

# The Community in Literature

## SOC 492/592 COURSE SYLLABUS SUMMER II 2008

### Information:

**Meeting Place:** 228 Kethley Hall

**CRN:** SOC 492: 31834

**Meeting Times:** Monday through Friday, 9:55–11:40 am  
July 2 through 31, 2008

SOC 592: 31835

**Instructor:** Dr. Alan Barton

**Office:** 214 Kethley Hall

**Telephone:** (662) 846-4097

**E-mail:** [abarton@deltastate.edu](mailto:abarton@deltastate.edu)

**Webpage:** [http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp\\_academic/abarton/](http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/)

**Office Hours:** During Summer II semester, 2008, the instructor holds regular office hours at the following times:

**Tuesday** 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

**Wednesday** 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

**Thursday** 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

If you cannot make one of these times, contact the professor to set up an appointment. If you plan on visiting the professor during office hours, it is a good idea to let him know during class, in case he has to cancel his office hours for some reason.

**Course Webpage:** Additional materials and updated course information can be found on the course webpage:

[http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp\\_academic/abarton/SOC492SU08/SOC492Syllabus.htm](http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/SOC492SU08/SOC492Syllabus.htm)

### Overview:

The purpose of this course is to critically examine the concept of *community* and to illustrate and analyze the concept using works of fiction. You will read articles and selections that offer visions of community, and discuss concepts of community in class. You will then use these concepts to analyze novels and short stories that present various ideals of community. Community theory will draw on authors such as Alexis de Tocqueville, Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim, Amatai Etzioni, Ken Wilkinson and Robert Putnam. You will read literature from Sinclair Lewis, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Richard Wright and Arundhati Roy.

## Readings:

### ***Required Readings:***

#### Books

Sinclair Lewis. (1920/1998). *Main Street*. Signet Classics, New York. ISBN: 0-451-52682-1.

Gabriel García Márquez. (1981/2003). *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Vintage Books, New York. ISBN: 1-4000-3471-X.

Arundhati Roy. (1997). *The God of Small Things*. Harper Perennial, New York. ISBN: 0-06-097749-3.

Richard Wright. (1936/2004). *Uncle Tom's Children*. Harper Perennial, New York. ISBN: 0-06-058714-8.

The books can be purchased through the university bookstore. You should make arrangements to complete all of the reading assignments.

#### Articles and Chapters

Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven M. Tipton. 1985. Selections from *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Harper and Row, New York. Ch. 7: Getting Involved, pp. 167–195.

Berry, Wendell. 1996. Conserving Communities. In *The Case Against the Global Economy and For a Turn to the Local*, edited by Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco. Ch. 34, pp. 407–417.

Alexis De Tocqueville. 1835/1840. *Democracy in America*. From <http://xroads.virginia.edu>. Vol. 2, Section 2, Ch. IV, V, VI, VII, VIII.

Emile Durkheim. 1964 (1892). Selections from *The Division of Labor in Society*. The Free Press, New York. Ch. 2: Mechanical Solidarity Through Likeness, pp. 70–110.

Robert C. Ellickson. 1991. Selections from *Order Without Law: How Neighbors Settle Disputes*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA. Ch. 3: The Resolution of Cattle-Trespass Disputes, pp. 40–64.

Amatai Etzioni. 1993. Selections from *The Spirit of Community: The Reinvention of American Society*. Touchstone Books, New York. Ch. 4: Back to We, pp. 116–133.

William Bradford Huie. 1956. The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi. *Look*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 46–50.

Robert D. Putnam. 2000. Selections from *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Touchstone Books, New York. Ch. 6: Informal Social Connections.

Charles M. Tolbert, Michael D. Irwin, Thomas A. Lyson and Alfred R. Nucci. 2002. Civic community in small-town America: How civic welfare is influenced by local capitalism and civic engagement. *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 67, No. 1, pp. 90–113. (Available in the full-text electronic journals at the DSU Library.)

Ferdinand Tönnies. 2002 (1887). Selections from *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*. Part 1, § 1–18. pp. 33–64.

Ken Wilkinson. 1999. Selections from *The Community in Rural America*. Social Ecology Press, Middleton, WI. Ch. 1: The Community: An Interactional Approach, pp. 11–36.

**Recommended Readings:**

Sinclair Lewis Nobel Lecture:

[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1930/lewis-lecture.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1930/lewis-lecture.html)

Gabriel Garcia-Marquez Nobel Lecture:

[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html)

Salon.com Interview with Arundhati Roy: <http://www.salon.com/sept97/00roy.html>

Richard Wright Biography by Ann Rayson:

[http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/poets/s\\_z/r\\_wright/wright\\_life.htm](http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/poets/s_z/r_wright/wright_life.htm)

**Organization and Approach:**

This course uses a participatory, learner-centered, adult education approach. An adult education approach recognizes that you are responsible for your own learning. The professor can only provide opportunities to learn, but cannot force you to learn. You are expected to work hard in this course, meaning that for every hour of class time, you should spend at least three hours outside of class preparing by doing readings, assignments, studying for quizzes and exams, and thinking about the course material.

