

Sociology of Carework
SOCI 2655W – Spring 2025
Department of Sociology
University of Connecticut



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Class Meetings: M/W/F 10:10-11:00

Office Hours: M/W 11:00-12:00 & by appointment

Catalog Description: Organization of carework, both nurturing and social reproduction, including activities essential for daily living; meanings and complexity of carework in various contexts, for diverse populations and through different working conditions; alternative ways of organizing carework infrastructure.

Course Introduction: Carework sustains society by meeting people's fundamental needs. We all need care, however for children, the elderly, disabled persons, and those with short and long-term illnesses, carework is essential. Carework takes place in a variety of contexts, from community groups to people's homes, to facilities like daycare centers, hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation centers. Nearly everyone can provide carework of some form, but not everyone does in equal measure. Carework is structured by intersecting inequalities based upon – economic disparities, racism, sexism, citizenship, migration, disability, youth, and aging. Carework scholarship has documented the inadequacy of the social organization of care around the world, and the effect of the devaluation of care on workers, families, and communities. Students will gain an understanding of the various forces that shape the social organization of carework through an examination of scholarly research, film/multimedia, and a recent memoir.

Course Learning Objectives:

- (1) Define and apply key sociological concepts to the study of carework.
- (2) Explain and critically evaluate competing ideas, theories, and perspectives to the sociological study of carework.
- (3) Apply social science methods and objective reasoning to carework related issues, conflicts, and ethical dilemmas.
- (4) Evaluate the origins, mechanisms, and processes that create and maintain social inequalities around carework as they relate to systems of privilege organized around gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability, and family structure.
- (5) Learn to conduct primary and secondary research and write a minimum of 15 pages (4500 words), excluding references, revised for conceptual clarity and idea development, edited for expression, proofread for grammatical and mechanical correctness through lecture, consultation, and substantive formative commentary on drafts.

How to succeed in this class:

- 1) Attend class and participate.
- 2) If you have questions, concerns, or need help, send an email and visit me during office hours and by appointment.

Locations and General Guidelines:

- Class meets in Hartford Times Building (HTB) 208.
- Office Hours meet in HTB 511 and via Webex: <https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/kip04003>
- Course materials and class announcements will be posted to HuskyCT: <https://huskyct.uconn.edu>
- Changes or additions may be made with advanced notice. If so, I will email your UConn address.

Required Readings: Please complete readings by the date listed in the Course Schedule.

- 1) Tronto, Joan. 2015. *Who Cares: How to Reshape A Democratic Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Available through the UConn Library: <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.lib.uconn.edu/stable/10.7591/j.ctt18kr598>
- 2) Mong, Sherry N. 2020. *Taking Care of Our Own: When Family Caregivers Do Medical Work*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (Mong below). Available through the UConn Library: <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.lib.uconn.edu/stable/10.7591/j.ctvv417rj>
- 3) Land, Stephanie. 2020. *Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay and a Mothers' Will to Survive*, NY: Hachette Books (Land below). Available through the UConn Library: On 3-hour reserve UConn Hartford Library.
- 3) Webpage readings – available on HuskyCT (W).

Grades:

HCCO Provider Interview = 5%
HCCO Outline & bibliography = 5%
HCCO Paper Rough draft = 10%

HCCO Paper Final Draft = 10%
HCCO Presentation/Slide = 10%
Engagement Exercises = 20%

Exam 1 – Midterm = 20%
Exam 2 – Final = 20%
Total = 100%

Grading Scale:

A = 100-93.0	B = 87.9-83.0	C = 77.9-73.0	D = 67.9-63.0
A- = 92.9-90.0	B- = 82.9-80.0	C- = 72.9-70.0	D- = 62.9-60.0
B+ = 89.9-88.0	C+ = 79.9-78.0	D+ = 69.9-68.0	F < 60.0

Hartford Community Carework Organization (HCCO) Research Paper:

