

# **Sociology of Occupations and Professions**

## **Sociology 643, Spring 2014**

Time: 2:30-3:45pm, Tuesday/Thursday

Location: Van Hise 474

Instructor: Professor Sida Liu

Office: 8142 Sewell Social Sciences

Office Hours: 4:00-5:00pm, Tuesday

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course offers an introduction to theories and empirical studies on occupations and professions. With the increasing division of labor in modern society, professions have become dominant forces in bringing knowledge to the service of power. Using theories and case studies of lawyers, doctors, accountants, factory workers, firefighters, economists and other occupational groups, this course examines the historical change, social structure, market competition, lifestyles, career path, workplace interaction, and other aspects of occupations and professions from the late nineteenth century to the age of globalization.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The course is designed as an advanced-level seminar, and therefore both careful reading and active class participation are important. Every student is required to do a reading presentation at one class and lead the discussion in that class during the semester. The instructor reserves the rights to take class attendance randomly and to call individual names for answering questions concerning the readings. Please communicate with me if you become ill or emergencies arise so that I will be aware of your circumstances. Reading and class participation account for 10% of your final grade.

Every student is required to submit a one-page summary each week of all of that week's readings (except for Week 1 and Week 8) to the "Communication → Discussion" forum at Learn@UW by 2:00pm on Tuesday. These summaries account for 20% of your final grade. (You have the option to skip summaries for up to 3 weeks without losing your grade, i.e., the minimal number of your summaries must reach 10 by the end of the semester.)

A take-home mid-term exam is scheduled in the week of **March 10-14, 2014 (Week 8)** and it accounts for 30% of your final grade. The exam will be a combination of concept identification, essay question, and library research. Specific information about the mid-term exam will be given at least a week before the exam.

There is no final exam. Instead, a 10-page (double-spaced) final paper is required, in which each student is required to use the theoretical perspectives learned in class to analyze a substantive problem concerning one or two occupations. Although the course readings are centered on a few high-status professions (e.g., law and medicine), you are strongly encouraged to write on other occupational groups that are not well documented in the readings (e.g., journalists, architects, actors, artists, football players, flight attendants...). The paper cannot be merely a summary of the course readings; instead, it must start from an empirical question regarding the occupation you are writing about and then apply the theories to explain it. The paper is evaluated according to four criteria: (1) valid research question; (2) knowledge of the readings; (3) quality of the analysis; and, (4) innovation.

Every student is required to submit a one-page paper outline for my approval before the **April 29, 2014 (Tuesday)** class, which accounts for 10% of your final grade. The final paper is due by email to [sidaliu@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:sidaliu@ssc.wisc.edu) by 5:00pm on **May 15, 2014 (Thursday)**. The final paper accounts for 30% of your final grade.

Percentage distribution of the final grade:

- Reading and participation – 10%
- Summaries – 20%
- Mid-term exam – 30%
- Paper outline – 10%
- Final paper – 30%

## READINGS

*Textbook:*

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The course has only one required textbook (Abbott, *The System of Professions*), which is available for purchase at the University Bookstore. All the other readings are available in electronic format at Learn@UW. After logging in to the course website, please click on the “Materials” button and then select “Content”. All the readings are in PDF format under the “readings” folder.

## READING SCHEDULE

### **Week 1: The Division of Labor in Society**

#### **January 21 (Tuesday)**

Course introduction – no reading.

#### **January 23 (Thursday)**

Durkheim, Emile. [1893] 1984. *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. W. D. Halls. New York: Free Press. (Preface to the second edition)

### **Week 2: What is a “Profession”?**

#### **January 28 (Tuesday)**

Parsons, Talcott. 1939. “The Professions and Social Structure.” *Social Forces* 17: 457-467.  
Becker, Howard S. 1970. “The Nature of a Profession.” Pp. 87-103 in *Sociological Work*.  
Chicago: Aldine.

#### **January 30 (Thursday)**

Hughes, Everett C. 1994. *On Work, Race, and the Sociological Imagination*, ed. L. A. Coser.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1-5, pp. 21-78)

### **Week 3: Professional Status and Professionalization**

#### **February 4 (Tuesday)**

Abbott, Andrew. 1981. “Status and Status Strain in the Professions.” *American Journal of Sociology* 86: 819-835.

#### **February 6 (Thursday)**

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1, pp. 1-32)

### **Week 4: Professions as Monopoly: Market Control Theory**

#### **February 11 (Tuesday)**

Abel, Richard L. 1989. *American Lawyers*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
(Chapters 2, 3 and 5, pp. 14-70, 112-126)

#### **February 13 (Thursday)**

Weeden, Kim A. 2002. “Why Do Some Occupations Pay More than Others? Social Closure and Earnings Inequality in the United States.” *American Journal of Sociology* 108: 55-101.

