
THE COMMUNITY

Professor Todd Madigan



Course Description

The 20th and 21st centuries have seen a dramatic restructuring of the way people live together. With a focus on these changes in the American context, we will explore rationalization and bureaucratization, suburban sprawl, the waning of the industrial sector and concomitant ascent of the service sector, the role of technology in mediating our lives together, and how racialized residential segregation affects our experience of public life. In the process of investigating these phenomena, we will attempt to answer questions like: What makes a community? Who is included—and who is excluded—from community? How does the built environment affect community? What are the challenges facing our contemporary communities? and How can we best meet these challenges such that communities might flourish?

Course Meeting Times

Tuesdays & Thursdays

2:00PM-3:15PM

All class meetings are online, and attendance is required.

Online Class Format

Our course will be conducted solely through Zoom. I'll send an announcement through Canvas five-to-ten minutes before the start of each class with a link to the meeting. (You don't need to have a paid subscription to Zoom to join the meeting. Just click on the link and follow the prompts.) We'll begin the synchronous (i.e., "live") class promptly at 2:00PM each Tuesday and Thursday.

Each class meeting will include a combination of lectures and small group discussions (these small group discussions will be facilitated through "breakout meetings"). It's critical that you attend these meetings with both audio and video enabled. You'll also want to make sure you have access to our readings during these live meetings, for you'll often need to refer to them during our discussions. I will expect you to participate in these discussions every class meeting, and this participation requires that you have completed the assigned readings.

Anything covered during our class lectures and discussions will potentially be encountered on an exam. Please come to class prepared to take notes.

Readings

This course is *reading intensive*; you should be prepared to complete approximately 50 pages of reading for each class meeting. If you don't think you'll be able to keep up with this schedule, you should reconsider enrollment in the course.



Online Class Etiquette

SOC 326 is a full credit university course, and as such, I expect your complete and undivided attention during our class meetings. This means you should be situated in a location where you can participate, take notes, and refer to the readings (e.g., not driving, walking, working, etc.). Please also make sure your first and last names are linked to the device you use to access class. This allows your classmates and me to know who you are when you speak, and it also enables me to take accurate attendance and give you credit for attending class.

COURSEWORK

Attendance

Much of the learning during this course will come through lectures and discussions with your classmates. For this reason, attendance and participation during all virtual class meetings is critical. Graded attendance will be taken during each meeting (if you are present for the full class, you will receive full credit; if you are present for less than the full class—but for at least 45 minutes—you will receive half credit; otherwise, no credit). You may miss one class without losing any points (i.e., you will receive full attendance credit for the first class you miss).

GRADING

Attendance

26 classes @ 5 points each = 130

Examinations

3 exams @ 120 points each = 360

Discussion Posts

5 posts @ 30 points each = 150

Group Project

1 project @ 130 points = 130

Late Work Policy

I will accept discussion posts, exams, and projects up to 48 hours after their due date, but 10% will be deducted from the assignment's grade. I will not accept work more than 48 hours late.

Examinations

You will take three “in-class” examinations, the third being given on the final regularly scheduled day of class. The subject of these exams will be the material that has been covered during their respective sections (i.e., they will not be cumulative). The material will be drawn from the course readings, lectures, and discussions. (No attendance will be taken on exam days.)

Video Clips and Discussion

Approximately once every three weeks you'll watch a video clip (or two) that I've assigned on our discussion board. You'll then write a one-page response and post it on the discussion board. Your post will be graded based on its intellectual engagement with the video(s). Strong responses will identify and cite a couple key points made in the video(s) and how they relate to something we've read or discussed in class (you must also include citations for this material). In addition to your own post, I'll ask you to comment thoughtfully on at least two other classmates' posts on the discussion board.

Group Project

You will join with three classmates in identifying a relatively new professional service, then give a ten-minute group presentation on that service to the class. You should not only describe the service, the human needs it addresses, and how those needs were met before they were commodified, but also document the ways in which the service has been rationalized. And ultimately, you should offer an argument as to whether this service is eroding community.

PLEASE NOTE: The readings for each class are to be completed *before* the start of the class for which they are listed.

