mills paper (10%) This paper is related to Mills' concept of the Power Elite. What I'd like is a mini research paper where you take 5 of his chapters and address one person who you think currently 'fits' into this particular category. **DUE IN CLASS 3.27, DUE IN SAFE ASSIGN 3.28.**
- 3) In a class called Social Class and Democracy, tell me about one of the oppressed groups discussed in Johnson and talk about their political power- or lack thereof (think Domhoff). **DUE IN CLASS 4.10, DUE IN SAFE ASSIGN 4.11.**
- 4) Volunteer work and paper (20%) This assignment has 2 parts. The first is 20 hours of volunteer work at a local nonprofit agency. You have several options, but I ask that you do all 20 hours at the same agency. Options are: Catholic Charities of Dallas, InterFaith, I Have A Dream, and Thriving Minds. For this assignment you will do 3-4 hours per week and expect to be in the "field" for 20 hours total- for 7 weeks. Completing your hours is graded on a pass/fail basis. You either get a 0 for the assignment or 100. There is also a paper associated with this assignment- due near the end of the semester. Note that if you do not complete your 20 hours you will not be able to write the paper. So a Fail in the 20 hours of volunteer work begets a Fail on the paper assignment as well. Each of these is worth 10% of your grade for a cumulative 20% of your course grade. **DUE IN CLASS 4.26, DUE IN SAFE ASSIGN 4.27**

Part of all assignments is uploading an electronic copy to SafeAssign- located in Blackboard. Students need to upload the document in \*.doc, \*.docx, \*.txt, or \*.pdf format. If students have problems uploading the file, **you will have 24 hours from the assignment due date to figure out this glitch.** Contact the helpdesk (214.768.HELP) with technical problems/questions. Please note that SafeAssign catches plagiarism and those found to have plagiarized part of their paper will receive at the very least a 0 on the assignment and at most an F as a course grade. Not uploading assignments by the 24-hour deadline will result in -10 points for every day that the paper is late.

GRADING SCALE:		LETTER GRADES	
Your final grade is based on the following:		A 94%+	C 74-76%
Attendance	10%	A- 90-93%	C- 70-73%
Writing Assignments (4 at 100 points/10% each)	40%	B+ 87-89%	D+ 67-69%
Tests (2 at 100 points/20% each)	40%	B 84-86%	D 64-66%
Service hours at nonprofit agency	10%	B- 80-83%	D- 60-63%
		C+ 77-79%	F 59% and below

#### COURSE POLICIES:

Students need to plan ahead regarding due dates and workload. All assignments are due in class on the due date. Anything turned in on the due date but after class will receive -10 points. Despite various life events that might occur (computer problems, an auto accident, oversleeping, deaths in the family, relationship breakups, or other personal tragedies) you should turn your assignments in on time. If you are plagued by bad luck recognize this and plan ahead. **NEVER EVER IS EMAILED WORK ACCEPTABLE.** If you will have a University related absence on the due date of an assignment, a hard copy form of the homework is due BEFORE the due date, or the assignment needs to be turned in on the appropriate day via a classmate.

Cell phones are not a problem, as I recognize that students have lives outside of the classroom, but please do not take a call while you are in class. This is distracting to those around you and to me. If your phone rings and you need to take a call, please go into the hall to converse. Also do not sleep in class. This is not tolerated. If you are too tired to remain awake, exercise your right to be absent.

***Text messaging has increasingly become a problem. For that reason I feel obligated to include a policy in the syllabus. The policy is this; because I believe this behavior is amazingly rude, text the first time and be shamed. Text a second time and I will ask you to leave the classroom and your absence will be noted in terms of your attendance grade. DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TEXT MESSAGE WHILE YOU ARE IN MY CLASS. If you cannot give me, and those around you, your undivided attention for the required time on any given day then do not come to class. (Please note that this goes for laptops as well. If I notice that students are being distracted by using laptops in class and it is problematic for me and/or those around you I reserve the right to ask you to not use this technology in class.)***

Regarding EMAIL COMMUNICATION more and more students are checking email on their telephones. If you have failed to configure your email correctly and are able to send messages and NOT receive, then I will not be responding to your

email messages. The “reply to” address in your cell phone email account should be your email addy in webmail and NOT your student ID (for example [jmcruz@smu.edu](mailto:jmcruz@smu.edu) and NOT [24218588@smu.edu](mailto:24218588@smu.edu)). Additionally, you are responsible for knowing the information in this syllabus. If you email me a question that is answered in this syllabus I will either not respond or say “check your syllabus.” I speak here of office hours, office location, what we’re doing on particular day, etc. Be conscientious and responsible for the information provided to you.

