

Intro to Sociology - SC00103
Noa Milman

Meeting time: Tue and Thu 1:30
Room: Campion 303

Office hours: Tue and Thu 3:00-4:00 or by appointment.
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Overview:

Through a broad overview of sociological themes the course is designed to enhance your sociological thinking, and to allow you to apply sociological concepts and perspectives to today's society. The focus of the course is to connect between the personal and social and see the complex relationships between the personal and the social world. During the semester we will discuss questions of gender, race and class from various sociological perspectives, and grapple with questions from current events in light of the course readings. Among other topics, we will discuss cultural relativism and the French controversy over the wearing of the veil in public schools, we'll ask whether men are "destined" to be more violent, what are the different meanings waiters give their tips and why does it matter, and how fashion and culture serve to keep the unequal class structure intact.

The Core Curriculum:

This course examines the human existence relation to society, with an emphasis on cultural diversity and the different historical notions of society and human existence. We will examine different methodological approaches in the social sciences, with an emphasis on qualitative methods. Students will get a chance to experience and use different sociological methods as part of their group assignment, alongside critical reading and thinking, and a strong writing component that is required for the in-class exams, literature reviews and filed notes.

Reading:

Essentials of Sociology, by Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum and Carr. W.W. Norton & Company, second edition, 2008.
Readings for Sociology, edited by Garth Massey. W.W. Norton & Company, fifth edition. 2006.

Both books are available at the BC bookstore. Other readings are available on Course Reserve.

Grading:

Attendance: attendance is required. More than one unexcused absence will affect your grade. Please notify me *before* class if you have to miss a session.

Participation: the class is participatory in nature. We'll have class discussions, exercises and presentations. Your participation is crucial for the success of the class and will affect your final grade.

Reading: you are responsible for doing all the reading BEFORE each class. Many of the discussions in class will be based on the reading, and you'll be asked to show at least working knowledge of the readings.

Cheating, Plagiarism and fabrication of information or citations are strictly forbidden. Please read carefully BC policy on academic integrity: <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html>

Grade composition:

Class attendance and participation: 20%

Midterm exam: 20%

Presentation: 30% (20% group grade, 10% based on your submitted field notes/literature reviews)

Final exam: 30%

Requirements:

1. Midterm exam – in class. Tuesday, October 14, 2008.

2. Group presentations:

you will be divided in groups of 4-5 students (You can compose the group yourself or ask me to assign you in a group). Each group will be asked to choose a sociological topic of an interest from the syllabus, and develop a research question in the area of your interest. Next you will need to choose your research method (observations, interviews) and identify relevant literature. Once an initial list of resources is composed, you'd need to divide the work between the members of the groups, and submit your proposal and work distribution on Thursday, September 18, 2008.

Throughout the semester, each member of the group will be asked to send the group and CC me 2 literature reviews (see literature review form) and 2 summaries of his/her field work (summary of observations, interviews, etc.). Note that you must complete at least two literature reviews/filed work summaries by midterm date, Tuesday, October 14, 2008 (i.e. Your

group and me need to receive at least 2 literature reviews OR 2 filed work summaries OR 1 literature review and 1 field work summary by that date).

By October 30, 2008 you must submit all of your literature reviews and notes from filed work. It is your responsibility to make sure that I've received a copy of your work.

After all the group members had read each other's summaries, you should assemble to discuss your findings, conceptualize and contextualize them, theorize, and create a coherent "story" for presentation. Each presentation should be 20 minutes + time for questions. You can design a lecture, PowerPoint presentation, class exercise, class discussion or a combination of any sort. Whichever style you choose, remember that your presentation should clearly state your research question, methods, and findings.

At the day of your presentation you'll be asked to submit a short description of your work distribution.

3. Final Exam – in class. Thursday, December 11, 2008, 2:30pm.

I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus with an adequate prior notice.

Date	Section title	Class title	Notes on substance	Readings
Tuesday, September 02, 2008	Introduction to sociology and the study of society	Introduction	course goals, aspirations and expectation, requirements introduction to the readings	
Thursday, September 04, 2008		What is sociology	basic definitions of sociology, the sociological imagination	Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 1 (P. 3-20) Readings for Sociology Chapter 2 "The sociological imagination" by C. Wright Mills. Chapter 3 "What makes sociology different" by Emile Durkheim. <i>Suggested reading:</i> <i>Chapter 1 "Sociology as an individual pastime?"</i> <i>By Peter Berger.</i>
Tuesday, September 09, 2008		The sociological imagination cont', and sociological frameworks	functionalist theory, conflict theory, symbolic interaction, control theory, rational choice theory	Readings for Sociology Chapter 23 "Uses of the underclass in America" by Herbert J. Gans. Chapter 29, "The rise and fall of mass rail transit" by Feagin and Parker

