

Sociology 304. Social Networks and Social Processes
Fall 2006

Meets: TR 10:10 – 11:25
Uris G90

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This course examines social networks --- how people are related to each other through ties like friendship, cooperation, and influence. We focus on regularities like homophily (liking people who are like yourself) and structural balance (liking people who like who you like), and on social processes based on networks like group formation, segregation, and the spread of innovations.

The class makes use of the computer program UCINET and several stand-alone routines to analyze and simulate social behavior. No specific background in mathematics or computing is required, though such background can be put to good use.

Coursework includes class participation, two midterms, and a seminar paper. Each is worth 25% of your grade. (Class participation includes your contribution to class discussion, paper presentation, and exercises.) The paper is due December 9.

Readings:

Granovetter, Mark S. **Getting a Job**. University of Chicago: 1995 (2nd edition.)

Putnam, Robert. **Bowling Alone**. Simon & Schuster: 2000.

Scott, John. **Social Network Analysis**. Sage Publications: 1991.

Additional readings will be distributed in class or made available electronically.

Schedule of Classes

Aug 24 **Introduction**

Reading: Scott, Ch 1-2

Aug 29-31 **The Social Fabric**

Reading: Putnam, Chapters 1-3, 6, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24.

Sept 5-7 **Measuring social relations**

Reading: Scott, Chapter 3.
Exercise 1 handed out (Tuesday).

Sept 12-14 **Dyads**

Reading: Scott, Chapter 4.
Exercise 1 due (Thursday)

Sept 19-21 **Triads**

Reading: Scott, pp. 8-16.
Exercise 2 due (Thursday).

Sept 26-28 **Centrality and power**

Reading: Scott, Chapter 5
Exercise 3 due (Thursday).

Oct 3-5 **Network cognition**

Exercise 4 due (Thursday)

Oct 12 **MIDTERM 1**

Oct 17-19 **Homophily and segregation**

Reading: Schelling, Thomas C. "Models of segregation." *American Economic Review* 59 (1969): 488-93.

Oct 24-26 **Groups**

Reading: Scott, chapter 6.

Oct 31- Nov 2 **Small Worlds**

Watts, Duncan J. and Steven H. Strogatz, "Collective dynamics of 'small-world' networks." *Nature* 393 (1998): 440-442.

Nov 7-9 **Search**

Reading: Granovetter, Introduction and Part I.

Thursday: no class, attend a session of the Cornell Workshop on Search and Diffusion on Networks (Nov 8-11)

Nov 14-16 **Diffusion**

Reading: David Strang and Michael W. Macy, "In search of excellence: fads, success stories, and adaptive emulation." *American Journal of Sociology* 107 (2001): 147-82.

Nov 21 **MIDTERM 2**

Nov 28-30 **Presentations of class papers**