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Department of Anthropology

Instructor

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ANTH 135

Behavioral Systems Science
Spring 2011
M 3:00-5:45 PM
WSQ 004

Office Hours

M 1:00-3:00
T 1:00-3:00
or by appointment

Course Website

<https://sjsu.desire2learn.com/>

Course Resources

Briggs, Katharine C. and Myers, Isabel B. **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: Self-Scorable**. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 2006.
Kauffman, Draper L. **Systems 1: An Introduction**. St. Paul: Future Systems, 1980.
Meadows, Donella. **Thinking in Systems: A Primer**. White River Junction: Chelsea Green Publishers, 2008.

Course Description

This is an upper-division undergraduate course for people who are interested in learning more about a systems approach to understanding individual and collective dimensions of human behavior. Behavioral Science integrates insights and skills from three major social sciences (anthropology, psychology, and sociology) to examine human behavior and appreciate the mix of biological, cognitive, cultural, and societal factors that generate it. Our focus will be on clarifying the systemic nature of human factors, the self-organizing processes that often cause counter-productive human behavior, and the cybernetics of how people regulate their individual and collective actions to act in purposeful ways. We will also examine the nature of meaningful systemic change in complex social systems.

Course Learning Outcomes

The main goals of this course are to help people think critically about different aspects of human behavior, appreciate multiple perspectives on complicated matters associated with such behavior, and develop a solid grounding in the major features of a systems approach to behavioral science. Specific objectives include:

- examining systemic similarities and differences in how human beings behave on an individual and collective basis
- developing a systems framework for understanding the complex connections that characterize life and link people to an increasingly interconnected world
- applying systems ideas to understand specific human systems, ranging from small groups and large organizations to communities and nation-states

Our primary focus throughout the semester will be on integrating intellectual and practical matters in order to become more reflective human beings and change agents.

Course Learning Activities

This is an upper-division seminar, in which all students are expected to help each other individually and collectively accomplish these learning objectives through an integrated systemic teaching-learning framework. Together we will learn about systemic thought and practice as it applies to human behavior through a combination of teaching, research, and practice that includes the following activities:

- weekly presentations by the course instructor and invited guests
- weekly reading assignments and interactive student-led discussions of readings
- weekly electronic discussions on key learning questions/points
- team systems studies of a human behavioral system, individual or social (30-minute presentations, with 8-10 PowerPoint slides)
- individual systems papers (5-8 pages) on a topic of your choice, either essays on a specific systems concept/tool or critical reviews of a key systems resource
- take-home final examination
- small learning teams to lead class discussions of readings, exchange ideas for assignments, and provide formal peer-reviews of research papers

We will spend the first few weeks of the semester collaboratively designing the course as a whole, finalizing the course schedule, and completing personal learning contracts.

Course Learning Assessment

Students will demonstrate their relative mastery of course learning objectives through their performance on the following assignments (as specified in their learning contracts):

- team systems study of a human behavioral system (50%)
- individual systems paper (15%-20%)
- take-home final examination (20%-30%)
- regular and responsible participation in completing the readings, engaging in class discussions, contributing to weekly emails, and support for peer learning (10%)

Guidelines for all course assignments are available in electronic form on the Desire 2 Learn (D2L) course website, including specific grading criteria for each assignment to evaluate student learning on a clear and consistent basis. Students should familiarize themselves with these materials and use them to proactively prepare for class sessions and assign-

ments on a timely basis. **Assignments will be penalized 5% each week they are submitted late**, unless there are extenuating circumstances. When preparing these assignments, it is important to remember that people who live and work in a globalizing world must be able to communicate successfully with a broad mix of audiences. SJSU graduates are expected to write well and deliver effective presentations, which usually requires several iterations to refine before work is sufficiently polished to be shared with others. Students should pay close attention to the guidelines and templates for each assignment, particularly in terms of ensuring that they are submitted in the appropriate format for that assignment. It is also useful to seek feedback from colleagues (including members of your learning teams) before finalizing your work. In addition, the University provides assistance for students at the SJSU Writing Center in Clark 126 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/> or 924-2308) on both an individual and a group basis.

Course Schedule and Topics

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Content Topics</u>	<u>Learning Topics</u>
31 January 11	Course Introduction	Systemic Learning
7 February 11	Systemic Course Design	Learning Contracts
14 February 11	Diversity & Human Behavior	
21 February 11	Behavioral Systems Science	
28 February 11	Complex Behavioral Systems	
7 March 11	Cybernetic Systems	
14 March 11	Complex Cybernetic Systems	
21 March 11	<i>Friday Night at the ER</i>	<i>Friday Night at the ER</i>
28 March 11	☺ Spring Break ☺	☺ Spring Break ☺
4 April 11	Self-Organizing Systems	
11 April 11	Cybernetic Self-Organizing Systems	
18 April 11	Complex Global World	
25 April 11	<i>Mindwalk</i>	<i>Mindwalk</i>
2 May 11	Systems of Systems	
9 May 11	Systemic Change	
16 May 11	Synthesis & Closure	
23 May 11	Final Exam Period	12:15-2:30

SJSU Academic Integrity Policy

SJSU expects all students enrolled in the University, whether on a matriculated or extended education basis, to act in accordance with accepted academic and professional standards for integrity at all times. Official University policy states that:

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity can be found online (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>).

The most common issues of academic integrity are usually associated with some form of plagiarism, which is using other people's ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Sometimes it is tempting to copy other people's ideas (from the Internet, textbooks, magazines, lectures, or student papers) and incorporate them into your own work. As a result, it is very important to give proper credit to those sources. If proper credit is not given, then you are passing these ideas and words off as your own. This is both unethical and illegal. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty that contravenes SJSU policy will result in a failing grade (F) on that assignment for all parties involved and may lead to dismissal from the course and/or the University.

SJSU Disability Policy

SJSU also recognizes that some students may require special accommodations to participate in a particular course. If any student in this course needs such assistance and/or would like to share emergency medical information, especially as it might affect potential safety issues like evacuation procedures, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can decide how to proceed. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register at the Disability Resource Center in Admin 110 (<http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> or 924-6000) to establish a record of their disability so they can utilize the University's resources.

Department Learning Objectives

Knowledge

- Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution.
- Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
- Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline.
- Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history.

- Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society.

Skills

- Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.
- Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.
- Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology, and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one sub-discipline.
- Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.

Professional Values

- Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research.