This is a graduate seminar that provides students with an overview of the sociological study of institutions. Our approach will be to understand how institutions promote social order and stability, while also experiencing disruption and revolution. We will review foundational theories mediating the study of institutions, analyze empirical applications across a range of contexts, and discuss newer research areas such as the role of intra-individual processes in reproducing and changing institutions and their applications in building intelligent systems.

As a graduate seminar that fulfills one of two core doctoral course requirements, the primary emphasis of our class time will be discussing the readings in-depth and identifying potential empirical cases for testing ideas arising out of our discussion.

REQUIRED READING

All readings that are required for the class can be located on the course’s Canvas website.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation (10%)

For a seminar to be beneficial to all involved, students need to come prepared to participate and actually participate. We should all be expected to chime in as we have constructive additions, critiques, or questions to contribute to the group.

Reading Memos (24%)

Every week with pre-assigned readings, each student is required to post on our Canvas discussion forum a reading memo. Each reading memo will consist of three (3) sections:

a) Identify two discussion questions.

b) Define in your own words any combination of two key concepts or theories from the readings. Each definition should be no more than two sentences, but strive to make them only one sentence long.

and, either

c) Identify a portion of the reading that was confusing and in one (1) paragraph describe additional, outside information that may be useful for addressing the confusion.
or

d) Identify a potential empirical case to test ideas that emerged from the readings, with a one (1) paragraph explanation for why the case is relevant.

Co-Facilitate Discussion (6%)

At our first meeting, we will assign each student to co-facilitate 1-2 (depending on class size) of our weekly discussions. There are three parts to being a co-facilitator:

By the start of class:

1. Review the reading memos posted that week by your classmates and select any three responses to the (c) and (d) portions you would like the class to discuss further. List these three on the board.
2. Write on the board the two discussion questions that you used in your own reading memo and be prepared to share your initial responses to them and respond to the thoughts of others.

At the start of class:

3. Present a 5-10 minute synthesis of the readings and discussion questions posted by your fellow classmates. The synthesis should be more than a summary of the readings. It may include overarching themes, an outline of the logic of the theoretical claims, theoretical or methodological critiques, and connections to content outside of this course (e.g., current news, everyday interaction, research studies not assigned in this course). Highlight ideas in your synthesis of the readings that overlap with discussion questions posted by your fellow classmates.

Take Home Exam (25%)

There will be a take home exam where students will:

- Compare and contrast foundational theories.
- Select one of several empirical cases to briefly research and use to apply concepts and theories from the course.

Since students will be tasked with briefly researching an empirical case, there will be no class meeting on the week of the exam.

We will spend our last class date discussing the different empirical cases and students’ responses to this portion of the exam.

The exam is due on Canvas: Tuesday, November 26 at 7:30PM.
Research Paper (35%)

Each student will choose an institution in which they are interested and write a 10-15 page essay (page count excludes abstract and references) applying course material. The paper may be a literature review, research proposal, or an analysis of data.

The research paper is due on Canvas: Tuesday, December 17 at 5PM

GRADES

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<td>Reading Memos</td>
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CREDIT HOURS

The university has asked departments to break down for students how much time they will spend working on various aspects of their classes.

As the UW System assumes “that study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours” (UWS ACPS 4), a 3-credit course such as this one will require a minimum of 144 (3 x 48) hours of your time. You may find it necessary to spend additional time on a course; the numbers below only indicate that the course will not require any less of your time.

- **37.5** hours in the classroom
- **75** hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- **31.5** hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Overview

Sept 3: Course Introduction

No assigned readings

Sept 10: Thinking about Institutions


Sept 17: Researching Institutions


Varieties of Institutionalism

Sept 24: Economic Institutionalism


Oct 1: Historical Institutionalism

Hall, Peter A. 1986. *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 2 (skim), 6 (skim), and 9.
Oct 8: Neo-Institutionalism


Change and Emergence

Oct 15: Statement of the Problem


Oct 29: Empirical Examples – Social Movements


Microfoundations

Nov 5: Internalization


Nov 12: Agency


Nov 19: Self & Identity


**Applications**

Nov 26: Take-home Exam

No assigned readings. Exam is due on Canvas by 7:30PM.

**Dec 3: Building Intelligent Systems**


**Dec 10: Review Exam**

Readings TBA

**Dec 17: Research Paper**

Due 5PM on Canvas

**UNIVERSITY AND SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

**Students with Disabilities.** In the pursuit of equal access and in compliance with state and federal laws, the University is required to provide accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To learn more, please visit: [http://uwm.edu/arc/](http://uwm.edu/arc/)

**Religious Observances.** Policies regarding accommodations for absences due to religious observance are found at the following: [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm)

**Students called to active Military Duty.** Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty are found at the following: [https://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/](https://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/)

**Incompletes.** A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other
unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work.

Discriminatory Conduct. Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience and well-being of students, faculty and staff. Policies regarding discriminatory conduct can be found at:

https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf

Title IX/Sexual Violence. Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education program or activities, and UWM policy prohibits such conduct (see Discriminatory Conduct, above). This includes sexual violence, which may include sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, and/or stalking in all educational programs and education-related areas. UWM strongly encourages its students to report any instance of sex discrimination to UWM’s Title IX Coordinator (titleix@uwm.edu). Whether or not a student wishes to report an incident of sexual violence, the Title IX Coordinator can connect students to resources at UWM and/or in the community including, but not limited to, victim advocacy, medical and counseling services, and/or law enforcement. For more information, please visit: https://uwm.edu/sexual-assault/

Academic misconduct. Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/

Complaint procedures. Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf

Grade appeal procedures. A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_28_Grade_Appe_by_Students.pdf

LGBT+ resources. Faculty and staff can find resources to support inclusivity of students who identify as LGBT+ in the learning environment. http://uwm.edu/lgbtrc/

Smoke and Tobacco-Free campus. UWM prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco on all campus property. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_49_Smoke_Toba_Free_Policy.pdf

Final Examinations. Information about the final exam requirement, the final exam date requirement, and make-up examinations. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_22_Final_Examinations.pdf

Book Royalties. In accord with department policy, the royalties from the sale of UWM sociology faculty-authored books to students in their classes are donated to a UWM Foundation/Sociology Account to support future awards and activities of UWM sociology students.

Updated 08/2019