SOC 1401 Social Research: A Narrative Approach Fall 2024
Course Syllabus

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Course Information

	Instructor:	Professor Yumei Li
Credit Hours: 3	Email:	yumei.li@scupi.cn
	Office:	N424, SCUPI New Building
	Tel (Main Office):	28-6259-6919
	Office hours:	Tu & W 12:00 PM- 5 PM
		& other times by appointment
Room: 4-202	Prerequisites:	ENGCMP200

To be a convincing "I-witness," one must, so it seems, first become a convincing "I."
--Clifford Geertz

Some of my impulse to be a writer comes from that feeling that I want to write myself into existence. I want to write the worlds that I've lived in, and the people I've been in the world with, into existence …
— Danzy Senna

I write because I don't know what I think until I read what I say.
— Flannery O'Connor

REQUIRED TEXTS

Course pack prepared by the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
We as humans have always wondered why and how our social world operates in particular ways. You might have asked yourself: How do college students choose their majors? How do college students adapt to their college life? Why do engineering classes attract more men than women? How do students benefit from a college education? Why do people choose to live and work at a specific place? In the end, you might sit down and ask yourself: Why am I (not) interested in these questions? What do I gain from thinking about these questions? And what do I learn from dealing with my surroundings the way I am doing?

This class will adopt a narrative approach to exploring such questions about the social world. In an interactive classroom learning environment, students will be introduced to the historical development of narrative inquiry and evaluate a variety of case studies in social sciences. Students will design and implement a narrative research project addressing a challenge currently encountered in the world of practice. Broadly, this class will: (1) introduce students to ideas about what social research is and the narrative inquiry used to study the social world; (2) guide students to evaluate specific case studies in social sciences and understand the purpose of social research; (3) direct students in using a narrative approach to examining real-world social problems; (4) help students develop critical thinking, public presentation, and team-work skills.

COURSE OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1) work as a team to examine the social world;
2) understand narrative approaches to the social world;
3) evaluate and critique social research;
4) develop a research question and plan for development;
5) learn about ways to collect and analyze data;
6) give a public presentation on a social issue or question;
7) compose narrative research projects following proper style guides.

CLASS ASSESSMENT and GRADING

There are no exams or quizzes in this course. This course is project-based and will require a significant commitment of your time. This course includes a combination of readings, writings, in-class discussions, and hands-on experiences. The following three components are vital to the successful completion of this course, and they figure into assessments and grades. Details of the assignments will be uploaded to the Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENT 1 Works-in-progress	Proposal with required elements	20%
ASSIGNMENT 2 Project Presentation	A paper presentation on students' final research projects.	10%
ASSIGNMENT 3 Final Project	A full-fledged narrative research paper	50%
ASSIGNMENT 4 Class Participation and Routine Writing	Attendance, in-class readings and discussions, and quality of homework.	20%
Total*		100%
*Student participation is key to success in this class. Each unexcused absence will lead to a deduction of 3 points or half a letter grade from their final grade. Students with three absences will fail the course.		

Tentative Schedule
(subject to change based on the needs of the class at the instructor's discretion)

Week 1 (9/2)   **Introduction to the course; what is social research?**
Discussion of syllabus, reading materials, course requirements, and grading policy.
What is social research?

Week 2 (9/9)   **Why Narrative**
Historical development of narrative approaches to understanding society

Week 3 (9/16)   **Research ethics and politics**

How do we behave ethically as researchers? What are the rules that we must observe as ethical researchers? What are the possible ethical dilemmas in social scientific research?
Homework 1

Week 4 (9/23)   **Narrating the self**
                      Positionality in narrative research
                       Voice as attitude and as character…

Week 5 (9/30)   National Day Holiday (No class)

Week 6 (10/8)   **Participatory observation**
                      How to do field observations?
                      Assignment 1 Due

Week 7 (10/14)   **Interviewing and focus group**

Week 8 (10/21)   **Documents as sources of data**

                      Homework 2

Week 9 (10/28)   **Narrative analysis**
                      Coding and thematic analysis

Week 10 (11/4)   **Narrative analysis Cont'd**
                      Structural analysis

Week 11 (11/11)   **Narrative analysis Cont'd**
                      Interactional and performative analysis
                      Homework 3

