San José State University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 57: Community Involvement/Personal Growth
Spring 2015

Instructor: Chris J. Cox
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Office Hours: MW 11:00 pm – 12:00 pm; 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Class Days/Time: MW 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm
Classroom: Clark Hall 303
GE/SJSU Studies Category: This course fulfills the Core GE area E (Human understanding and development) requirement. As such, there is a **minimum writing requirement of 1500 words.**

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging
Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page accessible through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. My page can be found at [www.sjsu.edu/people/christopher.cox/](http://www.sjsu.edu/people/christopher.cox/)
You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU.

Course Description
This course will examine the interaction between individual lifespan development and involvement with various formal and informal communities (such as civic and volunteer organizations, ethnic and religious groups, professional associations, etc.). We will explore factors that shape individual engagement with communities and the development of civic responsibility in our multicultural society. We will also consider evidence on how community engagement influences individual physiological, social/cultural, and psychological well-being.
We will also explore the concept of “social capital” – the notion that social networks have value for both individuals and societies. We will analyze the link between social bonds and life satisfaction for individuals, as well as the impact of civic participation on our society as a whole. Students will participate in and reflect upon a community service experience in an organization serving a multicultural population, and form a life plan for developing social capital through civic engagement. Students will come to understand the university as both a learning center and a multicultural community embedded within a larger social system.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

The general goals for the GE area E requirement are:

- Students will understand themselves as integrated physiological, psychological, and social entities who are able to formulate strategies for lifelong personal development. Courses shall address challenges confronting students who are entering the complex social system of the university, so that students can employ available university resources to support academic and personal development.

Accordingly, there are specific goals and learning objectives set for this course. These are:

1. Students shall recognize the physiological, social/cultural, and psychological influences on their well-being. (GE)

2. Students shall recognize the interrelation of these factors on their development across the lifespan. (GE)

3. Students shall use appropriate social skills to enhance learning and develop positive interpersonal relationships with diverse groups and individuals. (GE)

4. Students shall recognize themselves as individuals undergoing a particular stage of human development and recognize how their well-being is affected by the university’s academic and social systems, and how they can facilitate their development within the university environment. (GE)

Course Goals:

5. Comprehend the concept, meaning, relationship and value of “community involvement and personal growth” as well as community, service, and learning; also, gain an understanding of citizenship with moral and civic responsibility to society.

6. Know fully a community agency: its organization, service programs, clientele & their needs, volunteer roles, community role, and social problems addressed.

7. Gain a sense of the discipline of sociology, particularly patterns of interactions between individuals, groups, and social institutions, as well as the influences of
various cultural norms and values upon such interactions.

8. Demonstrate characteristics of intentional learners who can adapt to new environments, integrate knowledge from different sources, and continue learning throughout their lifetimes; and, demonstrate the capacity to participate as a socially responsible member of civic, professional, cultural, and other communities.

Given that this is a sociology course, we will focus on individual development in terms of our interactions with other individuals, groups, and social institutions, as well as the influences of various cultural norms and values upon such interactions.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbook**

Korgen, Kathleen; Jonathan White. *The Engaged Sociologist* (5th ed.)

Sociology 057 – Cox & Fallon Course reader available at Maple Press printshop
(Maple Press: 481 E. San Carlos St. San Jose). (408) 297-1001

**Library Liaison**

Kathryn Blackmer Reyes  (408) 808-2097

**Classroom Protocol**

1. Late Assignments: Assignments such as term papers will lose credit for every class meeting that they are late. These assignments must be **turned in by hand during class** (not by email). They must also be **stapled!** Papers over one week late will not be accepted unless a prior arrangement has been made with me. If you foresee a problem with meeting a deadline, you need to speak with me about it as soon as possible. Waiting until the last minute is not a good idea. Late exams need to be taken as soon as possible, and I need to be informed of your absence should it occur on an exam date.

2. Academic Honesty: Cheating on exams or written assignments is not allowed and will not be tolerated. Most importantly, this includes plagiarism on the formal written assignments. Basically, plagiarism includes using the words and ideas of others without giving proper credit, as well as the outright copying of others’ work. In cases of substantiated violations of the academic integrity policy (i.e., there is sufficient evidence that you have cheated on any assignment), you will automatically fail the course.