- Students will study one Hartford Community Carework organization through its web-based resources, an interview with a representative, and scholarly research. To find your HCCO, begin with Connecticut 211 (www.211ct.org).
- In week 3, students will submit a 1-page HCCO proposal for approval to assess that your HCCO is a good fit for this assignment. Once students have an approved HCCO, they will locate a representative to interview. This course will provide support through readings, lecture, and peer review to develop students' interviews, research, and writing.
- Your research should begin with a brief representative biography. Next, detail the HCCO's history and type of care, current programs, size, and scope of the organization's and outreach, and population(s) served. Your analysis should connect your interview and website data with 2 theories/key terms from our course and reflect on care innovation(s) – your HCCO's new approaches to care and resources provided.
- Students will generate insights about their website and interview data through *scholarly* resources – 3 journal articles (sources may include *The International Journal of Care and Caring*, *Gender & Society*, *The Gerontologist*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *The Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Signs*, *Social Forces*, *Sociological Forum*, and *Work, Employment and Society*, for example) and 2 academic books (look for university presses). You may draw 2 of your articles from the course readings listed below. Further instructions to follow.
- Please use a 12-point font (e.g., Arial, Times), 1” margins double-spaced text.
- To review, you will submit the following to HuskyCT:
 - 1-page HCCO proposal for approval.
 - An Interview with an HCCO representative and a copyedited interview transcript.
 - A preliminary Outline and Bibliography in American Sociological Association (ASA) format.
 - A 15-page (4,500 words, assuming 300 words/page not including citations) First Draft.
 - A 15-page (4,500 words, assuming 300 words/page not including citations) Final Draft.
 - Prior to submitting your final draft, you must turn in your First Draft and Bibliography.
 - Final revised papers are due to HuskyCT on the last day of class (before final exams).
 - A 5 minute presentation and PowerPoint slide about your HCCO, its contribution to Hartford area carework, and vision for care innovations. Presentations are scheduled for the last 2 weeks of class. Slides are due 24 hours before your scheduled presentation.

Resources:

- Please make use of the Hartford Writing Center
- ASA Citation format: <https://lib.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ASA6th.pdf>

Engagement Exercises: Across the semester, there will be weekly in class engagement exercises including reading assessments, reflections, and other activities. Reading assessments are, in effect, quizzes that help ensure students are prepared for class and can participate in meaningful discussions. If you have read the readings, you should be able to easily answer the questions and receive full credit. Reflections and other activities will enable us to focus in or expand out from course material. For the reflections and other activities, you will receive full credit for each thoughtfully completed exercise you turn in. The idea behind these exercises is not to assess your writing, but for you to engage with ideas and concepts related to our writing intensive study of the sociology of families. Engagement exercises must be completed in class on the day they are assigned. If you have an excused absence, please see “Makeup Assignments” below for more information. There will be more than 10 engagement exercises across the semester. You must complete 10 for full credit (2 points each, 20 points total).

Writing Intensive Course Guidelines: According to UConn’s Writing Competency criteria, to pass this course you must pass its writing components. <https://geoc.uconn.edu/writing-competency>

Exams: There will be a mid-term covering the first half of the course and a final covering the second. Exams include short and long essay questions. A study guide covering a comprehensive list of potential essay questions will be distributed prior to each exam. A subset of exam questions will be drawn verbatim from this longer list of questions. Make-up exams will only be offered with documentation and permission from the instructor.

Makeup Assignments: will be offered for excused absences with permission from the instructor. If you have an excused absence, you may make up in class exercises by writing a 3 page paper that: 1) summarizes the main points and significance of that week’s readings and 2) discusses how they can be integrated into your life. Makeup papers are due within 3 weeks of the missed class.

Technology: Electronic devices (like laptops, tablets, iPads, and cell phones) must be **completely turned off and put away** during class. **The only exception is** if students receive permission from the instructor or have a CSD accommodation to use an electronic device for note taking purposes **ONLY**. If you have a CSD accommodation, please contact me during the first week of class. In case of emergency, please leave the classroom to use your phone and return when you are done. The instructor will monitor the class for unauthorized electronics use. Students using electronics in class may be asked to leave. Plan to take notes by hand. Research shows that students understand and retain more information when they take notes by hand rather than typing. This is likely because typing allows students to write down lectures verbatim, instead of processing and distilling the most important information. Laptops can also be a distraction—for both users and their neighbors. For these reasons, everyone is encouraged to take written notes. Lecture slides will be made available to students on HuskyCT.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all work submitted in this course must be your own. You are discouraged from using AI tools to generate content that will end up in work (assignments, activities, responses) that is part of your evaluation in this course. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often incomplete, inaccurate, and may constitute plagiarism

