

SOCI 346.01: Rural Sociology

Spring 2018
MWF, 9:00-9:50pm
ED 214

Instructor and preceptor information

Instructor: Dr. Rayna Sage
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TA: Lauren Miller
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Preceptor: Allison Vaught 326
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Course description

Across the world, the experience of living rurally is seen as culturally and tangibly different and unique from the city or urban experience. There is also an important spatial interface and interdependence between rural and urban places. In this course, you will gain knowledge and analytical tools for understanding the dynamic and diverse nature rural society. This course is based on the assumption that almost every aspect of rural society is influenced by globalization, post-industrialization, and other large structural changes. This course is designed to introduce you to key dimensions of the field of rural sociology in the United States and other Western nations. This is not to imply that rural contexts in other countries is not important, especially in considering contexts within the global south – but the curriculum in this department is designed to cover these topics in other courses

Those of us who call ourselves rural sociologists are a small, but passionate group of people and my hope is to inspire you to care deeply about the health of our rural populations and places!

IMPORTANT! The organization of this class is based on a **collaborative learning model**. In large classes such as this, the “best practices” of learning are often ignored. This means that to be successful in this class, you will need to be present, interactive, and engaged. If you would rather be in a class where your grade depends on passive note-taking and exams, this class is not for you. This process is very important to my teaching philosophy and therefore, this class will be organized in a fashion that allows for these ideals to be realized.

Learning Outcomes

In this class you will:

- ✓ acquire a general understanding of how rurality is studied in sociology.
- ✓ build a foundation of knowledge regarding important topics in the study of rurality as it fits within an ever urbanizing society.
- ✓ practice and improve your writing and presentation skills.
- ✓ develop and improve your ability to conduct your own community-based research.
- ✓ improve your ability to state your informed judgment (not opinion) about how social justice issues are defined and challenged in rural America.

Required Readings

All required readings are located on Moodle under the Readings tab. Please complete readings prior to the week we are discussing.

To Be Successful: Course Requirements

FIRST, read this syllabus! Make sure you understand course requirements, policies, assignments, and your responsibilities as a student. Ask questions if you are confused about anything on the syllabus. Bring your syllabus to class and check it often! Write your class assignments down in a student planner.

There are 3 ways to earn points in this course.

1. Exams (30% of your grade)

There will be 2 in-class exams and 1 take-home assessment in this course. Each exam will be worth 100 points (30% of your grade). Exams will cover readings, lecture materials, guest speakers, and class activities and discussions. Exam formats will vary, but may include multiple choice, matching, short answer, and application.

2. Community Profiling and Asset Mapping Project (40% of your grade)

In groups of 2 or 3 you will complete a single community profiling and asset mapping project for one rural county. An assignment guide and more details will be distributed on this in week 5. In general, your team will be assigned a rural county to (a) investigate using data found online (e.g., the Census, KidsCount, CountyHealthRankings; 100 points) to write a brief profile, (b) summarize the key areas of need for the county (50 points), (c) inventory the available resources or community capitals (100 points), and (d) a 7 minute Ignite! Presentation about your county during our finals time slot (50 points).

3. Interactive Writing and Activities (30% of your grade)

Over the course of the semester we will have a number of interactive in- and out-of-class activities that will assist you in applying what you have learned as well as assist me in gauging how well you are understanding the materials in preparation for the exams and final project. There will be at least 15 and your lowest 3 will be dropped (25 points per activity).

Grading Breakdown

Item	Points	% of total
Exams (3 @ 100 pts)	300	30%
Community Profiling Project (400 points)	400	40%
Interactive Writing & Activities (12 @ 25 pts)	300	30%
	1000	100%

Grading

A	92.5-100%	C+	76.5-79.4%
A-	89.5-92.4%	C	72.5-76.4%
B+	86.5-89.4%	C-	69.5-72.4%
B	82.5-86.4%	D	59.5-69.4%
B-	79.5-82.4%	F	59.4% and below

Other Things You Need To Know: Guidelines and Policies

Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The [Code is](https://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php) available for review online (https://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

Exams

Be here on the day of an exam. If you miss an exam, you must take the comprehensive multiple-choice exam during finals week. Students who will miss an exam due to a university sponsored event must notify the instructor ahead of time and work with the instructor to make-up the exam within one week of the scheduled event. The score from this exam will replace the missing exam score. There will be no individually scheduled make-up exams during the semester.

