SEMINAR ON SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

This seminar provides an overview of social capital theory. The seminar emphasizes the sociological approach to social capital theory as outlined by James Coleman, but will also cover different sociological approaches, as well as the use of social capital in other disciplines. The seminar is designed to cover a balance of theoretical, methodological, and empirical issues, with an emphasis on quantitative research using survey data. The readings will be a mix of classical theoretical treatments of social capital theory and empirical research on the role of social capital in different substantive areas, including crime, labor markets, public health, and economic outcomes. An important objective of the course is to introduce students to significant theoretical problems that can be addressed empirically, and introduce some key methodological issues. There are no formal prerequisites for the course, but it is recommended that students have exposure to a basic social science course and basic methods and statistics.

The seminar begins with various definitions, conceptualizations, and typologies of social capital. It then moves to different theories of social capital, including Putnam, Bourdieu, and Coleman. It then discusses the role of social capital in the micro-macro debate, and the role of social capital in various substantive areas, including public health, neighborhoods and crime, labor markets, civic engagement, education, social networks, and economic development. Additional topics, such as measurement, immigration, trust, and norms and sanctions will be covered if time permits.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. An original seminar paper is required of all students. The paper should address a topic covered by the seminar and should attempt to synthesize and critically evaluate a broad body of literature. Each student will submit a two-page paper proposal by Wednesday Nov 7, which states the problem to be addressed, outlines the sections of the paper, and provides a reading list. The final paper is due Wednesday, Dec 12th at 5pm. Final papers may be emailed to me at matsueda@uw.edu.

2. Students will prepare and lead discussions of course readings. One student will lead the discussion. This will involve being prepared to lead discussions on the core (starred) required readings. Occasionally, another student will prepare a précis on one of the noncore (nonstarred) required readings. The précis is a two page single-spaced summary of the essential details of the theory, data, methods, and arguments of the reading. The précis author will distribute the précis to the rest of the seminar by the end of the day on Tuesday prior to the seminar via email. All other seminar members will be required to read the précis, read the core required readings, and come to class prepared to ask questions and make critical remarks.

3. Course topics are listed in the schedule listed below. Topics can be added or deleted by consensus of the seminar members as we proceed into the quarter.

GRADING:

The seminar paper will determine approximately 60 percent of the grade; other written work (précis) will count about 20 percent; and oral contributions about 20 percent.

BOOKS:

Required:


Recommended:
Further Reading:

COURSE WEBSITE:  http://faculty.washington.edu/matsueda/courses/590/web590.htm

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

I. INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW, AND ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES (SEPT 26)

II. WHAT IS SOCIAL CAPITAL? (OCT 3)

Required:


Recommended:


III. SOCIAL CAPITAL, SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, AND THE MICRO-MACRO PROBLEM (OCT 10)

Required:


Recommended:


IV. SOCIAL NETWORKS & SOCIAL CAPITAL (Oct 17)

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


V. A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF SOCIAL CAPITAL (OCT 24)

**Required:**

VI. NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL CAPITAL, COLLECTIVE EFFICACY, AND CRIME (OCT 31)

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**VII. LABOR MARKETS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL (NOV 7)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**VIII. SOCIAL CAPITAL AND IMMIGRATION (NOV 21)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

IX. DISCUSSION OF SEMINAR PAPERS (NOV 28)

X. DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (DEC 2)

Required:


Recommended:


ADDITIONAL TOPICS:

XI. SOCIAL CAPITAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Required:


Recommended:


XII. SOCIAL CAPITAL AND EDUCATION

Required:


Recommended:


XIII. MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Required:


Recommended:


XIV. MICRO-ECONOMIC UTILITY MODELS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Required:


Recommended:


XV. SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Required:


Recommended:
