

Sociology 101-T5
Principles of Sociology
Spring 2012

Instructor: Kathryn Brown-Tracy **Class:** 2:00-4:45 F
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Course Description

This course is a study of the major concept used in the field of sociology. Emphasis is placed on understanding the impact of society on our lives, and on increasing our effectiveness in controlling our destinies. A range of sociological topics to be covered are sociological perspectives, sociological methods, socialization, gender stratification, class inequality, and race and ethnic relations. We will examine some of the major social institutions in society, including the family and education.

Why Take a Sociology Course?

Do women and men have different styles of communicating? When someone asks, "How are you?" what is it they really want to know? Why does 1% of the United States population own 40% of the nation's wealth? Why do we call people Latino or Asian-American when not all Latinos or Asian Americans look the same, are from the same country or even speak the same language? These are the kinds of questions sociology can help us answer. Bring your imagination, and burning curiosity about the world and the people in it and we'll learn why sociology should matter to you.

Required Reading

Sociology in our times The Essentials, NINTH EDITION by Diana Kendall

Course Goals are for students to:

Develop and use a sociological imagination as a tool for understanding the basic concepts, theoretical perspectives and methods of inquiry.

Achieve an understanding of the connection between our personal experiences, the social context, and historical period in which we live.

Examine how various social forces control and shape individual lives and whole cultures.

Strengthen critical thinking skills and analytical skills by reading and writing critically and integrating ideas and concepts from the course material.

Apply critical thinking skills to understand social problems and relationships between social forces and individual perceptions.

Learn ways to transform personal relationships, social relationships and structures.

Develop an understanding and tolerance for different peoples and viewpoints.

Class Format

The in-class format will be a combination of small group discussion, some lecture, open discussion and small group activities. I will attempt in as much as possible to be a facilitator for student learning, rather than a disseminator of information. Class discussion in small groups and as a whole will form the most significant learning mode. **Participation is essential to making this class a success.** Each individual brings a wealth of knowledge and experience- we can all learn together through sharing our respective insights.

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is required and a sign-in sheet is provided at the beginning to note attendance and absences. Each missed class will result in 5 points being deducted off your final grade. With the fourth absence of class you may be asked to withdraw from the class. Lateness is disruptive so two late arrivals or early departures will be counted as one missed class.

Students are responsible for all missed materials in class and are responsible for getting notes from another student. Do not contact the instructor for a review of class material covered.

Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in the course, by being prepared for and participating in all class sessions. **Reading the assignments before class is necessary for good discussions.** As you read, keep the following questions in mind:

- What is the reading about?
- What is the main point?
- Are the arguments persuasive?
- Does the analysis apply to my life and/or culture?
- What is the most interesting thing I learned from the reading?

You will be responsible for reading all of the chapters assigned in the textbook even if class lectures do not cover each chapter in depth. Rather than try to cover everything on the surface we will delve deeper into select chapters as time allows.

In-class Conduct: Use of cell phones is not allowed. Anyone texting or using their cell phone during class may be asked to leave the class.

Assignments: I expect all assignments to be turned in by the due date indicated in this syllabus. However, I am aware that this expectation is not always met. As a result, I will use the following late policy for the mini-project and research paper submitted past the indicated due date.

1. Students must receive permission from the instructor in order to submit a late assignment. If using the grace period for an assignment please notify me.
2. Late assignments will not be accepted after a one-week grace period. Papers not submitted in class must be put in the instructor's mailbox prior to the next class. Papers will not be accepted through email this semester.
3. If not notified of using grace period for a late paper, **10 points** will be deducted from a late assignment.
4. Accepted extenuating circumstances include inclement weather, illness, family death or other emergency and other situations discussed with me. You will not lose points or use up your grace period in these situations. You must contact me as soon as possible to discuss these circumstances.

Academic Integrity at Three Rivers:

Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with academic integrity severely limits a person’s ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work’ clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor (TRCC Faculty Handbook, 2011-2012: 2).

Note: Adjustments or changes to the syllabus may be made by the instructor with appropriate student notification.

Writing Center/Tutoring Center: If you find yourself struggling with any aspect of the course work please make an appointment to see me or seek help from the Writing Center or the Tutoring and Academic Success Center.

