Trust in Society

Course Description:
You trust your friend to repay the $10 you loaned her last week; investors trust the stock market to accurately value corporate resources; you trust members of your class work group to complete their parts of the group project; patients trust doctors to inform them about the best treatments; some people trust Uber but others trust taxi services; waitresses trust patrons to tip them for good service; many but not all citizens trust the government to enforce laws fairly.

The word trust appears as a verb in each of these examples, but do we really mean the same thing by trust in each of these very different situations? What exactly is trust anyway, and why does it matter? Social science and popular press literature of the past decade suggests that trust is the cause of many "good" things, such as the source of cooperation, the basis of democracy, the foundation of the market economy, the source of national economic power, the key, even, to morality. Given its relation to all things good, it is not surprising that some commentators speak with alarm when they claim that “trust is declining” in society.

In this course we will explore the following questions: What is trust and what are its benefits? How is trust created? How is trust destroyed? Is trust declining in modern society? How would we know if it was? We will read and discuss theoretical and empirical research on trust from sociology and from across the social sciences. After this course you should be able to:
1) Compare definitions of trust and analyze it according to various theoretical frameworks
2) Distinguish trust from other related concepts such as cooperation, distrust and trustworthiness
3) Identify the pros and cons of different empirical measures of trust
4) Discuss the role of, and compare/contrast, trust in specific social contexts
5) Apply your knowledge of trust to a specific case study or empirical research project

Course Requirements
It is essential that students come to class prepared to discuss the reading material for that day's class. Students will be expected to participate regularly in classroom discussions, and will be graded on class participation (15% of course grade). Because it is necessary to be in class to participate, missing four class periods will result in at best a “C” grade for class participation. Missing more than six class periods (regardless of reason) will result in a zero for class participation. **Getting sick with most common illnesses should be more than accommodated with this policy.**

In addition to class participation, students will write 4 short papers (4-6 pages; 1300-2000 words; 15% each of course grade) throughout the term, analyzing a specific issue or aspect of trust (see specific paper assignments below, and the attached policy on late papers). Finally, students will hand in a final term paper (12-15 pages; 4,000-7,000 words; 20%) on any topic of interest related to trust, discussed with and approved by me. As part of this assignment you will write a proposal (3%), and also review (2%) the proposals of two classmates.

Course Grade: Participation (15%); Short papers (4 x 15%); Review of proposals (2%); Final paper proposal (3%) and Final paper (20%).
The following materials are required, and can be purchased from the bookstore of your choice, and are also available on reserve in Baker/Berry library. Other required readings are on the course Canvas site.


*** Students with learning, physical or psychiatric disabilities who will be taking this course and may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible, and by the end of the second week of classes (September 23, 2016). All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Disability Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested. Also, stop by the Academic Skills Center in 224 Baker Library to register for support services. ***

*** For individual peer tutorial assistance with papers, research, and new media projects, students may use RWIT, the Student Center for Research, Writing, and Information Technology. Make appointments online at [www.dartmouth.edu/~rwit](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~rwit), or drop by the Center in Baker-Berry Library, Level One. ***

**Honor Principle** and work in this course:

**Course Readings:** You are encouraged to discuss the readings and your papers with other students in the class, or others outside of the class.

**Short Papers:** You are encouraged to edit and re-edit your papers (comments from others outside the class are encouraged) before handing in to me. You should cite concepts and materials from course readings and other materials appropriately in your papers. You may use any citation method that you are familiar with (e.g., MLA or APA, see more information: [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/sources-citation.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/sources-citation.html)) so long as you are consistent. If you don’t have a preferred method use: [http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_SStyle.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_SStyle.pdf)

**Final Paper:** This is independent work. You are encouraged to get feedback on preliminary drafts from RWIT or others, including other students in the class.

**Questions to consider for each reading (and generally for each paper):**

[Go back and read the Graff reading from the first day!]

What is the (causal) argument being made?
What are the key concepts? How are the key concepts defined?
What evidence does the author provide to support the argument?
Under what conditions does the argument apply? Is the author claiming necessary and/or sufficient conditions?
How does the argument/concepts compare with others we have read?
What are flaws in the argument or definition of concepts?
Course Outline
Sept 12: Introduction to Course

Sept 14: NO Class – see Assignment #1 on Canvas

XHOUR Sept 15: NO Class – Assignment #1 due to Canvas

Sept 16: Arguments and thinking sociologically, thinking about mechanisms.

