

SOC 346 Rural Sociology

Spring 2017

ONLINE

INSTRUCTOR: Scott Byington

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Across all societies, people understand that there is something socially unique about being rural. This course seeks to provide you with the analytical tools for understanding rural society and the socioeconomic changes rural areas have historically faced. The course is based on the assumption that almost every aspect of life in rural society, including the Rocky Mountain region and Montana, is influenced by globalization, postindustrialization, and other social changes--and the fact that rural life remains important and complex.

This course is designed to introduce you to key dimensions of contemporary rural society in developed countries with an emphasis on the United States. This is NOT to imply that the rural/urban differences in the rest of the world, particularly underdeveloped countries, are not important. Indeed, we will have a few supplemental readings covering rural issues in less developed regions; however, our department curriculum is designed to cover those issues at greater depth in other courses.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

1. Read all assigned course material.
2. Post weekly Q&Qs on course Moodle.
3. Complete writing assignments on time.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Reading about rural sociology is *intensive*—and socially relevant. You will need to plan on keeping up with the reading assignments as this is the bulk of your work for this course.

1. Brown, David L. and Louis E. Swanson. 2003. *Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
2. Carr, Patrick J. and Maria J. Kefalas. 2009. *Hollowing Out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What it Means for America*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
3. Duncan, Cynthia M. 2014. **SECOND EDITION** (NOT the 2000 First Edition). *Worlds Apart: Poverty and Politics in Rural America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by discussing accommodations with me at the beginning of the course. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students who have a documented disability. (If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommason Center 154 or 406.243.2243.) “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Please notify me immediately following your first day in class (or shortly thereafter during office hours or by appointment) of any accommodations that you think you need for the course. Late notification may result in untimely delays in the requested accommodations. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Services for Students (DSS) in Lommason Center 154

(243-2243). If you have any questions, please contact me via e-mail. Communication is key—modifications will not be made nor grades changed retroactively.

GRADING:

Your grade will be calculated on a straight percentage basis (**100% base of 350 points possible**). I will not give final letter grades with pluses or minuses: A (90%+); B (80%-89%); C (70%-79%); D (60%-69%); F (59% - below).

ASSIGNMENTS:

BOOK CRITIQUES (2 - 100 points each): After reading the assigned book, you will write a critique containing four (4) sections, and should be 4 to 5 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 pt font, standard margins): 1.) **Description** - Provide a brief synopsis of the book; 2.) **Analysis** - Identify and discuss the major concepts and/or themes related to rural sociology exemplified in the book; 3.) **Evaluation** - Provide your own critique of the book. How well does the author support his/her claims? Do you agree or disagree with the stated claims?; 4.) List at least **five (5) questions** you now have after reading the book. These can be critical questions towards the book, or exploratory questions inspired by the text. Please EMAIL all paper to me by 11:55pm on the Friday of the given week.

WEEKLY QCQs (15 - 10 points each week): Each week you will have assigned readings from Brown & Swanson's *Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century* as well as supplemental articles. Once you have completed these readings, you will post on the course Moodle: (1) a **QUESTION** you now have after the reading, (2) a **COMMENT** you have about the reading, and (3) a **QUOTATION** from the reading that you found interesting. You will post a QCQ for *EACH* reading assigned in that given week. Therefore, if you have been assigned to read *three* chapters from Brown & Swanson, you will submit *three* QCQs, one for each reading. **HOWEVER**, please submit all three QCQs in **ONE** file. Do not upload three separate files. This means you will be uploading one file per week with all the weekly required QCQs included in this one file. Keep these **CONCISE**. I do not want to read a novel from you each week. QCQs are due by 11:55pm on the **FRIDAY** of the given week.

Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Most weeks, reading assignments have been divided into two sections. This is done in order to reflect the typical schedule of classroom based courses. If you treat this course as if we are meeting twice a week, you will have no problem staying on top of your reading assignments.

