

Office Hours

Tuesday 10:30 to 12:00 & by appt
Office Hours in The Chocolate Bar, McElroy Commons
Mailbox #68, McGuinn 410

Course Description

Within the framework of liberal education, this course is dedicated to developing a critical perspective for understanding and explaining human behavior and social interaction. The purpose is to help you to establish a “sociological perspective” that will enable you to better understand the social world around you and your role in shaping this world. At the end of this course, you should be more adept at identifying important social phenomena, analyzing these phenomena from a sociological perspective, and clearly communicating your analysis both orally and in writing.

There are three main goals of this course. 1) To develop and use a Sociological Imagination. 2) To achieve an understanding of basic sociological concepts and relate them to your own lives. 3) To strengthen critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills.

Reading The following book is required.

Henslin, James (ed). *Down to Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings*. 14th edition. New York: Simon & Schuster (Free Press).

*This book is available in the BC bookstore, but used copies are also available on websites such as Amazon.com. There is also a copy of this book in the Reserve Room of the O’Neill Library

There are also additional required readings, which are available on WebCT and on the Library’s Course Reserves web page. These are starred (**) on your syllabus.

Course Requirements:

Please note that as a Core Curriculum course, there is a strong writing component required of all students who take this class. To fulfill this requirement students will complete a *Sociological Journal* of observations, reflections, and comments throughout the semester. The journal will be handed in four times during the semester and will account for 35% of the course grade. Students will receive an information sheet and further instruction about this journal and a final journal presentation.

There will be a midterm exam worth 20% and a final exam worth 25% of the course grade. These exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and essays and will require you to be familiar with in-class material and all readings/handouts.

The remaining 10% of your grade will come from ***class participation***. If your attendance is excellent, you will receive anywhere from 7-10 points depending on your actual

participation. If your attendance is less than excellent you will receive anywhere from 0-6 points depending on your actual participation. I define non-excellent attendance as missing more than two (2) classes without an official university excuse from an official university office. This policy begins January 22, 2008.

Finally, you will have a chance to earn *extra credit* by attending certain non-class events during the semester. In order to receive the credit you must submit on the very next class day a 1-2 page summary of and reaction to this particular event. You will get anywhere from 0-2 extra points (depending on quality) each time you satisfy this requirement up to a maximum of six (6) points during the semester. I will announce qualifying events throughout the semester. Please also feel free to bring any events to my attention.

NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED UNLESS AN EXTENSION IS GRANTED BY ME BEFORE THE DUE DATE OF THE ASSIGNMENT.

Grading

Class Attendance & Participation	10%
Sociological Journal	35%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

Important Dates

1/31	1 st “Hand in” of <i>Sociological Journal</i>
2/19	2 nd “Hand in” of <i>Sociological Journal</i>
2/26	Midterm Examination
3/25	3 rd “Hand in” of <i>Sociological Journal</i>
4/22	4 th “Hand in” of <i>Sociological Journal</i>
5/6	Final Examination (subject to change-check final exam schedule to confirm)

There are no make-up exams in this class. Please make arrangements to attend both the in-class midterm and the final exam.

Course Outline (Readings outside of required text are available on WebCT)

Preliminary Schedule-subject to change

I. Introduction (January 17)

Berger, Peter. “Invitation to Sociology”

Mills, C. Wright “The Promise” *The Sociological Imagination*

II. What is Sociology? (January 22, 24)

Henslin, James. “What is Sociology? Comparing sociology and the other social sciences”

**Lemert, Charles C. *Social Things*. Ch.1 “Imagining Social Things, Competently”

**Giddens, Anthony, Mitchell Dunier, & Michael Applebaum. *Introduction to Sociology*. Fifth Edition. Ch.1 (pages 3-12)

III. Methodologies (January 29, 31)

Henslin, James. "How Sociologists Do Research"

Scully, Diana and Joseph Marolla. "Riding the Bull at Gilley's: Convicted Rapists Describe the Rewards of Rape"

Jacobs, Bruce A. "Doing Research with Street Corner Crack Dealers."

IV. Sociological Theory (February 5, 7)

**Walsh, John P. and Anne Zacharias-Walsh. "Working Longer, Living Less: Understanding Marx Through the Workplace Today."

**Ritzer, George. "The Weberian Theory of Rationalization and the McDonaldization of Contemporary Society"

**Hornsby, Anne M. "Surfing the Net for Community: A Durkheimian Analysis of Electronic Gatherings"

V. Culture & Socialization (February 12, 14)

Miner, Howard. "Bodily Ritual among the Nacirema."

Davis, Kingsley. "Extreme Isolation"

**Kivisto, Peter and Dan Pittman. "Goffman's Dramaturgical Sociology: Personal Sales and Service in a Commodified World"

** Lemert, Charles. *Social Things*. Ch.4 "Lost Worlds and Modern Sociology"

VI. Gender & Sexuality (February 19, 21)

Eder, Donna. "On Becoming Female: Lessons learned in School"

**Fausto-Sterling, Anne "How to Build a Man" in Berger, Wallis, and Watson, eds, *Constructing Masculinity*

Tannen, Deborah. "But What Do You Mean? Women and Men in Conversation"

Thorne, Barrie and Zella Luria. "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds"

Movie: TBA (February 25)

Midterm Due-February 28

VII. Deviance (March 11,13)

**Reiman, Jeffrey. "A Crime By Any Other Name..." *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor get Prison* (Ch. 2)

Chambliss, William J. "The Saints and the Roughnecks"

Rosenhan, David L. "On Being Sane in Insane Places."

***No class on Thursday March 20 due to Easter Break**

VIII. Social Control (March 18, 25)

**Orwell, George. *1984*. Part I. Chapters 1 & 2.

Meyer, Phillip. "If Hitler asked you to Electrocute a Stranger, Would you? Probably"

Zimbardo, Phillip G. "The Pathology of Imprisonment"

IX. Education (March 27)

Gracey, Harry L. "Kindergarten as Academic Boot Camp"

**Jackson, Philip. *Life in Classrooms*. Chapter 1 (on Course reserves)

X. Inequality (April 1, 3)

Gans, Herbert. "The Functions of Poverty"

Ehrenrich, Barbara. "Not Making it"

** Coleman, John R. "Diary of a Homeless Man"

**Mills, C. Wright "The Higher Circles" Chapter 1 of *The Power Elite*

Movie: "Waging a Living" (April 8)

XI. Race & Ethnicity (April 10, 15)

Page, Clarence. "Showing My Color"

**Entman, Robert M. and Rojecki, Andrew. *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*. Chapter 9

**McIntosh, Peggy. "Unpacking the Invisible Backpack"

Ezekiel, Raphael. "The Racist Mind."

XII. Social Change (April 17, 22)

Leidner, Robin. "Over the Counter and McDonald's"

**Twitchell, James. "Lead Us into Temptation." Introduction (p. 1-17)

**Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation*. Chapters TBA (on course reserve)

Journal Presentations (April 24, 29)

Details to be given

Last Class-Final Exam Review (May 1)

Final Exam-Tuesday, May 6, 2008 at 12:30 p.m.

Subject to change according to official University Exam Schedule

Academic Integrity

I expect you to behave fairly, honestly, and with respect toward our collective educational goals. Violators of academic integrity risk serious punishment and possible expulsion. Please refer to the academic integrity policy in the Boston College Catalogue for any clarification. It is also available online at:

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/enmgt/stserv/acd/univ.html#integrity

SC001.08 and the Core Curriculum

As SC001 is a part of the Core Curriculum, 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 21st 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 socio-historical 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 through your sociology journal. 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.