Economic Sociology II (ECON 895 – 002; ECON 496-)
Wednesday, 4:30 pm – 7:10 pm
D100 Buchanan Hall

Professor Virgil Henry Storr
Department of Economics
http://virgilstorr.org/
vstorr@gmu.edu

Course Description & Objectives

This seminar will explore key writings within the “new economic sociology” and survey recent developments within the field. Special emphasis will be placed on how culture, norms, ideologies and values shape economic action and interaction. The first half of the course will focus on the core writings in the economics and sociology of the market. The second half of the course will introduce students to interesting writings in important areas in the current economic sociology literature. The goal of the class is to prepare students to write academic papers in the field of economic sociology suitable for peer review journals. In addition to being graded on class participation, students will be graded on a research paper exploring some topic related to economic sociology.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you will,

- Understand the scholarly literature in economic sociology.
- Be able to synthesize existing ideas and contribute to discussions about the relationship between economy and society.
- Graduate Students: Be able to reference and recount multiple perspectives on how culture, norms, ideologies and values shape economic action and interaction. Also, be able to engage those perspectives in research papers.
- Undergraduate Students: Be able to apply their understanding of the relationship between economy and society in conversations about how culture, norms, ideologies and values shape economic action and interaction.

Course Readings & Required Books

You are expected to do all of the required readings (indicted below with an *) prior to the class where they will be discussed. All of the required readings can be obtained through GMU’s e-library or e-reserves (http://library.gmu.edu/) or via the links that are provided below.
Course Grading

*Undergraduate Students:* Grades for this class will be based on reaction memos (40%) and class participation (60%).

*Graduate Students:* Grades for this class will be based on reaction memos (15%), class participation (60%), and a research paper (25%).

The reaction memos should be no less than one page and no more than two pages and contain your thoughts on any aspect of that week’s readings. These can focus on something as broad as the central themes advanced in that week’s readings, or something as narrow as a particular sentence or footnote. The memos are due at 11:59 pm on the day before the class meets and should be emailed to vstorr@gmu.edu. Obviously, no memos are expected on the week’s that there are no readings assigned.

Class participation involves frequently contributing to our weekly in-class discussions. There will be no lectures in this class. The success of the class depends entirely on class participation, which constitutes the majority of your grade. As such, it will be impossible to receive a high mark in this class without actively participating in class discussions.

*Graduate Students:* The research paper should explore the morality or immorality of markets. You will be expected to turn in the abstract and outline for the research paper on or before February 27th, 2019. The final draft, which should be 15 to 20 pages, is due December 18th, 2018.

Course Outline

**Class #1.** *Introductions*

**Class #2.** *The economics of the market: the market process and the market order*


* Schumpeter, Joseph A. 1942. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, chapters 6 and 7 (pp. 72-87).
Class #3.  The sociology of the market: embeddedness and the social construction of the market


Class #4.  The sociology of the market: social capital


Class #5.  The sociology of the market: structural holes and the strength of weak ties (120 pages)


Class #6.  

*The economic sociology of economic culture: “the spirit of capitalism”*


*Storr, Virgil Henry 2013. *Understanding the culture of markets*, chapters 1, 2 and 4.


Class #7.  

*The economic sociology of work and workplaces*


Class #8.  

*The economic sociology of norms and institutions*


**Class #9. The economic sociology of post-disaster community recovery**


**Class #10. The economic sociology of economic development**


**Class #11. The economic sociology of markets and morality**


* Storr and Choi, Are Markets Moral?, chapters 1, 4 and 6.


Note that class will not meet February 27th, April 10th, or May 1st. I reserve the right to change the schedule with notification.

Honor Code: All provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class. [https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/](https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/).

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.