

# SYLLABUS

## Sociology 389.76 - Social Interaction

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Illinois State University, Spring 2009

Mon/Wed 3:00-4:15

**Professor:** Dr. Virginia Teas Gill  
**Office:** 356 Schroeder Hall  
**Office Phone:** 309-438-3735  
**E-mail:** vtgill@ilstu.edu  
**Office Hours:** Monday 4:30-5:30, Thursday 4:00-5:00, and by appointment

### Required Readings

All required readings can be found in my ISU instructor folder. To view this folder, go to [www.casit.ilstu.edu](http://www.casit.ilstu.edu). Under *CAS-IT Student Resources* click *Instructor Folders*. Enter your ULID and password. Then click *Sociology and Anthropology; Gill Virginia; and Social Interaction*.

**Optional readings:** An extensive bibliography of publications in ethnomethodology and conversation analysis can be found on the Ethno/CA website maintained by Paul ten Have, Professor Emeritus at the University of Amsterdam:  
[www.paultenhaven.nl/resource.htm](http://www.paultenhaven.nl/resource.htm)

### Other Requirements

You will need a pair of decent headphones for transcribing data.

### Course Description

*"The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something--because it is always before one's eyes.) ... And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and powerful."* Ludwig Wittgenstein--*Philosophical Investigations*

In this course, we will investigate social phenomena that are so familiar they can escape our notice. Yet they are highly patterned and massively important to our lives and to the organization of the social world. We will begin with Ethnomethodology, the study of how people use various sense-making resources to collaboratively achieve the reality of the social world and find meaning within it. We will then turn to Conversation Analysis (CA) to learn about the structure of talk-in-interaction and the conversational practices people use to accomplish social actions--and achieve the visibility of social roles and identities--within interaction in everyday and institutional settings. The course is hands-on. You will be actively engaged in transcribing and analyzing data. There will be frequent in-class activities and discussions, so you are expected to be prepared and ready to contribute. You will need to work with conversational materials in a patient, systematic manner. Through your engagement in the course, you will gain an appreciation of the importance of real-time, observable behaviors for the accomplishment and maintenance of social reality. You will also develop your powers of observation, your attention to detail, and your analytical skills.

### Course Requirements

*This is a brief description of the course requirements. Full instructions will be provided in class.*

**(1) Interaction Journal:** To help you integrate the course material into your own life and develop your awareness of social patterns and practices, you will keep a journal where you regularly record your observations and reflections about social interaction in your daily life. I will give you some guidelines each week, but in general you will need to listen for and reflect upon the types of social practices we're reading about and discussing in class. Take note of the various interactional dilemmas you observe and how people solve or address them. See if you can identify some interactional practices and try to document their structure and identify their function(s). Write down ideas you have about what you're learning and your perspective on interaction. Keep a notebook handy so you can immediately write down conversations and interactions you see during the course of the day. Please type these journal entries before handing them in.

I will collect your journals three times during the semester. I will expect to see that your journal is up to date, with one thoughtful and substantial entry per week. Each entry should be 1-3 pages long, double spaced. Please date your entries. *To preserve confidentiality, you must use pseudonyms rather than identifying people and places by name in your journal entries. You will receive a zero if pseudonyms are not used.*

**(2) Reading Summaries:** I encourage you to write one-page summaries of the main points of each reading. (See handout, "How to write a reading summary.") Reading summaries help you develop the habit of reading actively, teach you to identify main points quickly, and help you remember what you read. Thus, you will be well prepared for class. You will receive participation credit for each summary you turn in and you may use every summary you turn in during your in-class tests. (Please retain copies for yourself for study purposes. I will keep the hard copies you turn in and allow you to use these during the tests.) Students who do not turn in reading summaries will not be allowed to refer to any materials during the tests.

**(3) Tests:** There will be two in-class tests. They will assess your ability to comprehend, critically assess, and apply concepts and methods you have learned in the course.

**(4) Exercises:** Two exercises will help me assess your progress in the course. For the ***Transcription Exercise*** you will render the details of a conversation in written form, using CA transcription conventions. I will provide you with audio-taped data for this exercise. (2) The ***Analysis Exercise*** will show your ability to use CA to analyze a conversation. I will provide the data for this exercise, as well.

**(5) Participation:** A large portion of your grade will be dependent upon your active participation in the course. This includes being present (and on time) for each class session, actively participating in discussions, listening thoughtfully and respectfully to others, turning in reading summaries, and generally being involved and intellectually engaged. If you miss more than 4 classes, you should drop the course because you will receive 0 points for participation. Note: arriving late counts as an absence. There are no excused absences or excused late arrivals.

