

SC00106: Introduction to Sociology (section 6)

Instructor: Prof. Matthew Williams

Course meeting time: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Course location: Campion Hall 231

Office hours: Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; or by appointment

Office location: McGuinn Hall, 410-D

Instructor's e-mail: matthew.williams.3@bc.edu

(Please note that any e-mail sent to matthew.williams@bc.edu will *not* reach me. You must include the ".3".)

Instructor's phone number: 617-552-8413, ext. 9

(E-mail is probably a quicker way to reach me, as I check my e-mail at least once a day, while I only check my voicemail a few times a week.)

Overview

This course is intended to give you an overview of the field of sociology. Sociology is a very broad field, covering the entire range of human activities. More exactly, sociology is the science of the ways in which people interact with each other, ranging from small-scale face-to-face interactions such as you might have with your friends to such large-scale interactions as those that make up the global economy. Given the wide scope of the field, we cannot adequately cover all the major areas of social life that sociologists study within the time of one semester. Instead, we will focus on a subset of those major areas. Some the areas--culture, social structure, social psychology, stratification--are ones essential to understanding the world from a sociological perspective. Others--politics, social movements, the economy, and globalization--reflect my own areas of specialization and interest--they are what I know best and can thus teach best. One could spend an entire semester--or, indeed, an entire lifetime--studying any one of these topics. We will only have the opportunity to begin to scratch the surface.

Why study sociology? At its best, sociology is not merely intellectually interesting but illuminates many of the issues we face in our day-to-day lives and many of the major social problems we are now grappling with as a country and a world. Sociologists have an important perspective to offer on these matters, what is sometimes known as the "sociological imagination"--a perspective that differs from the way we typically look at social issues in the US. While few if any of you will become professional sociologists, people from all walks of life can draw on the sociological imagination to help them better understand the issues we face as a country and a global community, to reflect on their own lives, and to understand the lives of those from different social backgrounds. Over the course of the semester, you will have an opportunity to develop this sociological imagination and apply it to a number of social issues--and to your own life. While, in trying to understand people's actions or social issues, we typically look at the psychology of the individuals involved, sociology offers another, equally important perspective. In the sociological imagination, we look at how the wider social world--ranging from people's friends and families to race, class, and gender to the government and the economy--shape people's actions, even how they understand themselves. We will also

look at the ways in which people can work to change society, ways we might address some of these social issues.

A fair warning: Sociologists' politics tend to range from left-of-center to the far left. This reflects in large measure how sociologists understand the causes of various social problems, something we will explore throughout the semester. Even if you are relatively liberal, however, you may find that some sociological ideas challenge fundamental beliefs you have about the world, in some cases so fundamental you are not even aware of them. This can sometimes be an uncomfortable experience. To benefit from this course, you need to be open-minded and willing to work with that discomfort. I don't necessarily expect you to change your beliefs (although you may); I do hope that you will at least come away having thought through those beliefs more deeply.

Since this is a core sociology class, we will also address the following matters:

- We will consider some of the perennial questions that sociologists ask: How is society possible, and how much social conformity is necessary for it to survive? What is the nature of human freedom and what are the limits of our ability to withstand oppression? How do cultures and societies evolve?
- We will spend a unit considering the various methods that sociologists use. These systematized methods of empirical research are what make sociology a science, as opposed to a field of philosophical speculation.
- We will consider issues of cultural diversity. These include issues of race, class, and gender within the United States, as well as the diverse range of cultures throughout the world. As part of this process of exploring diversity, we will read articles by authors who are themselves from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- We will consider why a historical perspective is an important element of sociology. Societies are not static, but change over time and if we are to understand why things are the way they are today, we must understand the history and causes of these changes.
- This class will be writing intensive, including both journal writing and take-home essay exams. This will give you multiple opportunities to explore and refine your ideas and your responses to the class material.
- Finally, I hope this class will help you develop a personal philosophy. In particular, I hope that you will come to understand how larger social forces have shaped your life and the lives of others and consider the implications of this for issues like ethics, social policy and social justice.

