Economic Sociology (ECON 895 – 007)
Wednesday, 7:20 pm – 10:00 pm
Enterprise Hall 77

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Course Description & Objectives

This seminar will explore key writings within the “new economic sociology” and survey recent developments within the field. Special emphasis will be placed on how culture, norms, ideologies and values shape economic action and interaction. The first half of the course will focus on the core writings in the economics and sociology of the market. The second half of the course will introduce students to interesting writings in important areas in the current economic sociology literature. The goal of the class is to prepare students to write academic papers in the field of economic sociology suitable for peer review journals. In addition to being graded on class participation, students will be graded on two drafts of a research paper exploring some topic related to economic sociology.

Course Readings & Required Books

You are expected to do all of the required readings (indicted below with an *) prior to the class where they will be discussed. All of the required readings can be obtained through GMU’s e-library or e-reserves (http://library.gmu.edu/) or via the links that are provided below. Additional readings are available at http://docs.virgilhenrystorr.org/storreconsoc-additionalreadings.pdf and should be a useful starting point if you wish to explore the topics covered in the class beyond the required readings.

Course Grading

Grades for this class will be based on class participation and a presentation of your research on April 27th 2011 (50%) as well as the first and final drafts of a research paper (20% and 30%, respectively). Class participation involves submitting and discussing questions raised by your colleagues in the class’ online discussion group before mid-day on the days that the class meets as well as occasionally leading and frequently participating in weekly in-class discussions. You will be expected to turn in and make an appointment to discuss the abstract and outline for the research paper on or before March 2nd 2011. The first draft of the research paper is due March 30th and the final draft is due May 11th 2011. The research paper should explore a topic within economic sociology and the final draft should be suitable for submission to a peer-reviewed journal within economics or sociology. It will be impossible to receive a high mark in this class without participating in online and class discussions and writing a high quality paper.

Course Outline

Class #1. Introductions
**Class #2.**  *The economics of the market: the market process* (93 pages)


**Class #3.**  *The economics of the market: the market order* (83 pages)


* Schumpeter, Joseph A. 1942. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, ch. 6 and 7 (pp. 72-87).


**Class #4.**  *The economics of the market: rationality & economic action* (117 pages)


**Class #5.**  *The sociology of the market: embeddedness and the social construction of the market* (101 pages)


**Class #6.**  
*The sociology of the market: social capital (119 pages)*


**Class #7.**  
*The sociology of the market: structural holes and the strength of weak ties (101 pages)*


**Class #8.**  
*The economic sociology of work and workplaces (127 pages)*


Class #9. The economic sociology of economic culture: “the spirit of capitalism” (126 pages)


* Weber, Max 1930. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, ch. 2 (pp. 47-78).


Class #10. The economic sociology of economic development (124 pages)


**Class #11. The economic sociology of informal trade and alternative economic systems (136 pages)**


**Class #12. Student Presentations (abstracts and introductions to be circulated on April 24th).**

Note: We will not have class on April 13th or May 4th. Please use these periods to work on your research papers.