

SOCY464: Military Sociology

Fall 2011

University of Maryland

Department of Sociology

MW 2-3:15, ASY3203

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II. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE

This course uses a sociological approach to the study of armed forces and their relation to society. We will use sociological theories, concepts, and empirical research to investigate the military as a social institution where people, other institutions, societies, and cultures intersect. These intersections and the tensions and conflict that often arise from them are the basis of this course. This course will be run as a seminar; active participation in discussions (online, in writing, and in class) is required and there will be a good deal of work involved in this upper-level course. Although the subject of the military is at the forefront of current events, this course examines past events and policies as well as current ones to help us understand the forces shaping the contemporary military, and anticipate its likely future. As a word of caution: the subject can provoke deep-seated feelings, emotions, and opinions. You must treat each other with respect, civility, and an open-mind. I expect the course material to challenge your assumptions, no matter what your political views or connection to the military. This is neither an anti-war class, nor a jingoistic celebration of military superiority. We will be engaging with important ideas, not all of which you agree with. Any opinion you might hold (positive or negative) about issues in the course **MUST** be debated and discussed in relation to theories, concepts, and evidence from scholarly sources. The overarching goal of this course is that you gain a balanced understanding of the military in terms of who serves and why, under what conditions, and with what consequence to themselves, their families, and society. I look forward to a lively and engaging semester talking about a subject that is incredibly timely and newsworthy.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE ARE:

1. To understand and explain the relationship between armed forces and society in the past and present and to suggest possible forms of these relationships in the future.
2. To use sociological ideas and principles to analyze current challenges facing military organizations.
3. To have a working knowledge of the military structures in the U.S so that you may be an informed citizen and/or leader.
4. Communicate effectively the above in writing and discussion by doing the following:
 - a. ANALYZE problems using sociological concepts
 - b. EVALUATE the strengths and weaknesses of various arguments
 - c. HYPOTHESIZE the consequences of a major change in military organization or policy on the basis of concepts and prior evidence.

PREREQUISITE: 6 credits of sociology or permission of department. Students taking this course should be familiar with basic sociological concepts, as expected after taking 2 courses in sociology. Students are expected to have regular access to a computer, access to and regular use of Blackboard/ELMS, regular access to the email account used for official UMD communications, as this address will be used for the course distribution list.

IMPORTANT DATES (MAJOR GRADED EVENTS): **MIDTERM EXAMINATION:** Wednesday Oct 26, 2-3:15,
FINAL EXAMINATION: Monday, Dec 19 1:30pm-3:30pm

III. COURSE MATERIALS

There are no required textbooks. All required readings will be made available on the course Blackboard/ELMS site. They will be available to you for printing at your own expense. All registered students should automatically be provided access to the course through ELMS.

IV. OUTLINE OF THE INFORMATION TO BE COVERED IN THE COURSE

Exam dates are inflexible, though I reserve the right to adjust the schedule as needed. Any adjustments to the schedule will be announced in class and on ELMS and/or email. A more detailed course schedule will be available on the ELMS site.

Intro (Ch. 1) 1 day
Military organization 101 approx 2 days
Civil-military relations approx 2 days
Power elite and M-I-C approx 2 days
Militarization of society approx 2 days
Why do people volunteer? The I/O thesis approx 2 days
What happens when they don't? The Draft approx 2 days
Mid-term Exam **Oct 26**
Socialization in a Total Institution 2 days
"In the rear with the gear":Military Families 2 days
Diversity in the Military approx 4 days
Life After the Military approx 2 days
Those Who Served-Veteran policies approx 2 days
Final Exam **Dec 19**

V. HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

There may be only a few short homework assignments in this course, as well as two short papers. All work to be submitted in class is due no later than five minutes before the class period begins. Assignments will be accepted via email at least one hour before the start of class including students who are ill or are away. Any student who does not turn in an assignment by the time specified will be given a zero points for the assignment.

VI. MID TERMS AND FINAL EXAM INFORMATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Exams will cover all previously untested material in the course, including readings, lectures/presentations, and films. Exams will consist of some short answers including multiple choice or true/false, short response questions and essays. They will be closed book and closed notes. I will hold a review session in which the class will brainstorm good questions for the exam, and these questions will comprise part of the questions on the exam.

