COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS  
(SYP 5305)  

Graduate Seminar  
Department of Sociology  
Florida State University  
Spring 2016  
Thursday 9am to 12pm

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Course Description:  
This course surveys the field of collective behavior and social movements as it has developed in contemporary sociology. Protest and social movements are ubiquitous features of the contemporary social and political landscape. Challenges to institutional authority occur in both democratic contexts, where venues for grievance expression and political influence presumably exist, and in contexts where institutional reform and redress are unlikely. Social movements may have political and/or cultural goals when they challenge authority. In the cultural arena, social movements generate new perspectives on issues and disseminate these ideas to a broader society in an effort to affect values. Here, opposing social movements may engage in “culture wars,” disputing the premises of and claims for instituting new values or for maintaining status quo. In the political arena, social movements emerge as an expression of grievances and of frustration with established forms of making claims. Here again, multiple social movements with opposing or competing claims and goals may form and affect political processes. Irrespective of political ideology, protests outside of institutions are closely linked to politics inside of institutions. In this way, there are important relationships between movement emergence and decline and institutional politics.

Course Objectives:  
This course will provide an overview of the field of social movements. We will engage in large theoretical debates of how key issues are treated (such as movement emergence) as well as analysis of empirical treatments of particular movements. We will be particularly concerned with the socio-cultural and political context and consequences of protest, focusing on questions such as: What conditions facilitate the emergence of social movements? What factors affect the kinds of strategies and tactics social movements use? What role do mass media play in contemporary movements? What causes social movements to gain and lose support over time? And how do movements affect change? By the end of the semester you should:

- Understand the questions motivating the study of collective behavior and social movements.
- Have a working knowledge of the main theoretical frameworks in the field.
• Be ready to read the remaining readings on the movements preliminary exam list with confidence.

There are several specific objectives designed to help you successfully complete a Ph.D. in the Sociology program including:
• Apply course theories and concepts to explain some aspect of social movements.
• Synthesize readings and communicate your points in a coherent and sociologically appropriate way.
• Research some aspect of a social movement and communicate your findings in coherent and sociologically appropriate way.

**Required Books:**
The following books have been ordered at the University Bookstore. In addition, there will be several readings, mostly journal articles, which also are required.


**Course Requirements:**
There are four main requirements in the course:

• **Four 1-page Article Summarizes:** Each student will be responsible for leading four discussions during the semester. For this assignment you will prepare a ONE page summary (typed) and analysis of the readings (two pages if it is a book). The synopsis should be organized as follows:
  o Title and author of the piece
  o A brief description of the main theoretical contribution and points.
  o A brief description of the main empirical contributions
  o A brief description of the data and methods used
Your reaction to the piece. The reaction component of your synopsis should discuss the strengths and limitations of the theoretical insights, address the methodological strengths and weakness, and/or evaluate the theoretical insights in the context of the readings of the previous weeks. In other words the purpose of the synopsis is to both summarize the readings and encourage synthetic and analytical thinking. Please keep in mind that analytical thinking is different than criticism. While a reaction may involve critique of theory and methods it is cognizant of the contributions made by other scholars and makes suggestions about how we might improve our scholarship.

A list of keywords that best describe the theoretical orientation and methods used in the piece.

In addition, you need to prepare at least three questions or comments for the class to discuss. These may be included on a separate sheet of paper. Remember that synthesis is a difficult skill to learn, but is critical for professional success. Please email your synopsis to the entire class by Wednesday at 8pm and bring a hard copy for me.

- **Research Presentations (10 minutes maximum):** Each student will be responsible for doing two research presentations during the semester. There are two ways you can approach this. First, you can present research on which you are working [Note that the research must be related to the course]. If you choose this option, you want to think about the following structure:
  
  - Two minutes to introduce the project and tell us why it matters
  - One minute to tell us about the data and methods
  - Six minutes to discuss your findings (be selective)
  - One minute to conclude

  Alternatively, you can choose a topic related to the course readings, find additional research on the topic, and, then, present your findings to the class. The trick to success on this assignment is choosing a focused topic so that you can easily find a range of sources that you can synthesize and share with the class in a coherent manner. Regardless of the approach you take, you may not exceed the 10 minute allotment for the presentation. All presentations should include the use of visual aids (e.g. website, pictures or PowerPoint) and must be accompanied by a 1 to 2 page handout that provides an annotated bibliography of your sources.

