

SYLLABUS FOR SOC*K101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY ON-LINE

Course: SOC*K101

Course Title: Principles of Sociology

Course Schedule: On-Line

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Office Hours: Tues 9:00 – 11:00 a.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 by examining the 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. 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

Learning outcomes refer to the knowledge, skills, and abilities you should develop in this course. The learning outcomes for this course are:

- 1) Critical Thinking: To analyze and evaluate argumentation and persuasion in order to improve, refine, and refute it.
 - Read and analyze primary sociological writings
 - Demonstrate knowledge of major figures in the field of sociology
 - Understand and assess major theoretical perspectives in sociology
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how the social context and individual and group positions in society influence individual and group values, attitudes, and beliefs
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how the impact of social, political, economic, and cultural institutions on individual and group values, attitudes, and beliefs

- 2) Global Awareness: To examine the effect of historical and contemporary national and international events and trends on social, political and cultural institutions.
 - Identify the interrelationships between national and international events and trends, and their 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

Written assignments and discussion based on 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, 6th Edition*. McGraw Hill, 2010.
- Lisa J. McIntyre, *The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology, 5th Edition*. McGraw Hill, 2011.

IV. Course Assignments and Evaluation

Your final course grade will be based on the following components:

- You will receive an overall discussion grade based on your participation in weekly discussions that will count for 20% of your final grade.
- There will be two assignments, each worth 7.5% of your final grade.
- There will be three exams—the first will count for 10% of your final grade, the second will count for 15% of your final grade, and third exam will count for 20% of your final grade. The third exam will be your final, and it will not be cumulative.

- A final project will count for 20% of your final grade

Your overall discussion grade will be determined by calculating the average of your weekly discussion grades. Each week, you will receive a letter grade each week based on the number of posts you make, the quality of your posts, and how consistently you post throughout the week. In judging the quality of your posts, I will consider factors such as how long they are, how much effort you seem to be putting into them, how relevant they are, and whether they are introducing new information (such as relevant websites, for example) and points that enhance the discussion. **You will need to post at least 4 times each week to receive an A, although 4 posts by itself will not result in an A or even a good grade if the other criteria just discussed are not satisfactorily met.** Weekly discussions will be closed to comments by 9:00 a.m. the following week when a new weekly learning module is posted.

All assignments and exams involve written work, and poor quality writing, such as typographical errors, poor spelling, grammatical errors, and poor paragraph construction, 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 use The Writing Center in the Shop Wing building on the Mohegan campus. You can contact them by email at TRWritingCenter@trcc.comnet.edu or by phone at 860-892-5773.

Late work will receive up to a one letter grade deduction depending on the severity of the infraction. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will count against your final grade than work that receives an F but reflects some level of effort.

Online students are expected to follow to standards of academic honesty. If there is a question about cheating or plagiarism, the college's **Academic Integrity Policy** (revised 8 January 2003) will be followed.

V. Course Schedule

The following schedule is a list of the lecture topics that are intended to be covered each week as well as the required readings for the week. Any revisions will be announced during the course.

Part I. Sociology as Social Science

Mon 8/27 Week 1: The Sociological Perspective

Readings: Ferguson readings 1, 2, and 3; McIntyre Chapters 1 and 2

Mon 9/3 Week 2: Sociological Theory

Readings: Ferguson reading 4; McIntyre Chapters 4 and 5

Mon 9/10 Week 3: Research Methods

Readings: Ferguson readings 5 and 6; McIntyre Chapter 6

Assignment 1 posted; due 9/17 by 9:00 a.m.

Mon 9/17 Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Readings: Ferguson readings 35, 36, 37, 38, and 41; McIntyre Chapter 3

Exam 1 posted; due 9/24 by 9:00 a.m.

Part II: Culture and Social Structure

Mon 9/24 Week 5: Culture, Subcultures, and Countercultures

Readings: Ferguson readings 7, 8, 9, and 10; McIntyre Chapter 7

Assignment 2 posted; due Mon 10/8 at 9:00 a.m.

Mon 10/1 Week 6: Socialization

Readings: Ferguson readings 14, 39, and 40; McIntyre Chapter 10

Mon 10/8 Week 7: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Readings: Ferguson readings 19, 20, 21, and 22; McIntyre Chapter 11

Mon 10/15 Week 8: Social Structure

Readings: Ferguson readings 15 and 16; McIntyre Chapter 8

Mon 10/22 Week 9: Community

Readings: Reading: Ferguson readings 48 and 57

Exam 2 handed out; due 10/29 by 9:00 a.m.

Part III: Social Inequality

Mon 10/29 Week 10: Social Inequality

Readings: Ferguson readings 23, 42, and 43; McIntyre Chapter 13

Final project posted; due Mon 12/3 by 9:00 a.m.

Mon 11/5 Week 11: Social Stratification and Social Class

Readings: Ferguson readings 13, 17, 24, 26, and 55; McIntyre Chapter 12

Mon 11/12 Week 12: Education

Readings: Ferguson readings 50, 51, and 52; McIntyre Chapter 13 (review)

Mon 11/19 Week 13: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Readings: Ferguson readings 25, 31, 32, 33, and 34; McIntyre Chapter 14

Mon 11/26 Week 14: Racial and Ethnic Inequality (Continued)

Readings: Ferguson readings 25, 31, 32, 33, and 34; McIntyre Chapter 14

Mon 12/3 Week 15: Gender Inequality

Readings: Ferguson readings 11, 12, 27, 28, 29, and 30; McIntyre Chapter 14

Mon 12/10 Week 16: Final Week

Final Exam posted; due Sat 12/15 by 9:00 a.m.