

**Three Rivers Community College**

**Principles of Sociology**

**SOC K101**

**Dr. Joyce D. Martin, Professor**

**Summer 2012**

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Course Description:

This course is a study of the major concepts used in the field of sociology> The nature of institutions will be examined both individually and in their dynamic interrelationship. Emphasis is placed on understanding the impact of society on our lives, and on increasing our effectiveness in controlling our destinies within it.

Learning Outcomes:

- . Demonstrated understanding and knowledge of the major theories in sociology;
- . Understand and apply the sociological perspective in examples of daily life situations;
- . Demonstrate ability to use critical thinking to issues involving social structure, group life and personal interactions in a modern and global society;
- . Demonstrated understanding of the centrality of race, gender, class and social status in modern society;
- . Demonstrated application of the scientific method of research in understanding of sociology.

Required Text:

**Shepard, Jon M.. *Sociology*. St Paul, MN: West Publishing Company (2010).**

### Course Assignments

1. Interview an individual who identifies themselves as:

- . Living in poverty or has low income
- . Working class
- . Middle-class
- . Upper middle class
- . Wealthy

Interviews may be taped in order for student to transcribe the content of the interview (word for word). An introduction and list of questions should be prepared before interview. The questions are therefore determined by what the student seeks to learn from the interviewee relative to the topic of income inequality in our society. In other words, what do you want to learn about income inequality from this individual?

All assignments are to be typed and doubled-spaced. All papers must be at least five (5) pages in length. Students should research the topic of income equality in our society prior to developing the question, as well as the interview.

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight Toward Final Grade: 20 Percent

2. Readings on Reserve in Library

All students are required to read five (5) of the articles on Reserve in the Library. Students must write a one (1) page report for each of the five (5) articles read. The articles will include the following:

- . The Sociological Perspective (C. Wright Mills)
- . The Uses of Poverty (Herbert Gans)
- . We May Have to Limit Technology (Herbert Gans)
- . When Work Disappears (William Julius Wilson)
- . Hard Time Ahead for the Middle Class (Lester Thurow, 1996)
- . The Making of a Disaster (The Wall Street Journal, 2010)
- . Hooked on Gadgets, and Paying a Mental Price (The New York Times, 2010)
- . The Power Elite( C. Wright Mills)
- The Hidden Cost of Being African American (Thomas M. Shapiro)
- . Who Rules America? ( G. William Domhoff)
- . The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Max Weber)
- . The Atrophy of Social Life (D. Stanley Eitzen)

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight Toward Final Grade: 20 Percent

3. Mid-term Examination: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight Toward Final Grade: 25 Percent

4. Final Position Paper on “Emerging Sociological Issues of Economic Inequality in a Democracy.”  
Each student will seek to discuss and explain this emerging social phenomenon, applying the three (3) major perspectives in the study of sociology (functionalism, social conflict and symbolic interactionism). Each paper should have the following components:
  - . An introduction to the topic, with all major terms and concepts defined;
  - . The nature and scope of the problem explained
  - . Application of the theoretical perspectives of sociology to the topic of economic equality;
  - . Historical, economic, social and political context of the problem of economic inequality In our society discussed;
  - . Student’s position on problem, with recommendations for society.

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight Toward Final Grade: 25 Percent

- Attendance and classroom participation: 10 Percent of Final Grade

### **Policy Statements**

#### **Disability Statement:**

The College welcomes students with disabilities and strives to make their college learning experience successful. Students with disabilities are guaranteed reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disability Act of 1992. Disclosure is voluntary. Discuss directly with Instructor. For more information, contact the Student Development Center.

#### **Policy Statement on Cellar Phones and Beepers:**

Students are notified that cellar phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they are turned off or on 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. Texting on cell phones or Internet searches on laptops are not allowed in the class.

## Weekly Course Content

### Week 1:

- . Introduction to the Study of Sociology
- . Theoretical Perspectives
- . The Sociological Perspective
- . The Early Sociologists

Chapters: 1-2

### Week 2:

- . The Social Research Methodology
- Emile Durkheim's Classic Study on Suicide (1890s)
- Review of Unethical Research Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21 Centuries

Chapter 3 and handouts on Durkheim's study

### Week 3:

- The Social Structure
- . Culture
- . Socialization

\*Film: Genie: The Wild Child

Chapters: 4 , 6

### Week 4:

- Deviance and Social Control
- Film: Prohibition in America

Chapters: 7

Week 5: Social Inequality

- . Social Stratification and Inequality
- . The Centrality of Race, Gender, Class and Social Status
- . Economic Indicators of Inequality

Chapters: 8,9,10

Week 6-7:

Our Social Institutions

Chapters: 13-18

Week 8: Global Perspectives in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

\*Films, small group discussions on relevant topics