  The goal of the presentations is to 1) give you an opportunity to explore a social movement that you find particularly interesting, 2) hone your research skills, and 3) help you get comfortable presenting findings to an audience within time constraints. I do request that you discuss your topic with me so that I can both assist you and make sure that there is no overlap among presenters. Please email your annotated bibliography to the entire class by Wednesday at 8pm and bring a hard copy for me.

- **Analytical papers:** Three times during the semester (weeks 6, 12, and 17) you will be asked to hand in an analytical paper. Two weeks before each paper is due, I will provide you a list of questions and you will choose one question to answer. **This is NOT a research paper.** These papers will ask you to synthesize and analyze course readings.
Your paper should be no more than five double-spaced pages in length and include citations from the course readings. Please be sure that your paper has one inch margins and uses a 12-point font. Your papers are due at the beginning of the class and must be uploaded to Turnitin. I will not accept late papers.

- **Attendance and Class Participation:** Attendance and class participation are critical for a successful course. We learn from one another through discussion. On a more practical note, I will cover new material during the class that is relevant to the analytical paper. I consider more than one missed class poor attendance.

**Seminar grades:**
Your final grade will be based on the quality of your performance with respect to the course assignments and responsibilities. The allocation of points is as follows:

- Synopsis and presentation -- 20% (5% each)
- Research presentations – 25% (12.5% each)
- Analytical papers – 45% (15% each)
- Attendance and Participation – 10%

In academia, the ability to convey your ideas in a clear and concise manner is extraordinarily important. Thus, I stress the importance of writing in this course. It is to your benefit, then, to write and rewrite your papers before handing them in to me. Your work will be evaluated as follows:

- **Check minus:** Indicates that your assignment is unclear, unfocused, lacks depth, and/or is underdeveloped.

- **Check:** Indicates that your assignment is satisfactory.

- **Check plus:** Indicates that your assignment is particularly insightful, thoughtful, articulate, and an excellent example of quality academic writing/work.

**Course Policies and Student Responsibilities:**
- **Students** are expected to be on time and attend all classes having completed the week’s reading and formulated thoughtful questions and/or comments. To do well in any graduate seminar, preparation for and attendance to class is absolutely necessary. I consider more than one missed class poor attendance and repeated tardiness problematic. Both will result in downgrading.

- **Students** are expected to listen and respond to each others’ comments and concerns in a respectful and scholarly manner. Scholarly comments are:
  - Respectful of diverse opinions, analysis, and methodologies.
  - Invite and are open to follow up questions and/or discussion about the assumptions upon which comments are grounded.
  - Related to and advance the class and course material (rather than reflect personal beliefs).
  - Delivered in normal tones (rather than yelling and interrupting).
Unprofessional behavior will be penalized and may include being downgraded and/or dismissal from class.

- Late assignments and papers will not be accepted.
- Missing work is not sufficient reason for a grade of Incomplete (I). An incomplete will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. Remember that the College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

Academic Honor Code. The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “. . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at [http://fda.fsu.edu/content/download/21140/136629/AHPFinal2014.pdf](http://fda.fsu.edu/content/download/21140/136629/AHPFinal2014.pdf)). Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor’s discretion, and may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy.

Cheating and Plagiarism. The Provost and legal counsel of Florida State University warn us that any uses of others' copyrighted materials without proper acknowledgement is unlawful and may lead to criminal prosecution. To this end, please be scrupulous in using the work of others by giving full and appropriate credit to the sources and materials that you use. Please use care when taking words and phrases from others. If you use a string of three or more exact words from another source, you must place the words in quotes and cite the author, year and page number. Be a stickler about citing; cite more rather than less; cite early rather than late. Do NOT appropriate the concepts, phrases, or ideas of other people without giving them credit. If you do so, you risk losing your good name and getting into legal trouble. Any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or possibly an "F" for the course and may be reported to the University Judicial Office. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Your paper would be considered as plagiarized in part or entirely if you do any of the following:

- Submit a paper that was written by someone other than you.
- Submit a paper in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references.
- Submit a paper in which you "cut and paste" or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and place the source in your list of references.
**Disabilities.** Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:
(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

** This syllabus is a guide for the course and subject to change.