

INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY (SC001.05)

Spring 2012

Carney 203

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 4:00-4:50pm

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Sociology could be defined as the scientific study of human society, ranging from the smallest of social interactions to the functioning of global society. This course is designed to introduce you to the study, theory, and methods of sociology. As humans, we are inherently social creatures and thus any aspect of our lives can be examined through sociological investigation. In this course we will examine connections between the individual and society, structures of power, social institutions, and social change. As a Boston College core course, Introductory Sociology will also incorporate the following elements and objectives:

- 1. An exploration of perennial questions of human existence**, such as: What is society and what is the individual's place within it? To what extent are we free agents and to what extent are our choices, behaviors, and preferences determined and influenced by society? How can sociology inform our understanding of how we and others affect, and are affected by, social institutions and structures? Why do some groups in society have more power than others and how can we resist what is unjust and bring about social change?
- 2. Attention to cultural diversity.** In this course we will consider in depth how race, class, gender, sexuality and other dimensions of human diversity contribute both to the individual's experience within society and to the organization and characteristics of the society itself. As we will be considering perspectives that may not be familiar to you and will be discussing sensitive subject matter, I ask that you always treat your fellow classmates with respect and compassion, focusing your critical comments on students' arguments—never on the student themselves.
- 3. A historical perspective.** While much of sociology consists of the study of contemporary issues, it is also critical to understand how we got to where we are today. Sociological thought and theories, as in other disciplines, have evolved over time and will continue to do so. Thus, we will consider both how society has changed over time and where it might be headed in the future, as well as the history and development of the sociological discipline itself.
- 4. An introduction to methodologies of the field.** In the beginning of the semester we will learn about some of the most common methodologies used in sociology. Throughout the course, as we read various sociological publications, we will consider which methods the researchers have employed and why.

5. **A strong writing component.** College is a great opportunity to develop and improve your writing skills. Good writing is critical in all academic disciplines and written assignments will be an essential component of this class. On your assignments, I will aim to provide you with feedback that will help you improve the structure, clarity, and impact of your arguments.

6. **A contribution to the development of a personal philosophy.** One of the central aims of this course is to challenge you to think more critically about your position in society—how your background, race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, health, and so on influence your goals, beliefs, experiences, and interactions with both other individuals and social institutions. In other words, to draw on C. Wright Mills, what are the links between the “personal” and the “public”? In answering these and other questions, you will often be asked to question fundamental and “common sense” assumptions. You may find yourself developing a more nuanced way of thinking about your position in society, as well as a more complex understanding of the functioning of societies and the potential of individuals to make substantial and lasting changes within them.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Introduction to Sociology, Seagull Eighth Edition.* 2012. Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum and Carr. W.W. Norton & Company. (In Course Schedule below referred to as “textbook.”)
2. *Readings for Sociology, Seventh Edition.* 2012. Edited by Massey. W.W. Norton & Company. (In Course Schedule below referred to as “Reader.”)
3. Additional readings on Course Reserves AND on Blackboard.

**A few notes about the required texts and ways to save on costs:

- Both books are on reserve in O’Neill library.
- An FYI: Another version of *Introduction to Sociology* exists. It is identical to the one listed above except it has color pictures, more pictures, and a few additional graphics, all of which lead it to cost much more. You can also tell them apart because the pricier version is simply the “*Eighth Edition*” rather than the “*Seagull Eighth Edition.*” Whichever version you want to use is fine (e.g., if you find the more-pictures version for less on Amazon it’s perfectly okay to use that instead of the Seagull edition).
- For either of the required texts, you may be able to find cheaper options online than in the bookstore, so it might be worth spending a few minutes looking into that.
- Because there is a lot of overlap from one edition to the next, a previous edition of *Readings for Sociology* will suit you just fine for much of the semester. That is, a good deal of the readings in this book persist throughout the various editions. Therefore, if you decide to buy/check-out from a library an older edition that’s perfectly fine; you’ll just have to be sure you know when you’ll need to access the newer edition on reserve for certain readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

- 10% Participation and Attendance
- 15% Co-Leadership of Class Discussion
- 15% 3 Short Responses (5% each)
- 15% First Sociological Analysis Paper
- 20% Second Sociological Analysis Paper
- 25% Final Exam

Participation and Attendance:

Class participation encompasses attendance and quality of interaction with the class. High quality interaction includes listening carefully and responding thoughtfully and respectfully to others' ideas, as well as expressing your own ideas and demonstrating your class preparedness. You're encouraged to bring relevant news stories/editorials/blog posts to class that you think would be relevant to the day's discussion. Also, I realize that some students may be very uncomfortable speaking up in class. While I strongly encourage you to see this class as an opportunity to practice expressing your thoughts and opinions clearly and convincingly to a group, you also have the *option* of supplementing your participation grade by emailing me 2-3 thoughtful discussion questions on a particular day's *non-textbook readings by 2pm the day of class*. Emailed discussion questions should not be thought of as a complete substitution for contributing to class discussions, but rather as a potential participation grade booster that you may take advantage of throughout the semester. Half-way through the semester I will provide you with your participation grade to-date.