Week 12 (11/18)   **Discuss your findings**

PART III PRESENTING YOUR RESEARCH PROJECTS

Week 13 (11/25)   **Research Paper Presentation**
                      Presenting your research

Week 14 (12/2)   **Research Paper Presentation**
                      Presenting your research

Week 15 (12/9)   **Research Paper Workshop**

Week 16 (12/16)   **Wrap up the course**
                      Final Research Paper Due

Use of Machine Translation and Other Online Tools

While students are encouraged to use dictionaries and other language resources, they should not rely on machine translators or other AI tools to generate large sections of text. Papers must be written in English. Any paper that is written in Chinese and then processed through an online translator will be considered unacceptable.

A Note Concerning Plagiarism: The class adopts a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism. You should never copy the words of another and present those words as your own work. All sources cited must be acknowledged. You must not get help from any outside sources to do your work without the teacher's permission. The penalty for plagiarism is failing the class.

If an instructor believes that a paper was written using machine translation or other AI tools, the instructor reserves the right to ask the student to re-write (potentially with a different topic) or give an alternative assignment, which may include a timed-writing essay assignment. Until the re-write is submitted the student will have an F for the assignment.

Student Use of Electronic Technology Policy:
Students must use electronic technology (including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and iPads) in appropriate ways during classes. <u>Out of respect, cell phones should generally be turned off or on silent and stored out of sight. They should not be used during classroom activities unless the instructor has given permission.</u> Electronic devices are forbidden during quizzes, tests or other in-class graded assignments, unless the instructor has given permission.
Technology use in this class is meant to improve the learning environment for all students. Please be respectful of your instructor and classmates and use the technology appropriately.
If you have questions about what this means, please talk to your individual instructor.

Recording:
To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may NOT record classroom lectures, discussions, and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly recorded in advance can be used solely for the student's own private study.

Make-up Policy for Missed Assignments and Tests:
Students are responsible for the assignments in their classes. Assignments include in-class activities, quizzes, tests, homework, and any other work related to classes.
- If you are absent from class, you should try to contact one of the students in your class to find out what work was missed.
- If you cannot find out from another student about what work you have missed, when you return to class you must talk to your instructors about the missed work and if/when you can make up the work. You are responsible for talking to your teacher; your teacher is not responsible for reminding you about missed work.
- If you are absent from class on the due date of an assignment, you must hand in the assignment and be prepared to make up tests the day that you return to class or on a date decided with your teacher.
- If you know you will be absent, talk to your teacher before you leave or email your teacher to find out about the work that you will miss while you are away.
- If you have not been absent from class and you want to hand in an assignment late, you must first discuss the reason with your teacher before or on the due date. Do not assume that your teacher will accept late assignments. Also, you may lose points for late work based on teacher discretion.
- If you and your teacher arrange to meet so that you can make up an assignment and you miss that meeting, you may receive a "0" for that assignment.

SCUPI Honor Code:

Students in this course must follow the SCUPI Honor Code. This includes:

- must not get help from anyone to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.
- must not get help from any outside sources to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.
- must not copy the words of another and present those words as his/her own work.

Note: **Using AI tools to generate an essay or large sections of text will result in an F**.

Participating in these activities can result in an F and referral to university officials for academic integrity violations.

Participation:
Active participation is crucial for language learning. Participating in class makes you an engaged learner of English. In this class, participation means:

- arriving to class on time
- staying on task (including appropriate use of technology)
- actively listening to your classmates and teacher when they speak in class
- asking questions

- bringing all class materials

- attending class regularly
- completing all homework on time

- actively and constructively participating in class activities

- being prepared to answer questions
- using only English in class

Student Responsibility
For students, it is your responsibility to keep track of your assignments, the due dates as well as additional information announced by the instructor. It is also your responsibility to ask the instructor if you need clarification.

This syllabus is a contract between you and the instructor. It is the first place you should look for answers to your questions about course requirements, expectations, and policies. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to adhere to the requirements, expectations and policies outlined in this syllabus, including sections on the SCUPI Honor Code. Students who fail to submit their work on time or miss more than 3 classes could receive a failing grade for the course.