

SOC 101 • PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

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2015 Spring semester • Friday 2:00-4:45 • Room D105

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2:30-4:00 & by appointment • D205W

Nothing we do or experience takes place in a vacuum; everything is always related to a [social] context of some kind...The emotional problems we struggle with as individuals aren't due simply to what kind of parents we had, for their participation in the social system—at work, in the community, in society as a whole—shaped them as people, including their roles as mothers and fathers. An individualistic model is misleading because it encourages us to explain human behavior and experience from a perspective that's so narrow it misses most of what's going on. (Allan G. Johnson)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class, you will be introduced to the sociological perspective and learn to use the sociological imagination to explore the organization and regulation of social life. We will analyze social structure and its component elements as we re-examine our views of social relationships, organizations, institutions, and social categories. We will investigate social inequality and the mechanisms that reinforce and perpetuate it and how inequality might be challenged and changed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, a student should have the following skills and abilities:

- the ability to utilize critical thinking skills for analysis of society and human group behavior
- an understanding of how to use sociological concepts to understand and analyze cultures and societies
- the ability to utilize systematic inquiry for analyzing the social world
- an understanding of our role as individuals in making, maintaining, and changing society.

REQUIRED TEXT

Giddens, Anthony, Mitchell Duneier, Richard P. Appelbaum, & Deborah Carr. (2014) *Introduction to Sociology*, Seagull 9th edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION 15% OF COURSE GRADE

Participation in class discussion is essential. It is a graded element of this course and is fundamental to effective learning. Participation credit is earned when you discuss the readings as well as for sharing stories, thoughts, opinions, asking questions, and responding to other students' inquiries. The exams will be based in part on in-class discussions and activities, so your presence at every class is extremely important to your grade, as is your active and involved participation. Participation will be assessed each class meeting and your presence/absence will be noted. More than two absences may lower your final grade by one letter. It is your responsibility to be sure that your presence in class is accounted for by signing in each class meeting.

I will use the following criteria to evaluate your participation:

- Frequency and clarity of your verbal contributions. Are you making an effort to contribute to class discussion? Is it evident that you have prepared for class?
- Knowledge of the reading material and your ability to grasp its central themes. How carefully and critically did you read?
- Your ability to take an independent and reflective stance toward ideas under discussion. Are you willing to think and re-think your ideas and positions?
- The overall development of your power of verbal expression during the course of the semester. Do you demonstrate increased willingness and ability to contribute to class discussion as the course progresses?

While not all students will be as interested in all of the topics we cover, I expect everyone to be very, very attentive and engaged. Please use your computers **only** to take notes. I will deduct points from your attendance and participation grade if I notice that you are browsing the Internet.

READING ASSIGNMENTS & OUTLINES 20% OF COURSE GRADE

Readings for each class are listed in the course outline to follow and are also posted on the Blackboard page for this class. Readings must be completed before class on the day it is listed. They are designed to prepare you for the upcoming lecture. You will complete the readings on your own so that you are familiar with the topics to be discussed during class. You are responsible for all assigned reading, whether or not it is discussed in class.

To ensure that students have completed the reading assignments and grasped its central themes, you will be required to submit an outline on all assigned reading from the Giddens et al text. This will help you build skills in distilling and synthesizing information.

Reading outlines must be **dated with the due date** of the assignment and its **chapter title**. I will accept either typed or hand-written outlines. Your outlines must be in formal **outline format** and should cover all of the important material from the texts. This means that you will **not** cover every single piece of information in the chapter. Your outline should boil it all down to the most important points with some supporting facts. This means that **all headings** and **all bold terms** must be in your outline. Any quotes must be shorter than two lines and should include the page number(s) where the quote appears. Bear in mind that an outline is not a list of terms with definitions; it is an information hierarchy that clearly presents the major ideas from the chapter.

IN-CLASS CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISES 15% OF COURSE GRADE

Throughout the semester, 5 critical thinking exercises will be done during class meetings. These exercises will require you to directly apply the readings assigned for that day. My purpose is to promote critical thinking, interpretation, and analysis and ensure your understanding of key course concepts. The material you will draw on for these exercises will be primarily the readings in conjunction with that day's lecture.

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS 10% EACH 20% OF COURSE GRADE

You will write 2 sociological analyses over the course of the semester. These papers will each be at least 3 pages in length and must be typewritten. Detailed instructions for each paper are provided in a separate packet and are also posted on the Blackboard page for this class.

