

SOCIOLOGY 494H1S 2016
RESEARCHING SOCIAL NETWORKS

Prof. Marin
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Class Time: W12-2
Location: SS1078
Office Hours: T1-3
Web Page: portal.utoronto.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social network analysts view the social world through a lens that focuses on connections. We study the origins of patterns in social networks and the consequences of those patterns. In this course you will be the social network analyst. You will learn what social network data looks like, you will learn how to describe the properties of social networks and positions within social networks, and most importantly you will learn how to use these skills to answer your own sociological questions.

You will collect and analyze social network data to uncover how the structure and composition of people's social networks are related to other aspects of their lives. Each year this course will focus on a different population, social setting, or phenomenon. This year you will conduct original empirical research on the early-career workers, working as a class to collect data and then analyzing it independently. You will each write an individual research paper to answer your own research question. No previous knowledge of social network analysis is required.

The **prerequisite** is a 300 level course. The prerequisite will be enforced without exception. Students not having the prerequisites can be removed at any time without notice.

COURSE GOALS

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- i) Describe, read, and enter social network data.
- ii) Distinguish between different kinds of social networks and network ties
- iii) Demonstrate knowledge of social network data collection methods
- iv) Understand and calculate simple ego network measures by hand and with software
- v) Analyze ego network data to show relationships between network properties, their causes and their consequences
- vi) Relate network properties to their causes and consequences

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Your final grade in the course will be based on an empirical research project which you will complete in several stages, on a problem set, and on submission of short reflection papers and online participation. Full descriptions of all course assignments are available on the course web site.

Research Project

Topic Ideas	5
Literature Logs	10
Interviews	10
Proposal	15
Presentation	10
Final Paper	20

Problem Set

Problem Set	10
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Engaging the Course Material

Reflection Papers	10
Online Participation	10

Total **100%**

SOFTWARE AND READINGS

Readings are at the University of Toronto Bookstore and via the University of Toronto Libraries. I recommend that you install the myaccess bookmarklet for easiest access to the readings when working off campus. In addition, you will need to have access to the following software:

- Microsoft Excel
- SPSS (Student version is fine!)

Excel is available on many computers across campus. SPSS will be required to write your final paper. It is available in the computers at the Map and Data Library on the fourth floor of Robarts library. You may also download a free trial from the web site, but that trial will only operate for 30 days.

COURSE OUTLINE				
1	Jan 3	Course and Ego Network Introduction	Crossley et. al. Chapters 1-2	Post Paper Topic Ideas Online by Feb 3.
2	Jan 20	Network Forms	Borgotti Sage Chapter	
3	Jan 27	Ego Network Survey Methods	Crossley et. Al. Chapter 3 Campbell and Lee	
4	Feb 3	Ego Network Data and Measures	Crossley et. al chapter 4.	Comment on others' topic ideas
5	Feb 10	Networks, Community and Social Support	Due: Problem Set Fischer, 1982. To Dwell Among Friends. Fischer 2011. Still Connected: Family and Friends in American Since 1970	
READING WEEK: Finish up those interviews and work on your proposal!				
6	Feb 24	The Origins of Ego Networks + Data Entry Tutorial	Class will be held in the Sociology Computer Classroom this week. Feld, 1982. The Focussed Organization of Social Ties.	
7	March 2	Networks and Work	Due: Interview Data Upload Readings TBA	

8	March 9	Data Analysis Tutorial	<p>Class will be held in the Sociology Computer Classroom this week. Due: Proposal No readings.</p> <p>View data analysis videos on the course web site. Determine what analyses you will need to run and whether your independent and dependent variables are continuous, discrete, or dichotomous.</p>
9	March 16	Networks and the Life Course	<p>Moore, Gwen, 1990. "Structural Determinants of Men's and Women's Personal Networks." <i>American Sociological Review</i>. 55:726-35</p> <p>Additional Readings Readings TBA</p>
10	March 23	Presentations	<p>Due: Presentation.</p>
11	Mar30	Writing	<p>Selections from: They say, I say.</p> <p>Your choice of two articles from peer-reviewed sociology journals that you have read for your paper. Please bring hard copies of your selected articles.</p>
<p>Note: April 3 at 11:59 pm is the deadline for submitting literature logs.</p>			
12	Apr6	Sociology Careers	<p>Due: Final Papers Readings Optional, Available Online Reflection paper for this week is optional.</p>