Disabilities Statement: If you have a question regarding a disability that may affect your progress in this course please contact one of the college’s Disability Service Providers as soon as possible. Chris Scarborough (892-5751) generally works with students who have learning disabilities or attention deficit disorder. Kathleen Gray (885-2328) generally works with students who have physical, visual, hearing, medical, mobility, and psychiatric disabilities. Matt Liscum (383-5240) also works with students who have disabilities.

	Course Requirements and Grading Scale	Due
First Test	50 points	Feb. 17
Second Test	50 points	March 16
Third Test	50 points	May 4
Mini-Project	100 points	April 13
Research Paper	100 points	May 11
Attendance/Participation	25 points	
Homework Assignments	25 points	
Total	400 points	

Final Grade

To determine your final grade take the total number of points and divide by four.

	A	94-100	A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
F	under 59				

Sociology 101-T5
Course Outline

Week 1	1/20	Class Overview/Introduction	
Week 2	1/27	The Sociological Perspective Kendall, Chapter 1 Sociological Research Methods Kendall, Chapter 2	
Week 3	2/3	Culture Kendall, Chapter 3 Socialization Kendall, Chapter 4	
Week 4	2/10	Society, Social Structure, and Interaction in Everyday Life Kendall, Chapter 5	
Week 5	2/17	Test 1 (Chapters 1-5) Groups and Organizations Kendall, Chapter 6	
Week 6	2/24	Deviance and Crime Kendall, Chapter, 7	Movie: Cheaters/discussion questions
Week 7	3/2	Class and Stratification in the United States Kendall, Chapter 8	Activity: Stratification, Social Class, and Distribution of Wealth
Week 8	3/9	Race and Ethnicity Kendall, Chapter 10 Sex and Gender Kendall, Chapter 11	Activity: Race/Gender Stereotypes
Week 9	3/16	Test 2 (Chapters 6-8, 10-11) Families and Intimate Relationships Kendall, Chapter 15	
	3/18-25	Spring Break-classes not in session	
Week 10	3/30	Education Kendall, Chapter 16 Video: Freedom Writers/group questions	
	4/6-8	Spring Recess-college closed	
Week 11	4/13	Aging and Inequality Based on Age Kendall, Chapter 12	Mini-Project Due

Week 12 4/20	<i>Guest Speaker: Lisa Luck</i>
Week 13 4/27	Collective Behaviors, Social Movements, Social Change Kendall, Chapter 20
Week 14 5/4	Final/Test 3 (Chapters 11-12, 15-16, 20)
Week 15 5/11	Make-up Exams Research Paper Due

Mini-Project-Choose one of the following projects

Date due-April 13

The project you must complete for this course is designed to make you conscious of what it means to act as a sociologist. The project is also aimed at personal growth. It is not a term paper, but is to be a brief report of around 5-6 pages. The project must be typed, double-spaced on one of the paper only (unless printed at school), and use 12 point font. Neatness and proper grammar are assumed expectations. Therefore, points will be deducted for spelling and grammar errors.

A. *Mapping Your Own Status/Role Sets*

Answer the following in chronological order.

1. In one column, list all of your current positions or statuses in order of their importance to you, starting with the most important, and then going to least important. In a second column, next to the first, list the role-sets related to each status. For each status, note whether it is primarily ascribed, primarily achieved, or a mixture.
2. Now discuss the "Who Am I?" on the basis of the mapping you just did. Discuss why you rank-ordered as you did and why you seem to identify with them. Do you have a master status? Which one?
3. Now discuss the presence of conflicts you experience between the statuses and also between a status and its role reciprocals within the role set. How do you usually handle and relieve such strain? Some say that, when we are confronted with conflicting expectations, we follow the one which is more important to us, involves the strong sanctions, and carries the more specific obligations. Comment in relation to your situations.
4. Finally, comment on the applicability of social control. For example, how much do you feel controlled by the expectations of your status? Do you feel you can reject some of them if too controlling? How much of a voice do you have in determining who you are? Does this vary by the age, sex, etc. of the person involved? Finally, are you pretty much the sum of your statuses, or are you more than these?