On exam day, students should arrive to class with no more in their hands than UM Student I.D., paper and pencil. If students must bring items to class, students must deposit items in a box at the front of the class. Student will receive a zero on the exam if during the exam a student is caught with anything more than a writing implement and paper. **Absence from the midterm or final exam will require a medical excuse from the Health Center or a medical doctor; a self-signed note is not acceptable.** I will assign seats for the exam, and no student will be allowed to take the exam if arriving more than 5 minutes late. Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. Students are expected to take the final exam during the final examination time slot assigned by the registrar.

VII. PAPERS

Each of you will write two short response papers, around 4-5 pages over the course of the semester, but not all will be due on the same date.. Each of you will be randomly assigned to one of six groups, and each week, one of these groups will have their papers due, and will be responsible for posting their papers online to stimulate thought ahead of the class discussion. To do this, I'll create a group blog for each group on ELMS. Each week (beginning after the first two weeks of the class), the members of one group will be assigned to write a short response paper to the week's readings/topic. This essay will be posted in your group's blog. You will be responsible for one of these in the first half, and one in the second half of the course (before and after the midterm). These short papers should be written as a formal paper, even though they will be posted online. I will distribute a rubric I use to evaluate these papers to assist you in writing your paper in class. I will also provide more detailed guidance on these

papers in a separate document, to be distributed after class begins.

Procedurally, each member of the group writing in a given week will have to create a blog entry in your group blog that connects the ideas of that week's readings and reflects on them critically. You should also raise one or two questions for the class to consider and possibly discuss in class (we may not be able to get to all questions in our short meeting time). You may also want to connect the course material to something happening in the world (like find a news story that relates to the week's material as an example and discuss how our class material relates or informs the story). Your papers should probably be at least 4-5 pages, including a short summary of the main point of the readings, but this should not be more than half the length of the paper. **Blog postings should be completed by 6pm the evening before the week's discussion and a paper copy should be handed in at the beginning of class. After 6pm your paper is considered late and you will have a full grade deducted if you post late, but hand in a paper copy on time.** (Discussions will typically be held on Wednesday unless otherwise notified). Papers are major graded events and require a medical excuse from the Health Center or a medical doctor if missed. Papers not turned in on the due date will not be accepted and you will be given a score of 0. The lateness penalty of one grade off applies only to a failure to post your paper online by 6pm the night before class.

Please use the American Sociological Association citation style in your papers (parenthetical citation style in text, followed by a list of cited references.) Please use 12 point, double spaced, Times New Roman font. Part of your grade will evaluate grammar, spelling and overall attention to the usual important details in writing. Please spell-check your paper and read it out loud to identify awkward sentences.

VIII GRADE DETERMINATION FOR COURSE

Grading reflects your grasp of the material. Grades are not settled by diplomacy or negotiation.

FINAL GRADES WILL BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

Assignment	Point value
Participation and homework/quizzes	200
Midterm exam	250
Final exam	250
Short papers	300 (2x150)
TOTAL	1000

I use a standard grading scheme:

Grade	Percent
A-, A, A+	900+ points (900-929.9, 930-969.9, 970-1000)
B-, B, B+	800-899.9 points (800-829.9, 830-869.9, 870-899.9)
C-, C, C+	700-799.9 points (700-729.9, 730-769.9, 770-799.9)
D-, D, D+	600-699.9 points (600-629.9, 630-669.9, 670-699.9)
F	Below 600 points

Failure to perform passing work in any single area will likely compromise your final course grade.

EXTRA CREDIT: There may be occasional opportunities for extra credit including points on the exams for answering optional questions, for attending events I announce in class, and for in class activities as I see fit, but I won't entertain proposals from individual students on extra credit opportunities (i.e. don't ask me how you can dig yourself out of a poor grade at the end of the semester.) I do not guarantee any extra credit will be available; it is intended as an extra reward for attention paid to something I feel is important but perhaps beyond the scope of the class as designed. Any extra credit opportunity will be

made equally available to all class members.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is a necessary but not sufficient condition for passing this course. It is factored into your grade in two ways: if you miss class you obviously cannot get points for participation. I also use attendance to make decisions on borderline grades; I will not round up at all if you have more than 2 absences (i.e. a 59.87 will be an F).