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
Week 1 Jan 23 - Jan 27	<p>What is Rural: Conceptualizing Rurality Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. "Introduction" • Bell (2007). "The two-ness of rural life and the ends of rural scholarship" • [Supplemental // NO QCQ required] – • What is Rural? http://www.raconline.org/info_guides/ruraldef/ • Am I Rural? https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/am-i-rural

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
Week 2 - Jan 30 - Feb 3	Rurality in American West Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walker (2003). "Reconsidering 'regional' political ecologies: toward a political ecology of the rural American West"
Week 3 - Feb 6 - Feb 10	Rural Population Changes Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 1 & Ch. 2 Rural Population Changes Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 3 & Ch. 4 <i>Recommended: Carr & Kefalas. "Chapter 1"</i>
Week 4 - Feb 13 - Feb 17	Reshuffling and Remaking Rural Families Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 5 & Ch. 7 Reshuffling and Remaking Rural Families Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 8 & Ch. 9 <i>Recommended: Carr & Kefalas. "Chapter 2: The Stayers"</i>
Week 5 - Feb 20 - Feb 24	Transformed Rural Economy Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 10 Rural Economic Restructuring Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 11 & Ch. 14 <i>Recommended: Carr & Kefalas. "Chapter 3: The Seekers"</i>
Week 6 - Feb 27 - Mar 3	Transformation of the U.S. Agro-Food System Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brown & Swanson. Ch. 13 Next Gen of Food Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Geographic. "The Next Green Revolution." http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/green-revolution/ <i>Recommended: Carr & Kefalas. "Chapter 4: "The Returners"</i>

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
Week 7 - Mar 6 - Mar 10	Rural Community & Social Capital Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 15 & Ch. 16 Civic Community & Rural Protest Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woods (2003). “Deconstructing Rural Protest” • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 17 • <i>Recommended: Carr & Kefalas. “Conclusion”</i>
Week 8 - Mar 13 - Mar 17	<i>DUE: Book analysis #1 due by Friday at 11:59pm (100 points)</i>
Week 9	<i>Spring Break – NO QCQs THIS WEEK. FREE 10pts for everyone!</i>
Week 10 Mar 27 - Mar 31	Reproducing Rural Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 18 Reproducing Rural Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 20 & Ch. 21
Week 11 Apr 3 - Apr 7	People & the Environment Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 23 • Sheridan (2007). “Embattled Ranchers, Endangered Species, & Urban Sprawl.” People & the Environment Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 25 • Robbins & Luginbuhl (2007). “The Last Enclosure.”
Week 12 Apr 10 - Apr 14	Rural Communities & Resource Extraction Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 24 • <i>Recommended: Duncan. “Chapter 1: Blackwell”</i> Rural Communities & Resource Extraction - In-class discussion Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Atlantic. “A North Dakota Oil Boom Goes Bust.” • <i>Recommended: Duncan. “Chapter 2: Dahlia”</i>

Date	Topic, Readings & Assignments
<p>Week 13 Apr 17 - Apr 21</p>	<p>Local Economic Development <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA. “Creating Rural Wealth.” http://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2012-september/creating-rural-wealth.aspx • <i>Recommended: Duncan. “Chapter 3: Gray Mountain”</i> <p>Local Economic Development <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 26 & 30 • <i>Recommended: Duncan. “Chapter 4: Social Change and Social Policy”</i>
<p>Week 14 Apr 24 - Apr 28</p>	<p>Global Economy on Rural America <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. Ch. 29
<p>Week 15 May 1 - May 5</p>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown & Swanson. “Conclusion.” <p>[Supplemental // NO QCQ required]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen “Shortage in Rich Land.” [http://digital.kbia.org/shortage-in-rich-land] • Putnam interview. “Why You Should Care About Other People’s Kids.” <p><i>Book analysis #2 due by Friday at 11:59pm (100 points)</i></p>
<p>Week 16</p>	<p>NO FINAL!</p>