SOCIOMETRY

493 College Street, 203.432.3323
http://sociology.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Philip Gorski

Director of Graduate Studies
Jonathan Wyrtzen

Professors Julia Adams, Rene Almeling, Jeffrey Alexander, Elijah Anderson, Scott Boorman, Nicholas Christakis, Philip Gorski, Grace Kao, Philip Smith

Associate Professors Emily Erikson, Rourke O’Brien, Jonathan Wyrtzen

Assistant Professors Angel Escamilla Garcia, Yagmur Karakaya, Daniel Karell, Alka Menon, Ramina Sotoudeh, Emma Zang

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields include comparative sociology/macrosociology; cultural and historical sociology; economic sociology; life course/social stratification; mathematical sociology; medical sociology; methodology (qualitative and quantitative approaches); networks; political sociology; race/gender/ethnic/minority relations; social change; social demography; social movements; theory (general, critical, hermeneutic); urban sociology.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
Qualification for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. will take place during the student’s first three years of study at Yale. A student who has not been admitted to candidacy will not be permitted to register for the seventh term of study. To qualify for candidacy the student must take twelve seminars to be completed in years one and two: four required courses (SOCY 542, SOCY 578, SOCY 580, SOCY 581) and eight electives, including at least one workshop. After completion of courses, students prepare a research paper and one field exam and defend a dissertation prospectus.

Teaching is an important part of the professional preparation of graduate students in Sociology. Students teach therefore in the third and fourth years of study.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS
Sociology and African American Studies

The Department of Sociology offers, in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies, a combined Ph.D. degree in Sociology and African American Studies.

Students accepted to the combined Ph.D. program must meet all of the requirements of the Ph.D. in Sociology with the exception that, excluding the courses required, a research paper, and a field exam, combined-degree students may substitute African American Studies courses for six of the twelve term courses required to qualify for the Ph.D. in Sociology. For further details, see African American Studies.
Sociology and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

The Department of Sociology also offers, in conjunction with the Program in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, a combined Ph.D. in Sociology and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. For further details, see Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. Students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. degree if they have met the requirements and have not already received the M.Phil. degree. For the M.A., students must successfully complete eight term courses, two of which must include statistics and theory. A grade of High Pass or Honors must be achieved in five of the eight required courses. Candidates in combined programs will be awarded the M.A. only when the master’s degree requirements for both programs have been met.

Program materials are available at http://sociology.yale.edu.

COURSES

SOCY 506a / MGMT 734a, Designing Social Research  Staff
This is a course in the design of social research. The goal of research design is “to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial [research] question as unambiguously as possible” (de Vaus 2001: 9). A good research design presupposes a well-specified (and hopefully interesting) research question. This question can be stimulated by a theoretical puzzle, an empirical mystery, or a policy problem. With the research question in hand, the next step is to develop a strategy for gathering the empirical evidence that will allow you to answer the question “as unambiguously as possible.”

SOCY 508b / PLSC 505b, Qualitative Field Research  Egor Lazarev
In this seminar we discuss and practice qualitative field research methods. The course covers the basic techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing ethnographic data, with an emphasis on the core ethnographic techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing. All participants carry out a local research project. Open to undergraduates with permission of the instructor.

SOCY 519b, The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu  Philip Gorski
Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) was arguably the greatest sociologist since the classical generation of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. This seminar provides an intensive and critical introduction to Bourdieu’s work and to Bourdieusian research. Through an intensive and extensive reading of Bourdieu’s own works, empirical applications of his approach by other scholars, and critical consideration of the approach from other viewpoints, students learn what distinguishes Bourdieu’s approach from other classical and contemporary versions of sociology and social science; develop a firm and nuanced grasp of his trademark concepts (“habitus,” “capital,” and “field”); and observe how Bourdieu and others have applied them to the analysis of various social fields (class, gender, the state, politics, art and culture), and how his approach might be deepened.
SOCY 534a, Cultural Sociology  Yagmur Karakaya
Cultural sociology studies "irrational" meanings in supposedly rational, modern societies. Social meanings are symbolic, but also sensual, emotional, and moral. They can deeply divide nations but also powerfully unite them. They affect every dimension of social life, from politics and markets to race and gender relations, class, conflict, and war. We look at how this cultural approach developed, from counterintuitive writings of Durkheim and Weber a century ago, to the breakthroughs of semiotics and anthropology in midcentury, the creation of modern cultural sociology in the 1980s, and new thinking about social performance and material icons today. As we trace this historical arc, we examine ancient and modern religion, contemporary capitalism, the coronation of Elizabeth II, professional wrestling, Americans not eating horses, the Iraq War, the impeachment of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama's first presidential campaign, and the new cult of vinyl records.