Readings

I ask that you complete all reading assignments by the first day of the unit with which they go, unless otherwise noted in the course schedule. You will be held responsible for all readings on the exam, even those we do not cover in class. (At the same time, if you have a question on a reading we do not cover in class, please ask.)

Books

The following books will be used in the class and are available at the BC bookstore; they will also be on course reserve at the library:

- Susan J. Ferguson, *Mapping the Social Landscape: Readings in Sociology* (5th edition) (Boston, McGraw-Hill, 2008)
- Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Name Bullies* (New York, Picador, 1999)
- Kenneth J. Neubeck and Davita Silfen Glasberg, *Sociology: Diversity, Conflict, and Change* (Boston, McGraw-Hill, 2005)

On-Line Course Reserve

Many of the readings will be available in PDF format in the library's on-line course reserve system. While this may be less convenient than a pre-printed coursepack, it is also considerably cheaper (as in free).

Web

A few of the readings will be available on the internet. The URLs for such readings are provided in the syllabus.

Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as follows: Your midterm and final exams (both take-homes) will each be worth 30% of your grade, your journals worth 20%, class participation 15%, and attendance 5%.

I will give numerical grades on your exams. BC's grading system is, however, letter based, so your grades will be translated into letter format when I enter them into the system at the end of the semester. The scale translates as follows:

93+: A*	83-86: B	73-76: C	63-66: D
90-92: A-	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	60-62: D-
87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+	0-59: F

* There is no A+ in BC's grading system.

Attendance and Class Participation

I put in a good deal of work preparing for class and, in return, I ask that you come to class regularly. Additionally, we will be discussing certain facts and ideas in class that will not be in the readings, but that you will be expected to know for the exams. Thus, attendance is worth 5% of your grade. You are allowed two unexcused absences. If you have two or fewer unexcused absences, your grade for attendance will be a 95%. For every absence after the first two, I will deduct 3 points from your attendance grade (i.e., after three absences, your grade would be a 92%, after four, an 89%, etc.). Thus, good attendance can boost your grade, while poor attendance can hurt it.

If you come into class late, after attendance has been taken, please check in with me at the end of class to make sure you are not marked as absent. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, you will be credited with only half an attendance.

I hope to have in-class exercises and discussions in which everyone will participate on a regular basis. This will give you a chance to actively explore the ideas we examine in this class and debate with others. Thus, class participation is worth 15% of your grade.

Journals

As part of the course, I will ask you to engage in what is known as “focused free-writing” in response to the readings. This will constitute 20% of your grade. Please see the separate hand-out on journals for more information.

Exams

There will be two take-home exams, a midterm and final, each worth 30% of your grade. Each exam will consist of two questions, each requiring an answer of 5-7 pages. Both exams will be open-book and open-notebook. My goal is not to test whether you have memorized the material, but how well you understand and can apply the ideas. You may study in groups, but the work on the exams should be your own. The midterm will be passed out in class on February 21 and be due in class on March 11. The final will be passed out on the last day of class, May 1, and be due May 12, the scheduled day for the final exam. The midterm will test you on all the material in the first half of the class, including both the reading and the lectures, while the final will be cumulative. Please keep in mind that, while I do not necessarily expect you to agree with any of the ideas in this class, I do expect you to be able to understand, clearly explain and apply them in your exams.

Paper format

Responses to all exam questions should be typed and double-spaced. Please number your pages and use 12-point type in a common font such as Times New Roman or Courier. Please be sure to attend to such matters as proper grammar, organization and writing in a clear style. The better your writing, the more clearly you can convey your ideas. While some important thinkers have been bad writers, there is no reason to emulate them in this. More often than not, unclear writing reflects unclear thinking.

Late papers

For every day a paper is late, I will deduct three numerical points from it. A paper handed in the day it is due, but after class is over, will be counted as half a day late--that is I will deduct 1.5 points from it. Late papers should be turned in to my mailbox, #71 in McGuinn 410. Please do not e-mail them to me as attachments. If you must turn a paper in late, however, you should e-mail me, telling me that you have left it in my mailbox. I do not come into campus everyday to check it and if you leave it there without e-mailing me, I will have to assume that you turned it in the day I find it.