### **Week 5: Professions as Ecology: Jurisdictional Conflict Theory**

#### **February 18 (Tuesday)**

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 2-3, pp. 35-85)

#### **February 20 (Thursday)**

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 4-5, pp. 96-142)

### **Week 6: Professionalism: The Endogenous View**

#### **February 25 (Tuesday)**

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 6-7, pp. 143-211)

**February 27 (Thursday)**

Freidson, Eliot. 1970. *Profession of Medicine: A Study of the Sociology of Applied Knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-84)

**Week 7: Professionalism: The Exogenous View**

**March 4 (Tuesday)**

Johnson, Terence J. 1972. *Professions and Power*. London: MacMillan. (Chapters 3-6, pp. 39-86)

**March 6 (Thursday)**

Heinz, John P. and Edward O. Laumann. 1982. *Chicago Lawyers: The Social Structure of the Bar*. New York and Chicago: Russell Sage Foundation and American Bar Foundation. (Chapter 6, pp. 127-176)

**Week 8: Mid-Term Exam**

**March 11 (Tuesday)**

Library research for mid-term exam – no reading.

**March 13 (Thursday)**

Take-home mid-term exam – no reading.

----- Spring Break -----

**Week 9: History of the Professions**

**March 25 (Tuesday)**

Starr, Paul. 1982. *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*. New York: Basic Books. (Book I, Chapters 2-3, pp. 60-144)

**March 27 (Thursday)**

Auerbach, Jerold S. 1976. *Unequal Justice: Lawyers and Social Change in Modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 14-73)

Hanlon, Gerard. 1994. *The Commercialisation of Accountancy: Flexible Accumulation and the Transformation of the Service Class*. London: MacMillan. New York: St. Martin's Press. (Chapters 2, pp. 35-75)

**Week 10: Culture and Lifestyles**

**April 1 (Tuesday)**

Bourdieu, Pierre. [1979] 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. R. Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapter 3, pp. 169-225)

**April 3 (Thursday)**

Desmond, Matthew. 2006. "Becoming a Firefighter." *Ethnography* 7: 387-421.

**Week 11: Professional Career**

**April 8 (Tuesday)**

Rivera, Lauren A. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *American Sociological Review* 77: 999-1022.

Williams, Christine L., and Catherine Connell. 2010. "'Looking Good and Sounding Right': Aesthetic Labor and Social Inequality in the Retail Industry." *Work and Occupations* 37: 349-377.

**April 10 (Thursday)**

- Hagan, John, and Fiona Kay. 1995. *Gender in Practice: A Study of Lawyers' Lives*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 3-4, pp. 51-95)
- Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Benard, and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112: 1297-1339.

### **Week 12: Expertise and Artifacts**

#### **April 15 (Tuesday)**

- Eyal, Gil. 2013. "For a Sociology of Expertise: The Social Origins of the Autism Epidemic." *American Journal of Sociology* 118: 863-907.

#### **April 17 (Thursday)**

- Bechky, Beth A. 2003. "Object Lessons: Workplace Artifacts as Representations of Occupational Jurisdiction." *American Journal of Sociology* 109: 720-752.

### **Week 13: Workplace Interaction**

#### **April 22 (Tuesday)**

- Burawoy, Michael. 1979. *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 4, pp. 46-73)
- Barley, Stephen R. 1996. "Technicians in the Workplace: Ethnographic Evidence for Bringing Work into Organizational Studies." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41: 404-441.

#### **April 24 (Thursday)**

- Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 8 and 10, pp. 215-246, 280-314)

### **Week 14: Professions and the State**

#### **April 29 (Tuesday)**

- Johnson, Terence J. 1982. "The State and the Professions: Peculiarities of the British." Pp. 186-208 in *Social Class and the Division of Labour*, eds. A. Giddens and G. McKenzie. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Abbott, Andrew. 2005. "Linked Ecologies." *Sociological Theory* 23: 245-274.

#### **May 1 (Thursday)**

- Halliday, Terence C. 1985. "Knowledge Mandates: Collective Influence by Scientific, Normative, and Syncretic Professions." *British Journal of Sociology* 36: 421-447.

### **Week 15: The Globalization of Professions**

#### **May 6 (Tuesday)**

- Faulconbridge, James R., and Daniel Muzio. 2011. "Professions in a Globalizing World: Towards a Transnational Sociology of the Professions." *International Sociology* 27: 136-152.
- Fourcade, Marion. 2006. "The Construction of a Global Profession: The Transnationalization of Economics." *American Journal of Sociology* 112: 145-194.

#### **May 8 (Thursday)**

- Liu, Sida. 2013. "The Legal Profession as a Social Process: A Theory on Lawyers and Globalization." *Law & Social Inquiry* 38: 670-693.