SOCY 542a, Sociological Theory  Emily Erikson
The course seeks to give students the conceptual tools for a constructive engagement with sociological theory and theorizing. We trace the genealogies of dominant theoretical approaches and explore the ways in which theorists contend with these approaches when confronting the central questions of both modernity and the discipline.

SOCY 545a, Race, Medicine, and Technology  Alka Menon
Medicine and technology are important sources of authority and institutionalization in modern societies. Drawing insights from across sociological subfields and adjacent disciplines, the course offers an in-depth investigation of race, medicine, and technology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This course examines the role of medicine and related technologies in defining race and perpetuating racism. We trace how race became an important component of biomedical research in the United States. We also follow particular medical technologies across borders of time and space, using them to understand race and nationhood in transnational perspective. Taking a broad view of technology, we analyze cutting-edge, state-of-the-art technologies alongside older, more mundane technologies and infrastructures. Ultimately, we consider how medical technologies are not just treatments for individual patients but also windows into broader social and cultural structures and processes.

SOCY 560a / PLSC 734a, Comparative Research Workshop  Philip Gorski
This weekly workshop is dedicated to group discussion of work-in-progress by visiting scholars, Yale graduate students, and in-house faculty from Sociology and affiliated disciplines. Papers are distributed a week ahead of time and also posted on the website of the Center for Comparative Research (http://ccr.yale.edu). Students who are enrolled for credit are expected to present a paper-in-progress.

SOCY 578a, Logic of Empirical Social Research  Rourke O'Brien
The seminar is an intensive introduction into the methodology of the social sciences. It covers such topics as concepts and indicators, propositions and theory, explanation and understanding, observation and measurement, methods of data collection, types of data, units of analysis and levels of variables, research design inference, description and causal modeling, verification and falsification. The course involves both the study of selected texts and the analysis and evaluation of recent research papers.
SOCY 580a, Introduction to Methods in Quantitative Sociology  Daniel Karell
Introduction to methods in quantitative sociological research. Covers data description; graphical approaches; elementary probability theory; bivariate and multivariate linear regression; regression diagnostics. Includes hands-on data analysis using Stata.

SOCY 595a, Stratification and Inequality Workshop  Daniel Karell
In this workshop we present and discuss ongoing empirical research work, primarily but not exclusively quantitative analyses. In addition, we address theoretical and methodological issues in the areas of the life course (education, training, labor markets, aging, as well as family demography), social inequality (class structures, stratification, and social mobility), and related topics.

SOCY 605b / WGSS 570b, LGBTQ Population Health  John Pachankis
Sexual and gender minority individuals (e.g., those who identify as LGBTQ) represent a key health disparity population in the United States and worldwide, but high-quality evidence of this problem has historically been slow to accumulate. This course engages students in critically examining today’s rapidly expanding empirical knowledge regarding sexual and gender minority health by considering challenges to, and opportunities for, conducting this research with methodological rigor. Students consider social and ecological influences on sexual and gender minority health, including migration, community, and neighborhood influences. Social institutions, including religion, school, family, and close relationships, are examined as sources of both stress and support. Given the relevance of individual and collective identity and stress as mechanisms through which stigma impacts sexual and gender minority health, the empirical platform of the course is complemented by intersectionality theory, critical postmodern work on identity fluidity and multiplicity across the life course, and minority stress conceptualizations of health. Students apply lessons learned in the course to evaluating and developing policy and health care interventions for this increasingly visible segment of the global population. Also SBS 570.

