Overview:
Culture may be the most inadequately defined concept within the social sciences buried as a product of the material world or extended to the myriad of behaviors and events of everyday life. Which is it, the stuff of poetry or the everyday? This class does not seek to answer this question, but hopes to avoid definitional debates by focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of a range of available approaches to culture. This class, therefore, is less about what culture is and more about how sociology can contribute to our understanding of culture whatever its specific form. Conversely, this class also focuses on how culture is essential to understanding core sociological topics, such as power, social structure, inequality, and so forth. As a survey this class aims to provide an overview of sociological approaches to the study of culture.

Requirements:
In-Class Participation: In-class participation is essential for this course. By this time in your academic career, you have the skills and knowledge to contribute and should be confident in this fact. Any PowerPoint slides or notes will be made available after class. My hope is that this will facilitate more thoughtful note-taking and more creative engagement in the course. Attendance is required and you should be prepared in at least two ways: Please read the course materials prior to the class and bring the necessary course materials for each class.

Reader Response Essays: Reader response essays are short (1-2 pages, single-spaced) opportunities to engage in that day's readings. Successful essays will begin by offering a short description of 1 or 2 of the week's assigned articles or chapters. Next, a successful essay will compare and contrast the article(s) to other material from the class or from other academic courses. Last, a successful response will conclude with a brief critique or evaluation of the article(s).

Midterm Exam: The midterm exam (no more than 8 pages, double-spaced) will be a take-home exam and will, therefore, focus less on rote memorization and more on your ability to step-back and take a broad view of the material from the first-half of the course.
**Final Project:** The final project is an original research project that consists of two parts: A proposal-annotated bibliography and the final paper. The final project may be on a topic of your choice related to the sociology of culture. There are three data options available: 1.) you can conduct at least 2 1-hour long interviews of individuals associated with your topic, 2.) you can critically analyze at least 3 films that pertain to your topic, 3.) you can critically analyze the lyrics from at least 15 songs from at least 5 different artists. I will provide more detail about the final project in the near future.

*Proposal-annotated bibliography:* The proposal-annotated bibliography (5-7 pages) is an opportunity to get situated prior to the final paper and is intended to initiate the research process earlier in the quarter with the realization that your research ideas may evolve in subsequent weeks. The proposal portion of this assignment summarizes the topic that you intend to study, why it is relevant to the sociology of culture, and the data you plan to use (be as specific as possible). The annotated bibliography section consists of at least 8 references (ASA format) to scholarly research that indirectly or directly pertains to your topic. 4 of these references can be from class readings.

*Final Paper:* The final paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced) will represent the culmination of your original research. It will be formatted as a “standard” sociological article with a theory section, data section, results section and so forth. As is the standard with most scholarly writing, it should err on the side of formality and should represent your best work!

**Grades and Due Dates:**

10% In-Class Participation

15% 3 Reader Response Essays (1-2 pages, single-spaced)...April 6th-8th, April 13th-15th, May 27th

20% Midterm Exam (no more than 8 pages, double-spaced)...due May 4th.

15% Proposal/Annotated Bibliography (5-7 pages)...due May 18th.

40% Final Paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced)...due June 7th.

**Required Texts:**

Available at the UO Bookstore, Amazon.com, etc.:


**Blackboard:**


Course Schedule (Subject to change with appropriate notice in class or through email):

DEFINING CULTURE SOCIALLY

March 30, 2010
Introduction(s)

April 1, 2010
Griswold Chapter 1
Spillman Chapter 1
Suggested Reading (Introduction to Sociology of Culture)
American Journal of Sociology 99:1411-54.


CULTURE AS MEANING
April 6, 2010
Griswold Chapter 2
Griswold Chapter 3
Spillman Ch. 6: Geertz

April 8, 2010
Spillman Ch. 2: Simmel
Blackboard: Swidler (1986)

Suggested Reading (Culture as Meaning)
Spillman Ch. 4: Shils
Spillman Ch. 5: Williams


PRODUCTION OF CULTURE
April 13, 2010
Griswold Chapter 4
Spillman Ch. 3: Horkheimer

April 15, 2010
Spillman Ch. 15: DiMaggio
Spillman Ch. 17: Becker
Spillman Ch. 20: Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz

Suggested Reading (Production of Culture)


CONSUMPTION OF CULTURE
April 20, 2010

Suggested Reading (Consumption of Culture)


GLOBAL CULTURE
April 22, 2010

Suggested Reading (Global Culture)


CULTURE, IDENTITY, AND POWER
April 27, 2010

Griswold Chapter 6-7

Griswold Chapter 8
Suggested Reading (Culture, Identity, and Power)


MIDTERM DUE

May 4, 2010
Movie: Resolved (2007)

MIDTERM EXAM DUE

CONTEXT: SOCIAL MOVEMENT CULTURES

May 6, 2010
Griswold 5 Chapter 5
Spillman 26: Williams
Blackboard: Reed (2005)

May 11, 2010
Spillman 28: Swidler
Blackboard: Eyerman (2002)

May 13, 2010
Movie: Favela Rising (2005)

Suggested Reading (Social Movement Cultures)


CONTEXT: POPULAR CULTURE
May 18, 2010-Fads and Diffusion
PROPOSAL-ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
May 20, 2010-Institutions and Music
May 25, 2010-Internet Stuff
Suggested Reading (Popular Culture)


CASE: BLUES MUSIC: AUTHENTICITY, PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION, AND MEANING
May 27, 2010
READER RESPONSE 3A and 3B
June 1, 2010
Encouraging Inclusive Learning Environments

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if aspects of the instruction or course design result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu.

For Your Information:

**Academic Misconduct:** The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students’ obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students.