3. General conduct: Cell phones should not be used during class, and your phone’s ringer should be turned off. Text messaging is also not permitted during class. Please show courtesy to your fellow students and your professor by refraining from cell phone use during class. If you are having an emergency for which you need your phone on, come and talk to me before class begins.
*Also, there are times when we may discuss sensitive topics during class, or topics of controversy for which people may have extremely divergent views. Open discussion and debate are encouraged, but maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect towards all that are in the class is of the utmost importance.

**Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html). [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

**Assignments and Grading Policy**

The work in this class consists of two brief assessment papers, a midterm, a research paper, a **minimum of 24 hours of community service**, and a final exam. Separate handouts regarding each assignment will be given. The grading scale is as follows:

- Assessment papers: 20%
- Exams: 25%
- Research paper: 25%
- Community service: 30%

Part of the community service grade consists of a journal to be kept by students, and a group presentation during the course. Journal writings will be based on linking students’ service experience with topics covered in the readings or class presentations. Participation in class discussions and small group discussions is expected.

**General evaluation criteria for assignments:**

- Careful following of instructions
- Accurate and objective representation of theories, concepts, etc
- Thoughtful subjective responses to material, indicating thorough understanding
- Critical thinking in your response, with critical questions and answers to yet resolve
- Integration of concepts and ideas from readings, class discussions, service experiences, and relevant current events
- Proper format for written assignments; proper mechanics, grammar, and punctuation

**Student not engaged in service by the midterm risk failing the course.** No INC will be issued for failing to complete 24hrs of community service by the last class. No INC will be issued without a passing grade by the end of the term, nor without valid documentation of the reason for which the incomplete is requested.
Students must have a signed Student Service-Learning Plan on file by the second week of community service.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the six SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are
well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.

Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop-in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/.

Instructions for Major Written Assignments

*** (All papers are to be written in ASA, MLA, or APA format)

Pre-Assessment Paper ~ My Community Involvement

Describe your personal history with civic involvement, volunteerism or community service, whether through participation in school, church, neighborhood, community or national groups or activities, and any advocacy or political action. How did you feel about your involvement? How did this impact your attitudes or perspectives toward others? Who benefited from your service or activity? What changes might you have effected?

Look up the definition of social capital (in Putnam), and looking at these connections, assess your social capital. How connected are you? In what networks are you engaged, and with what groups are you associated beyond family and friends? What community resources do you have at your disposal?

How do you understand community involvement? What are your expectations for this service-learning course? How does community involvement help you develop as a whole person, physiologically, psychologically, social/culturally? (3 to 4 pages of text)

Research Report – Social Issue and Solution:

Either (A) Investigate a human need being met by the community organization at which you serve. This service agency is attempting to address a particular social issue or alleviate a social problem within the community such as homelessness, hunger, illiteracy, or poverty (you are not limited to these topics); Or (B) Research social forces that are affecting the community such as healthcare, immigration, violence, technology, mass media. Describe the social issue and efforts to remedy this problem from various perspectives. Clearly state your major thesis; that is, what is the problem is and what are the potential solutions.

Research this issue using articles and books from the library and the internet. You can also include information gathered at your service site from observations & interviews of employees and clients. Reference current news & media stories when applicable.

Be objective in analyzing the research data for your chosen problem. Be conscious of the physiological, psychological, social and cultural effects of this social problem on individual
persons and groups. Provide a bibliography with at least five (5) references, including no more than two websites. (5 to 7 pages of text, plus the bibliography)


Graded on: academic integrity, topic relevance to service, thesis statement, written quality, critical thinking in real world application, research quality, community service inclusion, bibliography, format and length.

Post-Assessment Paper – My Civic Engagement, My Personal Growth – Now and Future

Keeping in mind what you have studied in this class, and your involvement in the community (campus, city, etc), reflect on your experience, your accomplishments, how you have met the course learning objectives, how the course has impacted you, and how you might apply newfound knowledge, understanding or skills. Review the progression of your journal writing over the course of the semester.

What have you accomplished that was significant? What skills did you utilize? What learning objectives (see syllabus page one) were achieved? What feedback was helpful? Have you learned the value of “process” as much as “product”? How has this experience furthered your personal growth and holistic development – physiologically, psychologically, socially, and/or culturally? Which dimensions were influences in this class, and how will you cultivate these human dimensions over your lifespan?

How can you integrate civic participation into your life as a college student, and beyond? Formulate your intentions for future civic engagement. In what ways will you strengthen your social capital, and your connections to various communities of interest? How will these associations help you achieve your personal and professional goals?

