

Introductory Sociology: Fall 2010

Sociology 105

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Office Hours:
Monday: 12:00 - 1:00
Wednesday: 10:00-11:00
and by appointment

This course is intended to introduce students to some of the main issues in sociology. Sociology is the systematic study of groups of people acting in the social world. Thus, we are not examining the means and motivations of the individual, but rather the ways in which the individual acts as a result of - and as a member of - a larger society.

Description from the Course Catalog:

The nature and scope of sociology. In this study of human groups and relationships, the course explores the origin, structure and growth of human society; its basic institutions and processes; and problems resulting from social change. Prerequisite: English 020

Course Goals:

This course has two primary goals. First, you should understand how the larger social system shapes the lives of individuals. Second, you should be able to apply this understanding to different types of situations (e.g. the construction of race or gender, etc.). In order to achieve these goals you should be able to fulfill the following more specific objectives:

1. Describe the major theories of functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism.
2. Apply these theories to the various subtopics listed in the syllabus.
3. Describe the nature of sociology itself and discuss some of the ways sociologists do research.
4. Describe the major institutions that exist in most societies and discuss their roles in U.S. society.
4. Explain how, for any of the various subtopics we discuss, social forces influence these situations.
5. Use this knowledge to explain real world outcomes.

Teaching Methods:

This course will be taught by lecture and discussion. The lectures will sometimes cover the material in the readings; however, these lectures will assume familiarity with the material. Thus, prior preparation is crucial. Class discussions will both focus on the reading and go beyond it. You should do the reading thoroughly before class and be prepared to discuss it. This assumes that you have spent some time thinking about the material to determine what is confusing to you, as well as considering the implications of what you have read. There will be some readings that you will access through Moodle. They are marked in the syllabus. I may add a few short readings. If I do so I will announce it in class and on Moodle.

You should feel free to come see me to discuss problems with the material, help with study skills, ideas about the material or just to chat. I will be available during my office hours (no appointment needed) listed above and for appointments when scheduled in advance.

If you have a documented disability please let me know so that we can implement the appropriate accommodations.

Requirements for the Course

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading. Readings should be completed before the class day listed on the syllabus. The short articles from the readings book are listed by author, number and title. All readings listed in the syllabus are required.

Moodle: 25% of your grade.

This course will be web-enhanced. Some assignments will be completed through the use of Moodle. We will discuss the mechanics of this process in class. You must read all of the material posted in the class space regarding posting rules and other issues of netiquette.

Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignment on Moodle. Computer difficulties are not sufficient reason for extensions. All Moodle assignments must be completed by the due date. These assignments are due by 9:00 am on the date specified, but you must participate through the forum period to receive the best grade.

Class Participation: 10% of your grade

You will be expected to discuss the material in class. Class participation grades will be based on both quality and quantity - excessive quantity can work against you and quality is measured by thoughtfulness and preparation rather than correct answers.

One caveat - sociology concerns itself with issues that we are all familiar with. It is tempting to use personal experience in discussion. However, personal experience, while it can enliven a discussion, does not constitute sociological evidence. Thus, while your personal experience may differ from the arguments in the readings or lectures, it does not negate the arguments that the authors are making. Additionally, any personal experience you mention is subject to discussion and debate by the group so you should be careful what you personal information you bring up.

Attendance is required and any student missing more than four classes will have their class participation reduced by one letter grade. Anyone missing more than eight classes will fail this portion of the class.

Tests: 50% of your grade

There will be three in-class tests, which will consist of short answer questions. Each test will take one class period. The third test will be held during the final exam period. You will receive a list of sample questions before each test; some of these questions will be on the test. You may write out the questions and hand them in for comment following the rules for paper drafts.

The only excused absences for tests are for medical reasons, family crises, or religious holidays. In these cases please leave a message on my voice mail or email me as soon as possible (preferably before the test). You may take a test late with a substantial penalty if you miss the test day for other reasons. The penalty will be six points to start, and three points for every additional class that passes before you take the test.

Short Paper: 15% of your final grade

There will be one short essay assignment. The essay question will be available on Moodle at least one week before the due date. Further details will be given in class. Students who show the ability to analyze the material will receive higher grades.

Length: 3 - 5 pages

Format: Typed, double spaced, one inch margins

This paper is designed to help you think about the material, and requires that you use material from the readings to explain and expand upon the issues we cover in class. The best way to do this is to start by organizing the ideas we have covered into a coherent argument. This requires that you go back to your notes and the readings and construct an outline of the argument you plan to make, along with the sources (citations) of the material you will use to back up your assertions. We will discuss this in class extensively before the paper is due.

Drafts: You are encouraged to hand in a draft for comments prior to the due date. This can be in the form of an outline, a paragraph, half of the paper, or the entire thing. They can be hand written scribbles or typed sections.

You may email it to me in Moodle or hand it to me in class. Emailed papers may be attached in the following formats: Microsoft Word, rich text (rtf) or Adobe Acrobat (pdf). You may also paste the paper into the body of the email. I cannot open Microsoft Works files. Please make sure your full name is somewhere in your email and put "Soc 105 Paper" or "Intro Soc Paper" in the subject line.

If you emailed me a draft and have not received a reply from me in three or four hours check to make sure that you addressed the email correctly - if you have, then call my voicemail and leave me a message including a number where you can be reached. My email may be out (a rare occurrence) or there may be some other problem.

Drafts must be turned in by class time if they are on paper and by 4:00 p.m. on the day before the paper is due if they come by email.

