



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
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SSS 914

Theory Construction and Model Development: Macro
(3 credits)

Spring 2008

Instructor: Joseph J. Shields, PhD

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I. COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to educate students in the knowledge and skills necessary for understanding, evaluating and constructing social theories and developing explanatory models in areas relevant to mezzo and macro social issues. The course builds on the theories and models covered in courses such as SSS 883, Seminar in Social and Behavioral Science Concepts; SSS 884, Economic Concepts and Social Services; SSS 885, Theories of Administration; SSS 890, Analysis and Critique of Social Policy Methods; and SSS 946, Theories of Social Justice.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To deepen one's knowledge of an issue of social concern and to be able to develop a theoretical perspective on the causes and consequences of the issue.
2. To thoroughly understand the theoretical and empirical literature underlying the social issue.
3. To apply this theoretical and empirical knowledge to the design and development of an innovative model capable of explaining some aspect of the social issue.
4. To demonstrate the capability of being able to evaluate the model in terms of important ethical and value considerations.
5. To present the model in clear, concise, logical, scholarly fashion in writing and in formal presentations to peers.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Required Texts

Shoemaker, P., Tankard, J., & Lasorsa, D. (2004). *How to build Social Science Theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.

The instructor may assign additional readings. Since the focus of the course is the development of an exploratory model it is anticipated that each student will supplement the required readings with a thorough review of literature related to one's own area of inquiry.

2. Course Assignments

- a. A scholarly paper on the theoretical and empirical background literature related to the selected social issue will be due on class # 7
- b. A scholarly paper describing in detail the explanatory model of the selected social issue will be due on class #14.

3. Grading Policy

Background Paper	30%
Model Paper	50%
Model Presentation	10%
Class participation	10%

The final grade for this course will be based on the University Grading System. Please refer to the CUA Announcements, or the Program Handbook for Academic Requirements that include scholastic and behavioral requirements.

4. Course and Instructor Evaluation

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at <http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations> using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations

Please refer to *NCSSS Announcements* or appropriate Program Handbook (available on the NCSSS web page) for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (at 202-319-5211, room 207 Pryzbyla Center) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Part I: Foundation of Theory Construction and Model Development

Class 1. Introduction and Overview of the Course

Class 2 The Building Blocks of Theory Development

- Theoretical concepts
- Theoretical Statements
- Operational Linkages

Shoemaker et al. (2004):

Chapter 1. The Nature of Science

Chapter 2. Theoretical Concepts: The Building Blocks of Science

Class 3 Building Complex Theories

- Identifying assumptions
- Causal direction
- Theoretical linkages
- Operational linkages
- Formulating theoretical statements for complex systems
- Specifying nonlinear relationships and nonadditive effects.

Shoemaker et al. (2004):

Chapter 3. Theoretical Statements Relating two variables;

Chapter 4. Theoretical and Operational Linkages;

Chapter 5. Theoretical Statements Relating three variables;

Chapter 6. Theoretical Statements Relating four or More Variables.

Class 4 Theoretical Models

- Models vs. Theories
- Uses of models
- Criticisms of models
- Types of models
- Representing theories in model form
- Creativity and theory building
- Principles and techniques of creative thinking
- Metaphor and analogy in theory building

Shoemaker et al. (2004):

Chapter 7. Theoretical Models

Chapter 8. Creativity and Theory Building

- Class 5 Using and Evaluating Theoretical Models
- The usefulness of theory
 - Ten steps of building a theory
 - Evaluating theories
 - Constraints on theory building

Shoemaker et al. (2004)
Chapter 9. Using and Evaluating Theory

Part II: Exercises in Theory Construction and Model Development

- Class 6 Using Logic Models to Bring Together Program Planning, Evaluation and Action
- Introduction to logic models
 - Developing a basic logic model
 - Developing a theory-of-change logic model

W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004). *Logic Model Development Guide*. Available on-line at <http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>

- Class 7 Logic Models Continued
- Theory Based Evaluation (TBE)

Hernandez, M. (2000). Using logic models and program theory to build outcome accountability. *Education and Treatment of Children* 23(1) 22-40.

- Class 8 Models of Diffusion of Innovations
- Characteristics of innovations
 - Characteristics of innovators
 - Environmental context
 - Implications for research

Wejnert, B. (2002). Integrating models of diffusion of innovations: A conceptual framework. *Annual Review of Sociology* 28:297-326.

- Class 9 Diffusion of Innovation Models Continued
- Understanding innovations in service organizations
 - A model of diffusion in service organizations

Greenhalgh, T., Robert, G., Macfarlane, F., Bate, P. and Kyriakidou, O. (2004). Diffusion of innovations in service organizations: Systematic review and recommendations. *The Milbank Quarterly* 82 (4); 581-629.

- Class 10 The Behavioral Model of Health Service Use
- The development of the model 1960's-2000

Andersen, R.M. (1995). Revisiting the behavioral model and access to medical care: Does it matter? *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 36 1-10.

Class 11 Applications of The Behavioral Model of Health Service Use

Borders, T., Rohrer, K. Xu, T., and Smith, D. (2004). Older persons' evaluation of health care: The effects of medical skepticism and worry about health. *Health Services Research* 39 (1) 35-52.

Galbraith, A., Wong, S., Kim, S., and Newacheck, P. (2005). Out-of-pocket financial burden for low income families with children: Socioeconomic disparities and effects of insurance. *Health Services Research* 40 (6) 1722-1736.

Leukefeld, C., Martin, S., Purvis, R. and Farabee, D. (1998). A health services use framework for drug-abusing offenders. *American Behavioral Scientist* 41 (8) 1123-1135.

Class 12 Modeling Social Capital

Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 1-24.

Portes, A. (2000). The two meanings of social capital. *Sociological Forum* 15 (1) 1-12.

Class 13 Applications of Social Capital

Caspi, A., Moffit, T., Wright, B. and Silva, P. (1998). Early failure in the labor market: Childhood and adolescent predictors of unemployment in the transition to adulthood. *American Sociological Review* 63 424-451.

Furstenberg, F. and Hughes, M. (1995). Social capital and successful development among at-risk youth. *Journal of marriage and the Family* 57 (3) 580-592

Part III: Student Presentations

Class 14 Student Presentations