GRADE APPEALS: If you feel I have made an error in grading your work, you must submit a written appeal, documenting the purported error, and explaining how I was incorrect within a week of when you received the grade. In reviewing my grading, any mistakes, including those in your favor may be corrected.

IX. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASS

You are expected to attend all lectures and complete all assigned readings. You will be tested on material presented in class, in handouts (including the syllabus), in films viewed, or in assigned readings. Expect to spend a considerable amount of time outside of class to do the readings and complete the homework or assignments. And expect that any homework assigned may take you several hours to complete.

If you are having difficulty in this course, seek help before it is too late. I am happy to answer questions, clarify points, and help you find additional resources. In this course you **MUST** attend class regularly and you must have read and processed material from the text **BEFORE** lecture or discussion to be successful. Lecture and discussion time presumes basic familiarity with the assigned materials, as I do not intend to repeat or replicate those items, rather to expand on them in class.

In this class, students may bring their laptop to class to take notes only. If a student is found to be using a laptop for any other reason than taking notes, then, that student will lose the privilege of bringing their computer to class. All technological devices, except a laptop computer are prohibited in this class including MP3 devices, smart phones, phones, calculators, gaming devices, etc. If these devices are seen and/or used during the class, the student will be asked to leave the class immediately. Please turn them off during class so as to avoid disturbing the class. If these devices are seen and/or used during an exam, the exam will be collected from the student and the student will no longer be allowed to continue taking the exam. The exam score will be noted as 0. Exams will begin promptly at the start of class.

Make-up exams will only be offered for official excused absences, and should be scheduled to take place immediately upon return to classes.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to demonstrate civility with one another, class guests, teaching assistants, or me will be subject to referral to the Office of Student Conduct or to the University Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

PARTICIPATION: Class discussion will be an important part of this course, and participation is a major component of your grade. Participation will be evaluated by your level of participation in class discussions (asking and responding to questions in class, which I'll note daily) and from your online participation on ELMS. How does the online participation work? It is related to your short paper writing discussed earlier. You are expected to read and comment on at least one response paper before class. You will be allowed 3 "off" weeks from commenting-to be used at your discretion. Comments should be substantive and thoughtful and reflect that you have read and thought about the material before class (not just "good point", or "I disagree"). Feel free to express a different perspective than the author. This should give you all a good starting point for discussions in class (a way to prime the pump.) **All** students are expected to review the blogs and come prepared to discuss further in-class whether or not you take your pass that week. (NOTE: I can see under the hood of Blackboard how

many unique individuals view these things so it's clear to me if you don't look at the items on ELMS). Your participation grade comes from both these online comments (doing them when assigned and the level of intellectual engagement with the material expressed in them) and from your participation in class discussion. **Commenters should post their comments by NOON the day of the discussion class.** Each week's blog commenting effort is worth 10 points. Thus, nearly half of your participation grade comes from this source. The rest of the participation/HW points come from a few assignments due in class and an overall evaluation of your in-class participation, which includes attendance as a pre-requisite for participation.

COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR: Office hours are times when I am guaranteed to be available (barring an emergency). If you have a scheduling conflict during my office hours I can meet with you at another time by appointment. Please know that I have other non-teaching obligations to the Sociology department and UMD and am not always available at your convenience. I presume we are all members of the electronic age. I use ELMS and a course distribution list as primary means of disseminating course information. Both rely on your official UMD email account, thus you should check whatever that is regularly and ensure it is functioning. If you do not get emails sent to the course reflector, you need to ensure UMD is using your preferred email address. I prefer emails over phone calls. If something regarding this course is decided over the phone or in-person, send me an email so that I can confirm the details with you; we all know sometimes two participants in a conversation walk away with different views on what was concluded. **I cannot guarantee that I will receive or respond to e-mails outside of regular business hours.** I strive to communicate with students in a professional and respectful manner, and expect the same in return. Like you all, I send and receive hundreds of email and text messages, tweets, etc... but the professor-student interaction is not a casual one. I expect that you will communicate with me in a manner that respects the formal roles we each hold. Please compose emails which are well written, grammatically correct, spell checked, and convey an appropriate tone.

X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please recall the Honor Pledge at (<http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code>). You will be asked to write out the honor pledge, sign and date, before every exam and before a paper is due. It is noted below. I will refer students to the Student Honor Council if a student violates the Code of Academic Integrity. XF is the usual penalty given by the Student Honor Council for a student found in violation of the Code of Academic Integrity

"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/paper/examination."

