

SOC K101 ✦ PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Kathleen O'Reilly ✦ KOREILLY@TRCC.COMMNET.EDU

2012 Fall semester ✦ Monday & Wednesday 2:00 – 3:15 ✦ Room D102

Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 1:00 – 1:45 and by appointment

The first fruit of [the sociological] imagination – and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it – is the idea that the individual can understand his[her] own experience and gauge his[her] own fate only by locating him[her]self within his[her] period, that he[she] can know his[her] own chances in life by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his[her] circumstances. In many ways it is a terrible lesson; in many ways a magnificent one.” C. Wright Mills

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class, you will be introduced to the sociological perspective and learn to use the sociological imagination to explore the organization and regulation of social life. We will analyze social structure and its component elements as we re-examine our views of social relationships, organizations, institutions, and social categories. We will investigate social inequality and the mechanisms that reinforce and perpetuate it and how inequality might be challenged and changed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, a student should have the following skills and abilities:

- the ability to utilize critical thinking skills for analysis of society and human group behavior
- an understanding of how to use sociological concepts to understand and analyze cultures and societies
- the ability to utilize systematic inquiry for analyzing the social world
- an understanding of our role as individuals in making, maintaining, and changing society.

REQUIRED TEXT

McIntyre, Lisa. 2011. *The Practical Skeptic: Readings in Sociology*. New York: McGraw Hill.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Readings for each class are listed in the course outline to follow and are also posted on the Blackboard page for this class. Readings must be completed before class on the day it is listed. They are designed to prepare you for the upcoming lecture. You will complete the readings on your own so that you are familiar with the topics to be discussed during class. You are responsible for all assigned reading, whether or not it is discussed in class. If I sense that the readings are not being completed by the majority of the class, I reserve the right to give pop quizzes based on the information from the readings.

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Participation in class discussion is essential. It is a graded element of this course and is fundamental to effective learning. The exams will be based in part on in-class discussions and activities, so your presence at every class is extremely important to your grade, as is your active and involved participation. Participation will be assessed each class meeting and your presence/absence will be noted. More than two absences may lower your final grade by one

letter. It is your responsibility to be sure that your presence in class is accounted for by signing in each class meeting.

I will use the following criteria to evaluate your participation:

- ✦ Frequency and clarity of your oral contributions. Are you making an effort to contribute to class discussion? Is it evident that you have prepared for class?
- ✦ Knowledge of the reading material and your ability to grasp its central themes. How carefully and critically did you read?
- ✦ Your ability to take an independent and reflective stance toward ideas under discussion. Are you willing to think creatively?
- ✦ The overall development of your power of oral expression during the course of the semester. Do you demonstrate increased willingness and ability to contribute to class discussion as the course progresses?

Attendance and participation is worth 20% of your course grade.

IN-CLASS CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISES

Throughout the semester, ten critical thinking exercises will be done during class meetings. These exercises will require you to directly apply the readings assigned for that day. My purpose is to promote critical thinking, interpretation, and analysis and ensure your understanding of key course concepts. The material you will draw on for these exercises will be primarily the readings in conjunction with that day's lecture. **In-class critical thinking exercises are worth 20% of your course grade.**

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

You will write three sociological analyses over the course of the semester. These papers will each be at least 3 pages in length and must be typewritten. Detailed instructions for each paper is provided in a separate packet and is also posted on the Blackboard page for this class. **Each paper is worth 10% of your course grade.**

EXAMS

There will be two exams; one during the semester as the Midterm mark, and one during Finals Week at the end of the semester. All exams are open-book and open-notes exams. You must use your **own books** and your **own notes** for the exams. I will provide details about each exam when the exam dates approach. **Each exam is worth 15% of your grade.**

GRADING

I expect all assigned work to be handed in on the day it is due. I will not accept late work. An alternative due date is acceptable only under extraordinary circumstances and with at least one week's advance notice.

Exams and your final grade for the course will be evaluated on a conventional A to F scale.

A 95 - 100	B- 80 - 83	D+ 67 - 69
A- 90 - 94	C+ 77 - 79	D 64 - 66
B+ 87 - 89	C 74 - 76	D- 60 - 63
B 84 - 86	C- 70 - 73	F under 60

In-class Critical Thinking Exercises and Sociological Analyses will be graded on a scale from 1 to 10. I will evaluate this work based on the following criteria:

- 10** Extraordinary, thoughtful engagement with the topic(s). Work that goes well beyond assignment requirements.
- 7 - 9** Organized, insightful work that fulfills all assignment criteria. Cogent, technically clean writing.
- 4 - 6** Demonstrated engagement with the reading; shows that you are thinking. Relatively coherent and technically adequate.
- 1 - 3** Poorly organized. Does not convey any thinking. Structurally and technically so inadequate that following what you have to say is a challenge.

EXTRA CREDIT

There will be no opportunities for extra credit. As long as you do the work outlined here, participate in discussion, and attend all classes, you will do well in the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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. If you present someone else's work as your own (including cheating on assignments or exams and/or plagiarizing on assignments or papers), you will **automatically fail** the class.