Extensions

If you need an extension, please ask. I know that you all have lives outside this class, including both other coursework and extracurricular activities. Given this, I am willing to be flexible in when your papers are due--but you must plan ahead. I ask that you ask for an extension well ahead of time; it is very unlikely that I will grant an extension the day before a paper is due. I will make exceptions to all these rules in the case of a documented medical or personal emergency.

Rewrites

Few people do their best work on their first draft. Good writing typically involves multiple drafts and feedback from others. Given this, if you are unhappy with how you did on a paper or with your grade (which are not exactly the same thing), you may do a rewrite, addressing the problems I raised in your paper. If you wish to do a rewrite, please talk to or e-mail me and we will set a date for when your rewrite is due. If you turn in the rewrite after that day, I will deduct late points as discussed above. In addition, a rewrite cannot be used to make up for points lost due to lateness on the original paper. Any points deducted for lateness from your original paper will be applied to your rewrite as well.

Academic Integrity

Following is BC's definition of academic integrity, from <http://www.bc.edu/integrity>. Please familiarize yourself with it. If you have any questions about how to interpret it in the context of class assignments, please feel free to ask me. Any violation of academic integrity will result, at a minimum, in a zero on that assignment. Additionally, I will report the incident to your dean and the Committee on Academic Integrity. This is as much for your protection as mine, since the Committee will conduct an independent review of the incident in order to determine whether or not I have made a fair judgment.

Policy and Procedures

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the educational process.

Standards

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;

- fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports, or in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data;
- falsification of papers, official records, or reports;
- copying from another student's work;
- actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
- unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination;
- the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers;
- submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved;
- dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, and in any other matter relating to a course.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one's own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Other breaches of academic integrity include:

- the misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity for academic purposes;
- the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities;
- the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;
- the alteration or falsification of official University records;
- the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
- the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
- the expropriation or abuse of ideas and preliminary data obtained during the process of editorial or peer review of work submitted to journals, or in proposals for funding by agency panels or by internal University committees;
- the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally-identifying human subject data;
- the unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in University libraries, media, or academic resource centers.

Collusion is defined as assistance or an attempt to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of students' scholarly development. Acceptable levels of

collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.

Special Needs

If you have a learning disability or other special need, please tell me during the first week of classes, so that I can best prepare to accommodate you.

Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change. I will let you know in class and by e-mail if and when I make any changes.

Part 1: Core Concepts

January 15, *Introduction*

No reading--first day of class

January 17, *The Sociological Imagination*

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 1

Ferguson, ch. 1 & 3 (Mills, "The Promise"; Romero, "An Intersection of Biography and History")

January 22, *Culture*

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 5

Ferguson, chs. 8-10 (Velliquette & Murray, "The New Tattoo Subculture"; Espiritu, "The Racial Construction of Asian American Women and Men"; Trask, "Lovely Hula Hands")

Course reserve: Charles Derber, "The Good Man Fills His Own Stomach" & "The Ultimate Wilders" (chs. 1-2), *The Wilding of America*, 3rd ed. (New York, Worth Publishers, 2004)

January 24, *Social Structure*

Neubeck & Glasberg, pp. 45-47, 56-77

Ferguson, ch. 50 (Crow Dog & Erdoes, "Civilize Them With a Stick")

Course reserve: Theodore P. Gerber. "When Public Institutions Fail: Coping with Dysfunctional Government in Post-Soviet Russia," *Contexts*, 2004, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 20-28

January 29, *Sociological Research*

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 2

Ferguson, chs. 4 & 6 (Schwalbe, "Finding Out How the Social World Works"; Duneier, "Sidewalk")

Course reserve: Joel Best, "Contentious Numbers" (ch. 6), *More Damned Lies and Statistics* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004)

Part 2: Social Psychology

January 31, *Socialization and the Self*

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 6

Ferguson, chs. 12 & 49 (Granfield, “Making it by Faking it”; Karp, “Illness and Identity”)