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AND PREPARATION

Attendance is required. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class on a given day are responsible for obtaining from their classmates notes on all material covered as well as information regarding any administrative announcements that may have been made. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings in advance of the class period for which they are assigned.

COMMUNICATION

The course website prepared on the Blackboard system will contain the course syllabus, all handouts, links of interest, and course announcements. In addition files required for completion of the final paper will be available for download and each student will be required to upload interview data and assignments to the blackboard web site and to participate in online discussion boards. All students are responsible for checking their official utoronto.ca email addresses and the blackboard web site regularly, including the evening before class. When emailing me, you must use your utoronto.ca address, as this is the only address I can be sure is yours. Please also be sure to include "SOC494" in the subject line.

USE OF WRITING CENTRES

All students are encouraged to use their available writing centres. Writing tutors provide help you to think through your ideas, develop a thesis, organize your paper, present your evidence effectively, argue logically, and express yourself more clearly and concisely. Proofreading and copyediting for spelling, grammar, or format are *not* within the primary scope of the writing centres' services.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due online at the beginning of class on due date provided. Topic ideas, proposals final papers and problem sets will be penalized 5 percentage points per day,

including weekend or holiday days. Late interview data will be penalized 10% in total and will not be accepted more than 2 days late. Students who do not attend class on the presentation date will be penalized 10% and will instead write a 5-6 page paper on an assigned topic to be completed the by next class. Reflection papers. Online participation must occur before the beginning of the last class of the semester. Literature logs will not be accepted after the final date for submission.

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students will complete short in class assignments each week for which readings are due, typically based on the readings for the week. Assignments will typically be completed at the start or end of class. Students not in class when an assignment is done will receive a 0 for that assignment. To account for the possibility that students may miss class due to illness, the lowest two marks from these assignments will be dropped.

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

TURNITIN.COM

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. Turnitin can now be accessed via Blackboard and no course id or password are necessary.

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work,
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
 - Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers

- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

To remind you of these expectations, and help you avoid accidental offences, I will ask you to complete an online Academic Integrity Checklist for your proposal, presentation and final paper. These will be available on Blackboard. There will be a 10 percentage point penalty for students who do not complete the checklist.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PROJECT

Your major assignment in this course will be to use social network data to answer a research question of your choosing. For many of you, this will be the first time you have had the opportunity to conduct a research study. This may be intimidating, but rest assured that we will tackle the project together in stages, and when each stage comes you will know what you need to know. If you have trouble applying what you know, help will be available both in my office hours and in class time set aside for this purpose during weeks 6 and 8.

This project will be completed in stages. During the first weeks of class you will post your topic ideas online and provide feedback on other students' topic ideas. During the first part of the semester, you will each conduct 4 interviews and submit that data from your interviews. Next you will submit research proposals. I will combine the data from all students' interviews into a single data set and you will analyze the data to answer your research question. When your analyses are done you will present your findings to the class and submit a final paper.

As part of this project, the entire class will conduct interviews to collect the data that you will all analyze. **Given that you will need to depend on your classmates to collect your data and that your classmates will be depending on you to collect theirs, it is extremely important that you submit your interview data on time.** If your data aren't in on time your classmates won't have data to analyze.

STUDENT CONTACTS

You are responsible for all material presented in class, including announcements. If you are unable to attend class, you should obtain notes from a classmate. Write down the names and contact information for two of your classmates below so you'll have someone to contact if you need notes.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Other (IM, Skype etc.): _____

Name: _____

Other (IM, Skype etc.): _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____