

## SC 00104 Introduction to Sociology

Fall 2007

T Th 9am, Campion 303

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 10:15am - 12pm, and By Appointment

### Course Objectives

This course is intended to survey the major perspectives, debates, and topics within classical and contemporary sociology, as well as to spark your interest in thinking about your place as a member of society. We'll start off with some of the building blocks of sociology, working to understand what it means to adopt the "sociological imagination." After an overview of social research methods, we'll then move on to applying the sociological imagination to culture, socialization, social institutions, and social inequality.

The three main goals of this course are: 1) to develop and use a sociological imagination, 2) to achieve an understanding of basic sociological concepts and issue; and 3) to strengthen critical thinking and analytical skills by reading and writing critically and integrating ideas and concepts from the course material and your own lives.

I also hope to get you excited about sociology! Even if you are not planning on a sociology major, this course can offer you a new way of looking at the world around you and to question popular, "common sense" assumptions about the world. Ultimately, the goal of this course is to provoke thought about what we take for granted as "natural" about the social order of everyday life, in order that we may think more critically about the ways our own social interactions both reinforce and challenge the cultural practices and social institutions which shape those very interactions.

As this is a core course, we will be looking at sociology with an eye towards the following concerns:

- 1) **The Perennial Questions:** We'll think about the questions that great social thinkers like Marx and Weber asked years ago. How is society possible? What is the relationship of the individual to society and vice-versa? How do these questions shape contemporary debates and can there be any resolution? Is our behavior more "nature" or "nurture"?
- 2) **Cultural Diversity:** A number of readings will address the issue of cultural diversity in 21<sup>st</sup> century society, in order to appreciate the great variety of ethnic, religious, racial and cultural perspectives.

- 3) **Historical Perspective:** We'll regard sociology and sociological theory within the historical context in which they are embedded. We will also address specific events and social phenomena as manifestations of larger sociohistorical trends.
- 4) **Methodology:** A section of this course will be devoted to understanding different methods sociologists use to study various social phenomena.
- 5) **Writing Component:** There is a strong writing requirement in this course. You'll be expected to integrate and apply the concepts learned in class to real world issues and your own life. We'll work to understand what strong sociological writing and critical thinking can accomplish.
- 6) **Creating a Personal Philosophy:** You're encouraged to think about your own life and biography in terms of the topics addressed in class. You'll be challenged to critically examine your own position in our society, to assess your behavior, and to raise your consciousness as a member of society.

### Course Requirements

*Please turn off your cell phones before class!*

- 1) **Class Attendance and Participation:** Everyone is expected to attend class and participate in discussions and exercises. Absences **WILL** be noted and more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a drop in grade.
- 2) **Assigned Reading:** You should come to class having read all assigned material.
- 3) **Papers:** There will be 3 short paper assignments throughout the semester. These will allow you to a bit of sociology yourself, as well as provide opportunities to critically connect concepts introduced in class with topics of interest to you. More detailed assignments will be given out when the time comes. Late papers will be penalized.
- 4) **Weekly Responses:** You will be expected to contribute informal, but engaged reactions to the WebCT class discussion list. You must contribute 8 times throughout the semester. See below for more detail.
- 5) **Exams:** There will be mid-term and final in-class exams which will cover the core material of the course.

### **Weekly Responses:**

This class deals with ideas that require regular **completion of reading** and regular **attendance**. To encourage reading and thought, you are required to write **eight 150-200 word reactions to the week's readings, to be posted on the class WebCT website**.

Thought pieces should be posted as a **reply** to the appropriate date within the discussion group. They should discuss the readings assigned to that date in the context of the class, or connected thoughtfully to issues of interest to you. These writings can be quite

informal, but thoughtless, cursory or late pieces will not receive credit. Three of the eight postings should respond, or at least make reference, to comments previously posted by classmates. Reactions must be posted **by midnight before the class for which the reading is assigned (that is, by 12am on Tuesdays and Thursdays)**. Only **one posting a week** will be counted as part of the required eight.

These reactions will be graded check-plus, check or check-minus, with the rough translation being (check plus = 100), (check = 90), and (check minus = 80). Every missing reaction at semester's end will count as a zero, so make sure you pace yourself with these responses so you will not come up short at semester's end. These responses are worth 15% of your grade. I will update you at mid-term as to how many you have done and your current grade. You may also ask me at any time.

**Please Note:** These do not have to be very long, nor do I expect you to spend hours on them. Your honest immediate reactions to the readings are what I am interested in, as well as having you interact with each other. You can also explore perhaps what you *didn't* understand about a reading!

### Grading

Your grade will be based on the following elements:

1) Class Attendance and Participation	10%
2) WebCT responses (8 total)	15%
3) Three short papers (approx. 3-4 pages each)	10% each (30% total)
4) Mid-term exam	20%
5) <u>Final Exam</u>	<u>25%</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Academic Honesty

You are responsible for adhering to the statement of academic honesty in your Student Handbook.

### Disability Statement

If you have a disability, please let me know about it at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

### Keeping in Touch with Me

I encourage you to drop by during my office hours if you have any questions about the readings, assignments, or concepts in general. I can also make appointments outside of these hours if you check with me. The best way to contact me is through my email listed at the beginning of the syllabus. I check my email frequently and will get back to you as soon as possible.

## Required Readings

- Giddens, Anthony, Mitchell Duneier and Richard Appelbaum. *Introduction to Sociology*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Norton. 2007.
- Massey, Garth. *Readings for Sociology*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Norton. 2006. (This book should be packaged with the text at a reduced rate.)

