

POSC 480 Winter 2010

Directed Independent Study Course: “*Social Capital*”

Theme: To consider the development and use of the concept ‘*Social Capital*’ and its potential utility in better understanding the interrelations between society, democracy, and the state.

Key Questions: What *is* social capital? Can it be measured? Can a relation(s) between individuals, communities, and the state be explained through a social capital perspective? What are the social and political effects of ‘low social capital’? What causes low social capital? How, if at all, can it be increased in society? Is this desirable?

Objectives:

1. To expose the student to some of the relevant literature on the subjects of social capital and its corollaries.
2. To gain an understanding of social capital theory and its use in hypothesizing social and political relationships.
3. To meet weekly (in office) to review and discuss assigned readings and develop testable hypotheses.

Evaluation: Two research essays will be created. The first paper (approx. 10-12 pages) will outline and analyze the concept of social capital and the theoretical importance / usefulness of it as a model for political research. The second paper (approx. 12-15 pages) will choose a location (national, regional, or local) of which sufficient empirical data is available in order to apply a social capital approach and create an expository hypothesis.

Preliminary Reading List:

Robert Putnam. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community , (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

Barbara Arneil. Diverse Communities: The Problem with Social Capital. (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2006).

Social Capital: A Multifaceted Perspective. [electronic resource] World Bank, 2000.
(<http://proxy.ucfv.ca:2048/login?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ucfv/Doc?id=5007386>).

Nan Lin. Social Capital: An International Research Program. (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford U.P., 2008).

Rodney Hero. Racial Diversity and Social Capital: Equality and Community in America. (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2007).

James Jennings. Race, Neighbourhoods, and the Misuse of Social Capital. (Toronto: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

Richard Johnston. Social Capital, Diversity, and the Welfare State. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

Terry Lovell. (Mis)Recognition, Social Inequality and Social Justice. (New York: Routledge, 2007).