aqwsazNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Sociology 540: Power and Social Change

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Course Meets: M,W, Sa

Spectrum Center

Required Text:

Domhoff, G. William. Who Rules America? Power, Politics, and Social Change. 5th Edition.

Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006.

Directed Readings

**Course Description**:

This course will examine contemporary theories of power, power arrangements in the United States, and social movements, national and global, that have challenged power arrangements at various times and in various places. The first part of the course will focus on two theories of power, Domhoff’s class theory of power and Chomsky’s institutional theory of power, and how they explain power arrangements in American society. The second part of the course will focus on social movements that have challenged power arrangements in the past, or that are presently challenging power arrangements . Social movements that will be examined are the labor movement, civil rights movement in the U.S., the anti-Vietnam war movement, and anti-Globalization movements. The third part of the course will focus on postmodern theories of power and the war on terror, specifically Foucault’s power/knowledge theory.

**Course Goals:**

The course will present students with a comprehensive perspective on theories of power, modern and postmodern. And through the readings and lectures the course will engage the students in the task of critically applying theories of power to American and global society. The course will also demonstrate to students that social movements have in the past, are today, and will be in the future effectively challenging power relationships.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain Domhoff’s theory of power.
2. Identify and explain important modern and postmodern theories of power.
3. Analyze power arrangements in American society.

4. Analyze power arrangements in global society.

5. Understand the role social movements have played in achieving progressive social change.

**Course Content**

This course covers the work of social theorists and sociologists such Karl Marx, Max Weber, C. Wright Mills, G. William Domhoff, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Michele Foucault, Immanuel Wallerstein, Mike Davis, Noam Chomsky, and Doug McAdams. To foster scholarly discussion, the course will be organized around small and large group discussion, lecture, workshops, and media presentations.

This course includes an overview of contemporary theories of power such as:

* Power elite and Modified Power Elite
* Pluralism
* Structural
* Marxism
* Critical
* Power/Knowledge
* Political Process
* Globalization
* World Systems

**Evaluation Process**:

There will be a total of 400 points.

Exams. There will be two exams, a midterm and final, each worth one hundred (100) points for a total of two hundred (200) points. The exams will be based on the lectures, the readings, and in-class videos. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in, short answer and essay questions.

Oral and Written Reports. Each student will give an oral report on one of the assigned readings. With the report, the students will hand in a two page written paper analyzing the reading on which the student reported. This paper should include the thesis, or theme, and the main points of the reading. The paper must also be computer generated and in essay form and handed in on the day of the report. The report and the essay combined will be worth fifty (50) points.

Papers. There will be two papers assigned during the term. These papers must be three to four pages. The papers will be worth fifty (50) points each for a total of one hundred (100) points.

Class Participation. The final fifty (50) points will be based on class participation. Attendance is mandatory at National University and the necessary starting point for class participation. But being present is not class participation, class participation consists of relevant comments and questions that reflect both that the student has read the material and made an attempt to engage the material analytically.

**Points System**:

Assignment *#* Points Total % Grade

Exams 2 100 200 50%

Reports 1 50 50 12.5%

Paper 2 50 100 25%

Participation 50 50 12.5%

400 100%

Grading System:

Grade Percent

A 93%-100%

A- 90%-92%

B+ 87%-89%

B 83%-86%

B- 80%-82%

C+ 77%-79%

C 73%-76%

C- 70%-72%

D 60%-69%

F below 60%

Late Work:

Work will be given a reduction in grade for each class period that it is late. Exceptions in grade reduction can be made for compelling family emergencies, documented medical emergencies, and unexpected demands at work, however any of these reasons need written documentation, e.g., letter from a physician or work supervisor. No late work will be accepted at all after the last scheduled hour/day of class except for the above reasons.

Class Structure:

The first part of each class will be a lecture given by the professor on the topic for that class (see class schedule). After the dinner break, the students will present their reports. The reports will have been assigned in the previous class. Every student is required to read all the assigned readings and participate in the class discussion of them even though not reporting on them. After the reports and discussions, there will be video (usually a part of a documentary relevant for the topic.) After viewing the documentary, the class will discuss it. The two most important ways to gain class participation points is during the discussions on the reports and during the discussions on the videos.

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Directed Readings:

The directed readings will consist mainly of hard copy handouts.