Late Assignments

Assignments turned in after the due date will not receive credit.

Concerns with Grading

When it is a matter of simple math errors or mismarking a correct answer, write a brief email outlining the problem and turn it. If you have a problem with the content of an exam or the validity of the grading procedure, please wait 48 hours and submit an email outlining your grievance to the instructor and TA.

Attendance and Classroom Etiquette

In-class activities will be an indicator of your attendance. If you miss a day, please be sure to check in with a peer regarding what you missed and stay aware of your missed in-class activities. Your lowest three will be dropped from your grade.

Please be on time for class and prepared to participate in the full class session. Students who leave during the class interrupt learning activities and disrupt the focus of those around them. Schedule appointments at times when classes are not in session. Everyone benefits from your presence. It is very disruptive for everyone if you come into class late, or leave early.

Please be considerate of others by remaining quiet while your professor and others speak.

Laptops

The use of laptops is not allowed in this class.

Email Etiquette

All emails to the instructor and preceptor need to have the subject line that identifies your class number and section, and your name. This is VERY important so that we can address your concerns in a timely manner. Please include appropriate salutations, as well as a description of why you are emailing.

Course withdrawal

If at some time during the course you feel that a withdrawal would be in your best interest, I encourage you to review your options according to the Registrar's Office [here](https://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/dropadd.php) (<https://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/dropadd.php>) and also to come and discuss your situation with me. With early intervention, there are often ways to be successful.

Disability modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students \(https://www.umt.edu/dss/\)](https://www.umt.edu/dss/). 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 Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Financial difficulties

Sometimes the things that get in the way of academic success have nothing to do with academics. Being a "poor student" can be a major stressor. If you find yourself unable to pay your rent, purchase food, or in some other financial crisis, there are resources available. Please visit me or the Office for Student Success (<http://www.umt.edu/oss/>).

Course Calendar (subject to change)

Dates	Topic – see Moodle weekly folders for readings	Exams and scheduled assignments
SECTION 1: Introduction to Rural Sociology		
Wk 1 1/22-1/26	Introductions and What is Rural?	No class Friday! Friday: Student information sheet on Moodle
Wk 2 1/29-2/2	The rural-urban interface, frameworks, and theories	
Wk 3 2/5-2/9	No, but really. What is rural?	
Wk 4 2/12-16	Population change in rural America	Wednesday: In-class movie
Wk 5 2/19-2/23	Migration and rural diversification County Profiling and Asset Mapping Project	No class Monday! Friday: In-class introduction to the County Profiling assignment
Wk 6 2/26-3/2	Migration and rural diversification	Wednesday: Review Friday: Exam 1
SECTION 2: Dimensions of Inequality		
Wk 7 3/5-3/9	Income inequality: Between and within	
Wk 8 3/12-3/16	Racial inequality: Between and within	
Wk 9 3/19-3/23	Gender and sexuality inequality: Between and within	
Week 10: 3/26-3/30 Spring Break!		

Dates	Topic – see Moodle weekly folders for readings	Exams and scheduled assignments
Wk 11 4/2-4/6	County Profiling and Asset Mapping Project	Monday: In-class County Profiling Wednesday: Review Friday: Exam 2
SECTION 3: Rural America across Regions		
Wk 12 4/9-4/13	Rurality in the Northeast	No class Friday!
Wk 13 4/16-4/20	Rurality in the Midwest	
Wk 14 4/23-4/27	Rurality in the South	
Wk 15 4/30-5/4	Rurality in the West	Monday: Ignite! Slides due on Moodle
Tues, May 8 10:10-12:10	Final – Ignite! Presentations of County Profiles (7 slides in 7 minutes)	Tuesday: Exam 3 due on Moodle at 10:10am