[OVERVIEW]

The study of culture is a broad subfield in sociology, the boundaries of which are poorly defined and delineated—a murkiness that can be frustrating when learning the contours of the concept. Ultimately, however, the study of culture provides a flexible and dynamic space in which to examine nearly every aspect of our lives. This course is not a survey of the sociology of culture, but rather focuses on a few key areas within the subfield. Specifically, we will explore the meaning of culture, where it comes from, and how it is produced. To do this, we look at how symbols, language, cultural production, and forms of knowledge and power interact to shape and create meaning in our lives. From there we will examine different theoretical and empirical approaches to culture in three parts: (1) Codes and Cognition, which examines symbolic codes and communal understandings; (2) Production and Consumption, which considers the roles of markets, globalization, and institutions in both what is produced in the “culture industry” (e.g., art, fashion, technology and television) and how and by whom it is consumed; and (3) Culture and Domination, with a particular focus on culture’s role in the reproduction of class difference.

[REQUIREMENTS]

CLASS PARTICIPATION + ATTENDANCE (20%)

Your active and engaged participation in class sessions is essential. All students are expected to be active, attentive, and respectful members of the class and to participate in class discussions and activities. This means coming to class prepared, having done all the reading, and ready to discuss and apply the materials. Attendance is mandatory, and I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. (NOTE: If you arrive more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be marked absent for that class.) You are allowed TWO unexcused absences, after which I will lower your participation grade by 3% per unexcused absence. I will excuse an absence if it has been discussed with me in advance. (NOTE: This does not mean emailing me right before class to inform me you will not be coming to class.)

PRESENTATIONS (10%)

Each week, two (or three, depending on enrollment) students will be responsible for leading a discussion on that week’s readings. This is NOT an exercise in reciting a summary of the readings for the group. Rather, you should engage with the readings in such a way that lead to an engaged discussion. It is up to you and your partner(s) to decide what that looks like. Perhaps you have questions about the applicability or utility of the theory. Or you may set up your presentation as proponent / critic (one person extracting the central thesis from the text while the other refutes it). Or you may want to connect the readings to something happening in the world (current events, cultural phenomenon, etc.).
I am giving you some creativity here, but above all else your presentation should be aimed with generating discussion. No pressure!

**ASSIGNMENTS (30%)**

There will be three short writing assignments (750-1,000 words) over the course of the semester. Each is worth 10% of your grade.

**FINAL PAPER (40%)**

You will also be required to do a final paper, roughly 10-12 pages long. This could be linking an empirical interest you have to themes of the course (or perhaps part of your thesis…), pursuing a topic in the sociology of culture, or making an argument for the importance of an approach or body of literature that we did not include in the syllabus. We will be discussing and developing these throughout the semester, and to keep you from doing everything at the last minute you will be required to hand a short proposal (earlier in the semester) and outline/abstract (later).

- Proposal (5%)
- Outline + Abstract (5%)
- Final Paper (30%)

**Paper Formatting:** All written work should be *single spaced*, in *12pt. Times New Roman* font, with *one-inch margins*. Please include a word count as well.

**Paper Submitting:** All papers must be submitted electronically on Moodle as a *Word doc* (no PDFs).

**Late Papers:** Unless previous accommodations have been made, late papers will be lowered by 3% for each day late.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

All readings will be available as PDFs on Moodle.

**ACCOMMODATION**

Haverford College is committed to supporting the learning process for all students. Please contact me as soon as possible if you are having difficulties in the course. There are also many resources on campus, including the Office of Academic Resources ([https://www.haverford.edu/oar](https://www.haverford.edu/oar)) and the Office of Access and Disabilities Services ([https://www.haverford.edu/ads/](https://www.haverford.edu/ads/)). If you think you may need accommodations because of a disability, please contact Sherrie Borowsky, Coordinator of Accommodations, Office of Access and Disability Services at hc-ads@haverford.edu. If you have already been approved to receive academic accommodations and would like to request accommodations in this course because of a disability, please meet with me privately at the beginning of the semester (*within the first two weeks if possible*) with your verification letter.

[COURSE SCHEDULE]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>WEEK ONE: Introductions</th>
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<td>• No readings</td>
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### WEEK TWO (9/11 & 9/13): Why Culture?


### WEEK THREE (9/18 & 9/20): Classical Sociological Theory Lineages

- Simmel. “The Metropolis and Mental Life.”

### PART I: CODES AND COGNITION

### WEEK FOUR (9/25 & 9/27): Interaction, Behavior, Socialization


### WEEK FIVE (10/2 & 10/4): Cognition & Emotion

WEEK SIX (10/9 & 10/11): Culture as Signification


*** WEEK SEVEN (October 16 & 18) — NO CLASS! (Fall Break) ***

PART II: PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF CULTURE

WEEK EIGHT (10/23 & 10/25): Fields

- TBD

WEEK NINE (10/30 & 11/1): Culture and Capitalism


WEEK TEN (11/6 & 11/8): Culture and Capitalism, Part II

### WEEK ELEVEN (11/13 & 11/15): Case Study – Art, Fashion, Media

- **WHAT DO YOU WANT TO READ?**

### PART III: DEPLOYING CULTURE

### WEEK TWELVE (11/20 & 11/22): Consent and Domination


### WEEK THIRTEEN (11/27 & 11/29): Culture and Class


### WEEK FOURTEEN (12/4 & 12/6): Rethinking Western Concepts of Culture

- TBD (Something on Russia / Socialism)

### WEEK FIFTEEN (12/11 & 12/13): Course Conclusions

- TBD