Class Schedule:

Meeting Topics and Reading Assignments

Class 1 **Course Introduction**

Mon 3/3 “**The Constellation of Power in the U.S”**

Class 2 “**Constellation of Power: Economic Power”**

Wed 3/5 Reading Assignment: Domhoff: Chapters Intro, 1 and 2

# Paper #1 Assigned

Class 3 “**Constellation of Power: Political Power”**

Mon 3/10 Reading Assignment: Domhoff: Chapters 3, 6 and 7

# Paper #1 Due

Class 4 “**Constellation of Power: Mass Media”**

Wed 3/12 Reading Assignment: Domhoff: Chapters 4 and 5.

Chomsky: “A Propaganda Model”

Class 5 “**Constellation of Power: Global Power Arrangements”**

Mon 3/17Reading Assignment: Semm: “The Social Construction of Unreality”

# Exam #1

Class 6 **“Challenging Power: Labor Movement”**

Wed 3/19 Reading Assignment:Chapter 7 (pp 180-198)

Class 7 “**Challenging Power: Civil Rights Movement”**

Sat 3/22

# Paper #2 Assigned

Class 8 **“Challenging Power: Anti-Globalization Movements ”**

Mon 3/24 Reading Assignment: Davis: “Planet of Slums”

Class 9 **“Foucault: Power/Knowledge.”**

Wed 3/26 Reading Assignment: Foucault: “Panopticon”, Chapter 8

# Paper #2 Due

Class 10 **“New Forms of Power in the 21st Century**

Sat 3/29

**Exam #2**

**Important University Policies**

**Course Workload:** This course has been designed for the adult learner taking course work at an accelerated pace. To facilitate your learning and cover all of the material in such a short time, it is imperative that in-class contact hours not be abbreviated. Each student is a valuable part of the learning environment, and your participation is needed in class discussion, presentations, peer evaluation, and being a supportive audience for anyone presenting or lecturing. Given the rapid pace of the course, it is necessary for students to keep on track and on task with the readings and assignments. In accordance with accreditation standards set by WASC, National University requires approximately two hours of outside work for every contact hour (NU Catalog). For a 4.5-quarter unit course, there are 45 contact hours, plus a minimum of 90 hours outside of classroom work. Of course, the time may be spent in all sorts of ways--many hours over the weekend, for example, with fewer during the week, or whatever schedule works best for the student given the deadlines in the course.

**Plagiarism**: Students are also reminded that all work must be generated independently and solely for this course. Any act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty (intentional or unintentional borrowing of another person's published or unpublished material without proper attribution, having someone fix writing or other errors, or any other attempt to defraud the academic process) will meet with reprimand and possible failure of the course (see the NU Catalog for other potential penalties). To avoid plagiarism, students should do their own work and submit work that is original to this course.

Students are required to cite the use of materials written by others in all written communications for courses. Remember, the use of ideas, words, or phrasing without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism. The burden of proof rests on the student, not the instructor; in other words, the student will be required to prove that plagiarism has not occurred. Please use the APA or MLA guidelines/procedures for citing work. Use the standard you choose consistently.

**Grading Standard:** Papers grades are based on the goals of the assignments, which are to demonstrate close reading skills and familiarity with course concepts, *as well as on the standards for undergraduate written work described below.* Letter grades correspond to the definitions of those grades for undergraduate classes as defined in the National University Catalog.

**Grading Criteria for Writing Assignments:** Formal paper grades will be assigned in accordance with the University catalog and the following general criteria adopted by the School of Arts and Sciences. In this course, grades will be issued according to the +/- system.

**Note: Letter grades may be assigned for any or all of the following reasons.**

**"C" range**

* Acceptable, solid achievement, meets standards for course.
* Retains over-all focus, generally solid command of subject matter.
* Subject matter well-explored but may show signs of under-development.
* Significance is understood, competent use of examples.
* Structure is solid, but an occasional sentence or paragraph may lack focus.
* Quotations and citations are integrated into argument.
* Transitions between paragraphs occur but may lack originality.
* Competent use of language; sentences are solid but may lack development, refinement, style.
* Occasional minor mechanical errors may occur, but do not impede clear understanding of material.
* **No serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma-splices, etc.)**

**"B" range**

* Commendable achievement, exceeds standards for course.
* Specific, original focus, content well-handled.
* Significance of content is clearly conveyed; good use of examples; sufficient support exists in all key areas.
* Has effective shape (organization), effective pacing between sentences or
* paragraphs.
* Quotations and citations are integrated into argument to enhance the flow of ideas.
* Has competent transitions between all sentences and paragraphs.
* Conveys a strong understanding of Standard English; the writer is clear in his/her attempt to articulate main points, but may demonstrate moments of "flat" or unrefined language.
* **May have a few minor mechanical errors (misplaced commas, pronoun disagreement, etc.), but no serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma-splices, etc.)**