B. *Description of Change in Two Generations of the Same Family*

This assignment involves exploring your cultural heritage by analyzing your family across two generations. Specifically, you are asked to compare your family (as it was when you were in high school) with the family of one of your parents (as it existed when your parent was of high school age). Rather than relying on your own impressions and recollections to answer the following questions, you will find it helpful to interview as many of your relatives as possible.

1. Family composition: Outline the kinship structure of each household. Specify the age of each family member.
2. Cultural heritage: What are the ethnic and religious ties of each family member? Specify how and to what extent these ties permeated family life, including your family and your parent's family.
3. Social Class Position: Specify the occupation, income and education of each parental pair to determine the socioeconomic status of their respective households, including your family and your parent's family.

4. Sex-roles: What were the sex-role patterns in each family? How and to what extent were these patterns reflected in the division of labor and the authority structure of each? Examine your family and your parent's family.
5. Parent-child Relationship: What kind of parent-child interactions were encouraged? What differences existed between the maternal and paternal roles? What was expected of children and what types of discipline were employed? Examine your family and your parent's family.
6. Family solidarity: What is your assessment of the character and strength of the family bond? Examine your family and your parent's family.
7. Specify the procedures you employed to gather information. What difficulties did you encounter? Also, if there are areas where the respondents did not want to answer, please report that.

C. *My Experience as a Member of a Minority or Majority*

For example, ethnic, racial, religious, sex, age, political, physical, etc. Analyze a specific situation or your general experience as a member of a majority or minority group. Discuss your attitudes and behavior and that of others toward you.

Research Paper due May 11

Choose a topic or issue to research in-depth, from this course. For example, research Gender Difference and Gender Inequality, Poverty, or Violence. You will write an 6-8 page paper. This paper must be typed, and double-spaced, with standard margins, and 12 pt. font. It is expected that the paper be checked for proper grammar and spelling errors. Points will be deducted for spelling and grammar errors.

You will write a paper on a controversial topic that is of sociological importance. For example, you can write on specific issues within the broad category of education, health, crime, race, class, gender, family, and so forth using theories, conceptual frameworks, statistics, or some other aspect of sociological insight in your assessment. You can investigate the pros and cons of a particular issue, say use of the internet. Or you can take the side on an issue, for example, the role of prisons in our society. Past papers have addressed the structural-functionalist perspective on abortions, symbolic interaction perspective on Native American mascots in sports, and the why No Child Left Behind Act is hindering children's education.

This paper should present your ideas and voice about some issue that motivates you and that genuinely interests you. I am not looking for a particular answer or what you may perceive as something I want to read. I want to read a well-written, thoughtful, and analytical paper that is supported with scholarly evidence from books and academic journals, excluding the book from this class so, you cannot use the book in this class in your bibliography, although you may use it to generate ideas). Five points will be awarded to the overall score if you take your paper to the Writing Center and I receive work via email that someone read over your paper.

Once you pick a research topic, form a research question.

For example, I am particularly interested in the topic of hate crimes.

My research question is "What factors are associated with hate crimes?"

Explain why this issue is particularly interesting or important to you (for example, it is personally relevant politically important and/or intellectually stimulating).

In order to answer your research question, go to our on-line electronic resources and pick the search engine Academic 1, Academic Search Premier, and/or Opposing viewpoints. Once at the search engine, you will need to type in key phrases or words specific to your topic. Use a minimum of 5 books and articles where the full article is available, not just the abstract to answer your research question.

The following will be considered when evaluating your paper:

What is the sociological significance of this issue? In other words, analyze the issue using a sociological framework (theoretical perspective).

How do you see that social change could (or should) be brought about in this area?

What steps could you take toward social change in this area?

Does the paper adequately and effectively use evidence?

How creative is the author (e.g. introduces new ideas, integrates material in an innovative way)?

Is the paper well-written in regard to clarity, grammar, and spelling?

Does the paper flow in the sentence, paragraph and paper-as-a-whole?

Does the paper make a coherent argument or statement?

Structure your paper roughly as follows: 1 page explaining why the issue you chose is significant or interesting to you, 3-5 pages analyzing the issue sociologically (the heart of the paper), and 1-2 pages discussing social change in regard to your issue.