Section I: What is Trust?
Sept 19: Trust and related concepts
READ: R. Hardin, Trust and Trustworthiness, chs. 1-3


Sept 22: READ: “Trust, Distrust and In Between” by Edna Ullmann-Margalit CANVAS
AND
Heimer, Carol. “Solving the Problem of trust.” Ch. 2 in Trust in Society

Sept 23: READ: R. Hardin, Trust and Trustworthiness, chs. 4,5; 8

WEEK 3: Trust in Society
Sept 26: Trust in Society – what does it do?
AND

Sept 28: Trust in society
READ: Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005. “All for all: Equality and Social Trust” CANVAS
AND
Cooperation w/out Trust, ch1

Sept 29: Political trust and trustworthiness

Sept 30: Trust in transition
READ: Cooperation w/out Trust, chs 9 & 10

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Paper assignment 1: Make an argument to address the questions: What is trust and why do we care about it?
Your paper should also address: What is the basis/definition of trust? What effect is trust purported to have: on individuals, on groups, in society in general?
DUE: SUNDAY October 2 by 5pm to CANVAS.
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Section 2: Producing trust interpersonally

Yamigishi, Toshio. “Trust as a form of social intelligence.” Ch. 4 in Trust in Society.

Oct 5: READ: Cooperation w/out Trust, ch 2

Oct 6: Groups

AND

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Paper assignment 2: Compare and contrast the concept of trust to one other related concept: confidence, cooperation, familiarity, distrust, reciprocity, risk, trustworthiness, uncertainty. In your paper you must define trust. Since there are competing models of trust, you will want to choose one definition to discuss (e.g., is trust an action, a decision, a belief, a moral judgment, a disposition, an expectation?) DUE: Sunday October 16, 5pm to CANVAS

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WEEK 5: trust in low-resource environments

Oct 10: READ: Ain’t No Trust INTRO and ch1

Oct 12: GROUPS – Ain’t No Trust Read chs 2-6, as assigned

Oct 13: Groups discussion

Oct 14: READ Ain’t No Trust Conclusion

Paper #2 DUE on Sunday October 16 by 5pm on CANVAS

Section 3: Institutional Trust

AND

Oct 19: READ: Cooperation without Trust, ch7
AND
Knight, Jack. Chapter 12: “Social Norms and the Rule of Law” In Trust and Society


Final paper Proposal R1 DUE on CANVAS

Oct 21: READ: Gambetta “Streetwise” chapters Intro and Conclusion CANVAS
Trust in Society SOCY 63

PROPOSAL REVIEWS Due Sunday October 23 by 5pm to CANVAS

Section 4: Trust Online
AND
Yamigishi et al. “Solving the Lemons problem with reputation” CANVAS

AND

Oct 27: READ: Khopkar and Resnick, “In the Eye of the Beholder” CANVAS
AND

Final Paper PROPOSAL Revision DUE

AND
Kuwabara K.2015.“Do Reputation Systems Undermine Trust?” AJS 120:1390–1428. CANVAS

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Paper assignment 3: (A) How does the medium of the Internet affect issues of trust? Are issues of trust different in the digital environment than “real world”? How so? OR
(B) Why are signals relevant to trust? Can we signal trustworthiness? Do different situations or social contexts (e.g., Internet) call for different signals, why?
DUE: THURSDAY November 3 by 5pm to CANVAS

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Section 5: Trust in Medical Encounters

AND

Nov 3: Paper 3 DUE by 5pm to CANVAS
Nov 4: READ: Halbert et al. “Racial Differences in Trust in Health Care Providers.” Archives of Internal Medicine 166:896. CANVAS

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Paper assignment 4: What does it mean to say that we trust doctors? Has our “trust” in medical care changed over time? What factors might cause a change in the level (or type) of trust people feel for doctors, or for health care organizations?
DUE: MONDAY Nov 14, 5pm to CANVAS.

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Section 6: Alternatives to Trust
Nov 7: READ: Cook, Hardin, and Levi Cooperation without Trust, ch. 5, 7, 8


Nov 10: GROUPS

Nov 11: GROUPS

What do we know about trust?
Nov 14:

Paper 4 DUE by 5pm to CANVAS

FINAL PAPERS DUE: SUNDAY November 20 by 5 pm to CANVAS
Policy on Late Papers
Short papers handed in any time after they are due will receive a full letter grade reduction. (Basically this means the highest possible grade you can get on a late paper is a B). I will deduct an additional half a letter grade for each additional class period your paper is late. **Any paper more than two weeks late will not be accepted.**

Extensions may be given for extreme individual circumstances. If you are having problems completing an assignment, for whatever reason, it is best to talk with me as soon as possible. Talk to me after class, come to see me in my office, or email me. I may be able to help you get the paper done on time, and I will be more sympathetic than if I hear of your problem the day before or day (!) the assignment is due. **Please note** that talking with me will not necessarily lead to an extension.

**Also Note Well: Computer failure is never considered a justifiable excuse for a paper extension.** Computers sometimes freeze or breakdown; power outages happen. The way to deal with these possibilities is to **SAVE/BACK-UP YOUR WORK.**