

## **SYLLABUS FOR SOC101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY**

Course: SOC\*K101: Principles of Sociology

Course Schedule: MWF 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Location: D105

Instructor: Steven Neufeld

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

- 1) Critical Thinking: To analyze and evaluate argumentation and persuasion in order to improve, refine, and refute it.
  - Read and analyze original writings on society, social institutions, and social behavior
  - Demonstrate knowledge of major figures in the field of sociology
  - Understand and assess major theoretical perspectives in sociology

- Explain the impact of the social context and social, political, economic, and cultural institutions on individual and group values, attitudes, and beliefs
- 2) Global Awareness:
- Identify the interrelationships between national and international events and trends, and their impact on social, political, economic, and cultural institutions
  - Develop an understanding of cultural differences within American society and around the globe
- 3) Systematic Inquiry: To understand and utilize social scientific research methods for analyzing the social world.
- Understand different research methods and assess their validity
  - Draw appropriate inferences and conclusions from data and suggest steps for further inquiry
- 4) Communication: To understand and convey ideas using reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- 5) Information Literacy: To assess what information is needed to answer questions and solve problems and to retrieve, evaluate, and use that information effectively.
- 6) Responsible Citizenship: To **understand** how individual attitudes and behaviors affect societies and **to use** that understanding for ethical decisions and actions in personal, professional, and social life.
- See one's self as an active participant in society with a strong commitment and responsibility to work with others.
  - Understand the impact of individual attitudes and behaviors on social institutions and society as a whole.

### 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*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. McGraw Hill, 20.

### 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. You should check all work before it is submitted. If you need assistance with your writing skills, I strongly urge you to visit The Writing Center in room C117.

All assignments and exams are to be submitted at the time class meets. Work received up to one day late will receive up to a partial letter grade deduction. Work received more than one day late will receive a full letter grade deduction. Once I have graded and returned assignments and exams, late work will no longer be accepted without my permission. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will hurt your final grade more than submitted work that receives an F but reflects appropriate 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 1/20: Introduction

Readings: None

Week 2: Sociological Theory

Mon 1/23: The Sociological Imagination

Wed 1/25: Sociology as Social Science

Fri 1/27: Deductive Theory

Readings:

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

Week 3: Research Methods

Mon, 1/30: Inductive Theory

Wed, 2/1: Sampling

Fri, 2/3: Quantitative Research Methods

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 32-42

- McIntyre, Chapters 2 and 5

Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/6: Qualitative Research Methods

Wed, 2/8: Experimental Research Methods

Fri, 2/10: The Functionalist Perspective

Readings:

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

Assignment #1 Handed Out 2/10; Due 2/17

Week 5: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/13: The Conflict Perspective

Wed, 2/15: The Conflict Perspective (Cont'd)

Fri, 2/17: The Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

Readings:

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

Exam #1 Handed Out 2/17; Due 2/24

**Part II: Culture and Social Structure**

Week 6: Culture

Mon, 2/20: Presidents' Day Holiday—No Class

Wed, 2/22: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

Wed, 2/24: *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Cont'd)

Readings:

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

Week 7: Culture Continued

Mon, 2/27: Subcultures and Countercultures

Wed, 2/29: Social Norms

Fri, 3/2: Socialization

Readings:

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

Assignment #2 Handed Out 3/2; Due 3/9

Week 8: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Mon, 3/5: Theories of Deviance Part I

Wed, 3/7: Theories of Deviance Part II

Fri, 3/9: Social Control

Readings:

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

Week 9: Social Structure

Mon, 3/12: Roles and Statuses

Wed, 3/14: Groups

Fri, 3/16: Organizations

Readings:

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

Week 10: Spring Break—No Class

Week 11: Community

Mon, 3/26: Community

Wed, 3/28: The Decline of Community

Fri, 3/30: Social Change

Readings:

- Ferguson, pp. 650-680

Exam #2 Handed Out 3/30; Due 4/6

### **Part III: Social Inequality**

Week 12: Social Inequality

Mon, 4/2: *Roger and Me*

Wed, 4/4: *Roger and Me* (Cont'd)

Fri, 4/6: Social Inequality

Readings:

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

Research/Service Learning Paper Handed Out 4/6; Due 5/4

Week 13: Social Stratification

Mon, 4/9: Functionalist vs. Conflict Theories

Wed, 4/11: Caste vs. Class Systems

Fri, 4/13 Social Class

Readings:

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

Week 14: Education and Social Inequality

Mon, 4/16: The Functionalist Theory of Education

Wed, 4/18: The Conflict Theory of Education

Fri, 4/20: Education and Social Inequality

Readings:

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

Week 15: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Mon, 4/23: The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity

Wed, 4/25: Prejudice and Discrimination

Fri, 4/27: Film

Readings:

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

Week 16: Gender Inequality

Mon, 4/30: Sex vs. Gender

Wed, 5/2: Sex Inequality

Fri, 5/4: Film

Readings:

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

Week 17: Conclusion

Mon, 5/7: Concluding Comments

Final Exam Handed Out 5/4; Due 5/11 by 10:00 a.m.