

SYLLABUS FOR SOC*K101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Course: SOC*K101: Principles of Sociology

Course Schedule: Tues & Thurs 1:00-2:15

Instructor: Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Mon thru Thurs 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; or by appointment

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.

All exams and assignments must be typed. 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.

Section 1: Sociology As Social Science

Week 1: The Sociological Perspective

Thurs, 1/21: The Sociological Imagination

Readings:

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

Week 2: Sociological Theory

Tues, 1/26: Deductive and Inductive Theory

Thurs, 1/28: Durkheim's Theory of Suicide

Readings:

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

Week 3: Research Methods

Tues, 2/2: Quantitative Research Methods

Thurs, 2/4: Professional Day—No Class

Readings:

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

Assignment #1 Handed Out; Due 2/11

Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Tues, 2/9: Qualitative Research Methods

Thurs, 2/11: The Functionalist Perspective

Readings:

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

Week 5: Theoretical Perspectives
Tues, 2/16: The Conflict Perspective
Thurs, 2/18: The Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

Readings:

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

Exam #1 Handed Out; Due 2/25

Section 2: Culture and Social Structure

Week 6: Culture

Tues, 2/23: The Gods Must be Crazy

Thurs, 2/25: Culture

Readings:

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

Week 7: Socialization

Tues, 3/2: Subcultures and Countercultures

Thurs, 3/4: Socialization

Readings:

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

Week 8: Spring Break—No Class

Week 9: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Tues, 3/16: Theories of Deviance

Thurs, 3/18: Social Control

Readings:

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

Assignment #2 Handed Out; Due 3/25

Week 10: Social Structure

Tues, 3/23: Roles and Statuses

Thurs, 3/25: Groups and Organizations

Readings:

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

Exam #2 Handed Out; Due 4/1

Week 11: Community and Social Change

Tues, 3/30: The Decline of Community

Thurs, 4/1: Social Change

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 650-680

Exam #2 Handed Out; Due 11/6

Section 3: Social Inequality and Privilege

Week 12: Social Inequality

Tues, 4/6: *Roger and Me*

Thurs, 4/8: Social Inequality

Readings:

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

Research Paper/Service Learning Instructions Handed Out; Due 5/4

Week 13: Social Stratification

Tues, 4/13: Caste vs. Class Systems

Thurs, 4/15: Social Class

Readings:

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

Week 14: Education and Social Inequality

Tues, 4/20: The Sociology of Education

Thurs, 4/22: Education and Social Inequality

Readings:

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

Week 15: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Tues, 4/27: Race and Racism

Thurs, 4/29: Prejudice and Discrimination

Readings:

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

Week 16: Sex Inequality

Tues, 5/4: Sex vs. Gender

Thurs, 5/6: Sex Inequality

Readings:

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

Final Exam Handed Out; Due 5/13