### **LEARNING ENHANCEMENT CENTER:**

While this is not an English or writing class, I believe that you should be writing at a particular level and that any written work you turn in should be void of basic grammatical errors. Based on your writing I may suggest that you see someone in the Learning Enhance Center. If I do make this suggestion, please recognize that it is to help you. For those who are suggested go there, I would like documentation that you have been and that a tutor or staff member has edited your paper. Remember that the center exists for your use. Be aware that you will probably have to make an appointment to meet with someone so you should act in a timely manner to accomplish this. The website for the center is: <http://www.smu.edu/alec/home.html>

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.) **\*Proper documentation is needed by the second week of class to have absences excused. (I need documentation by 1.26.12 and will not be dealing with this at the end of the term.)**

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue) **\*Proper documentation is needed by the second week of class to have absences excused. (I need documentation by 1.26.12 and will not be dealing with this at the end of the term.)**

### **ACCOMODATIONS:**

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PROFESSIONAL COURTESY:**

Students are encouraged to share ideas with classmates and others and to discuss material outside of class; however, all written work must be your own. Plagiarism or other forms of cheating are not tolerated. Students will receive a 0 for academic dishonesty and/or an F in the course. Please note again that your writing assignments will be submitted to/through Safe Assign and any papers that are shared between students will be dealt with accordingly.

Civility and respect for each other and each other’s ideas are critical to an informed discussion of social issues. Be respectful at all times of your classmates and me. Remember that a course in sociology will cover a wide variety of topics that are sensitive in nature. While a given student may not find every topic controversial, a particular idea may indeed be emotionally charged for a variety of reasons for an individual. Therefore everyone will be tolerant of other’s opinions and their right to express themselves, provided that the views expressed are not hateful or derogatory in nature. Should a student feel that it is his/her right to put down or malign other’s views or their person, then they will immediately be asked to leave the classroom.

**CF3404.001H: Social Class and Democracy**  
**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES Spring 2012\*\***

DAY/DATE	ACTIVITY	READING/ASSIGNMENT DUE
Tuesday, 1.17	Syllabus Questions/Answers Discussion of Assignments	None
Thursday, 1.19	Discussion	Guest Speakers
Tuesday, 1.24	Class Lecture	Johnson 1, 2 (Theory BB)
Thursday, 1.26	Class Lecture	Johnson 3, 4, 5
Tuesday, 1.31	Class Lecture	Johnson 6, 7, 8
Thursday, 2.02	Class Lecture	Wealth Intro, Section I
Tuesday, 2.07	NO CLASS/CRUZIDAY	
Thursday, 2.9	Class Lecture	Wealth Section I
Tuesday, 2.14	Class Lecture	Wealth Section II
Thursday, 2.16	Class Lecture	Wealth Section II
Tuesday, 2.21	Class Lecture	Economic 1.1-1.11
Thursday, 2.23	Guest Speaker	Speaker
Tuesday, 2.28	Class Lecture	MILLS 1, 12, 15
Thursday, 3.01	Guest Speaker	Speaker
Tuesday, 3.06	Class Lecture	Lardner/*Speaker paper due
Thursday, 3.08	Midterm	
Tuesday, 3.13	SPRING BREAK/NO CLASS	*Read Domhoff
Thursday, 3.15	SPRING BREAK/NO CLASS	
Tuesday, 3.20	NO CLASS/CRUZIDAY	
Thursday, 3.22	NO CLASS/CRUZIDAY	
Tuesday, 3.27	Class Lecture	Wealth Section III/*Mills paper due
Thursday, 3.29	Class Lecture	Economic 2.1-2.5/Domhoff
Tuesday, 4.03	Class Lecture	Economic 2.6-2.10
Thursday, 4.05	Class Lecture	Economic 3.1-3.4
Tuesday, 4.10	Class Lecture	Economic 3.5-3.8/*Domhoff paper due
Thursday, 4.12	Class Lecture	Economic 7, 8
Tuesday, 4.17	Class Lecture	Wealth p. 176-209
Thursday, 4.19	Class Lecture	Wealth p. 210-287
Tuesday, 4.24	Class Lecture	Johnson 9, Economic 9
Thursday, 4.26	Class Lecture	Economic 10/ *Volunteer paper due
Wednesday, 5.02	FINAL EXAM 3-6pm	

\*\* Please note that I reserve the right to make changes with prior [appropriate] notice to students.

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- ❖ C Wright Mills, 2000, The Power Elite, ISBN 0195133544, Oxford University Press [**MILLS**]
- ❖ From the Editors of Dollars and Sense, 2009, The Wealth and Inequality Reader (3rd ed), ISBN 9781878585530, Dollars and Sense [www.dollarsandsense.org] [**WEALTH**]
- ❖ From the Editors of Dollars and Sense, 2010, The Economic Crisis Reader (2nd ed), ISBN 9781878585844, Dollars and Sense [**ECONOMIC**]
- ❖ G William Domhoff, 2010, Who Rules America (6th ed), ISBN 978007811563, McGraw Hill [**DOMHOFF**]
- ❖ Allan G. Johnson, 2006, Privilege, Power, and Difference (2nd edition), ISBN 139780072874891, McGraw Hill [**JOHNSON**]
- ❖ James Lardner and David Smith, 2005, Inequality Matters, ISBN 9781595581754, The New Press [**LARDNER**]

