Sociology 551
Interactional Approach to Social Interaction

Spring 2018
Friday 1:30-4:30pm
206 Tarbutton

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Office Hours: by appointment, Tarbutton 226

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course approaches the dynamics of social interaction from the symbolic interactionist (SI) perspective. We examine and discuss an overview of both classic and contemporary works in this tradition. In the first section of the course, we will focus on the development of the SI perspective and will read major theorists including Mead, Cooley, Blumer, Goffman, and Stryker. In the second section of the course we will cover recent theoretical developments, focusing on topics including stigma, the looking-glass self, reflected appraisals, identity processes, identity and stress, identity negotiation, and emotions. Throughout the course, we will focus on how selves and identities are created, modified, and enacted through interactions with others.

This course will:
- Deepen students’ knowledge of sociological research methods through engaging with studies that draw on a wide range of methodological approaches.
- Increase students’ understanding of how sociological theories are developed, tested, and refined, and provide students the opportunity to apply a symbolic interactionist theory to a substantive area of their choosing in the final course paper.
- Improve students’ written and oral communication skills through writing exercises, presentations, and discussion facilitations.
- Provide the opportunity to prepare for qualifying exams in social psychology.

COURSE MATERIALS

A specific set of articles and chapters for each session (located in BOX)
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Two discussion facilitations (2 @ 20% each)

Each student will sign up to facilitate class discussions twice during the semester. Your discussion facilitation should begin with an explanation/presentation of five key points/punchlines of the readings (10-15 minutes). Then be prepared with questions for the class to facilitate a discussion among seminar participants. Note: All students will be responsible each week to prepare several discussion questions to share.

2. Final Paper Proposal or Prelim Exam Responses (60%)

a. Final paper proposal or empirical research paper: Your final paper, in NSF proposal form or empirical research paper “article” form, will give you the opportunity to apply an interactionist theory to a substantive topic of interest; papers should be 20 pages. There are three stages:
   - A one-page proposal including abstract (200-300 words) and selected working bibliography: due March 23 (hard and electronic copy)
   - Detailed outline and presentation of NSF proposal paper or empirical research paper: due April 6 (hard and electronic copy)
   - Final NSF proposal or empirical research paper – due May 7, by 5pm (hard and electronic copy)

b. Two Prelim Exam Style Responses: Each prelim response is 10 pages. There are two stages:
   - Prelim-style question on theories in symbolic interaction: due March 23 (hard and electronic copy)
   - Prelim-style question on identity processes in symbolic interaction: due May 7 (hard and electronic copy)

If you have any special needs, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and we will discuss the necessary arrangements (for additional information, visit the Emory Office of Accessibility Services website; see http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision)

Jan 19  Introductory Discussion
Jan 26  George Herbert Mead


Feb 2  Herbert Blumer


Feb 9  Erving Goffman and Managing Emotions


Feb 16  Looking Glass Self and Reflected Appraisals (former graduate student guests - Nikki Khanna and Dr. Caitlin Killian)


Feb 23 Sheldon Stryker


March 2 Identity Processes: Formation and Negotiation


March 9  Identity Processes: Stigma (former grad student guest - Dr. Ashby Walker)


March 16  Spring Break

March 23  Identity Processes: Identity (Control) Theory (former grad student guest - Dr. Lesley Watson)


March 30  Identity Processes: Bases and Types of Identities (Guest Dr. Ellen Granberg)


**April 6**

Presentations of NSF Proposal or research empirical paper outlines

**April 13**

Identity Processes: Social Identity Theory and Identity Theory


**April 20**

Macro-Micro Links in Identity Research

*Note: No critical reviews for this session*


**April 27**

Discussion of Papers

**May 7**

Final Papers due by 5:00 pm (hard and electronic copy)
General Recommended Readings:


