The extent to which we take everyday objects for granted is the precise extent to which they govern and inform our lives. Margaret Visser, 1986

It’d be difficult to find an everyday object that we take more for granted than the openings of our interactions. How many people have you greeted today, even just in passing? Over the course of your lifetime, how many times have you introduced yourself to someone new? And how many times have you arrived to some social scene where already-present others were engaged in some activity and you had to find a way ‘in’ to what they were doing?

These phenomena are so deeply part of the background of our daily social lives that special effort is required to notice them. In this class, you will learn to see these incredibly familiar everyday phenomena, in a sense, for the very first time.

This course is intrinsically interdisciplinary – we will examine the openings of interactions by drawing on research from sociology, anthropology, ecology and ethology, linguistics and psychology. And we will also explore different methodological approaches to the study of this empirical phenomenon, from the experimental to the naturalistic.

We think in generalities, but we live in detail.
Alfred North Whitehead, circa 1861 - 1947

This class will give you tools to enable you to perceive, and then scientifically analyze, the details of the openings of everyday social interactions. You will learn about past and current research on openings, and you will conduct some of your own original research – efforts that together will reveal how human social conduct is strongly organized, coherent and meaningful in nuanced ways.

This course will show you how critical the openings of our everyday interactions are – both to our sense of ‘self’ and to our social relationships.

Required readings for the course include:

- Selected readings compiled in the Course Pack/Reader
  Available at MUB Copy Center, Level 2 East, Durham, NH 03824, (603) 862-1984
  Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00am – 4:30pm [also on 3-hr reserve at Dimond Library]

- Additional readings on Blackboard
  CMN 788 Blackboard (Bb) course website: http://blackboard.unh.edu
  Check our course website and your email daily for important updates and information
The overall structure of the course and the required readings for each Unit are outlined on the following pages. All dates on this syllabus are tentative, and may need to be adjusted during the semester due to unforeseen circumstances. I will update the schedule at each class meeting as needed.

Course grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date Assigned</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10) Reaction Papers</td>
<td>Every week</td>
<td>Sundays at 11:59pm</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see Reading list below)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Presentation</td>
<td>Start of semester</td>
<td>TBD individually</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription Exercise</td>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation Exercise</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3-5) Quizzes</td>
<td>TBA (unannounced)</td>
<td>TBA (unannounced)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project*</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Components due throughout semester</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see table below)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PROJECT COMPONENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Date Due (tentative)</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data gathering plan + IRB training module</td>
<td>by 9/19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ consent + video of 2 openings, 1 closing</td>
<td>by 10/12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcripts of 2 openings, 1 closing</td>
<td>by 10/31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic plan (tailored to your data)</td>
<td>by 11/9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class presentation</td>
<td>11/21 – 12/7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final research paper</td>
<td>by 12/13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total points possible</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nature of these assignments will be discussed in class.

All dates on this syllabus are tentative, and may need to be adjusted during the semester due to unforeseen circumstances. I will update the schedule at each class meeting as needed.

NOTE: Our class will not meet on the following days:
- Monday, August 29th [curtailed operations due to hurricane Irene]
- Monday, September 5th [Labor Day]
- Monday, October 10th [Fall Break Day] – **class re-scheduled to meet on Tuesday October 11**
- Wednesday, November 16th [NCA Conference]
- Wednesday, November 23rd [pre-Thanksgiving: “classes follow a Friday schedule”]
Class Policies

Please arrive to class on time. Set all cell phones and other electronic devices to ‘silent’, and do not send/receive text messages during class. Please do not audibly chew gum in class (my pet peeve).

Attendance: I expect you to be present at each and every class. I will keep track of attendance throughout the semester. It’s critical that you attend class regularly. Much of the material I will expect you to know and use in doing graded work will come only from in-class discussions. I do not lecture ‘from the book’. If you must miss a class, please get the notes from a classmate.

Complete reading assignments before class meetings. Active and informed participation during class is a necessary part of this course. Excessive unexcused absences and/or excessive tardiness will lower your grade.

Quizzes: There will be (3-5) unannounced quizzes during the course of the semester. These quizzes will be short (10-15 multiple-choice and/or true/false questions). They will be ‘open book’ and ‘open note’ – you may use your own personal copy of the required Course Pack/Reader, and/or you may refer to your own hard-copy (handwritten or printed out) lecture notes. During quizzes, you may not use any electronic device (e.g., use of laptops, smart phones, BlackBerries/iPhones, iPods, iPads, cell phones is prohibited). Quizzes will cover material presented in class and assigned readings. There is a strict time limit on these quizzes – be sure to stay up-to-date on your reading. There are no make-up quizzes.

The success of this course depends upon mutual respect and courtesy. Treat others’ written and spoken contributions with respect at all times.

If you need to miss class on the day you are scheduled to do a presentation, or on the day an assignment is due, see me in advance. Legitimate reasons include official university activities, religious observances, and medical appointments that can’t be otherwise scheduled. You must get my permission in advance and make explicit alternative arrangements with me. If you are ill or have an emergency, notify me on my office voicemail (603-862-2362) before class meets that day. If this is impossible, get in touch with me as soon as you can. Be prepared to document the problem.

Do not assume that late work will be accepted. Assignments that are turned in late may suffer a grade reduction of one letter grade per day late.

Discussion of grades: When an evaluated assignment is returned to you, please take it home and read the comments I have made. If you have questions about the evaluation of your work after you have reviewed your assignment and my comments at home, set up an appointment with me to discuss your work. This appointment must be set up within one week of the return of the assignment.

Academic honesty: The University of New Hampshire’s Academic Honesty Policy will be strictly enforced. The University has a policy of zero tolerance for plagiarism. Plagiarism is the undocumented use of someone else’s ideas, words, or sentences. To present another’s work as one’s own, even if paraphrasing, is plagiarism. Doing so is a serious offense and will result in failure for that assignment and, most likely, for the course. If you are not sure about how to use certain materials, see me. All of the work you submit must be your own original work. Review UNH’s policy at http://www.unh.edu/student/rights/ It applies to all class work, including in-class and take-home work.

Special needs: The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 (located in 201 Smith Hall, 3 Garrison Avenue). If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide me with that information privately, in my office, so that we can review those accommodations.
SYLLABUS

Unit 1: INTRODUCTION
What is an opening of an everyday interaction? Why and how are openings important? How can we study openings?

Readings to do for Week of 9/4 - Reaction paper due **Sun 9/4 11:59pm**


Unit 2: WHAT’S ‘AT STAKE’ DURING OPENINGS?
What’s at stake for other social animals? What’s at stake for humans? Risk and social uncertainty; First impressions: Face and social relationships

Readings to do for Week of 9/11 - Reaction paper due **Sun 9/11 11:59pm**


Readings to do for Week of 9/18 - Reaction paper due **Sun 9/18 11:59pm**


Unit 3: PUBLIC ENCOUNTERS
When in public, how/when/why do we start interacting with unknown others?

Readings to do for Week of 9/25 - Reaction paper due Sun 9/25 11:59pm


Unit 4: CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND TELEPHONE OPENINGS
How can we study the details of recorded, naturally occurring openings?

Readings to do for Week of 10/2 - Reaction paper due Sun 10/2 11:59pm


Unit 5: CO-PRESENT GREETINGS

How do we begin a face-to-face interaction? How do we get to greet one another? What do we convey through the precise way we produce our greetings?

Readings to do for Week of 10/9 - Reaction paper due Sun 10/9 11:59pm


Unit 6: INTRODUCTIONS

Why are introductions important? What social norms govern them? How do we launch, and then build, introductions? ‘Who’ are you for someone you’re meeting for the first time?

Readings to do for Week of 10/16 - Reaction paper due Sun 10/16 11:59pm


Readings to do for Week of 10/23 - Reaction paper due Sun 10/23 11:59pm

Unit 7: HOW ARRIVING AND PRE-PRESENT PARTIES BECOME UNIFIED

How do we figure out ‘where’ another person is ‘coming from’?
How do we do ‘including’? How do we close openings?

Readings to do for Week of 10/30 - Reaction paper due Sun 10/30 11:59pm

Readings to do for Week of 11/6 - Reaction paper due Sun 11/6 11:59pm


Corsaro, W. A. 1979. “‘We’re friends, right?’: Children’s use of access rituals in a nursery school.” Language in Society 8:315-323. [Blackboard]


SocGrads Email chain