## Course Schedule

### PART I. STUDYING SOCIAL LIFE AND SOCIETY

#### Introductions

**Sept 4** Introduction

**Sept 6** The Sociological Imagination

- **M1-** Peter L. Berger, “Sociology as an Individual Pastime” from *An Invitation to Sociology*, 1963: p. 3-12
- **M2-** C. Wright Mills, from *The Sociological Imagination*, 1959: p. 13-18

#### Sociological Perspectives

**Sept 11** Core Thinkers/Perspectives in Sociology

- **Giddens**, Ch. 1: p. 12-17
- **M3-** Emile Durkheim, “What Makes Sociology Different?”: p. 19-26
- **M35-** Max Weber, “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism”: p. 347-354

**Sept 13** Core Thinkers/ Perspectives

- **Giddens**, Ch. 1: p. 17-24
- **M23-** Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”: p. 218-227

**Sept 18** NO CLASS

**Sept 20** Research Methods

- **Giddens**, Ch. 2: p. 31-38
- **M6-** Joel Best, “Telling the Truth about Damned Lies and Statistics”: p. 53-57

**Sept 25** Research Methods cont’d

- **Giddens**, Ch. 2: p. 38-50 (skip 46-47)
- **M7-** Allan Brandt, “Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study”: p. 59-70

*Paper 1 Due*

#### Culture and Socialization

**Sept 27** Culture

- **Giddens**, Ch. 3: p. 55-63, 66-74
- **M8-** Clyde Kluckholm, “Queer Customs”: p. 73-80

**Oct 2** Socialization

- **Giddens**, Ch. 4, p. 91-105

## PART II: SOCIAL GROUPS AND SOCIAL CONTROL

### Social Structure

#### Oct 4 Social Interaction and Everyday Life

- Giddens, Ch 5: p. 115-127
- M11- Erving Goffman, "On Facework," 1955: p. 104-114

#### Oct 9 Groups, Organizations, and Control

- Giddens, Ch 6: p. 145-161
- M5- Kelman and Hamilton, "The My Lai Massacre: A Crime of Obedience?": p. 34-52

*Film: "Obedience"*

#### Oct 11 Groups, Organizations, and Control cont'd

- M30- Shearing and Stenning, "From the Panopticon to Disneyworld": p. 296- 301
- M33- Jennifer Hunt, "Police Accounts of Normal Force": p. 322-337

#### Oct 16 Deviance

- Giddens, Ch. 7: p. 179-191
- M18- Elijah Anderson, "The Code of the Street": p. 171-183

## PART III: SOCIAL INEQUALITY

### Race, Class and Education

#### Oct 18 Class and Stratification

- Giddens, Ch. 8: p. 215-230
- M12- Robin Rogers-Dillon, "The Dynamic of Welfare Stigma": p. 115-129
- M31- William J. Chambliss, "The Saints and the Roughnecks": p. 302-315

#### Oct 23 MID-TERM EXAM

#### Oct 25 Class and Stratification cont'd

- Giddens, Ch. 8: p. 230-245
- M22- Robert B. Reich, "What Happened to the American Social Compact": p. 210-217

#### Oct 30 Race and Ethnicity

- Giddens, Ch. 11: p. 329-335, 354-362
- M14- Mary C. Waters, "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only": p. 136-145

*Film: Hoop Dreams*

#### Nov 1 Race and Education

- Giddens, Ch. 16: p. 507-512

- **M21-** D. Stanley Eitzen, “Upward Mobility Through Sport”: p. 202-209

## **Gender**

### **Nov 6 Gender and Sexuality**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 10: p. 291-299
- **Giddens**, Ch. 18: p. 596-606
- **M37-** Kim A. McDonald, “Shared Paternity”: p. 366-370

### **Nov 8 Gender and Inequality**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 10: p. 300-307, 313-319
- **M42-** William M. Adler, “Job on the Line”: p. 406-417

*Paper 2 due*

## **PART IV: WORK AND THE CHANGING WORLD**

### **The Economy, Work and Globalization**

#### **Nov 13 Work and Economic Life**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 14: p. 437-447
- **M24-** Barbara Ehrenreich, “Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America”: p. 228-247

*Film: Roger and Me*

#### **Nov 15 Work and Economic Life cont’d**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 14: p. 449-465
- **M41-** George Ritzer, “The McDonald’s System (from *The McDonaldization of Society*)”: p. 399-405

#### **Nov 20 Work and the Changing Family**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 15: p. 472-481, 483-492
- **M39-** Arlie Russell Hochschild, “The Emotional Geography of Work and Family Life”: p. 376-389

**Nov 22: NO CLASS, HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

#### **Nov 27 Globalization and Global Inequality**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 9: p. 273-283
- **M34-** John Isbister, “The Foundations of Third World Poverty”: p. 338-344

#### **Nov 29 Urbanization and Globalization**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 19: p. 620-634
- **M47-** Inglehart and Baker, “Modernization’s Challenge to Traditional Values: Who’s Afraid of Ronald McDonald?”: p. 460-466

- **M48-** Mary Pardo, “Grassroots Activism: Mothers of East Los Angeles”: p. 467-476

*Paper 3 due*

## **PART V: SOCIAL CHANGE**

### **Social Movements and Social Change**

#### **Dec 4**

- **Giddens**, Ch. 13: p. 412-425
- **M49-** Paul Wapner, “Greenpeace and Political Globalism”: p. 477-485

#### **Dec 6            WRAP-UP/ Review**

- **M51-** Bill McKibben, “An Alternative to Globalization”: p. 500-507

## **FINAL EXAM**