You are expected to take responsibility for the success of the course, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as interest, motivation, creativity, and initiative are important elements in evaluating your performance and assigning a grade.

This course relies heavily on reading and discussion. You will read the articles and books, and come to class ready to discuss them. Discussion will emphasize applying the concepts of community presented in the articles to the stories, settings and characters in the novels.

**Concepts:**

We will focus on the following sociological concepts this semester. Our objective is to understand these concepts better by illustrating them in the readings, class discussions and practical exercises.

- |                      |                |                 |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| •Community           | •Structure     | •Social Change  |
| •Social Institutions | •Civil Action  | •Social Capital |
| •Social Integration  | •Civil Society | •Law            |

**Learning Opportunities:**

You must complete the following assignments:

(1) Engaging in Class Discussions (30 points)

- You are expected to do all of the assigned readings and attend all class sessions;
- You are expected to engage actively in classroom discussions, reflecting on the topic and readings;
- The quality of contributions to class discussions is more important than the quantity of contributions.

**(2) Leading Class Discussions (30 points)**

- You will lead class discussions on the assigned readings during the semester; the readings will be divided up among the students in the course;
- Your responsibilities are to get other students talking about the topic, to mediate the contributions of other students, to keep the discussion focused, and to guide the discussion to ensure that the social and policy issues are covered;
- Each discussion should last approximately 45 minutes.

**(3) Final Exam (40 points)**

- Final essay (worth 30 points);
- Turn in question on Tuesday, July 22 (10 points);
- Turn final essay in on blackboard before 10:00 am on Thursday, July 31;
- In your essay, take one of the concepts related to community presented in the readings, and apply it to the works of fiction.

See the on-line course syllabus for more information on the SOC 492 and 592 final exams.

**(4) Engagement (+/- 10 points)**

- A total of 10 points may be added or subtracted from your final grade to reflect the degree of engagement in the course that you exhibit;
- Engaged students demonstrate qualities such as motivation, extra effort, interest in the course material, improvement over the course of the semester and leadership;
- Lack of engagement is manifested by frequent absences, talking with others or dozing off in class, lack of interest in the course material, lack of preparation, and lack of participation in course activities.

## **Grading:**

There are a total of 100 points available for the semester. Your final score is simply the sum of all points earned over the semester. If you accumulate 90 or more points over the course of the semester, you will get an "A" in the course. If you accumulate 80 to 89 points, you will get a "B," for 70 to 79 points you will get a "C," and for 60 to 69 points you will get a "D." If you get less than 60 points, your final grade will be an "F." Note that you start with zero and earn points; you do not start with 100 and lose points.

## **Policies and Expectations:**

### ***Responsibility:***

**YOU are responsible** for learning the course material and for your progress in the course. You are expected to **attend class regularly** and **complete all of the assignments**. You are expected to know **all** material presented during class sessions, whether you attended the class or not. If you miss a class session, you should check with another student to see what you missed. "I didn't know" is **NEVER** a valid excuse. If you don't know something, it is your job to find out.

### ***Learning Opportunities:***

You are responsible for completing all of the assigned work in this course in a timely fashion. Assigned work is designed to provide you with learning opportunities, and all work is due at the time specified; **no late assignments will be accepted**, and missed assignments **cannot** be made up. If you miss class or an assignment, you are making a choice that

prioritizes other activities above the class, and you will receive a grade of zero for any assignment that you fail to turn in.

**ALL** work that you submit (except in-class work) should be **typed/word processed**. If you submit a paper with more than one sheet, please attach all sheets with a staple or paper clip **BEFORE** you bring the assignment to class to turn in. The instructor will **NOT ACCEPT** work that is handwritten or that has multiple pages that are not attached with a staple or paper clip.

### ***Absences:***

You are expected to attend all class sessions and activities. Please make sure that you **sign the roll sheet** at each class meeting, as this will serve as official documentation of your attendance. If you miss class, you must document your absence, or points will be deducted from your grade (See the information on grading attendance). Please notify the instructor **IN ADVANCE** if you must miss class. It is in your interest to provide the instructor with **written** notification (e.g. a note or e-mail) to document any missed classes. It is risky simply to tell the instructor and expect him to remember.

***Illnesses and Emergencies:*** Illnesses and emergencies **MUST** be documented with a note from a doctor or other professional. You should bring the note to the next class meeting and submit it to the instructor. Illnesses and emergencies pertain **only** to the student, not to the student's family, friends or others.

***University Activities:*** If you must miss class for an official university activity, you should make arrangements with the instructor **BEFORE** the missed class. Appropriate documentation is required.

***Making Up Missed Work:*** If you miss an exam or other assignment due to a documented illness, emergency or official university activity, a make up will be given at the end of the semester. The make-up exam will be an oral exam with the instructor, in which you will be required to respond to a series of questions

You are responsible for all material presented in all classes, even during an excused absence. You should get class notes from another student for all class sessions you miss.

