

Michigan State University
Syllabus for SOC 316: Youth and Society
Summer 2017

Instructor

Samuel C. Mindes, MA, ABD
Department of Sociology
Michigan State University

Email: mindessa@msu.edu
Website: samuelcmindes.com
Virtual Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:

This course will focus on youth and social issues. We will examine the interactions and behavioral changes that occur among youth during adolescent development in reference to biological, social, and cultural conditions. We will focus on issues in youth studies such as subcultures, risk, crime and deviance, family issues, identity, and education. This course will investigate how youths transition into adults and how youth experience shapes worldviews and life trajectories.

We will explore these topics through Andy Furlong's book *Youth Studies: An Introduction*, which provides excellent readings, data exploration, and case studies on relevant subjects. We will also engage in discussions on key and controversial issues through the book *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Adolescence*. Focusing on numerous issues, this book is formatted in a debate style, which allows readers to gain a perspective from both sides of the question. Through these two texts, you will become more knowledgeable about youth studies and develop an informed opinion on the primary questions relating to the study of youth and adolescence in society today.

Required Texts:

Andy Furlong. 2012. *Youth Studies: And Introduction*. Routledge.
Toni Serafini, B. J. Rye, Maureen Drysdale. 2012. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Adolescence, Third Edition*. Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

Select one of the following (see Critical Book Review below):

Elizabeth A. Armstrong & Laura T. Hamilton. 2013. *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality*. Harvard University Press.
Michael Kimmel. 2008. *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*. Harper Collins.
Amy T. Schalet. 2009. *Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex*. University of Chicago Press.

*Additional course readings, handouts and materials will be distributed by the instructor.

Objectives:

The Department of Sociology at Michigan State University has developed a set of Curricular Learning Outcomes that they aim to instill in students through the sociology courses. A number of those are central to the development of this course. Specifically, through this course, students will be better able to:

Curricular Learning Outcomes	Assessment tool
1. define and utilize key sociological concepts	Weekly quizzes and discussions
2. explain, evaluate, and apply relevant sociological theories	Weekly discussions
3. translate the findings and implications of a sociological study to laypeople	
4. communicate research effectively	
5. demonstrate general methodological skills	Data Collection Portfolio
6. demonstrate critical reading skills	Critical Book Review

Course Expectations:

- 1. Readings:** Each week there will be readings assigned from the textbooks. Readings are listed in the course schedule found on this syllabus. Supplemental readings from academic journals and news articles and occasional videos may be required as well; these will be included on the D2L course page. You are expected to have completed all of the readings listed for each week.
- 2. Weekly Quizzes (25% of final grade):** Each week you will need to complete a weekly quiz over the readings. There are six weekly quizzes, each worth 20 points. They will become available on Monday at 8am and need to be completed by 8pm ET on Sundays. Quizzes are located on the D2L course page under the assessments tab and the weekly folders. You may use notes, books, readings, and any other materials for the quizzes, but these are to be completed alone. They will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and long answer questions. Quizzes will be timed, though you should have plenty of time to complete the assignment. When the time runs out, the assignment will be submitted automatically. You may only complete each quiz once.
- 3. Discussion Boards (25% of final grade):** At least six times per week, you are required to post to the discussion board. With any class, discussion is an important part of the learning process; online classes are no exception to this. Discussions are located on the D2L course page under the communication tab and the weekly folders. Discussions are based on the *Taking Sides* issues, which are set up in a debate format. To make discussions easier, you may be assigned to a discussion group.
 - Post 1 (by 5pm ET on Wednesday):** Pick the “YES” or the “NO” side of the argument to support (this does not necessarily have to be your own opinion). However, you need to read *both sides* of the issue to have an informed opinion and debate. You must post an original response before responding to other threads. This post should be about 250 words. Please include the word “YES” or “NO” in the title of your original post.
 - Post 2 (by 5pm ET on Friday):** Respond to someone who took the opposite side with where you find flaws in their position and offer your own points. This post should be about 150 words.
 - Post 3 (by 5pm ET on Friday):** Respond to someone who took the same side as you, adding additional evidence to support their argument. Your response should be about 150 words.
 - Posts 4, 5, and 6 (by 10pm ET on Sunday):** You then need to complete three additional response posts on either side of the debate. You may (and are encouraged to) respond to comments on your original post and subsequent posts. There is no minimum or maximum length for these posts, but they must be substantial contributions to the discussion (one or two sentences is not enough). These posts must be at **level 3 or higher**, meaning they are in response to response posts, like posts 2 and 3 explained above.
- 4. Data Collection Project (25% of final grade):** Throughout the first four weeks of the course, students will need to develop a short project which involves gathering two types of data used in sociological studies: qualitative and quantitative. It is important to be familiar with both types of data to develop informed opinions about the world around us. In completing this project you will have the opportunity to collect data relating to youth issues using these two methods and make some simple conclusions based on what you observed. More information about the expectations and format for the Data Collection Project is available on the D2L course page. This project will be due in the fifth week of the course.
- 5. Critical Book Review (25% of final grade):** You will need to write a 2,000- to 2,500-word critical book review of one of the following books: Armstrong and Hamilton’s *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality*, Kimmel’s *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*, or Schalet’s *Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex*. Each of these books is an excellent reading on youth and society, each with its own particular topic. You will need to select one of these books to read