#### **Additional Requirement for Graduate Students**

In addition to the requirements above, if you are a graduate student you will complete a project on resistance and persuasion in interaction. This project will give you some familiarity with two approaches to the study of resistance and persuasion (CA and one non-CA approach) and some literature that exemplifies these approaches. By contrasting CA with another analytical approach, you will gain a deeper understanding of both and will be in a better position to decide whether and how they will be useful to you. The project will also give you practice working with conversational data, locating examples of phenomena, and using CA to analyze data. Full details will be provided in a handout and in individual student conferences.

#### **Grading**

Interaction Journal:	(20 pts. each x 3)	60 points	
Tests	(40 pts. each x 2)	80 points	
Transcription Exercise		30 points	
Analysis Exercise		30 points	
Participation (includes Reading Summaries)		<u>100 pts</u>	
		<b>300 TOTAL POINTS</b>	(Graduate students: Add 50 points for your project, for a total of 350 points.)

#### **Expectations for Your Written Work**

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology expects its students to be able to communicate effectively in writing. Proofread and edit your written work carefully before handing it in; your grades will be lowered by at least one letter grade if several major grammar and spelling errors are made. ***Plagiarism*** is a serious offense and will be dealt with accordingly. I encourage you to collaborate with other students, but you must turn in your own work. **Reading summaries that copy any portion of a reading verbatim, without indicating the quote with quotation marks and a page number, will receive no credit.**

#### **Policy on Late Assignments/Papers and Make-up Tests**

In the interest of fairness to all students, your work must be handed in on time. If you encounter an emergency situation (severe illness, etc.) that will prevent you from taking a test or completing something on time, you must contact me before it is due to discuss the situation. Call me at my office (309-438-3735) and leave a message with your name and a phone number where I can reach you. I will allow you to hand in late work or take a makeup test only if you have contacted me in advance. I do not accept excuses in class or after a due date has passed.

#### **Special Accommodations**

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice mail) or 438-8620 (TDD).

## Course Outline - Spring 2009

### Week 1

#### **READING:**

- David Francis and Stephen Hester (2006). "Social Interaction, Language and Society." Pp. 1-19 in Frances and Hester, *An Invitation to Ethnomethodology*. London: Sage.

Mon, Jan 12                    Introduction to the Course  
Wed, Jan 14                    Ethnomethodology-----Reading Summaries Due

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### Week 2

#### **READINGS:**

- Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987). "Doing gender." *Gender & Society* v. 2 no. 2, pp. 125-151.
- John Heritage (1984). "The morality of cognition." Pp. 75-102 in Heritage, *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Mon, Jan 19                    **ML King Holiday -- NO CLASS**  
Wed Jan 21                    Ethnomethodology-----Reading Summaries Due

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### Week 3

#### **READINGS:**

- Harvey Sacks (1984). "Notes on Methodology." Pp. 21-27 in Atkinson and Heritage (Eds.) *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- John Heritage (1984). "Conversation Analysis." Pp. 233-265 in Heritage, *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Mon, Jan 26                    Ethnomethodology  
Wed, Jan 28                    Intro to Conversation Analysis-----Reading Summaries Due

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### Week 4

#### **No readings this week**

Mon, Feb 2                    Intro to Conversation Analysis-----Bring study guides to trade  
Wed, Feb 4                    **TEST 1** (covering weeks 1-4) **Meet at Milner computer lab 213C, main floor**

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### Week 5

#### **READINGS:**

- Steven E. Clayman and Virginia Teas Gill (2004). "Conversation Analysis." Pp. 589-606 in Hardy and Bryman (Eds.) *Handbook of Data Analysis*. London: Sage.
- "Ethical Guidelines for Informed Consent and the Use of Recording Technology in Research" (from the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics).

Mon, Feb 9                    Working with Recorded Data - Ethics & Logistics-----**Interaction Journals Due (wks 1-4)**  
Wed, Feb 11                    Working with Recorded Data - Ethics & Logistics-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 6**

**READINGS:**

- Paul ten Have (1999). "Transcribing Talk-in-Interaction." Pp. 74-98 in ten Have, *Doing Conversation Analysis: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.

Mon, Feb 16 CA Transcription (**Meet at Schroeder computer lab 216 today**)  
 Wed, Feb 18 CA Transcription (**Meet at Schroeder computer lab 216 today**)-----Reading Summary Due  
 Transcription Exercise Assigned

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**Week 7**

**READINGS:**

- Ian Hutchby and Robin Wooffitt (1998) "Foundations of Conversation Analysis." Pp. 41-54 in Hutchby and Wooffitt (Eds.) *Conversation Analysis*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity.
- J. Maxwell Atkinson (1985). "Refusing Invited Applause: Preliminary observations from a case study of charismatic oratory." Pp. 161-181 in "Van Dijk (Ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* v. 3. London: Academic Press.

Mon, Feb 23 Turn Construction and Turn Taking  
 Wed, Feb 25 Adjacency Pairs-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 8**

**READINGS:**

- Ian Hutchby and Robin Wooffitt (1998) "Analysing data I: Building collections and identifying phenomena." Pp. 88-108 in Hutchby and Wooffitt (Eds.) *Conversation Analysis*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity.

Mon, March 2 Grade Transcription Exercise in class-----**Transcription Exercise Due**  
 Wed, March 4 Adjacency Pairs-----Reading Summary Due  
**Grad students: Intro and Lit Review due today**

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**Week 9**

**Mon, March 9 and Wed, March 11 SPRING BREAK -- NO CLASS**

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**Week 10**

**READINGS:**

- Judy Davidson (1984). "Subsequent versions of invitations, offers, requests, and proposals dealing with potential or actual rejection." Pp. 102-128 in Atkinson and Heritage (Eds.) *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anita Pomerantz (1984). "Pursuing a response." Pp. 152-163 in Atkinson and Heritage (Eds.) *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mon, March 16 Preference Organization  
 Wed, March 18 Pursuing a Response-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 11**

**READING:**

- Anita Pomerantz (1980) "Telling my side: 'Limited access' as a 'fishing' device." *Sociological Inquiry* 50:186-98.

Mon, March 23 Data Session-----**Interaction Journals Due (wks 7-10)**  
 Wed, March 25 Data Session-----Reading Summary Due

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**Week 12**

**No readings this week**

Mon, March 30                   **Data Analysis Exercise** (We will do this in class. **Meet at Schroeder computer lab 216 today.**)  
Wed, April 1                   Grade Data Analysis Exercise in class

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**Week 13**

**READINGS:**

- John Heritage (2004). "Conversation analysis and institutional talk: Analyzing data." Pp. 222-245 in David Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method, and Practice (2nd edition)*. London: Sage.
- Charles Antaki (1998). "Identity ascriptions in their time and place: 'Fagin' and 'the terminally dim.'" Pp. 71-86 in *Identities in Talk* (Antaki and Widdicombe, Eds.) London: Sage.

Mon, April 6                   Institutional Talk  
Wed, April 8                   Membership Categorization-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 14**

**READINGS:**

- Jack Whalen, Don Zimmerman, and Marilyn Whalen (1988). "When words fail: A single case analysis." *Social Problems* 35: 335-362.
- Paul Drew (1985). "Analyzing the use of language in courtroom interaction." Pp. 133-147 in Van Dijk (Ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* v. 3. London: Academic Press.

Mon, April 13                   911 Call Centers  
Wed, April 15                   Legal Settings-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 15**

**READINGS:**

- Tim Halkowski (2006). "Realizing the illness: Patients' narratives of symptom discovery." Pp. 86-114 in *Communication in Medical Care*. Heritage and Maynard (Eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Virginia Teas Gill and Douglas W. Maynard (1995). "On 'Labeling' in Actual Interaction: Delivering and Receiving Diagnoses of Developmental Disabilities." *Social Problems* 42 (1):11-37.

Mon April 20                   Clinical Settings  
Wed, April 22                   Clinical Settings-----Reading Summaries Due

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**Week 16**

**READINGS:**

- Steve Clayman (1988). "Displaying neutrality in television news interviews." *Social Problems* 35: 474-492.
- Steve Clayman and John Heritage (2002). "Questioning presidents: Journalistic deference and adversarialness in the press conferences of U.S. presidents Eisenhower and Reagan." *Journal of Communication* 52 (4): 749-775.

Mon, April 27                   News Interviews  
Wed, April 29                   News Interviews-----Reading Summaries Due

**Interaction Journals Due (wks 13-16)**  
Bring study guides to trade

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**Finals Week**

**Thurs, May 7    1:00-2:15 pm                   Test 2 (Meet in Schroeder computer lab 235)**