

Sociology 352

Social Networks

Spring XXXX

Class Time: TR 3:30-4:45, Bolton XXX

Instructor: Prof. John Roberts <jmrob@uwm.edu>

Office Hours: XXXX

Prerequisites: Any sociology course, or permission of instructor.

Overview and objectives: The concept of social networks and the analysis of social network data has a rich history in sociology and other social sciences, predating by many decades the current popular understanding of the term. This course is intended to teach students some of the most important basic principles of social network analysis, and to introduce students to a variety of applications that show how social scientists think about the structure and implications of social networks. Students will also learn how to conduct and interpret analyses using special software for social network analysis. The course will therefore span methodological and substantive issues.

Class sessions will include lectures (on core material as well as interpretation of analytic results), software instruction, and small group activities.

This course counts as an elective toward the Quantitative Social Data Analysis (QSDA) certificate.

Text: We will rely on class notes rather than a required textbook. A good supplemental reference for much of this material is

Borgatti, S. P., Everett, M. G., & Johnson, J. C. 2013. *Analyzing social networks*. Sage: London.

Any additional readings will be distributed via Canvas.

Software: We will explore two excellent and user-friendly software programs. *Netdraw* is a free program for (as you might guess) drawing network diagrams and (Borgatti, S.P. 2002. NetDraw software for network visualization. Analytic Technologies: Lexington, KY).

*UCINET* is a related software package that can carry out many types of network analyses (Borgatti, S.P., Everett, M.G., & Freeman, L.C. 2002. *Ucinet for Windows: Software for social network analysis*. Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies); it is not free to keep permanently, but does allow a 90-day free trial.

Netdraw is available at <https://sites.google.com/site/netdrawsoftware/home>, and UCINET is available at <https://sites.google.com/site/ucinetsoftware/home>.

Students who do not have access to a computer on which they can install this software and use it for assignments should talk to the instructor as soon as possible.

Exams: There will be a midterm and final exam, consisting of short-answer questions on conceptual points and analytic interpretations. The tentative midterm exam date (subject to change, according to the pace of the course) is XXXX. The final exam will be given at XXXX on XXXX (as shown on the University final exam schedule).

Makeup Exams: Makeups are possible only in special circumstances. I will ask for appropriate documentation of the circumstances before giving a makeup.

Project: The final project (**due by XXXX**) is a major focus of the course. The project can take many forms depending on a student's interests. Perhaps the most common is to obtain and analyze some actual social network data that can illuminate sociologically interesting ideas, but there are other possibilities too. We will talk much more about this as the semester goes on.

Assignments: We will have four take-home assignments during the semester, including interpretations of analytic results obtained from software; we will also do three small-group exercises in class. Missed in-class work cannot be made up, and late assignments cannot be submitted, except under the sort of special circumstances that apply to makeup exams.

In class: Class attendance is expected. Do not talk to classmates during lectures, and do not take phones or other electronics out of your bag/purse/pocket. Because there is no text, it is especially important to take effective notes and ask questions if something is not clear.

If you need to use a tablet or laptop computer as an accommodation for specific needs, please speak with me beforehand. Otherwise such devices may not be used. (An exception is if I have announced in advance that a class session will be focused on software, and a student wants to follow along on his or her own computer. In that case anyone is welcome to use a computer.)

Grading: Final course grades are based on overall scores calculated by weighting graded elements of the course as follows:

Midterm 20%; Assignments 30%; Final Exam 25%; Project 25%.

Letter Grade Conversion:

A+: 99-100; A: 93-99; A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69; D: 60-66

F: 0-59.

Course schedule:

Weeks 1 and 2: Basic ideas, definitions of terms, some history.

Weeks 3 and 4: Centrality of network actors.

[Homework Assignment 1]

Weeks 4 and 5: Identifying subgroups.

[Homework Assignment 2]

Weeks 6 and 7: Affiliation networks.

[Homework Assignment 3]

Week 8: Review and midterm exam.

Week 9: Strength of weak ties?

Week 10: A small world?

[Homework Assignment 4]

Week 11: Networks and health.

Week 12: Networks and crime.

Week 13: Organizational networks.

Week 14: Statistical models for networks.

Week 15: Review and project help.

[final exam & project]

Time Commitment: In addition to 2.5 hours per week spent in class, the outside-class time commitment for this course is expected to average 4.5 hours per week of studying class notes and materials (likely more before an exam, and less in other weeks) and completing assignments, and 1.5 hours per week in work related to the project (likely more in the last part of the semester, and less earlier in the semester). In a 15-week semester, this will be approximately 128 hours.

## UNIVERSITY AND SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES

The Secretary of the University maintains a web page that contains university policies that affect the instructor and the students in this course, as well as essential information specific to conduct of the course. The link to that page is: <https://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf>

**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/>

**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>

**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/>

**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.

[https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S\\_31\\_INCOMPLETE\\_GRADES.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf)

**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\\_Conduct\\_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Conduct_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](mailto: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\\_Discrimina\\_duct\\_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_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](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](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](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.

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