Thursday, September 11, 2008		Sociological methods	Methods	Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 1 (P. 20-34) Readings for Sociology Chapter 6 "Telling the truth about damn lies and statistics" by Joel Best Chapter 7 "Racism in research: The case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study" by Allan M. Brandt.
Tuesday, September 16, 2008	Culture and society	The nature/ nurture debate		Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 2 (P. 39-47). Course Reserve: <u>On Human Nature</u> , by Edward O. Wilson. Chapter 6, Sex (until P. 135). <u>The Lenses of Gender</u> , Sandra L. Bem, Chapter 2, P. 6-23, 29-38
Thursday, September 18, 2008		Cultural diversity and relativism	<i>* Submit research proposal: group members, research question, methods, initial literature, initial list of interviewees /observations and work distribution.</i>	Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 2 (P.47-52) (from Cultural Diversity to Cultural Universals) And P. 57-64 Readings for Sociology chapter 17, "A look behind the veil" by Fernea and Fernea <u>Women Across Cultures: A Global Perspective</u> , by Shawn M. Burn, <i>chapter TBA</i>

Tuesday, September 23, 2008	The creation of self and social identity	Introduction to processes of socialization		Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 3 (P. 69-83) Readings for Sociology Chapter 10 "Boyhood, organized sports and the construction of Masculinities" By Michael A. Messner Course Reserve: <u>Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory</u> , by Iris Marion Young. Chapter 8, Throwing Like a Girl
Thursday, September 25, 2008		Socialization continues		
Tuesday, September 30, 2008	Social interaction - micro	Introduction to social interaction, Goffman's dramaturgical model and role theory		Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 4 Readings for Sociology chapter 11 "On face work" by Erving Goffman chapter 20 "'Getting' and 'making' a tip" by Greta Foff Paules
Thursday, October 02, 2008		social interaction continues		

<p>Tuesday, October 07, 2008</p>	<p>Social interaction - macro</p>	<p>Groups, networks, and organizations</p>		<p>Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 5 Course Reserve: "The Spread of Obesity in a Large Social Network Over 32 Years" by Nicholas Christakis. <u>Bowling Alone</u>, by Robert Putnam. Chapter 1.</p>
<p>Thursday, October 09, 2008</p>	<p>Yom Kippur / Midterm Study Time - no class</p>			
<p>Tuesday, October 14, 2008</p>	<p>Mid-term examination</p>		<p><i>* By midterm – submit at least two pieces from your research: literature reviews and / or field notes.</i></p>	

<p>Thursday, October 16, 2008</p>	<p>Conformity and Deviance</p>			<p>Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 6 (pages 153-163) Readings for sociology chapter 30 "from panopticon to Disney world" by Sheering and Stenning Course Reserve: "On Being Sane In Insane Places" by David L. Rosenham</p>
<p>Tuesday, October 21, 2008</p>	<p>Class and the question of social mobility</p>			<p>Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 7. Readings for Sociology, Chapter 24 "Nickel and Dime" by Barbara Ehrenreich Chapter 26, "From <i>When Work Disappears:</i> <i>the world of the new urban poor</i>" by William Julius Wilson Chapter 22 "What happened to the American social compact?" By Robert B. Reich</p>
<p>Thursday, October 23, 2008</p>		<p>Social class continues</p>		

<p>Tuesday, October 28, 2008</p>	<p>Capitals - Social, Cultural, Financial</p>	<p>Capitals and life chances and choices</p>		<p>Course Reserve: <u>The Discovery of Society</u>, by Collins and Makowsky P. 243-250 "Pierre Bourdieu: Symbolic Violence and Cultural Capital". "Cultural Capital, Educational Attainment, and Marital Selection" by DiMaggio and Mohr. "Cultural capital and the extracurricular activities of girls and boys in the college attainment Process" by Kaufman and Gabler.</p>
<p>Thursday, October 30, 2008</p>		<p>Capitals continues</p>	<p><i>*last date to submit group project materials (all field notes and literature reviews).</i></p>	
<p>Tuesday, November 04, 2008</p>	<p>Gender</p>			<p>Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 9 Course Reserve: "When Girls Will Be Boys " by Alissa Quart, New York Times, 3/16/08 <i>Selling Hot Pussy: Representation of black female sexuality in the cultural marketplace</i>, by bell hooks. In <u>The politics of women's bodies</u>, ed. Rose Wietz. Ch. 8. Other Readings TBA</p>

Thursday, November 06, 2008		Gender continues		
Tuesday, November 11, 2008	Race & Ethnicity			Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 10 Readings for Sociology Chapter 32 "The Border Patrol State" by Leslie Marmon Silko, chapter 14 "Optional Ethnicities: for Whites only?" by Mary c. Waters chapter 13 "My secret life as a black man" by Anthony Walton
Thursday, November 13, 2008		Race and Ethnicity continues		
Tuesday, November 18, 2008	In-class presentations			
Thursday, November 20, 2008	In-class presentations			

Tuesday, November 25, 2008	In-class presentations			
Thursday, November 27, 2008	No Class - Thanksgiving			
Tuesday, December 02, 2008	Social organizing and social movements			Essentials of Sociology, Chapter 16 (P. 475-486). Readings for Sociology, chapter 48 "Grassroots activism: Mothers of East Los Angeles" by Mary Pardo chapter 49 "Greenpeace and political activism" by Paul Wapner
Thursday, December 04, 2008	Review and wrap-up	The Sociological Imagination revisited		
Thursday, December 11, 2008, 2:30pm	Final exam			