

SOC*3410 Individual and Society

Winter 2019

Lectures: Tuesdays, 7:00-9:50 pm

Instructor: Dr. Michael Follert

Office Hour: Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 pm

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Course Description:

In the era of social media, according to one popular adage, “we struggle with insecurities...because we compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel”. If this is truly the case, the digital age has simply made more obvious a feature of self-reflection and self-awareness that is at least as old as the modern world. In our everyday lives we disclose some aspects of ourselves, we reserve others, we edit what we present to the world as the situation warrants, we compare ourselves to our peers, almost by habit. It's enough to make you wonder if there is really a 'true' self behind all that doing. The indeterminacy between our inner world and the inner world we represent *to the world* poses a conceptual problem for which the tools of psychology and psychiatry alone are inadequate. In grasping the fundamentally interactive nature of the self, sociology is uniquely positioned to answer important, timely questions like, 'what are we doing when we take selfies?', 'how do people navigate the overlap between online and offline worlds?', and 'what's up with 'ghosting'?'

This course is structured around key readings and concepts for doing micro-sociological analysis. We will examine some compelling studies of everyday life, with particular attention to recent work on how selfhood extends through online worlds. Between the mid-term test and the final exam, students will apply course concepts in the analysis of two recent feature-length films from a pre-determined list; visual case studies of the individual and society, essentially.

Readings:

Required course readings will be available online through the library's ARES interface, so **no textbook or course kit purchase is required**. Weekly readings will average around 50 pages. A complete reading list will be posted shortly before the beginning of classes. Students who attend the lectures having completed the readings will get the most out of the course.

Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will develop their conceptual tools for talking about 'the self' in sociological ways.
- Students will apply their conceptual understanding to grapple with social problems in contemporary Canadian society.
- Students will consider their own location within structures of power and privilege, and consider how power relations also structure our inner worlds.
- Students will exercise professionalism and ethics in their completion of assignments, with attention to guidelines on academic integrity.
- Students will demonstrate intellectual curiosity and develop their problem-solving, decision-making, listening, and communication skills.
- Students will show leadership, accountability, personal organization, teamwork, and strong time management.

Grading:

25% **In-Class Mid-Term**

This will be a multiple choice test, assessing your comprehension of material from the first four weeks of class. There will be 30 questions and you will respond to the 25 about which you feel most confident. You'll have 35 minutes to complete it. February 5th, 7 pm.

20% **Case Study: Film Analysis I**

This assignment will require you to watch a film and then draw upon concepts extending from **weeks 1 to 6** to analyze it. You will be given a range of major motion pictures to choose from, wherein aspects of 'the self' are dramatized in interesting ways. All of the required materials will be made available to you through the UofG library's online holdings. The paper will be roughly 5 pages. Due February 26th, 7 pm on courselink.

20% **Case Study: Film Analysis II**

This assignment will require you to watch a film and then draw upon concepts extending from **weeks 7 to 10** to analyze it. You will be given a range of major motion pictures to choose from, wherein aspects of 'the self' are dramatized in interesting ways. All of the required materials will be made available to you through the UofG library's online holdings. The paper will be roughly 5 pages. Due March 26th, 7 pm on courselink.

35% **Take Home Final Exam**

The final exam will involve long-form or essay responses. You will receive the exam questions at the final class on April 2nd and will have until the end of the day on April 9th to upload your responses to the specified dropbox on courselink.

General Expectations on Conduct

We collectively construct the culture of the classroom. Responsibility for a comfortable, respectful, and constructive learning environment is shared by all participants. Dialogue and debate are encouraged; disrespect and intentionally derailing discussion are not.

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day. More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.