**"A" range**

* Outstanding achievement, significantly exceeds standards.
* Unique topic or unique treatment of topic, takes risks with content; fresh approach.
* Sophisticated/exceptional use of examples.
* Original and "fluid" organization; all sentences and paragraphs contribute; sophisticated transitions between paragraphs.
* Integration of quotations and citations is sophisticated and highlights the author's argument.
* Confidence in use of Standard English, language reflects a practiced and/or refined understanding of syntax and usage.
* **Sentences vary in structure, very few if any mechanical errors (no\ serious mechanical errors).**

**"D" range *(Note: The “D” grade is a passing grade; work that is not of “passing quality” should receive grade “F.”)***

* **Marginal achievement; only meets minimum standards.**
* Significance of content is unclear.
* Some ideas may lack support, elaboration.
* Lacks sufficient examples or relevance of examples may be unclear.
* Support material may not be clearly incorporated into argument.
* Expression is occasionally awkward (problematic sentence structure).
* Mechanical errors may at times impede clear understanding of material.
* **May have a few serious mechanical errors, but no recurring serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma-splices, etc.)**

**"F" range**

* Ignores assignment.
* Lacks significance.
* Lacks coherence.
* Includes plagiarized material (intentional or unintentional).
* Lacks focus.
* Difficult to follow due to awkward sentence or paragraph development.
* Mechanical errors impede understanding.
* Problems with writing at the college level.

**Grade Distribution:**

A /4.0

A-/3.7

B+/3.3

B /3.0

B-/2.7

C+/2.3

C /2.0

C-/1.7

D+/1.3

D /1.0

D-/0.7

F / 0.0

**National University Library:** The NU Library System (NULS) supports academic rigor by providing access to scholarly books, journals, e-books, and databases of full text articles from scholarly journals. Library books and journal articles can be shipped to online students. Librarians are available to assist students at the Spectrum Library in San Diego, at the regional Library Information Centers (LIC), and online.

**National University Writing Centers are available at various sites and by on-line appointment**

Exam #1

1.(t/f) According to Domhoff, surveys reveal that most Americans believe that corporations have too much power.

2.(m/c) Domhoff’s theory is a(n)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ theory of power.

a. pluralist b. state autonomy c. class domination d. elite

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3. – 12. Match the following terms with the correct definition.

a. corporate community b. power elite c. corporate-conservative coalition

d. social upper class

\_\_\_ Corporate owners, top executives, and the Christian right who enter the political process through campaign contributions and the policy making process.

\_\_\_ Wealthy people who develop a group identity through participation in exclusive organizations, clubs, private schools, elite resorts.

\_\_\_ The general leadership group for the corporate community and the upper class.

\_\_\_ Corporations, banks, and agribusinesses . . . that shape the federal government policy on issues important to them and all other Americans.

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13.(m/c) According to Domhoff, all of the following are examples of class conflict EXCEPT:

a. government regulation b. profits and wages c. taxation

d. abortion e. none are exceptions

14.(t/f) Domhoff claims that studies show that Americans are aware of class differences, but still believe that the American system offers the possibility of upward mobility for those who show initiative and work hard.

15.(t/f) According to Domhoff, revoking the inheritance tax (“death tax”) was important for all Americans because approximately 90% of Americans were effected negatively by it.

16.-21. Match the following with the definition.

a. special-interest process b. policy planning process c. opinion shaping process

\_\_\_ Process by which dominant class, mainly through lobbying, seeks to achieve its policy goals.

\_\_\_ Process by which dominant class develops its policy goals.

\_\_\_ Process by which dominant class attempts to manufacture public consent for its policies.

22.(m/c) Boarding schools, private social clubs, and private elite universities function in which of the following ways?

a. socialization b. identity formation c. social cohesion d. a and b e. all of above

23.(t/f) Public pension funds have been a significant counter-force to the corporate community through the introduction of stockholder resolutions.

24.(t/f) According to Domhoff , both the Republican and Democratic parties for most of their history have been controlled by factions of the power elite.

25. All of the following are tendencies of a two party system controlled by power elites EXCEPT:

a. avoidance of issues b. collusion c. emphasis on personalities d. none are exceptions

26.(t/f) According to Domhoff, those brief times when a third party emerged were times when the most progressive social changes occurred in America.

27.(m/c) The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ money loophole was closed in 2002, but the cap on \_\_\_\_ money donations was raised to a maximum of $95,000 over a two year period.

a. hard/soft b. soft/hard

28.(t/f) A 527 group is a fund raising group with no cap on donations as long as it remains independent.