Attendance at every class is required. If you have to miss class, please inform me and I may ask for proper documentation (note from Dean, note from doctor, etc.).

Co-Leadership of Class Discussion:

Working with a partner, each student will co-lead class discussion one time during the semester for about 30-40 minutes of the class period. In late January we will choose dates. As discussion leaders you are required to prepare the following:

- A brief summary of the readings' most important points.
- 3-4 discussion questions on the readings.
- 2-3 discussion questions relating the readings to the broader themes of both the unit and the course overall.
- A brief discussion of any limitations you see in the readings. (This element may be woven into some of your discussion questions if you like.)

Short Response Papers:

Throughout the semester you will write three short response papers (1 to 2 pages double-spaced) on three *different* course units. In each response you should reflect critically on one of the assigned non-textbook readings by relating it to topics covered in lecture and in the textbook. Think of these papers as an opportunity to show that you are doing both the textbook and non-textbook readings, and also to demonstrate your ability to thoughtfully engage with the course material. Although not required in the response papers, you may also want to discuss any weaknesses you perceive in the reading or how the reading relates to you personally. Each response paper is due at the end of the unit *following* that on which you wrote the paper. So, for example, a response paper on a reading from the gender unit is due, at the latest, at the conclusion of the race and ethnicity unit. Be very careful to not put yourself in a situation where there are not enough units left for you to do your three responses!

Sociological Analysis Papers:

In addition to the short response papers, you will also write two longer (5 to 7 pages double-spaced), more in-depth papers. You will be provided with two to three essay questions, of which you will choose one to answer. Paper 1 is due Wednesday, February 29 and Paper 2 is due Wednesday, April 18. More details on these and all other assignments will be provided throughout the semester.

****A few final notes about papers:**

- They are due at the start of class; 5 minutes late will be considered late!
- Please use the following formatting: 12 point Times New Roman font, 1” margins on all sides, double-spaced, name/date/headings at the top not taking up an unreasonable amount of space.
- Late papers will drop 5 percentage points for each day they are late, taking effect at the start of class. So, for example, papers turned in an hour after class on the due date will still lose 5 percentage points.

Final Exam:

There will be a cumulative final exam on **Monday, May 14 at 4pm in our usual classroom (Carney 203).**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Cheating, plagiarism and fabrication of information or citations are considered extremely serious offenses, both by me and by the university, and will result in automatic course failure. As it is your obligation to be fully aware of the Boston College policies on academic honesty, please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with them at www.bc.edu/integrity. Also, here are more extensive explanations of cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to: the use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation; copying from another student’s work; unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination; the use of purchased essays or term 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 or for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers.

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.

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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

** This course is divided into units (denoted by the headings in the table below), each of which is 2-4 class days. Although we will be examining these topics somewhat discretely, in reality there is much overlap and many connections among these subjects, and so we will also be considering how what we learn in each unit informs the others.

** You are responsible for completing all course readings by the date they are listed. The *exception* to this rule pertains to the textbook readings. These may be done over the course of a unit (unless you are leading a class discussion within that unit). So, while you should aim for reading the textbook chapter by the date it is assigned, it is also okay if you do this reading spread out across the unit. All other readings must be done by the date listed.

** I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time, provided I give you fair and reasonable warning.

January 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome! Course Introduction and Overview
	Introduction to Sociology
January 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 1
January 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 1: Berger, “Sociology as an Individual Pastime” from <i>Invitation to Sociology</i> ▪ Reader, Ch. 2: C. Wright Mills, “Personal Experiences and Public Issues” from <i>The Sociological Imagination</i>
January 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Edin and Kefalas, “Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood before Marriage” ▪ Blackboard: Miner, “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” ▪ Reader, Ch. 7: Burawoy, “Public Sociologies: Contradictions, Dilemmas, and Possibilities”
	Sociological Research Methods
January 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 2 ▪ Reserve: Babbie, “The Importance of Social Research”
January 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Schwalbe, “Finding Out How the Social World Works” ▪ Reserve: Altorki, “Arab Women in the Field”
	Culture and Socialization
February 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 3 pp. 56-61 (beginning of chapter through “Culture and Society” section) ▪ Textbook, Ch. 4
February 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 14: Messner, “Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities” ▪ Reader, Ch. 15: Lareau, “Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural Growth” from <i>Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life</i>
	The Self and Social Interaction in Everyday Life
February 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 5
February 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Cooley, “The Looking Glass Self” from <i>Society and the Individual</i> ▪ Reader, Ch. 9: Read and Bartkowski, “To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation Among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas”