XI. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Service (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form which has been updated for the Fall 2011 semester. Only written DSS documentation of the accommodation will be considered and I am only legally allowed to accommodate a disability registered through DSS. This form must be presented to me no later than September 30, 2011. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who provide me with documentation which has not been reviewed and approved by UM's DSS Office after September 30, 2011.

XII. MEDICAL EXCUSES

In my class, you (student) or a guardian must email me (preferred) or call me PRIOR to class to inform me that you will not be in attendance due to illness or injury thus will miss the class deadline. On the very next class session that you are in attendance, you must present me with a self-signed note for missing one single lecture/recitation/laboratory. This note must include the date of illness and a statement that the information you have provided is true. You must also state that if your absence is found to be false, you understand that you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. The statement must be signed and dated. Do understand that **only one self-signed note for one absence will be allowed.** For non-consecutive absences or a major assignment/exam (either of the two papers

and the two exams), I will require a Health Center or medical doctor's health excuse. If you do not inform me or if you do not present me with timely documentation, 0 points will be given to you for class participation/homework/exam/paper. Note: In the case that you are unable to get a written medical excuse, you may ask your provider for a copy of your medical notes for the specific visit(s) in question.

XIII. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

By September 14, 2011, students must provide me, in writing, a request for a make-up exam for an exam date on this syllabus that you are unable to make due to a specific religious observance (you must specify the event) on a specific date. Please refer to the Online Catalog Policy on Religious Observance. Please remember that accommodations are NOT made for travel to and from the religious observance.

XIV. COPYRIGHT

Any materials I provide you with, including my lectures, powerpoints, course assignments and handouts are protected by copyright and are not to be distributed outside the course (i.e. you are in violation of the law should you provide them to any sharing website, or third party who might distribute them without my explicit permission.)

XV. COURSE EVALUATION

I take your course evaluation very seriously. Each year I revise my syllabus, course assignments and exams based on the feedback I receive on the course evaluation. I am not only interested in the scores that you give this class but I am also very interested in the specific comments you have about this course. I want to encourage each student in this class to evaluate not only my class but all of your classes. One important campus-wide evaluation is the online evaluation at the end of the semester. **CourseEvalUM** will be open to students to complete their evaluation for Fall 2011 courses on Tuesday, November 29, 2011. Students can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete their evaluations.

XVI. UNIVERSITY EMERGENCY CLOSING

In the event that the University is closed for an emergency or extended period of time, I will communicate to you via email or phone to indicate schedule adjustments, including rescheduling of examinations and assignments due to inclement weather and campus emergencies. Official closures and delays are announced on the campus website <http://www.umd.edu>. The snow phone line is 301-405-SNOW, as well as local radio and TV stations.

XVII. FALL 2011 IMPORTANT DATES

Wed, Aug. 31	First Day of Classes
Mon, Sept. 5	Labor Day-Campus Closed
Wed, Sept. 14	Drop/Add Dates for Undergrads, <i>(End of Schedule Adjustment)</i>
Wed, Sept. 28 (sunset) to Fri, Sept 30 (nightfall)	Rosh Hashanah
Fri, Oct. 7 (sunset) to Sat, Oct. 8 (nightfall)	Yom Kippur
Thurs, Oct. 13 by 9 P.M.	Early Warning Grades Are Due
Wed, Oct 26, 2-3:15	MIDTERM EXAM (documentation req. for absence)
Wed, Nov. 9	Last Day for a student to drop one course with a "W"
Thurs, Nov. 24-Sun, Nov. 27	Thanksgiving Break
Tues, November 30 to Wed, Dec. 14	Course EValUM Open
Tues, Dec. 13	Last day of Fall classes (Last day to Withdraw)
Thurs, Dec 15 to Wed, Dec. 21	Final Exams
Mon, Dec 19, 1:30-3:30	FINAL EXAM, SOCY464 (documentation req. for absence)
Wed, Dec. 21- Thurs, Dec. 22	University and College Commencement Ceremonies
Thurs, Dec. 22 at 4 PM	Deadline for Grades Being Posted
Sat, Dec. 24 to Mon, Jan. 2 2012	Holiday Break-Campus Closed