29.(t/f) Swiftboat Veterans for Truth are an example of a 527 group

30.(t/f) According to Domhoff, organized labor contributes more to political campaigns than business groups do.

31.(t/f) According to Domhoff, one difference between the Democrats and Republicans is that the Republicans appoint members of the dominant class to positions of power and the Democrats do not.

32.9t/f) According to Domhoff, one success of the liberal-labor coalition was the formulation and successful passing of the Social Security Act of 1935.

33.-38. Briefly explain how the following have led to the increasing concentration of ownership in the economy.

a. mergers and acquisitions

b. deregulation

39.-46. Match the following with the correct definition.

a. shared monopoly b. interlocking directorate

c. strategic alliance d. revolving door

\_\_\_\_The same people occupying seats on the governing boards of competing companies.

\_\_\_\_Four or fewer corporations controlling over 50% of single economic activity.

\_\_\_ Cooperative relationship among corporations that involves sharing resources, capital, and risk.

\_\_\_ The movement of power elite from corporation to public service then back to the corporation.

47.(m/c) All of the following are ways that corporations exercise power over labor EXCEPT:

a. off shoring b. outsourcing c. downsizing

d. anti-union activities e. none are exceptions

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Match the following democratic process to the practice which undermines it.

Process Practice

48. elections a. revolving door

49. legislation b. campaign financing

50. regulation c. lobbying\

51. free press d. ownership

52.(m/c) The Asbestos Study Group is an example of a:

a. Trade Group b. Front Group c. Public Interest Group

53.(t/f) In the United States, incumbents win 90% of the time.

54.(m/c) In the movie Bulworth, the lobbyist was from which of the following industries?

a. oil b. insurance c. finance d. auto

55.(m/c) The movie Bulworth claims that “big money” undermines the democratic process in which of the following ways?

a. cost of campaigning b. corporate media ownership

c. campaigning through political commercials d. all of above.

56.(m/c) Which of the following are true about enforcement in the meat processing industry?

a. no mandatory recalls b. no mandatory public warning

c. no mandatory fines or penalties d. all of above

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57. –64.Match the corporation or industry to the “wealthfare”

Corporation Wealthfare

\_\_\_ Fast Foods a. Research and Devlopment

\_\_\_ Airlines b. Bailout

\_\_\_ Media c. Telecommunications Act

\_\_\_ Pharmaceutical d. Work Opportunity Tax Credit

\_\_\_ Energy e. Clear Skies Act

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65.(t/f) Ownership in all media is becoming more concentrated.

66.(m/c) All of the following are examples of concentration of ownership in the media EXCEPT:

a. shared ownership b. interlocking directorates c. shared monopolies

d. strategic alliances e. none are exceptions

67.(m/c) According to your professor, the mass media is:

a. the main institution of socialization b. the main institution of social control

c. an institution of mass distraction and stupification d. all of above

68(t/f).According to your professor, the customers of the mass media are the advertisers.

69.(m/c) A consequence of the concentration of the ownership in the media has been cost cutting. Which of the following are examples?

a. fire reporters b. fire staff c. close bureaus

d. limit time per story e. all of above

70.(m/c) According to your professor, the goal of corporate news is:

a. profit b. entertainment c. information d. a and b e. all of above

71.-75. Briefly explain the following as they relate to corporate news.

a. if it bleeds it leads

b. soft news

c. political coverage

d. VNRs/GNRs

Exam #2

1.(t/f) The policy-planning network explains how expertise is used by the power elite to maintain power and achieve policy goals.

2.-10. Match the following component of the policy-planning network to its correct definition.

a. think tanks b. foundations c. policy discussion groups

\_\_\_ tax-free institutions created to give grants to both individuals and non-profit organizations.

\_\_\_ nonprofit organizations that provide settings for experts in various academic disciplines.

\_\_\_groups that bring together experts around general issues and problems.

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11.-16. Match the following component of the policy-planning network to its appropriate example.

Component Example

\_\_\_ think tanks Ford, MacArthur, Doris Duke

\_\_\_ foundations American Enterprise Institute

\_\_\_policy discussion groups Council on Foreign Relations

17.-25. Identify and explain three ways that the corporate-conservative coalition controls the policy-planning network.

a.

b.

c.

26.(t/f) The Heritage Foundation is an example of a corporate-conservative think tank.

27.(m/c) All of the following are goals of the opinion shaping process EXCEPT:

a. reinforce underlying principles of the American belief system.

b. influence schools and voluntary associations.

c. send the message that a person’s problems are a result of individual inadequacy.

d. learn from polls and surveys how to frame policy to gain the public’s consent.

e. none are exceptions.