and critically analyze keeping in mind the lectures, discussions, and readings from the semester. You need to let me know via email by May 29 which book you plan to read and critically review. More information about the expectations and format for the critical book review is available on the D2L course page. Though this assignment is not due until the end of the course, you should begin to read and review the book throughout the semester.

Technical Requirements:

The following technical requirements are necessary to successfully complete this course:

- Have ready access to the internet/email (broadband access preferred)
- Have and know the basics of Microsoft Word or another word processor
- Have Flash software installed and operating correctly
- Know the D2L course management software system

You MUST contact the D2L help desk toll free at (800) 500-1554 or locally at (517) 355-2345 for assistance or troubleshooting.

Grade Breakdown:

Weekly Quizzes (6 total)	120
Discussion Board Participation	120
Data Collection Project	120
Critical Book Review	120
Total	480 points

Grading Scale:

446 – 480 points	4.0	350 – 373 points	2.0
422 – 445 points	3.5	326 – 349 points	1.5
398 – 421 points	3.0	288 – 325 points	1.0
374 – 397 points	2.5	0 – 287 points	0.0

Academic Honesty:

Michigan State University adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.00, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in the Spartan Life website: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu>. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive a 0.0 in the course.

The Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge

“As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do.”

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is defined as presenting another’s work or ideas as one’s own. You are expected to do your own work on all assignments. Students who plagiarize will receive a 0.0 in the course.

Turnitin.com:

Consistent with MSU’s efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool called Turnitin to compare a student’s work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student’s work with an extensive database of prior publications and

papers, providing links to possible matches and a "similarity score." The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool.

Students should submit papers to Turnitin Dropboxes without identifying information included in the paper (e.g., name or student number), the system will automatically show this information to faculty in your course when viewing the submission, but the information will not be retained by Turnitin.

Students are reminded that they may submit assignments to Turnitin before final submission to check the similarity score.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Limits to Confidentiality:

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports will trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

Class Schedule and Assignments:

Calendar will change and be updated throughout the semester

Introduction

During the first week of the course, familiarize yourself with the D2L course page. Each week will have a folder and subfolders with lectures, reading requirements, supplemental readings, and assignments. Be sure that you feel comfortable navigating the site so when you near deadlines you are not running into problems.

You should find a Discussion Board (called "Questions about the Course") where you can post any problems you are having with the organization of the course website. Post your concerns here and I will read them and respond. This will allow you to see what problems others are having to see if a solution has been posted. You may also contact me (midnessa@msu.edu) with questions and concerns about the organization and requirements of the course. If you are having *technical problems* (not related to the organization of the course), contact the D2L help desk toll free at (800) 500-1554 or locally at (517) 355-2345 for assistance or troubleshooting.

Week 1: Introduction to Youth Studies

Monday May 15 – Sunday May 21

Readings:

Youth Studies, Ch. 1: Youth and the Life Course

Youth Studies, Ch. 2: Divisions in Youth

Taking Sides, Issue 16: Does Playing Violent Video Games Harm Adolescents?