Late Papers: Late papers will be accepted but will have a late penalty of 4 points deducted for the first class they are late and two points for each class they are late after that, up to a maximum of 10 points. Papers are late immediately after class on their due date. Extensions *may* be granted for personal or family illnesses or problems if the request is made before the due date.

Rewrites: You will be permitted to rewrite the paper. Rewrites should represent a substantial reworking of at least one section. This should go beyond grammatical editing and include revision of your argument - either through rethinking it or supporting it with more evidence or reorganizing it. The new grade will be averaged with the original grade. *Rewrites are due one week after the graded papers are returned.*

Some Additional Details

Required Texts:

Lisa J. McIntyre.. 2011. *The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology. Fifth Edition.* McGraw-Hill.

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Recommended Text:

Diana Hacker. 2003 or 2006. *A Writer's Reference, Fifth or Sixth Edition* Bedford/St. Martin's.

This is the writing handbook used in most BCC English composition courses. If you haven't taken composition yet buying it and using it now will help you when you get there

College Resources:

There are three invaluable resources for students at BCC: the tutorial center, student services, and the computer lab. The tutorial center offers free peer tutors (students who have done well in this class before), excellent seminars on study skills and abundant references on study skills both on computer and in books. Student services offers short term counseling, assistance with learning disabilities, and transfer information. The computer lab offers free computers for students to use at a variety of hours. Take some time to find out where these resources are and find out what else they offer. Students who take advantage of the free resources that the college offers often do better in their courses.

Core Competencies:

Students who enter BCC in the fall of 2004 and students who have less than 15 credits by the fall of 2004 are required to complete a core competencies portfolio. Students who would like to use a paper from this course to fulfill a competency should meet with me. Both essay assignments fulfill the following competencies:

Human Understanding and Interaction:

To understand the language and concepts used to analyze human experience, such as the development of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes.

To recognize group, institutional, and societal dynamics; to understand human similarities and differences.

Oral and Written Communication (Written Communication portion: Non-Comp/Sources):

To write essays focusing on one main idea logically developed with detailed paragraphs; to responsibly and accurately incorporate information from secondary sources.

We will discuss the process for fulfilling a competency when we discuss the paper

Snow Days:

If the college is closed for a snow day (or I am out sick), check Moodle for instructions.

Date	Reading	Due
What Is Sociology		
Wednesday, September 8	Introduction to the class.	
Friday, September 10	#19: Harvey Molotch "The Rest Room and Equal Opportunity"	
Monday, September 13	Introduction, Chapter 2	
Wednesday, September 15	#1: C. Wright Mills "The Promise"	Forum One Opens
Friday, September 17	Chapter 1.	
Monday, September 20	Chapters 3 & 4.	Forum One Closes
Wednesday, September 22	No Reading	

Sociological Research		
Friday, September 24	Chapter 5	
Monday, September 27	Chapter 6	
Wednesday, September 29	#4: Simon Davis, "Men as Success Objects and Women as Sex Objects: A Study of Personal Advertisements"	
Friday, October 1	Statistics Web Sites (See Moodle)	
Monday, October 4	No Reading	
Wednesday, October 6		First Test

Culture		
Friday, October 8	Chapter 7	
Monday, October, 11	Columbus Day: No Class	
Wednesday, October 13	#8: Clyde Kluckhohn, "Queer Customs"	
Friday, October 15	No Reading	

Structure		
Monday, October 18	Chapter 8.	
Wednesday, October 20	#7: Philip Meyer "If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably"	
Friday, October 22	#16: Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Pathology of Imprisonment" Zimbardo Website	Forum Two Opens

Date	Reading	Due
Institutions		
Monday, October 25	Chapter 9.	
Wednesday, October 27	No Reading	Forum Two Closes

Socialization		
Friday, October 29	Chapter 10.	
Monday, November 1	#22: Gwynne Dyer, "Anybody's Son Will Do"	
Wednesday, November 3	#23: Thomas J. Schmid and Richard S. Jones, "Suspended Identity: Identity Transformation in a Maximum Security Prison"	

Deviance		
Friday, November 5	Chapter 11.	
Monday, November 8	#27: William J. Chambliss, "The Saints and the Roughnecks"	
Wednesday, November 10	#26: Emile Durkheim, "The Normality of Crime"	
Friday, November 12	No Reading	
Monday, November 15		Second Test

Stratification		
Wednesday, November 17	Chapter 12.	
Friday, November 19	Chapter 13.	
Monday, November 22	More data on stratification. (See Moodle)	
Wednesday, November 24	#32: James Loewen, "The Land of Opportunity"	
Friday, November 26	Thanksgiving: No Class	
Monday, November 29	#34: Katherine Newman and Chauncy Lennon, "The Job Ghetto" #33: Barbara Ehrenreich "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America"	
Wednesday, December 1	No Reading	Forum Three Opens
Friday, December 3	Chapter 14 (pp. 223 – 239).	
Monday, December 6	More data on race/ethnicity. (See Moodle)	Forum Three Closes

Date	Reading	Due
Wednesday, December 8	#35: Joe R. Feagin, "Racism" #38: Yin Ling Leung, "The Model Minority Myth: Asian Americans Confront Growing Backlash"	
Friday, December 10	Chapter 14 (pp. 240 – 242)	Paper Due
Monday, December 13	No Reading	
Wednesday, December 15	Last Class: Wrap Up	
Exam Period		Third Test