28.(t/f) The National Smokers Alliance is an example of a front group.

29.(m/c) The Advertising Council places $1.55 billion worth of advertising each year. It is responsible for all of the following EXCEPT:

a. Smokey the Bear b. McGruff the Crime Dog c. Crackers the Corporate Crime Fighting Chicken

30. (t/f) Social issues (abortion, same-sex marriage) are a key part of the corporate-conservative electoral strategy even though they are not issues of substantive concern to the power elite.

31.(m/c) Domhoff’s class domination theory of power is closest to which of the following?

a. pluralism b. state autonomy c. elite.

32.(m/c) All of the following are goals of global power arrangements EXCEPT:

a. cheap labor b. resources c. free trade d. open markets e. none are exceptions

33.(m/c) According to Domhoff, the pluralist theory of power overlooks all of the following EXCEPT:

a. power of public opinion to influence elected officials.

b. the role of the public-opinion shaping network.

c. the domination of each party by the power elite.

d. the difference between individual rights and real power.

e. none are exceptions.

34.-42. Explain how each of the following works towards achieving the goals of the MNCs. Use terms from lectures and study guide.

a. Establishing and supporting third world elite.

b. Debt

c. Structural adjustment

43.(m/c) All of the following were factors which created the conditions for the early labor movement EXCEPT:

a. industrialization b. urbanization c. immigration

d. wage dependent labor e. none are exceptions

44.(m/c) All of the following were actions taken by the early labor movement EXCEPT:

a. strikes b. boycotts c. sabotage d. union organizing e. none are exceptions.

45.(t/f) Corporations would hire employees of the Pinkerton Detective Agency to help break strikes.

46.(t/f) The Gospel of Mass Consumption was a government and corporate plan to mass produce consumers.

47.(t/f) During the Great Upheaval of the 1880s, courts ruled that boycotts were illegal, calling them a criminal conspiracy.

48.(m/c) All of the following represent the compromise that the power structure made with labor during the depression EXCEPT:

a. establishment of a minimum wage b. Social Security c. Unemployment insurance

d. collective bargaining e. all of the above

49.-54. Explain how the following factors led to the decline of labor power in the US.

a.post-WWII economic boom

b. deindustrialization

c. cold war

55.(m/c) All of the following were ways that disenfranchised black voters in the South EXCEPT:

a. poll taxes b. literacy test c. exclusionary primaries

d. voter registration e. none are exceptions

56.(t/f) Lynching was a public ritual that reinforced the system of power in the South.

57.(t/f) The reason for the backlash against integration in America after the Brown v Board of Education ruling was because integration happened so fast and was so widespread.

58.(m/c) All of the following were actions taken by civil rights groups EXCEPT:

a. sit-ins b. sabotage c. freedom rides d. voter registration drives

e. none are exceptions

59.(t/f) COINTELPRO was an FBI program designed to protect the leaders of the civil rights movement from harassment and violence from groups like the KKK.

60.(m/c) GIs engaged in which of the following anti-war actions?

a. fragging b. search and avoid missions c. wearing peace symbols

d. refusal to fight e. all of above

61.(t/f) According to the official FBI report, National Guardsmen fired on Kent State students because they felt threatened.

62.(t/f) One of the goals of the protests in Seattle in 1999 was to disrupt the IMF meeting.

63. Countries are suing MNCs based in the U.S. under what law?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

64.(m/c) Countries in the Third World are doing all of the following EXCEPT:

a. electing leaders who reject loans from the IMF and World Bank.

b. nationalizing their resources. c. evicting U.S. military bases

d. rejecting international treaties like the FTAA e. none are exceptions

65.-68. Identify four consequences of globalization that might account for popular resistance to global trade agreements and structural adjustment plans.

a. b. c. d.

70.(m/c) The Christian Right became a political force in the 1970s as a backlash against which of the following movements.

a. Civil Rights b. Women’s Rights c. Gay Rights d. b and c e. all of above

71.(t/f) According to the Christian Right, liberals control America through the mass media and the public education system.

72.(m/c) The Christian Right and the corporate-conservative coalition agree on which of the following?

a. eliminating the New Deal b. Anti-gay agenda c. pro-Israel foreign policy

d. a and c e. all of above

73.(m/c) Which of the following are successes of the Christian Right?

a. abstinence only sex education b. teaching intelligent design

c. global AIDs policy d. a and c e. all of above

74.(t/f) The South Dakota abortion law only allowed for one exception; an abortion could be performed if the woman was dying.

75.(t/f) Studies have shown that the majority of young people who make virginity pledges do not have sex before marriage.

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