**CF3304.001H: SOCIAL CLASS AND DEMOCRACY  
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES: Spring 2012**

**WRITING GUIDELINES FOR ALL PAPERS**

All papers should have the following characteristics: 12-point font. Double-spaced. Numbered pages. Stapled. NO cover page or folders- name on first page. All writing should be spell checked and free of grammatical errors. Use various images as necessary to illustrate your point. Proper citations are required. If you are not sure how to cite a website, see <http://memorial.library.wisc.edu/citing.htm>. (I'm not too concerned with what format you use, however in Sociology we use the ASA style, which can be found here:

<http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?section=Sociology+Depts&name=Quick+Style+Guide.>)

**Ensure to use, ASA, APA, or MLA. If you are not aware of how to cite, consult the Web or the Learning Enhancement Center.**

**All papers should be between 6-10 pages long.**

**All papers are due in SafeAssign 24 hours after being due in class. If you have problems uploading your assignments, contact the help desk to figure this out. Their number is 214.768.HELP. Again, hard copies are due in class on the due date and then due online in \*.txt, \*.doc, \*.docx, or \*.pdf format. Not uploading assignments by the 24-hour deadline will result in -10 points for every day that the paper is late.**

**\*Please note that following all instructions perfectly is considered average work- C. It's what I expect of all of you. If you want an above average grade (B) or an excellent grade (A) then consider going above and beyond the assignment in terms of depth and insight.**

**Paper 1: Speaker Response Paper [\*due in class 3.06 and due in SafeAssign 3.07]**

This paper starts as a paper with two parts- a summary and a critique of the speaker who comes to class. The summary is straight forward- spend time thoughtfully addressing their presentation. The second part is a critique where you share what you view as strengths and weaknesses, while going beyond the presentation. Spend time incorporating course materials here- what did they support, what did they refute?

**Paper 2: C Wright Mills Paper [\*due in class 3.27 and due in SafeAssign 3.28]**

This paper requires you to do some online research. Mills has several chapters that we will read together, as a class, to understand the point he makes. Then you will go beyond this, writing a paper on 3 additional chapters- your choice- where you do research and figure out if we have a contemporary example of this particular group of people.

For example, from your understanding of The Power Elite, you might choose to write about chapter 4, The Celebrities, where you do some digging to find out what celebrity today has the type of power/influence that Mills addresses in this particular chapter. I want the examples fleshed out, so for this chapter, you might discuss what the talent is, how much he/she is worth, what an income is like, etc. Again do this for 3 chapters total (maybe Steve Jobs would be the example for the Corporate Rich, and Warren Buffet would be your example of The Very Rich). It is worth 100 points and 10% of your course grade.

**Paper 3: Social Class and Democracy Paper [\*due in class 4.10 and due in SafeAssign 4.11]**

For this paper I'd like you to think critically about both Johnson and Domhoff. (This is an amazing time to take this course and consider Johnson and Domhoff because it's an election year.) Issues of social class and race are in the media constantly as candidates vie for a nomination (in the case of Republicans) or as Obama attempts to garner support for his second run at the White House. Take this and consider Johnson's writings about gays, women, people of color, etc. Poke around online and think about the state of equal marriage for example for gays/straights, or the rate of pay between women/people of color and men (White men)- or consider social class and race as these are pretty ubiquitous in terms of air time right now. Where are we in the struggle for equality? Compare Johnson to your findings and then consider Domhoff's work as well. In what view, what needs to be done- if anything at all- in terms of social inequality? The paper is worth 100 points and 10% of your course grade.

**Paper 4: Volunteer Work and Paper [\*due in class 4.26 and due in SafeAssign 4.27]**

I believe that volunteerism is important. At the macro level it enables work to be done that might not be if there's no resources to pay an employee to do something, and at the micro level it provides a sense of meaning and purpose. Outside of these it generates good energy and looks good on a resume. You will also engage in networking with persons who can potentially make recommendations for post graduate work or graduate programs. Last, this could potentially lead to paid employment after college.

I have asked persons from Thriving Minds (Big Thought), I Have A Dream, InterFaith, and Catholic Charities to come speak to you about their agency on 1.19. You will select one agency at which you can volunteer for 7 weeks at 3-4 hours per week. You will earn a 100 or a 0 for having completed (or not) the 20 hours of required volunteer work. We will have mechanisms in place for signing in and signing out. Note the different populations served by each agency, the types of programming that you can become involved with, and the hours that are available to volunteer in making your choice. What I would like is for you to get half of these hours completed prior to test 1 (3.08.11) and half of them completed after. This grade is worth 10% of your course grade.

The final paper is a culmination of your learned experiences and course content. So write a 6-10 paper with an Intro and Conclusion making a particular point- address what exactly you did, what you learned, how you think of the population served, an evaluation of the program/agency (maybe what you view as a need and how you might go about meeting this need), how this particular experience relates to the study of social class inequality and democracy or power. The paper is worth 10% of your course grade.