Supplemental:

Stuff You Should Know – HowStuffWorks.com. "Do video games produce real-life violence?" May 29, 2012. (podcast, 32 minutes).

Assignments:

Complete the *Pre-Course Survey*

Introduce yourself on the *Discussion Board*

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, May 21 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 1 Quiz* by Sunday, May 21 at 8pm ET

Week 2: Education & Employment

Monday May 22 – Sunday May 28

Readings:

Youth Studies, Ch. 3: Education and Opportunity

Youth Studies, Ch. 4: Employment and Unemployment

Taking Sides, Issue 9: Do Reality TV Shows Portray Responsible Messages about Teen Pregnancy?

Supplemental:

All Things Considered – NPR. "Is '16 And Pregnant' an Effective Form of Birth Control?" January 13, 2014. (radio broadcast, 5 minutes)

Stateside – Michigan Radio. "Gender Inequality in the College Party Scene." March 24, 2014. (radio broadcast, 18 minutes).

Al Jazeera. "A Tale of Two Schools" (video, 4 minutes)

Assignments:

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, May 28 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 2 Quiz* by Sunday, May 28 at 8pm ET

Week 3: Relationships & Identity**Monday May 29 – Sunday June 4****Readings:**

Youth Studies, Ch. 5: Family, Friends and Living Arrangements

Youth Studies, Ch. 6: Identities

Taking Sides, Issue 7: Is “Coming Out” As a Sexual Minority (Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual) Earlier in Adolescence Detrimental to Psychological Well-Being?

Supplemental:

All Things Considered – NPR. “The New American Man Doesn’t Look Like His Father.” June 26, 2014. (radio broadcast, 8 minutes).

All Things Considered – NPR. “The Face of the Millennial Man, Sketched in Data.” July 17, 2014. (radio broadcast, 5 minutes).

Assignments:

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, June 4 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 3 Quiz* by Sunday, June 4 at 8pm ET

Week 4: Lifestyles & Wellbeing**Monday June 5 – Sunday June 11****Readings:**

Youth Studies, Ch. 7: Youth Cultures and Lifestyles

Youth Studies, Ch. 8: Health and Wellbeing

Taking Sides, Issue 2: Are Body Dissatisfaction and Its Outcomes of Equal Concern for Boys and Girls?

Supplemental:

Thinking Allowed – BBC Radio 4. “Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex – The Claims of Parenting.” December 7, 2011. (radio broadcast, first 11 minutes).

US News. “Do Dove and Axe Sell the Same Message?” April 18, 2013

Assignments:

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, June 11 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 4 Quiz* by Sunday, June 11 at 8pm ET

Week 5: Crime, Justice, & Politics**Monday June 12 – Sunday June 18****Readings:**

Youth Studies, Ch. 9: Crime and Justice

Youth Studies, Ch. 10: Citizenship and Political Engagement

Taking Sides, Issue 15: Are Boys Bigger Bullies than Girls—In Cyberspace?

Supplemental:

None

Assignments:

Data Collection Project due Friday, June 16 by 8pm ET (submit to the dropbox)

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, June 18 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 5 Quiz* by Sunday, June 18 at 8pm ET

Week 6: Global Perspectives**Monday June 19 – Sunday June 25****Readings:**

Youth Studies, Ch. 11: Beyond the First World

Youth Studies, Ch. 12: Working with Young People

Taking Sides, Issue 17: Are Social Networking Sites (SNSs), Such as Facebook, a Cause for Concern?

Supplemental:

Hvistendahl, M. (2011). Young and restless can be a volatile mix. *Science*, 333(6042), 552-554.

Assignments:

Complete *Discussion Board* requirement by Sunday, June 25 at 10pm ET; first post by 5pm ET on Wednesday

Complete *Week 6 Quiz* by Sunday, June 25 at 8pm ET

Week 7: Wrapping Up**Monday June 26 – Thursday June 29****Assignments:**

Critical Book Review due Tuesday, June 27 by 11pm ET (submit to the dropbox)

Complete the *Course Survey*