At the root of this class is an exploration of the idea that culture is shaped through social interactions and relationships with others; and that the opposite is also true. Networks coalesce, are transformed, and dissolve because of cultural change — and indeed, there are good reasons to think of networks as a form of culture as well. This is a graduate course that has a dual focus on subfields of the sociology of culture and social networks; and as such, there is a tradeoff here. I make a choice for breadth across these fields rather than the requisite depth that either one deserves (indeed, entire careers have been devoted to each one). Still, the course is based on the conviction that using a lens of the study of culture can be a useful entry point into the study of social networks, and vice versa.

The format of the course is partially discussion-based, and partially practical application.

- Discussion: I will spend time each week giving key background and context to how the work articulates with the development of the field, and each week one (or two) of you will lead a discussion introducing the material (no more than 15 minutes), and we’ll spend the remainder of the time engaging with the questions raised by the discussants. This discussion will touch on conceptual/methodological contributions of the studies, how they articulate with prior approaches, and any challenging questions they raise.
- The practical application part of the course will involve you identifying and working with a model dataset (either brought to the course by you, or provided to you by me) that has both relationship and cultural attributes, and then doing three workshop assignments.

Your goals in this course to take the topical knowledge and skills you learn during the term to develop a research paper to inform a comps, dissertation chapter, or independent manuscript. Any of these final products will be evaluated by me, but part of your course grade will come from thoughtful peer reviews of your classmates’ presentations to help them advance their thinking should they decide to develop it further into a publication, thesis, or dissertation. Starting in Week 2, if you have not signed up as one of the week’s two discussants, you will be required to write and submit a 1-page memo (single-spaced, 12pt font) on an aspect(s) of the reading(s) that you found interesting (or provocative, or problematic) to Moodle by Wednesday @ 9a. The list of weekly supplemental readings is intended to provide extra detail for those that wish it; these are not required.

Grading: 30% class participation and engagement (including serving as discussant and your reflection papers); 30% workshop assignments; 40% final paper.

Required texts:
Week 1: Network origins of culture
McLean, Paul. 2016. Culture in Networks. Chapters 1-3 (pp.1-64), Chapter 5
adams, j. Gathering Social Network Data, Ch 1-2.

Also recommended:

Week 2: Cultural origins of networks
McLean, Paul. 2016. Culture in Networks. Chapter 6 “Networks from culture”.
adams, j. Gathering Social Network Data, Ch 3.

Also recommended:

Week 3: Research ethics with relational data
adams, j. Gathering Social Network Data, Ch 4. “ethical considerations”

Week 4: Measurement of meaning structures
adams, j. Gathering Social Network Data, Ch 5.
Also recommended:

*** Workshop Homework 1 due ***
Week 5: Culture & cognition

Also recommended:

Week 6: Culture, networks, & social class

Also recommended: TBD

Week 7: Meaning-making processes & network mechanisms

Also recommended: TBD

*** Workshop Homework 2 due date TBD***
Week 8: Social movements & networks


Also recommended:

*** Workshop Homework 3 due ***

Week 9: Cultural production and networks


Also recommended:


Week 10: Cultural preferences, attitudes, & tastes


Also recommended:
**Week 11: What’s next in the analysis of culture and networks**


*Also recommended:*  


**Week 12: Final project presentations and group feedback, Part 1**

In this class session, your goal is to publicly summarize (in 10 minutes) your final project, lessons learned, and next steps. This will serve as a workshop of sorts, and allow you to integrate feedback from your peers in time for the final paper submission.

**Week 13: Final project presentations and group feedback, Part 2**

In this class session, your goal is to publicly summarize (in 10 minutes) your final project, lessons learned, and next steps. This will serve as a workshop of sorts, and allow you to integrate feedback from your peers in time for the final paper submission.

**Week 14: Concluding thoughts & open topics**

**********Final papers due December 18**********
All students in this class must adhere to the American Sociological Association’s Code of Ethics. Violations of this code will not be tolerated. [http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics](http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics)

**UMass Amherst statement on academic honesty**

Full statement: [http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy)

All members of the University community must participate in the development of a climate conducive to academic honesty. While the faculty, because of their unique role in the educational process, have the responsibility for defining, encouraging, fostering, and upholding the ethic of academic honesty, students have the responsibility of conforming in all respects to that ethic. Intellectual honesty requires that students demonstrate their own learning during examinations and other academic exercises, and that other sources of information or knowledge be appropriately credited. Scholarship depends upon the reliability of information and reference in the work of others. Student work in this class may be analyzed for originality of content, electronically or by other means. No form of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating of dishonesty will be condoned in the University community. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, facilitating dishonesty among others.

**UMass Amherst Office of Disability Services**

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to making reasonable, effective and appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and help create a barrier-free campus. If you have a documented disability on file with Disability Services ([www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability)), you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in this course. If your disability requires an accommodation, please notify your instructors as early as possible in the course so that we may make arrangements in a timely manner.

**Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Relationship Violence at UMass**

As a faculty member I have a responsibility to all students to provide resources and assistance to anyone who wishes to disclose potential sexual misconduct. In July 2018 there was a recent change to Title IX UMass guidelines, such that ‘regular faculty’ such as myself are not mandated reporters (note: department heads or program directors – which I am not – still are mandated reporters). This means that anything you report to me will be kept private – the intent of this policy is to allow students to come to most (non-administrative) faculty with concerns and questions, and to talk openly and confidentially, so that we can help you.

Separately, students can also contact the Title IX office directly at eod@admin.umass.edu if they want to make a report, file a complaint, find out about resources and/or accommodations. Other resources include the Title IX webpage: [http://www.umass.edu/titleix/](http://www.umass.edu/titleix/) and the Sexual & Relationship Violence Resource Guide: [http://www.umass.edu/titleix/sites/default/files/documents/sexual_violence_resource_guide-09-15.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/titleix/sites/default/files/documents/sexual_violence_resource_guide-09-15.pdf)