UConn Resources, Policies and Services: I am committed to supporting your success in this course. Your health is a critical to your success; please contact me if you encounter challenges that impact your performance or your well-being. We can work together to identify solutions to course-related concerns, and I can help direct you to UConn resources for your academic, personal, and professional development. For more information, here are some of UConn’s resources:

- University Guidelines apply: <http://provost.uconn.edu/syllabi-references>.
- Center for Students with Disabilities: <https://csd.uconn.edu/>
- Plagiarism Resources: <https://lib.uconn.edu/services/ask/get-help/writing/plagiarism-resources/>
- “Be Well” hotline provides free 24-7/365 mental health support for all UConn students: 833-308-3040
- Regional Campus Mental Health Services: <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/regional-campuses/>
- Office of Student Services to request support: <https://studentservices.hartford.uconn.edu/contact-us/>
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, Inappropriate Romantic Relationships: <http://policy.uconn.edu/2013/08/07/policy-against-discrimination-harassment-and-inappropriate-romantic-relationships/>
- The Student Code of Conduct: <http://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-preamble/>

Extra credit: Provide a social media or film-based YouTube clip URL and write 3-4 sentences that 1) define the course concept illustrated and 2) why it is a good example. Please do NOT submit academic, scholarly, or Ted talk sources. Due to HuskyCT by the last day of class.

Course Schedule: (Complete readings/assignments by the date listed. Changes may be made with advanced notice):

Date Readings & Assignments

Week 1: What is Care?

- 1/22 Introduction
Develop HCCO Research Ideas and sites
- 1/24 England, “Emerging Theories of Care Work” (W)
Tronto, “Introduction”
Mong, Introduction and Chapter 1, “The Work Caregivers Do”
Find Your HCCO

Week 2: Interviewing Careworkers

- 1/27 Laureau, “Learning to Interview” (W)
Develop your HCCO 1-page Proposal
- 1/29 Laureau, “How to Conduct a Good Interview” (W)
- 1/31 Mong, Chapter 2, “On-the-Job Training”
HCCO 1-page Proposal Due to HuskyCT

Week 3: Definitions of Care

- 2/3 Folbre and Olin Wright, “Defining Care” (W)
HCCO Proposal Evaluated on HuskyCT (Please check HuskyCT for HCCO approval)
Begin HCCO Representative Interview Schedule Development
- 2/5 Morris, “Impairment and Disability: Constructing and Ethics of Care That Promotes Human Rights” (W)
- 2/7 Mong, Chapter 3, “Who Pays?”

Week 4: Carework History

- 2/20 Nakano Glenn, “From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor” (W)
Continue HCCO Representative Interview Schedule Development
- 2/12 Duffy, “Beyond Outsourcing: Paid Carework in Historical Perspective” (W)
- 2/14 Mong, Chapter 4, “Integrating Care Work with Life”
HCCO Representative Interview Schedule Due to HuskyCT

Week 5: Politics and Care

- 2/17 Tronto, “When We Understand Care, We’ll Need to Redefine Democracy”
Schedule, Conduct, and Copyedit HCCO Representative Interview
- 2/19 Kashen, “Building a Care Infrastructure in the United States”(W)
- 2/21 Mong, Chapter 5, “You Do What You Gotta Do”

Week 6: Emotions and Care

- 2/24 Dodson and Zinbarg, “It’s like a family: Caring Labor, Exploitation, and Race in Nursing Homes,” (W)
If necessary, Schedule, Conduct, and Copyedit HCCO Provider Interview
Begin Analysis, Collect and Review Library Resources, Draft Outline
- 2/26 Scott, “I Feel as if I am the one who is disabled” (W)
- 2/28 Mong, Chapter 6, “Work Shifts”
Copyedited HCCO Representative Interview Transcript Due to HuskyCT