Course reserve: Myra & David Sadker, “Hidden Lessons” (ch. 1), *Failing at Fairness* (New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1994)

February 5, *Social Interaction and Organizations*

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 4

Ferguson, chs. 17 & 22 (Williams, “Shopping as Symbolic Interaction”; Boswell & Spade “Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture”)

Course reserve: Deborah Gould, “Rock the Boat, Don’t Rock the Boat, Baby” (ch. 8), *Passionate Politics*, edited by Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper, & Francesca Polletta (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2001)

Course reserve: Philip Meyer, “If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably”, *Esquire*, February 1970, pp. 73, 128, 130, 132

Part 3: Social Stratification

February 7, *Power, Privilege and Oppression*

Movie (in-class): *True Colors* (producers, Mark Lucasiewicz and Eugenia Harvey; Northbrook IL: MTI/Film & Video, 1991)

Neubeck & Glasberg, chs. 7-8

Ferguson, ch. 23 (Davis, Moore & Tumin, “Some Principles of Stratification”)

February 12, *Economic Aspects of Stratification*

Ferguson, chs. 25, 26, 51 (Shapiro, “The Hidden Cost of Being African American”; Ehrenreich, “Nickel-and-Dimed”; Kozol “Still Separate, Still Unequal”)

Course reserve: Christine J. Williams, “The Glass Escalator,” *Social Problems*, 1992, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 253-267

February 14, *Cultural Aspects of Stratification*

Ferguson, chs. 24, 30, 31, 52 (Domhoff, “Who Rules America?”; Loe, “Working at Bazooms”; Bonilla-Silva, “‘New Racism,’ Color-Blind Racism and the Future of Whiteness in America”; Ferguson “Bad Boys”)

Course reserve: David Croteau, “Politics, Work, and the Private Citizen” (ch. 10), *Politics and the Class Divide* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1995)

February 19 & 21, *The Multiculturalism Debate*

Course reserve: Jean Hardisty, “The Resurgent Right” & “The Kitchen Table Backlash” (chs. 1 & 3), *Mobilizing Resentment* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1999)

Course reserve: Todd Gitlin, “Marching on the English Department” & “The Fate of the Commons” (chs. 5 & 8), *The Twilight of Common Dreams* (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1995)

Course reserve: Tim Wise, "Affirmative Action Past and Present" (ch. 1), *Affirmative Action* (New York, Routledge, 2005)
Course reserve: Winifred Breines, "Struggling to Connect," *Contexts*, 2007, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 18-24
Course reserve: Cheryl Gooding, "Building a Multicultural Union Women's Organization," *New Solutions*, Spring 1997, pp. 62-75
Midterm exam passed out February 21

Part 4: Social Institutions and Social Change

February 26 & 28, *The State and Capital*
Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 11
Ferguson, chs. 35 & 36 (Mills, "The Power Elite"; Clawson *et al.* "Dollars and Votes")
Course reserve: Charles Derber, "The End of the Century" & "The Mouse, Mickey Mouse, and Baby Bells" (chs. 1 & 3), *Corporation Nation* (New York, St. Martin's Griffin, 1998)
Course reserve: Theda Skocpol, "Voice and Inequality," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2004, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 3-20

March 4 & 6
NO CLASS--spring break

March 11, 13 & 18, *Social Movements*
Midterm exam due March 11
Movie (in-class): *Eyes on the Prize, Part 3: Ain't Scared of Your Jails* (director, Judith Vecchione; Alexandria VA: PBS Video, 1986)
Readings and journal entries due March 13
Neubeck & Glasberg, pp. 313-325
Course reserve: Jo Freeman, "On the Origins of Social Movements" (ch. 1), *Waves of Protest*, edited by Jo Freeman & Victoria Johnson (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999)
Course reserve: David S. Meyer, "Institutionalizing Dissent," *Sociological Forum*, 1993, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 157-179
Course reserve: Doug McAdam, "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency," *American Sociological Review*, 1983, vol. 48, no. 6, pp. 735-754
Course reserve: Mary Fainsod Katzenstein, "Discursive Politics and Feminist Activism in the Catholic Church" (ch. 3), *Feminist Organizations*, edited by Myra Marx Ferree & Patricia Yancey Martin (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1995)
Course reserve: Paul Lichterman, "Piecing Together Multicultural Community," *Social Problems*, 1995, vol. 42, no. 4, pp. 513-534
Course reserve: James M. Jasper, "Rituals and Emotions at Diablo Canyon" (ch. 8), *The Art of Moral Protest* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997)

