

SYLLABUS FOR SOC101: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

Course: SOC*K101: Principles of Sociology
Course Schedule: TR 1:00 – 2:15
Instructor: Steven Neufeld
Office: C142
Phone: 860-383-5233
Email: sneufeld@trcc.comnet.edu
Office: C-142
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 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

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

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

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 final 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.
- **Class participation will help boost your final GPA for the course.**

All assignments and exams involve written work, and the quality of your writing, including spelling and grammar and proper paragraph construction, will be a factor in your overall 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 visit The Writing Center in room C117. I am also willing to review early drafts of papers and assignments provided you send them to me several days in advance of the due date.

Late work will be penalized up to a full letter grade deduction depending on the severity of the infraction. Exams cannot be submitted after I have returned the graded exams, which is usually one week after the exams are due, without explicit permission from me. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will hurt your final grade more than submitted work that receives an F but reflects some level of effort.

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. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class.

Part I: Sociology as Social Science

Week 1: The Sociological Perspective
 Tues 8/28: The Sociological Imagination
 Thurs 8/30: Sociology as Social Science

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

Week 2: Sociological Theory
 Tues 9/4: Deductive and Inductive Theory
 Thurs 9/6: Durkheim's Theory of Suicide

Readings: Ferguson reading 4; McIntyre Chapters 4 and 5

Week 3: Research Methods
 Tues 9/11: Quantitative Research Methods
 Thurs 9/13: Qualitative Research Methods

Readings: Ferguson readings 5 and 6; McIntyre Chapter 6

Assignment 1 handed out: due 9/20

Week 4: Theoretical Perspectives

Tues 9/18: The Functionalist Perspective

Thurs 9/20: The Conflict Perspective

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

Exam 1 handed out; due 9/27

Part II: Culture and Social Structure

Week 5: Culture

Tues 9/25: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

Thurs 9/27: Culture

Readings: Ferguson readings 7, 8, 9, 10, and 56; McIntyre Chapter 7

Week 6: Subcultures, Countercultures, and Socialization

Tues 10/2: Subcultures and Countercultures

Thurs 10/4: Socialization

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

Assignment 2 handed out; due 10/16

Week 7: Deviant Behavior and Social Control

Tues 10/9: Deviant Behavior

Thurs 10/11: Social Control

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

Week 8: Social Structure

Tues 10/16: Statuses and Roles

Thurs 10/18: Groups and Organizations

Readings: Ferguson readings 15, 16, and 18; McIntyre Chapter 8

Week 9: Community and Its Decline

Tues 10/23: Community

Thurs 10/25: The Decline of Community

Reading: Ferguson readings 48 and 57

Exam 2 handed out; due 11/1

Part III: Social Inequality

Week 10: Social Inequality

Tues 10/30: *Roger and Me*

Thurs 11/1: Social Inequality

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

Final project posted; due 12/6

Week 11: Stratification and Social Class

Tues 11/6: Social Stratification

Thurs 11/8: Social Class

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

Week 12: Education

Tues 11/13: The Functionalist Perspective

Thurs 11/15: The Conflict Perspective

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

Week 13: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Tues 11/20: Race and Ethnicity

Thurs 11/22: Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class

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

Week 14: Racial and Ethnic Inequality (Cont'd)

Tues 11/27: Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination

Thurs 11/29: Racial/Ethnic Inequality

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

Week 15: Sex Inequality

Tues 12/4: Sex vs. Gender

Thurs 12/6: Sex Inequality

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

Final projects due; Final Exam handed out; due Thurs 12/13