Week 7: Economics of Care

- 3/3 Tronto, "Care, Inc."
England, Budig, and Folbre. "Wages of virtue: The relative pay of care work," (W)
Continue HCCO Analysis, Collect and Review Library Resources, Draft Outline
- 3/5 Nakano Glenn, "Neoliberalism and Globalization" (W)
Midterm Study Guide Distributed
- 3/7 Mong, Conclusion
HCCO Outline & Bibliography Due

Week 8: Intersecting Inequalities and Care

- 3/10 Duffy, "Reproducing Labor Inequalities" (W)
Guest Speakers, Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau, Hands on Hartford
- 3/12 Aranda, "Global Care Work and Gendered Constraints" (W)
- 3/14 **Midterm Exam**
HCCO Outline and Bibliography Returned (Please check HuskyCT for comments)
Begin HCCO First Draft Development

Week 9: Spring Recess March 16-22

Week 10: The Globalization of Care

- 3/24 Zimmerman, Litt, and Bose, "Globalization and Multiple Crises of Care" (W)
Williams, "Migration and Care: Themes, Concepts and Challenges" (W)
Continue HCCO First Draft Development
Guest Speaker, Catherine Gruszka Vadala, Bushnell Front of House & Volunteer Operations Mgr.
- 3/26 Solari, "Professionals and Saints: How Immigrant Careworkers Negotiate Gender Identities at Work" (W)
- 3/28 Land, Ehrenreich, "Foreword" and Chapters 1-5

Week 11: Care Contexts

- 3/31 Price-Glynn and Rakovski, Ch 3, "The Best of Both Worlds" (W)
Continue HCCO First Draft Development
- 4/2 Campbell, "(Dis)continuity of Care: Discovering the Ruling Relations of Home Support" (W)
- 4/4 Land, Chapters 6-10
HCCO First Draft and Bibliography Due on HuskyCT

Week 12: Parenting and Care

- 4/7 Grusami, "Motherwork under the state" (W)
Guest Speaker, Kelly Dougherty, Hands on Hartford
- 4/9 Luhr, "Signaling Parenthood: Managing the Motherhood Penalty and Fatherhood Premium in the U.S. Service Sector" (W)
HCCO Presentation Signup
- 4/11 Land, Chapters 11-14
HCCO First Drafts Returned On HuskyCT
Begin HCCO Final Paper Revision

Week 13: Dirty Work

- 4/14 Duffy, "Doing the Dirty Work: Gender, Race and Reproductive Labor in Historical Perspective" (W)
Continue HCCO Final Paper Revision
Develop your HCCO Presentation and PowerPoint Slide
- 4/16 Stacey, "Finding Dignity in Dirty Work" (W)
- 4/18 Land, Chapters 15-18

Week 14: Meaning Making and Care

- 4/21 Baines, "Moral Projects and Compromise Resistance: Resisting Uncaring in Nonprofit Care Work" (W)
Continue HCCO Final Paper Revision
Develop your HCCO Presentation and PowerPoint Slide
- 4/23 Mauldin and Brown, "Missing Pieces: Engaging in Sociology of Disability in Medical Sociology" (W)
Guest Speaker Patricia Kelly, President/CEO Ebony Horsewomen
- 4/25 Land, Chapters 19-22
HCCO In Class Presentations
Submit your HCCO Presentation slide to HuskyCT 24 hours before your presentation

Week 15: Transforming Care

- 4/28 Nakano Glenn, "Creating a Caring Society" (W)
HCCO In Class Presentations
Submit your HCCO Presentation slide to HuskyCT 24 hours before your presentation
- 4/30 Tronto, "Making the Caring-With Revolution Happen"
HCCO In Class Presentations
Submit your HCCO Presentation slide to HuskyCT 24 hours before your presentation
- 5/2 Land, Chapters 23-27
Final Exam Study Guide Distributed
HCCO Final Draft Due
HCCO In Class Presentations
Submit your HCCO Presentation slide to HuskyCT 24 hours before your presentation

Week 16: Final Exams

Reading Days: May 3-4

Final Exams: May 5-10, For exam date & time see: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/exams>

Grades Due: May 13