March 20
NO CLASS--Easter weekend

March 25, *A New Kind of Politics?*

Course reserve: Francesca Polletta, "Friendship and Equality in the Women's Liberation Movement" & "Democracy in Relationship" (chs. 6 & 7), *Freedom is an Endless Meeting* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Course reserve: Hilary Wainwright, "Porto Alegre" (pp. 42-69), *Reclaim the State* (New York, Verso, 2003)

March 27, *The Mass Media, part 1*

Course reserve: Robert J. Brym & John Lie, "The Mass Media" (ch. 18), *Sociology: Your Compass for a New World* (Belmont CA, Thomson Wadsworth, 2007)

Ferguson, ch. 39 (Mantsios, "Media Magic")

Course reserve: Charlotte Ryan, "Getting Framed" (ch. 3), *Prime Time Activism* (Boston, South End Press, 1991)

April 1 & 3, *The Mass Media, part 2*

Klein, chs. 1-5 & 8

April 8, 10 & 15, *The Economy and Labor*

Movie (in-class): *A Days' Work, A Day's Pay* (directors, Kathy Leichter and Jonathan Skurnik; New York: Mint Leaf Productions, 2001)

Readings and journal entries due April 10

Neubeck & Glasberg, ch. 12

Ferguson, ch. 42-43 (Leidner, "Over the Counter"; Hochschild, "The Time Bind")

Klein, chs. 10-11

Course reserve: William Julius Wilson, "Societal Changes and Vulnerable Neighborhoods" (ch. 2), *When Work Disappears* (New York, Random House, 1996)

Course reserve: Arlie Russel Hochschild, "Love and Gold" (pp. 15-30), *Global Woman*, edited by Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Russel Hochschild (New York, Henry Holt & Company, 2002)

Course reserve: Kim Voss & Rick Fantasia, "The Future of American Labor", *Contexts*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2004, pp. 35-41

April 17, 22, 24 & 29, *Development and Globalization*

On-line: Materials for the Global Justice Game, <http://www.globaljusticegame.mrap.info/>

Other readings and journal entries due April 24

Neubeck & Glasberg, pp. 47-56, 298-307

Ferguson, ch. 37 (Derber, "One World Under Business")

Klein, chs. 9, 14 & 17

Course reserve: Joseph E. Stiglitz, "Broken Promises" & "The IMF's Other Agenda" (chs. 2 & 8), *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2002)

Course reserve: Vandana Shiva, "Threats to Biodiversity" & "Biopiracy" (pp. 40-68), *Protect or Plunder?* (New York, Zed Books, 2001)

Course reserve: Pam Simmons, "'Women in Development': A Threat to Liberation" (pp. 16-21), *The Ecologist*, 1992, vol. 22, no. 1

May 1, *A New Kind of Economy?*

Final exam passed out

Course reserve: William Julius Wilson, "A Broader Vision" (ch. 8), *When Work Disappears* (New York, Vintage Books, 1996)

Web: Marie Trigona, "Recuperated Enterprises in Argentina: Reversing the Logic of Capitalism," *Center for International Policy--Americas Program, Citizen Action in the Americas* # 19, March 17, 2006: <http://americas.irc-online.org/am/3158>

Web: Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain, "Redressing Ecological Poverty Through Participatory Democracy," *Political Economy Research Institute, Working Paper* # 36, December 1, 2000, download as a PDF:

<http://www.peri.umass.edu/Publication.236+M55a927957b3.0.html>

May 12

Final exam due, 12:30 p.m.