EXAMS 15% EACH 30% OF COURSE GRADE

There will be 2 exams; one during the semester at the Midterm mark, and one during Finals Week at the end of the semester. All exams are open-book and open-notes exams. You must use your **own books** and your **own notes** for the exams. Exams must be done in class on the designated date. Exams are not revisable. I will provide details about the exam questions when the exam dates approach.

CLASS CANCELLATION

If the College cancels classes due to adverse weather conditions, the College has a system in place for informing students. The Three Rivers home page also contains that information. If class is canceled by me personally, I will inform you through your **CommNet email address**. I will also inform the administration who will then post a sign on the classroom door.

GRADING

I expect all assigned work to be handed in on the day it is due. I will not grade late work. An alternative due date is acceptable only under extraordinary circumstances and with at least one week's advance notice.

Sociological Analyses will be graded on a 10-point rubric. This grading rubric can be found with the Paper Assignment Instructions.

All inquiries or disagreements regarding grades will be handled during my office hours or at another mutually agreeable time. I will not discuss grades immediately before, during, or after class.

Exams and your final grade for the course will be evaluated on a conventional A to F scale.

A 95 – 100

B- 80 – 83

D+ 67 – 69

A- 90 – 94

C+ 77 – 79

D 64 – 66

B+ 87 – 89

C 74 – 76

D- 60 – 63

B 84 – 86

C- 70 – 73

F under 60

Reading Outlines will be graded on a 3-point rubric as follows:

| | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| CONTENTS | Outline covers all of the main points with enough detail to be thoroughly understood without being overly detailed. Quotation directions are followed. | Outline covers most of the main points OR notes cover far too much of the details. Quotation directions followed. | Outline barely covers all of the main points. Quotation directions not followed. | Outline is incomplete, inadequate, and/or unacceptable. |
| ORGANIZATION | Outline is easy to read and uses a clear outlining style. Main points, supporting ideas, and explanations are in correct positions. | Outline is mostly clear and easy to read. The outline style is inconsistent, but able to be followed. | Outline is difficult to read and/or outlining style is a barrier to reading and comprehension. | Outline is unclear and outlining style is unacceptable. |
| COMPREHENSION | It is clear that the student read and mastered the material and concepts from the text. | It is clear that the student adequately read and understood the material and concepts from the text. | It is clear that the student did not read and/or adequately understand the material or concepts from the text. | It is clear that the student did very little reading and did not understand the material or concepts from the text. |

In-Class Exercises will be graded on a 3-point rubric as follows:

| | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| CONTENTS | Demonstrates full knowledge of the subject with explanations and elaborations. Uses clear statements and excellent sociological reasoning. | Demonstrates good knowledge of the subject with relevant explanations. Uses clear statements and sociological reasoning. | Demonstrates some knowledge of the subject with attempts at explanations. Lacks clear statements and sociological reasoning. | No clear knowledge of the subject matter and no attempt at explanations, clear statements, or sociological reasoning. |
| EVIDENCE | Interpretation and evaluation is thorough and systematic. Conclusions are logical and reflect sociologically informed thought. | Interpretation and evaluation is good and demonstrates some logic and sociologically informed thought. | Interpretation and evaluation is acceptable. Little logic employed and sociologically informed thought largely absent. | Interpretation and evaluation is unacceptable. Logic and sociologically informed thought absent. |
| COMPREHENSION | Shows complete understanding of the exercise and applied sociological concepts. Accurately interprets evidence and graphics. | Shows adequate understanding of the exercise and applied sociological concepts. Good interpretation of the evidence and graphics. | Shows some understanding of the exercise and applied sociological concepts. Questionable interpretation of the evidence and graphics. | Shows little understanding of the exercise and applied sociological concepts. Poor interpretation of the evidence and graphics. |

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. I encourage students to discuss course material and study together, but everyone must do their own work. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor. If you present someone else's work as your own (including cheating on assignments or exams and/or plagiarizing on assignments or papers), you will **automatically fail** the class.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cellular phones are allowed in class only if they are **turned off** or turned to a **silent mode**. Vibrating mode is not allowed, as it can sometimes be heard. Under no circumstances are you to answer your phone or text message in class. If you must respond, please leave the room. If you answer your phone or text while in class, I will take your phone until the end of class.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Some of the material in this course involves issues, language, and areas that are sensitive in nature. Sociology courses can sometimes bring about unsettling feelings as they address personal matters as well as academic matters. This course will draw on our experiential knowledge as well as our cognitive understandings. It is important for us to be especially aware of the unique learning process in which we are involved and to insure a level of sensitivity for others' needs, feelings, and struggles.

