

SYLLABUS FOR SOC101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Course: SOC*K101

Course Title: Principles of Sociology

Course Schedule: M & W, 9:30 a.m.—10:50 a.m.

Instructor: Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Mon & Wed 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; Tues & Thurs 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.;
or by arrangement

I. Course Description

Sociology is the study of groups, organizations, institutions, and societies, and their influences on human behavior. Sociology goes beyond individual and psychological explanations of human behavior to look at social factors and trends that shape individual behavior and the behavior of groups and societies. These social trends and factors include cultural aspects of societies, such as beliefs, values, and social norms. They also include structural aspects of societies, which refers to the positions and roles people occupy in groups, institutions, and societies as a whole. In particular, sociology focuses on patterns of social inequality, especially class, racial and ethnic, and gender inequality, and the way they influence how we think and act both individually and collectively. Overall, sociology allows us to analyze societies and social behavior from a critical perspective, thereby providing us with a better understanding of social problems and issues.

The course is divided into three parts, with an exam after each part. The first part of the course will examine how sociologists study the social world. This will discuss the idea of sociology as a science, the research methods used by sociologists to study the social world, and theoretical perspectives on society and social behavior. The second part of the course will explore the sociological concepts of culture and social structure. In terms of culture, we will look at issues such as culture and socialization, deviance, crime, and social control. In terms of social structure, we will examine concepts such as statuses and roles, groups and organizations, total institutions, and community. The final part of the course will study social inequality, including class inequality, racial and ethnic inequality, and gender inequality. Along the way, students will also be introduced to various prominent theorists in the history of sociology, such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Parsons, and Goffman.

II. Learning Outcomes

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

- An understanding of the sociological perspective
- An understanding of different research methods used in sociological research
- An understanding of different theoretical perspectives used in sociology
- An appreciation of the role of social factors in influencing individual behavior
- The ability to think about society from a critical perspective, especially how social positions in society shape how people think and act
- An understanding of inequalities in our society and their consequences for both dominant and subordinate groups
- A knowledge of major figures in the history of sociology

III. Course Readings

Assigned readings are to be done before coming to class. Discussion of the readings in class will be a significant part of your class participation grade. The required text for the class is:

Susan J. Ferguson, *Mapping the Social Landscape: Reading in Sociology*, 4rd Edition. McGraw Hill, 2005.

IV. Course Assignments and Evaluation

Course grades will be based on three assignments and three exams. The three assignments will each count for 10% of the final grade. Instructions for each assignment will be handed out in class at the appropriate time. The first exam will count for 20% of the final grade, and the second and third exams will count for 25% of the final grade. The third exam will be your final exam, although it will not be a cumulative exam.

Instead of doing the third assignment and the final exam, you will have an option to do a service learning project in which you will write a final paper that combines volunteer service with original research. If you choose this option, this project will count for 35% of your final grade.

All exams and assignments must be typed. Late work will be penalized accordingly. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will count more negatively towards your final grade than work that receives an F but reflects some level of effort.

Class participation can help boost your final GPA for the course.

V. Cell Phone Policy

Students are notified that cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode.

Under no circumstances are phones to be answered in class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement.

VI. Course Schedule

The following schedule is a tentative list of the lecture topics that are intended to be covered each week as well as the required readings for the week. Since the schedule is tentative, the dates for specific topics and readings may be revised during the course. Changes to the schedule will be announced in class.

Week 1: Introduction to Sociology

Mon, 1/23: The Sociological Imagination

Wed, 1/25: Sociological Theory

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 1-36

Week 2: Deductive and Inductive Theory

Mon, 1/30: Deductive and Inductive Research

Wed, 2/1: Durkheim's Theory of Suicide

Readings: 36-47

Week 3: Research Methods

Mon, 2/6: Quantitative Research Methods

Wed, 2/8: Qualitative Research Methods

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 47-65

Assignment #1 Handed Out; Due 2/15

Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/13: The Functionalist Perspective

Wed, 2/15: The Conflict Perspective

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 429-451; 452-472

Exam #1 Handed Out; Due 2/22

Week 5: Culture

Mon, 2/20: President's Day—No Class

Wed, 2/22: Culture

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 66-118

Assignment #2 Handed Out; Due 3/6

Week 6: Socialization

Mon, 2/27: Subcultures and Countercultures

Wed, 3/1: Socialization

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 161-173

Week 7: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Mon, 3/6: Theories of Deviance

Wed, 3/8: Social Control

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 230-278

Week 8: Social Structure

Mon, 3/13: Roles and Statuses

Wed, 3/15: Groups and Organizations

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 173-229

Week 9: Spring Break

Mon, 3/20: No Class

Wed, 3/22: No Class

Readings: None

Week 10: Community and Social Change

Mon, 3/27: The Decline of Community

Wed, 3/29: Social Change

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 637-653; 665-672

Exam #2 Handed Out; Due 4/5

Week 11: Social Inequality

Mon, 4/3: Social Inequality

Wed, 4/5: Education and Social Inequality

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 279-303; 501-516; 581-600

Week 12: Social Class

Mon, 4/10: Caste vs. Class Systems

Wed, 4/12: Social Class

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 147-161; 289-303; 318-331

Week 13: Education and Social Inequality

Mon, 4/17: Sociology of Education

Wed, 4/19: Education and Social Inequality

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 573-600

Assignment #3 Handed Out; Due 5/1

Week 14: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Mon, 4/24: Race and Racism

Wed, 4/26: Prejudice and Discrimination

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 380-420

Week 15: Gender Inequality

Mon, 5/1: Sex vs. Gender

Wed, 5/3: Gender Inequality

Readings: Ferguson, pp. 119-147; 342-353; 366-379

Final Exam Handed Out; Due 5/10

Week 16: Week

Mon, 5/8: No Class