### ***Class Participation:***

**Class participation** is an important element in this course. The purpose of class discussions is to provide you with an opportunity to practice thinking skills in a safe environment. In discussions, you are encouraged to explore ideas presented in the readings and lectures, to think about and apply concepts, and to develop arguments and evaluate evidence.

If you repeatedly engage in **disruptive behaviors** during class discussions, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

- You must demonstrate **appropriate respect** for the opinions and ideas of other students during class discussions. It is acceptable (and encouraged) to disagree with the perspectives of other students or the instructor, but you should phrase this to show disagreement with the **idea or opinion**, not with the person presenting the idea or opinion. If you repeatedly show disrespect for other class members, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

• Class discussions are **NOT** a time to chat with other students about topics not related to the course. Talking privately with other students while the rest of the class is trying to carry on a discussion is disruptive, bothersome, and disrespectful to other students and to the professor. If you repeatedly speak when you do not have the floor, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

• Class is **NOT** a time to catch up on your sleep. If you are not prepared to stay awake and participate in class discussions and other activities, you should not come to class. If you continually fall asleep during class sessions, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

If you are asked to leave the classroom for disruptive or disrespectful behavior, you **cannot** make up any work that you miss as a result.

### ***Electronic Devices (Cell Phones, Pagers, etc.):***

Please make sure that all cell phones, pagers, and similar electronic devices are **turned off** during class time. If your phone or pager repeatedly interrupts class, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

**DO NOT** bring cell phones or other portable communication devices to class during quizzes, exams, or in-class assignments. If the instructor sees a cell phone or other device during a quiz, exam or in-class assignment, you will receive a grade of zero on the quiz, exam or in-class assignment, and you will be asked to leave the classroom.

If you must have a cell phone or pager (e.g. if you are a volunteer fireman or emergency responder), you **MUST** make arrangements with the instructor in advance.

### ***Academic Honesty:***

You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the DSU Bulletin and Handbook. You are expected to do your **own work** in this course. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated.

You should be fully aware of the **Course Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating**. If you are caught cheating in this course, you will be dismissed from the course with a grade of "F." In addition, a report will be filed with the university's Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES.** Make sure you know what constitutes plagiarism and cheating **BEFORE** turning in any assignments. Once you turn in an assignment, you are representing it as your own work. If you are suspected of committing plagiarism, pleas of "I didn't know what plagiarism was" will not be accepted.

If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, see the DSU Library's "**Plagiarism Prevention: A Guide for Students**." The **Course Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating** also outlines examples of plagiarism. If it is still unclear, see the instructor.

### ***Special Accommodations:***

Appropriate accommodations will be made for students with medical problems or diagnosed disabilities. Have Dr. Richard Houston at **Reily Student Health Center** (846-4690) contact the course instructor to make arrangements.



**Outline:**

<b>Week 1:</b>	
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Topic / Readings / Assignment</b>
Wednesday July 2	Course Introduction; Review Syllabus
Thursday July 3	Community in American Society; <i>Gemeinschaft</i> and <i>Gesellschaft</i> ; Readings: DeTocqueville (1835); Tönnies
Friday July 4	<b>INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY</b>
<b>Week 2:</b>	
Monday July 7	Mechanical and Organic Solidarity; Self-Reliance and Getting Involved; Readings: Durkheim; Bellah et al.
Tuesday July 8	Readings: García Márquez, ch. 1–3 (pp. 3–71)
Wednesday July 9	Readings: García Márquez, ch. 4–5 (pp. 72–120); Huie
Thursday July 10	Community Bonds; Civic Community; Readings: Wilkinson; Tolbert et al.
Friday July 11	Informal Social Control; Readings: Ellickson; Wright, Intro & ch. 1 (pp. 1–61)
<b>Week 3:</b>	
Monday July 14	Readings: Wright, ch. 2, 3 (pp. 62–156)
Tuesday July 15	Readings: Wright, ch. 4, 5 (pp. 157–263)
Wednesday July 16	The Communitarian Nexus; Readings: Etzioni; Roy, ch. 1–3 (pp. 3–89)
Thursday July 17	Social Capital and the Breakdown of Traditional Community; Readings: Putnam; Roy, ch. 4–6 (pp. 90–147)
Friday July 18	Keeping Community Alive; Readings: Berry; Roy, ch. 7–10 (pp. 148–204)

<b>Week 4:</b>	
<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>Topic / Readings / Assignment</b>
Monday July 21	Readings: Roy, ch. 11–16 (pp. 205–278)
Tuesday July 22	Readings: Roy, ch. 17–21 (pp. 279–321); Submit Questions for Final Exam Essay
Wednesday July 23	Community Development in Practice; Readings: Lewis, ch. 1–8 (pp. 17–116)
Thursday July 24	Readings: Lewis, ch. 9–15 (pp. 116–212)
Friday July 25	Readings: Lewis, ch. 16–23 (pp. 213–306)
<b>Week 5:</b>	
Monday July 28	Readings: Lewis, ch. 24–31 (pp. 306–396)
Tuesday July 29	Readings: Lewis, ch. 32–39 (pp. 396–471)
Wednesday July 30	Prepare for Final Exam
Thursday July 31	Final Exam