How will you practice moral and civic responsibility – as a citizen of democracy? What challenges to being an “educated citizen” do you anticipate? What would be your greatest life achievement? What are your hopes for the future of your community or your country ten years from now?

Throughout your paper, cite course readings (two since midterm) and reference “Citizenship Development and the American College Student” (4+ pages). [This paper serves as the basis for your Final Group Presentation]

Ideas for JOURNAL Entries (optional)

Here are some other aspects to observe and reflect upon:
- Agency Website Visit – describe your perceptions and learning from your agency’s website
- Detailed Field Observation - describe the agency environment in detail and its impact on you
- A Day in the Life - describe in full your service activity on a particular day and its effect on you
- What were highlights of your service this week? What were difficult moments?
- What new challenges did you take on? How did you handle these? What did you learn about yourself?
- Interview director/supervisor: develop Q/A on profession, responsibilities; add your observations.
- Interview client/service recipient: develop Q/A to understand client, need; add your observations
- What gaps do you recognize in your knowledge and skills related to this experience and/or population? How might you proceed in your learning to fill those gaps?
- Interview director or supervisor - develop Q/A survey on his/her profession, responsibilities
- Interview client/service recipient: develop Q/A survey to understand client/need; give observation
- Extra Field Study - visit, report on another organization similar or interactive to yours.
- Newspaper, periodical, movie or video connection – relate a media issue to your service field
- Career research - investigate, report on such career education, training, and opportunities

**Final Group Presentation – Summation of Learning Outcomes:** You & your group must summarize and demonstrate what you have learned from your course readings, discussions, class activities, research and especially community involvement (refer to your Post-Assessment Paper).

Think developmentally about your service learning over the semester and organize your presentation accordingly. Recall your initial thoughts, and the stages of your service experiences: entering into class, reading class materials, entering into your respective community service sites, etc. Draw all of these experiences together to “make sense” of them – apply the sociological imagination to your understanding of society, thinking of what you’ve learned of most value, how you have grown, and where you may go from here. A framework might be:

- Preliminary expectations and assumptions about community involvement and personal growth
- Where we served, why we served, changes in attitude about service
- What we learned about the community, its people, schools, organizations and social institutions
# Sociology 57 Spring ‘15 Schedule

## Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Spring Semester officially begins on Wednesday, Jan 21; classes officially begin on Thursday, Jan 22. Our first meeting is on Monday, January 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>Introduction. Read “Thinking About Social Change in America;” “The Strange Disappearance of Civic America” Read Korgen/White chapter 1</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Foundations of Sociology; Theory. The Sociological Imagination Read: Korgen/White ch. 2; “The Sociological Imagination ch. 1: The Promise”</td>
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<td>Feb 4</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>Civic participation. Read “Citizenship development and the American College Student”</td>
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<td>Feb 11</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Civic participation in the Bay Area. Read “Building Community…” Read Korgen/White ch. 3 Pre-Assessment Paper due Wednesday, February 18th</td>
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<td>Feb 18</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>Personal development (life course); social relationships and health. Read Maslow and Erickson excerpts (on faculty webpage) Read Korgen/White ch. 5</td>
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<td>Feb 25</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>Begin Community Service. Read “Kinds of Service” Read “Group Process”</td>
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<td>Mar 4</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>Read “We Live Through Institutions”; Korgen/White ch.’s 10, 11 Midterm Exam Wednesday, March 11th Covers readings thus far.</td>
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<td>Mar 11</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>Participating in social change. Read “We Don’t Have to Be Saints” Read Korgen/White ch. 4 <strong>Spring Break is March 23rd – March 27th</strong></td>
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<td>Mar 18</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>Stratification. Read Korgen/White ch. 7</td>
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<td>Apr 1</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>Multiculturalism. Read “Multiculturalism…” and “Immigrant Life…” articles. Research Papers Due Wednesday, April 8th</td>
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<td>Apr 8</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 13</td>
<td>Race, Ethnicity, Gender. Read Korgen/White ch.’s 8, 9</td>
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<td>Apr 15</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>Read “Hazards” Begin Group Presentations (tentative)</td>
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<td>Apr 22</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>Read “Widening the Circle” Post-Assessment Paper due Wednesday, April 29th</td>
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<td>Apr 29</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Read “Campus Compact: Civic Life in the Information Age”</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
<td>Read Korgen/White ch. 12</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>Wrap up. Prepare for final exam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td><strong>Last day of instruction for the Spring semester is Wednesday, May 13</strong>th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 20th 12:15 pm – 2:30 pm</td>
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