Soc 1a: Order and Change in Society          Fall 2014
M, W, Th    1-1:50pm

Prof. Carmen Sirianni
Pearlman 210; sirianni@brandeis.edu
Office Hours: Mon, Wed 5-6pm and Thurs by appointment

Graduate TAs:

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This course analyzes patterns of social organization and change in a variety of different arenas of social and institutional life: work, family, gender, community, poverty, wealth, race, environment, social movements, politics, organizations. It focuses on the contemporary United States, though it also examines longer patterns. Broad normative questions of democracy and equality run throughout all topics.

ABSOLUTELY NO USE OF LAPTOPS OR CELL PHONES DURING CLASS

Out of respect for each other’s contributions during class, all cellphones and laptops will be shut off and stored out of sight. Get a paper notebook for note taking, if you do not typically utilize one. (I will make an exception only if there is a dire emergency, such as a family member in surgery. You must inform me of such an emergency ahead of class.)

The required reading will be discussed most intensively in your discussion sections, and everyone is required to attend these and do all of the readings beforehand. Assigned sections will be developed within the first 2 weeks or so of the course.

Two sets of take-home essays, plus participation in section, will determine final grades. ALL essays are due in hardcopy, stapled, paginated, double-spaced, 12-point or so font, with TA name at top.

1. Midterm take home essays, 2 essays, 10 pages total: Oct 6 in class (35 percent of grade).

2. Final take home essays, 3 essays, 15 pages total: Dec 8 in class (50 percent of grade).


4. Service Learning Option: Students engaged in community service, social action, or campus leadership projects may opt to write one of their essays for the final on their experiences. This may require supplemental reading appropriate to the nature of the student’s active engagement. Students wishing to choose this option should discuss it
with their TAs and/or the instructor as early in the semester as possible, present a short written proposal (1 page), and must receive formal approval by Oct 15.

Disabled students requiring specific arrangements in completing course work should see their TA and/or instructor.

**Required readings:** at Bookstore, on reserve, or on LATTE

Required books:


**August 28: Introduction:** Overview of course topics, readings, assignments.

**Sept 3-18: Family, Gender, and Work**


Reading:


**Sept 22-Oct 2: The Changing Nature of Work: From Industrial to Postindustrial Society**

The organization and meaning of work; scientific management and industrial work; recognition and power in service workplaces, gender, race; postindustrialism and information technologies.

Readings:


**Oct 6: Midterm essays due in class: 10 pages, double-spaced, paginated, stapled**

**Oct 6-13: Racial Inequality: Income and Wealth**

What are the dynamics of race, wealth, and income in the U.S., and what might these entail for public policy? What have been the effects of the financial crisis on equality and strategies for equity?

Readings:

Shapiro, *The Hidden Cost of Being African American*.

**Oct 15-29: Community and Urban Politics: Religion, Race, Immigrants**

How do people act through religious congregations and civic associations to build social capital, enhance power, revitalize their communities, incorporate recent immigrants?

Readings:


**Nov 3-13: Political Sociology and Polarized Politics**

Power and politics in society; how can we understand recent conservative movements and the polarized turn in American politics? The Tea Party.

Readings:

**Nov 17-24: Bureaucracy and Beyond?**

Why has bureaucracy been such a powerful force in society and economy? What happens in the ideal type, as well as in street-level practice? In what ways is bureaucracy being reinvented and transformed?


**Dec 1-4: Climate Change and Environmental Movements**

The emergence and development of a multi-dimensional climate movement, comprised of contentious as well as collaborative politics. Challenges for civil society, government, markets. The institutional field of environmentalism.

Readings:


**Dec 8: Final papers due in class: 15-pages, double-spaced, paginated, stapled**