

SYLLABUS FOR SOC101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Course: SOC*K101: Principles of Sociology

Course Schedule: MWF 1:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.

Location: D109

Instructor: Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: M and W 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

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:

- I. Critical Thinking: Utilize critical thinking skills to analyze society and human group behavior
 - Develop the ability to think about society using the major sociological perspectives
 - Develop an understanding of inequalities in our society and their consequences for both dominant and subordinate groups

- Demonstrate the ability to use the sociological imagination to understand human behavior
- II. Cultures and Societies: Use sociological concepts to understand and analyze cultures and societies
- Identify the interrelationships between social, political, economic, and cultural institutions
 - Develop an understanding of cultural differences within American society and around the globe
 - Evaluate the impact of social, political, economic, and cultural institutions on individuals
 - Demonstrate knowledge of major figures in the field of sociology
- III. Systematic Inquiry; Understand and utilize social scientific research methods for analyzing the social world
- Develop an understanding of different research methods used in sociological research
 - Understand the appropriateness of different methods for different research questions

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 texts for the class are:

- Susan J. Ferguson, *Mapping the Social Landscape: Reading in Sociology*, 5th Edition. McGraw Hill, 2005.
- Lisa J. McIntyre, *The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology*, 4th Edition. McGraw Hill, 2008.

IV. Course Assignments and Evaluation

Course grades will be based on two assignments, a research paper or service learning project, and three take-home exams:

- The two assignments will each count for 10% of the final grade.
- The research paper or service learning project will count for 20% of the final grade.
- The first exam will count for 15% of the final grade, the second exam will count for 20% of the final grade, and the third exam will count for 25% of the final grade. The third exam will be your final exam, although it will not be a cumulative exam.

All assignments and exams involve written work, and poor quality writing, including poor spelling and grammar, will negatively affect your grade. At a minimum, you should spell check all work before it is submitted. If you want assistance with your writing skills, I strongly urge you to visit The Writing Center in room C117.

Late work will be penalized accordingly. Assignments and exams submitted by email without permission will also be penalized. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will hurt your final grade more than submitted work that receives an F but reflects some level of effort.

Class participation will 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.

Part I: Sociology As Social Science

Week 1: Introduction

Fri 1/21: Introduction

Readings: None

Week 2: Sociological Theory

Mon 1/24: The Sociological Imagination

Wed 1/26: Sociology as Social Science

Fri 1/28: Deductive Theory

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 1-32
- McIntyre, Chapters 1

Week 3: Research Methods

Mon, 1/31: Inductive Theory

Wed, 2/2: Sampling

Fri, 2/4: Quantitative Research Methods

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 32-42
- McIntyre, Chapters 2 and 5

Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/7: Qualitative Research Methods

Wed, 2/9: Experimental Research Methods

Fri, 2/11: The Functionalist Perspective

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 43-61
- McIntyre, Chapter 6

Assignment #1 Handed Out 2/11; Due 2/18

Week 5: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/14: The Conflict Perspective

Wed, 2/16: The Conflict Perspective (Cont'd)

Fri, 2/18: The Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 441-478
- McIntyre, Chapters 3 and 4

Exam #1 Handed Out 2/18; Due 2/25

Part II: Culture and Social Structure

Week 6: Culture

Mon, 2/21: Presidents' Day Holiday—No Class

Wed, 2/23: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

Wed, 2/25: *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Cont'd)

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 62-101
- McIntyre, Chapter 7

Week 7: Culture Continued

Mon, 2/28: Subcultures and Countercultures

Wed, 3/2: Social Norms

Fri, 3/4: Socialization

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 127-154
- McIntyre, Chapter 10

Assignment #2 Handed Out 3/4; Due 3

Week 8: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Mon, 3/7: Theories of Deviance Part I

Wed, 3/9: Theories of Deviance Part II

Fri, 3/11: Social Control

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 209-255
- McIntyre, Chapter 11

Week 9: Spring Break—No Class

Week 10: Social Structure
Mon, 3/21: Roles and Statuses
Wed, 3/23: Groups
Fri, 3/25: Organizations

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 155-208
- McIntyre, Chapter 8

Week 11: Community
Mon, 3/28: Community
Wed, 3/30: The Decline of Community
Fri, 4/1: Social Change

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 650-680

Exam #2 Handed Out 4/1; Due 4/8

Part III: Social Inequality

Week 12: Social Inequality
Mon, 4/4: *Roger and Me*
Wed, 4/6: *Roger and Me* (Cont'd)
Fri, 4/8: Social Inequality

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 256-265; 428-440; 479-493

Research Paper/Service Learning Instructions Handed Out; Due 5/6

Week 13: Social Stratification
Mon, 4/11: Functionalist vs. Conflict Theories
Wed, 4/13: Caste vs. Class Systems
Fri, 4/15 Social Class

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 114-127; 266-279; 292-305; 630-649
- McIntyre, Chapters 12

Week 14: Education and Social Inequality
Mon, 4/18: The Functionalist Theory of Education
Wed, 4/20: The Conflict Theory of Education
Fri, 4/22: Education and Social Inequality

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 571-604
- McIntyre, Chapter 13

Week 15: Racial and Ethnic Inequality
Mon, 4/25: The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity

Wed, 4/27: Prejudice and Discrimination
Fri, 4/29: Film

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 280-291; 359-406
- McIntyre, Chapters 14

Week 16: Gender Inequality

Mon, 5/2: Sex vs. Gender

Wed, 5/4: Sex Inequality

Fri, 5/6: Concluding Remarks

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 102-114; 306-359
- McIntyre, Chapters 14 (cont'd)

Final Exam Handed Out 5/6; Due 5/13