For productive class interaction, I suggest that we all follow certain guidelines:

- Listen attentively to whomever is speaking and do not interrupt. It is unacceptable to chat with your neighbor while another student is trying to participate.
- Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on social categories exist.
- Understand that we have all learned misinformation about these social categories.
- Agree not blame ourselves or others for this misinformation while accepting responsibility for not repeating such misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This doesn't mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully.

Please note that I run a low-tech classroom. I do not post or hand out my lecture notes, conduct PowerPoint lectures, or expect online discussions/submissions. I do write out my notes as you write yours, pause for your contributions, and expect in-person interaction.

ACCESSIBILITY

I intend for my courses to be as accessible to as many different people as possible. If there is any reason why the standard approach to college classrooms and coursework is difficult for you to accomplish or if you have any special issues that have the potential to interfere with your completion of the course requirements, please come and talk to me about it.

This may include but is not limited to: extreme shyness; difficulty with English; learning disability; physical disability; personal life issues; emotional/psychological challenges; past experiences that make course material anxiety-producing; students whose parents did not attend college and can't help their children understand the system as well as other parents might; and students who have more responsibility than the typical college student (ie: dependent parents, children, especially heavy outside workload). I will work with you to find a suitable arrangement. You must come to see me about this *within the first week of class* or *within one week of an issue's occurrence*.

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you submit a written authorization from a DSP. It is your responsibility to alert me about the disability and to make accommodation arrangements. I will do everything I can to help. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes a learning disability, contact the staff in the Counseling and Advising Office.

| TRCC Disabilities Service Providers Counseling & Advising Office Room A-119 | |
|--|---|
| Matt Liscum (860) 383-5240 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disabilities • Sensory Disabilities • Medical Disabilities • Mental Health Disabilities |
| Chris Scarborough (860) 892-5751 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • ADD/ADHD • Autism Spectrum |

LEARNING PORTFOLIO

All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication that uses the college template. Through this electronic tool students will have the opportunity to monitor their own growth in college-wide learning. The student will keep his/her learning portfolio and may continue to use the Digication account after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. Student work reviewed for assessment purposes will not include names and all student work will remain private and anonymous for college improvement purposes. Students will have the ability to integrate learning from the classroom, college, and life in general, which will provide additional learning opportunities. If desired, students will have the option to create multiple portfolios.

COURSE OUTLINE

This course outline serves as a general guide for students of SOCI 101. It is subject to change based on class discussion, class activities, and current events. You will help shape what we pursue and what we emphasize. If the syllabus needs to be adjusted, changes will be noted in class. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out about any changes.

Jan 23 • Introduction to SOCI 101

Jan 30 • Sociological Imagination & Theoretical Perspectives

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 1 What is Sociology? p. 3-25

Feb 6 • Social Research

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 2 Asking and Answering Sociological Questions p. 29-45

Feb 13 • Culture

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 3 Culture and Society p. 51-79

Due

Reading Outline

Feb 20 • Socialization

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 4 Socialization and the Life Cycle p. 83-103

Due

Reading Outline

Feb 27 • Stratification

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 8 Stratification, Class, and Inequality p. 193-225

Due

Reading Outline

Mar 6 • Gender

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 10 Gender Inequality p. 255-287

Due

Reading Outline

Mar 13 • Midterm Exam Exercise

Due

Sociological Imagination Analysis

Mar 20 • No Classes Held

Mar 27 • Race

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 11 Ethnicity and Race p. 291-317

Due

**Reading Outline
Midterm Exam**

Apr 3 • No Classes Held

Apr 10 • Education

Giddens et al Chapter 16 Education p. 471-497

Due Reading Outline

Apr 17 • Mass Media

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 5 Social Interaction and Everyday Life in the Age of the Internet p.108-129

Due Reading Outline

Apr 24 • The State and Deviance

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 7 Conformity, Deviance, and Crime p. 161-181
Chapter 13 Gov't, Political Power, and Social Movements p. 359-372

**Due Reading Outline
Educational Experiences Analysis**

May 1 • Economic Systems

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 14 Work and Economic Life p. 395-431

Due Reading Outline

May 8 • Families and Relationships

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 15 Families and Intimate Relationships p. 435-467

Due Reading Outline

May 15 • Sexualities

Readings

Giddens et al Chapter 18 Sociology of the Body p. 561-562, 571-578

**Due Reading Outline
Final Exam**