

Self in Society
 Professor Chambliss
 Teaching Assistant: Michelle Romano
 Fall, 2011

“Familiar things happen, and [people] don’t bother with them. It requires a very unusual mind to undertake an analysis of the obvious.” —

Alfred North Whitehead

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topics and Readings</u>
1	F Aug 26	Phenomenology and the World as Taken-for-granted
2	W Aug 31 F Sept 2	Sartre, “Existentialism”; and Merleau-Ponty, “Preface” to <u>Phenomenology of Perception</u> (handout) The Definition of the Situation
3	W Sept 7 F Sept 9	Routinization: Chambliss, Chapters 1-2 of <u>Beyond Caring</u> (handout) The Self
4	W Sept 14 F Sept 16	Goffman, “On Face Work,” in <u>IR</u> . The Self, part 2: The Body
5	W Sept 21 F Sept 23	Sacks, selection from <u>Man/Wife</u> : Preface, Introduction, Man Who Mistook . . . , Lost Mariner, Disembodied Lady, Witty Ticky Ray, Yes Father – Sister, Reminiscence, Dog Beneath the Skin, Rebecca. Bad Faith
6	W Sept 28 F Sept 30	Sartre, “Patterns of Bad Faith” (handout) Others
7	W Oct 5 F Oct 7	Sartre, <u>Anti-Semite and Jew</u> ; exam handed out Open
8	W Oct 12 F Oct 14	Midterm Exam No class—Fall Recess
9	W Oct 19 F Oct 21	Interaction; Collins, “The Sociology of God” (handout) Movie: “Triumph of the Will”
10	W Oct 26 F Oct 28	Interaction, continued; Collins, section from <u>Interaction Ritual Chains</u> (handout) Goffman, “Deference and Demeanor,” in <u>IR</u>
11	W Nov 2 F Nov 4	The Body and Space Merleau-Ponty, pp. 139-147 in <u>Phenomenology of Perception</u>

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topics and Readings</u>
12	W Nov 9 F Nov 11	Dreyfus, <u>On the Internet</u> , 2 nd edition (entire) Open
13	W Nov 16 F Nov 18	Sociality Berger and Luckmann, TBA
Thanksgiving Break		
14	W Nov 30 F Dec 2	Berger and Luckmann, TBA, cont. Berger and Luckmann, TBA, cont.
15	W Dec 7 F Dec 9	Conclusion Review
16	Dec 12 – 16	Finals Week (Exam scheduled for Wednesday, Dec 14, from 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.)

Comments:

- (1) This is a course in existential phenomenology (a kind of philosophy) as applied to everyday social life. I'm trying to teach a certain way of looking at the world—a “perspective.” The exams will be designed to measure how well you understand that perspective.
- (2) The readings are either from books available in the bookstore or from handouts you will be given in class; all books are paperback. The books used are Sartre, Existentialism and Human Emotions; Sartre, Anti-Semite and Jew; Oliver Sacks, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat; Erving Goffman, Interaction Ritual; Peter C. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality; and Hubert L. Dreyfus, On the Internet, 2nd ed., Routledge: 2009. The readings only loosely fit the topic for any given week, but over the semester you will find that taken together they do mesh with the lecture material. I suggest that you do the reading before the first class of the assigned week, since I may refer to them.
- (3) Each week you will write up one “booknote,” to be explained in class. You must submit at least 8 of these, at least 3 of which will be graded. Booknotes must be submitted at the end of each class when readings are assigned (Wednesdays typically).
- (4) Your course grade will be 1/3 midterm exam, 1/3 final exam, 1/3 booknotes. Exams are take-home.
- (5) This is a “thinking” course, not an information course. To get much from it, you will really need to think about the ideas and wrestle with the material, some which is quite challenging. But more than any other course I have taught in the past 30 years, this course (students and alumni say) really can change how you see the world and your own life in it.