DISABILITIES

In addition to contacting me, if you have a disability which may affect your work in this course, please contact Chris Scarborough (892-5751) if you have a learning disability or ADD. Please contact Judy Hilburger (892-5744) or Matt Liscum (383-5240) if you have a physical, visual, hearing, or psychiatric disability.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class only if they are **turned off** or turned to a **silent mode**. Vibrating mode is not allowed, as it can sometimes be heard. Under no circumstances are you to answer your phone or text message in class. If you must respond, please leave the room. If you answer your phone or text while in class, I will take your phone until the end of class.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Some of the material in this course involves issues, language, and areas that are sensitive in nature. Sociology courses can sometimes bring about unsettling feelings as they address personal matters as well as academic matters. This course will draw on our experiential knowledge as well as our cognitive understandings. It is important for us to be especially aware of the unique learning process in which we are involved and to insure a level of sensitivity for others' needs, feelings, and struggles.

For productive class interaction, I suggest that we all follow certain guidelines:

- ✦ Listen attentively to whoever is speaking and do not interrupt.
- ✦ Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on social categories exist.
- ✦ Understand that we have all learned misinformation about these social categories.
- ✦ Agree not blame ourselves or others for this misinformation while accepting responsibility for not repeating such misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- ✦ Never demean, devalue, or in any way “put down” people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This doesn’t mean that you can’t disagree, only that you must do so respectfully.

Please note that I run a low-tech classroom. I do not post or hand out my lecture notes, conduct PowerPoint lectures, or expect online discussions/submissions. I do write out my notes as you write yours, pause for your contributions, and expect in-person interaction.

Please see me if you have any special issues that have the potential to interfere with your completion of the course requirements. This may include but is not limited to: extreme shyness; difficulty with English; learning disability; physical disability; severe test anxiety; personal life issues; etc. I will work with you to find a suitable arrangement. You must come to see me about this *within the first week of class or within one week of an issue's occurrence.*

COME SEE ME

If you are having trouble with the material, come see me.

If you want to discuss your grades, come see me.

If you know you will be absent, come see me as soon as possible.

If you want to discuss the material further, come see me.

COURSE OUTLINE

This course outline serves as a general guide for students of SOCI K101. It is subject to change based on class discussion, class activities, and current events. You will help shape what we pursue and what we emphasize. If the syllabus needs to be adjusted, changes will be noted in class. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out about any changes.

Aug 27 ✦ Introduction to SOCI K101

Aug 29 ✦ Sociological Imagination

Readings

#1 *The Promise*

Sept 3 ✦ No Classes Held

Sept 5 ✦ Sociological Imagination

Readings

#2 *How History and Sociology Can Help*

#3 *Hernando Washington*

Sept 10 ✦ Sociological Research

Readings

#4 *Men as Success Objects*

#7 *If Hitler Asked You to*

Sept 12 ✦ Sociological Research

Readings

#6 *Doing the Right Thing*

Sept 17 ✦ Culture

Readings

#8 *Queer Customs*

#9 *Body Ritual Among the Nacirema*

Sept 19 ✦ Culture

Readings

#13 *Escalating Danger in Contemporary Legends*

Sept 24 ✦ Culture

Readings

#11 *The Power and Meaning of "Girl Watching"*

#12 *The Code of the Streets*

Sept 26 ✦ Culture

Readings

#10 *Act Your Age*

Oct 1 ✦ Social Structure

Due

Paper Assignment 1 Applying the Sociological Imagination

Oct 3 ✦ Social Structure

Readings

#14 *The Presentation of Self*

#18 *Commanding the Room*

Oct 8 ✦ Social Structure

Readings

#5 *Miscounting Race*

#15 *The Not-So-Lonely Crowd*

Oct 10 ✦ Social Structure

Readings

#16 *The Pathology of Imprisonment*

Oct 15 ✦ Social Structure

Readings

#17 *"Getting" and "Making" a Tip*

#19 *The Rest Room and Equal Opportunity*

Oct 17 ✦ Midterm Exam

Oct 22 ✦ Social Institutions & Socialization

Readings

#21 *Emotional Capital and Professional Socialization*

#39 *Tales Out of Medical School*

Oct 24 ✦ Social Institutions & Socialization

Readings

#20 *"Tuck in That Shirt!"*

Oct 29 ✦ Social Institutions & Socialization

Due

Paper Assignment 2 Analysis of Educational Experiences

Oct 31 ✦ Social Institutions & Socialization

Readings

#22 *Anybody's Son Will Do*

#25 *Not Just Bodies*

Nov 5 ✦ Social Institutions & Socialization

Readings

#23 *Suspended Identity*

#24 *How Women Reshape the Prison*

Nov 7 ✘ Social Institutions & Socialization

Readings

#26 *The Normality of Crime*

Nov 12 ✘ No Classes Held

Nov 14 ✘ Deviance & Social Control

Readings

#28 *On Being Sane*

#30 *Situational Ethics*

Nov 19 ✘ Deviance & Social Control

Readings

#29 *Sexual Assault on Campus*

#31 *Denying the Guilty Mind*

Nov 21 ✘ No Classes Held

Nov 26 ✘ Inequality

Readings

#32 *The Land of Opportunity*

#27 *The Saints and the Roughnecks*

Nov 28 ✘ Inequality

Readings

#35 *Racism*

Dec 3 ✘ Inequality

Readings

#36 *"Race Doesn't Matter, But..."*

#37 *Confessions of a Nice Negro*

Dec 5 ✘ Inequality

Readings

#38 *The Model Minority Myth*

Dec 10 ✘ Inequality

Readings

#33 *Nickel and Dimed*

#34 *The Job Ghetto*

Dec 12 ✘ Inequality

Due

Paper Assignment 3

Investigation of Entertainment Reporting

Dec 17 ✘ Final Exam