SOCY 617a / ANTH 541a / ENV 836a / HIST 965a / PLSC 779a, Agrarian Societies: Culture, Society, History, and Development  Jonathan Wyrtzen and Marcela Echeverri Munoz
An interdisciplinary examination of agrarian societies, contemporary and historical, Western and non-Western. Major analytical perspectives from anthropology, economics, history, political science, and environmental studies are used to develop a meaning-centered and historically grounded account of the transformations of rural society. Team-taught.

SOCY 618a, Managing Blackness in a “White Space”  Elijah Anderson
“White space” is a perceptual category that assumes a particular space to be predominantly white, one where black people are typically unexpected, marginalized when present, and made to feel unwelcome—a space that blacks perceive to be informally “off-limits” to people like them and where on occasion they encounter racialized disrespect and other forms of resistance. This course explores the challenge black people face when managing their lives in this white space.

SOCY 620a, Material Culture and the Iconic Consciousness  Jeffrey Alexander
How and why do contemporary societies continue to symbolize sacred and profane meanings, investing these meanings with materiality and shaping them aesthetically? Initially exploring such “iconic consciousness” in theoretical terms (philosophy,
sociology, semiotics), the course then takes up a series of compelling empirical studies about food and bodies, nature, fashion, celebrities, popular culture, art, architecture, branding, and politics.

**SOCY 625a, Analysis of Social Structure**  Scott Boorman
Emphasizing analytically integrated viewpoints, the course develops a variety of major contemporary approaches to the study of social structure and social organization. Building in part on research viewpoints articulated by Kenneth J. Arrow in *The Limits of Organization* (1974), by János Kornai in an address at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences published in 1984, and by Harrison C. White in *Identity and Control* (2nd ed., 2008), four major species of social organization are identified as focal: (1) social networks, (2) competitive markets, (3) hierarchies/bureaucracy, and (4) collective choice/legislation. This lecture course uses mathematical and computational models—and comparisons of their scientific styles and contributions—as analytical vehicles in coordinated development of the four species.

**SOCY 628a, Workshop in Cultural Sociology**  Jeffrey Alexander
This workshop is designed to be a continuous part of the graduate curriculum. Meeting weekly throughout both the fall and spring terms, it constitutes an ongoing, informal seminar to explore areas of mutual interest among students and faculty, both visiting and permanent. The core concern of the workshop is social meaning and its forms and processes of institutionalization. Meaning is approached as both structure and performance, drawing not only on the burgeoning area of cultural sociology but on the humanities, philosophy, and other social sciences. Discussions range widely among methodological, theoretical, empirical, and normative issues. Sessions alternate between presentations by students of their own work and by visitors. Contents of the workshop vary from term to term, and from year to year. Enrollment is open to auditors who fully participate and for credit to students who submit written work.

**SOCY 630a / AFAM 773a, Workshop in Urban Ethnography**  Elijah Anderson
The ethnographic interpretation of urban life and culture. Conceptual and methodological issues are discussed. Ongoing projects of participants are presented in a workshop format, thus providing participants with critical feedback as well as the opportunity to learn from and contribute to ethnographic work in progress. Selected ethnographic works are read and assessed.

**SOCY 653a, Workshop in Advanced Sociological Writing and Research**  Philip Smith
This class concerns the process of advanced writing and research that converts draft material into work ready for publication, preferably in refereed journals, or submission as a substantial grant proposal. It investigates problem definition, the craft of writing, the structure of argument and data presentation, and the nature of persuasion more generally. The aim is to teach a professional orientation that allows work that is promising to become truly polished and compelling within the full range of sociological genres. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor; participants must enter the class with suitable draft material for group analysis and discussion.

**SOCY 656a, Professional Seminar**  Staff
This required seminar aims at introducing incoming sociology graduate students to the department and the profession. Yale Sociology faculty members are invited to discuss their research. There are minimum requirements, such as writing a book review. No grades are given; students should take for Audit. Held biweekly.
In 1764 Immanuel Kant noted in the margin of one of his published books that evil was “the subjection of one being under the will of another,” a sign that good was coming to mean freedom. But what is freedom? Starting with early reference to Kant, we study two major texts on freedom in post-Kantian German Idealism, Schelling’s 1809 *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Related Objects* and Hegel’s 1820 *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. 