February 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Tannen, “You Just Don’t Understand: Men and Women in Conversation” ▪ Reader, Ch. 27: Paules, “‘Getting’” and ‘Making’ a Tip” from <i>Dishing it Out: Power and Resistance among Waitresses in a New Jersey Restaurant</i>
Groups, Networks, and Organizations	
February 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 6 ▪ Reserve: Ritzer, “McJobs: McDonaldisation and the Workplace”
February 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 32: Shearing and Stenning, “From the Panopticon to Disney World” ▪ Reader, Ch. 33: Rhodes, “Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison”
Conformity, Deviance, and Crime	
February 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 7 ▪ Reserve: Durkheim, “The Functions of Crime”
February 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Rosenhan, “On Being Sane in Insane Places” ▪ Reserve: Draus and Carlson, “Down on Main Street: Drugs and the Small-Town Vortex”
Stratification, Class, and Class Inequality	
February 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 8 ▪ Reader, Ch. 24: Marx and Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”
February 24	▪ NO CLASS
February 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 31: Gans, “Uses of Underclass in America” ▪ Reader, Ch. 23: Ehrenreich, “Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America”
February 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PAPER 1 DUE! ▪ Reader, Ch. 20: Bettie, “Women Without Class: <i>Chicas, Cholas</i>, Trash, and the Presence/Absence of Class Identity” ▪ Reader, Ch. 30: Wilson, “The Economic Plight of Inner-City Black Males” from <i>More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City</i>
Gender, Gender Socialization, and Gender Inequality	
March 2	▪ Textbook, Ch. 10
March 5	▪ NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
March 7	▪ NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
March 9	▪ NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
March 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Risman, “Gender as Structure” ▪ Reserve: Crittendon, “The Mommy Tax”
March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Pascoe, “‘Dude, You’re a Fag?’: Adolescent Male Homophobia” ▪ Reserve: Benokraitis, “How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works”
Ethnicity and Race, and Racial Inequality	
March 16	▪ Textbook, Ch. 11
March 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Bonilla-Silva, “‘New Racism,’ Color-Blind Racism, and the Future of Whiteness in America” ▪ Reserve: W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk”

March 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Hill Collins, “Controlling Images and Black Women’s Oppression” ▪ Reader, Ch. 26: Benton-Cohen, “Borderline Americans: Racial Divisions and Labor War in the Arizona Borderlands”
March 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 22: Waters, “Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?” ▪ Reserve: Zhou, “Are Asian Americans Becoming ‘White’?”
	Government and Political Power
March 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 13, pp. 402–434 (beginning of chapter up to “Political and Social Change” section) ▪ Reserve: Domhoff, “Can Anyone Become President of the United States?”
March 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 5: Kelman and Hamilton, “The My Lai Massacre: A Crime of Obedience?” from <i>Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility</i> ▪ Reader, Ch. 35: Glennon, “Size Does Count, at Least for French Fries: Minnesota’s Straight River” from <i>Water Follies: Groundwater Pumping and the Fate of America’s Fresh Waters</i>
	Work and Economic Life
March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 14
April 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 25: Thompson, “Hanging Tongues: A Sociological Encounter with the Assembly Line” ▪ Reserve: Schor, “‘A Life at Hard Labor’: Capitalism and Working Hours” from <i>The Overworked American</i>
	Families and Intimate Relationships
April 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 15 ▪ Reserve: Giarrusso, Silverstein, and Bengston, “How the Grandparent Role Is Changing”
April 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK
April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK
April 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Cherlin, “The Deinstitutionalization of American Marriage” ▪ Reserve: Lanutti, “For Better or Worse: Exploring the Meanings of Same-Sex Marriage within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community”
April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 39: Stack, “Domestic Networks” from <i>All Our Kin: Strategies of Survival in a Black Community</i> ▪ Reserve: Eggebeen and Knoester, “Does Fatherhood Matter for Men?”
April 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NO CLASS – PATRIOT’S DAY
	Education
April 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PAPER 2 DUE! ▪ Textbook, Ch. 16 ▪ Reserve: Bowles and Gintis, “Education and Inequality”
April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Kozol, “Savage Inequalities: Children in U.S. Schools” ▪ Reserve: Zweigenhaft, “Prep School and Public School Graduates of Harvard: A Longitudinal Study of the Accumulation of Social and Cultural Capital”

ALERT! There are now only three remaining units. Thus, if you have not done any response papers yet you must do all three on the following units.	
Religion	
April 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 17
April 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reader, Ch. 43: Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton, “Religious Community and American Individualism” from <i>Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life</i> ▪ Reserve: Riley, “How Student Life is Different at Religious Colleges”
Health and Illness	
April 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Textbook, Ch. 18, pp. 610–636 (beginning of chapter through “HIV/AIDS” section) ▪ “Sick Around America” (film—view before class)
April 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Karp, “Illness and Identity” ▪ Reserve: Klinenberg, “Dying Alone: The Social Production of Urban Isolation”
Social Movements and Making Social Change Happen	
May 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reserve: Brecher, Costello, and Smith, “Globalization and Social Movements” ▪ Reserve: Jasper and Nelkin, “The Animal Rights Movement as a Moral Crusade” ▪ Reserve: Johnson, “What Can We Do? Becoming Part of the Solution” ▪ <i>Recommended if you’re doing a response paper on this unit:</i> Textbook, Ch. 13, pp. 434–448 (“Political and Social Change” up to “The Nation-State”)
May 14	FINAL EXAM, 4 P.M., CARNEY 203