WEEK 1	TUES. 8/17	NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	THURS. 8/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: Max Weber and <i>rationalization</i> and <i>bureaucratization</i> Walter Benjamin “The Storyteller” (from <i>Illuminations</i>) Walter Benjamin “The Work of Art In the Mechanical Age of Reproduction” (from <i>Illuminations</i>)
WEEK 2	TUES. 8/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Ritzer “Introduction” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>) George Ritzer “McDonaldization Past and Present” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>)
	THURS. 8/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Ritzer “Efficiency and Calculability: Consumers 1” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>) George Ritzer “Predictability and Control: Consumers 2” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>)
WEEK 3	TUES. 8/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Ritzer “Efficiency and Calculability: McJobs and Other McDonaldized Occupations 1” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>) George Ritzer “The Irrationality of Rationality: Traffic Jams on Those Happy Trails” (from <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i>)
	WED. 9/1	DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
	THURS. 9/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zygmunt Bauman “Individuality” (from <i>Liquid Modernity</i>) Zygmunt Bauman “Time/Space” (from <i>Liquid Modernity</i>)
WEEK 4	TUES. 9/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zygmunt Bauman “Work” (from <i>Liquid Modernity</i>) Zygmunt Bauman “Community” (from <i>Liquid Modernity</i>)
	THURS. 9/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zygmunt Bauman “Introduction” (from <i>Modernity and the Holocaust</i>)
WEEK 5	TUES. 9/14	EXAM 1 – NO READING ASSIGNMENT

	THURS. 9/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John McKnight “John Deere and the Bereavement Counselor” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “The Professional Problem” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “The Need for Oldness” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>)
WEEK 6	TUES. 9/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John McKnight “Professionalized Service and Disabling Help” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “The Medicalization of Politics” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “Well-Being: The New Threshold to the Old Medicine” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>)
	THURS. 9/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John McKnight “Diagnosis and the Health of the Community” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “Politicizing Health Care” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “A Nation of Clients?” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>)
WEEK 7	TUES. 9/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John McKnight “Do No Harm” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “Redefining Community” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>) • John McKnight “A Reconsideration of the Crisis of the Welfare State” (from <i>The Careless Society</i>)
	WED. 9/29	DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
	THURS. 9/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck “What Is Sprawl, and Why?” (from <i>Suburban Nation</i>) • Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck “The Devil Is in the Details” (from <i>Suburban Nation</i>)
WEEK 8	TUES. 10/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck “The House That Sprawl Built” (from <i>Suburban Nation</i>) • Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck “The Physical Creation of Society” (from <i>Suburban Nation</i>)
	THURS. 10/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck “The American Transportation Mess” (from <i>Suburban Nation</i>) • Ben Green “The Livable City” (from <i>The Smart Enough City</i>)

WEEK 9	TUES. 10/12	FALL BREAK—NO CLASS
	WED. 10/13	DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE
	THURS. 10/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Green “The Democratic City” (from <i>The Smart Enough City</i>) • Ben Green “The Just City” (from <i>The Smart Enough City</i>)
WEEK 10	TUES. 10/19	EXAM 2—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	THURS. 10/21	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 11	TUES. 10/26	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	THURS. 10/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoshana Zuboff “The Discovery of Behavioral Surplus” (from <i>The Age of Surveillance Capitalism</i>) • Siva Vaidhyanathan “The Pleasure Machine” (from <i>Anti-Social Media</i>)
WEEK 12	TUES. 11/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siva Vaidhyanathan “The Surveillance Machine” (from <i>Anti-Social Media</i>) • Siva Vaidhyanathan “The Attention Machine” (from <i>Anti-Social Media</i>)
	WED. 11/3	DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE
	THURS. 11/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siva Vaidhyanathan “The Politics Machine” (from <i>Anti-Social Media</i>) • Siva Vaidhyanathan “The Disinformation Machine” (from <i>Anti-Social Media</i>)
WEEK 13	TUES. 11/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Hagerman “Introduction” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>) • Margaret Hagerman “Race Doesn’t Really Matter Anymore” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>)
	THURS. 11/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Hagerman “The Perfect Place to Live” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>) • Margaret Hagerman “We’re Not a Racist School” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>)

WEEK 14	TUES. 11/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Hagerman “That’s so Racist!” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>) • Margaret Hagerman “Everybody Is White” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>)
	WED. 11/17	DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE
	THURS. 11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Hagerman “Shaking Those Ghetto Booties” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>) • Margaret Hagerman “It Was Racism” (from <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>)
WEEK 15	TUES. 11/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elijah Anderson “The Black Middle Class in Public” (from <i>Cosmopolitan Canopy</i>) • Elijah Anderson “The ‘N—’ Moment” (from <i>Cosmopolitan Canopy</i>)
	THURS. 11/25	THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS
WEEK 16	TUES. 11/30	EXAM 3—NO READING ASSIGNMENT