Introduction to Sociology

SC00104
Cushing 335
September - December, 2012
Monday, Wednesday & Friday - 8:00am - 8:50am

Instructor: Mr. Alexander Hernandez
Office: McGuinn 410A
E-mail: alexander.hernandez@bc.edu
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00am – 12:00pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This is an introductory level course that will make you familiar with the field of sociology. We will discuss traditional theories and studies that sociology is built upon as well as current events that relate to our field. This course is designed to get students asking questions about how we participate in a larger society, how we as individuals influence others and how others influence us. Moreover, we will examine why we hold the beliefs that we have and how we act accordingly. In other words, you will develop an enhanced sociological imagination where you will view the world and see sociology and it’s relation to issues we face on a daily basis. I ultimately hope that you will leave this course thinking more sociologically about the world in which we live because sociology is all around us!

Course Objectives:

As well as tackling many theoretical and methodological perspectives, this course will attempt to provide entrances to being more engaged critical thinkers in everyday life. By deconstructing many socialized aspects of everyday life, students will come to understand multiple perspectives. This course touches on critical elements of the BC Core.

Perennial Questions – In this course we will examine several vital questions, including:
• What makes society work?
• How does society evolve?
• What is truth within our society? Other societies?

Cultural Diversity – In addition this course will examine how race and ethnicity is dealt with in American society and other cultures.

Historical Perspective - In order to understand the field of sociology, a history of our paradigms must be examined as well. We will discuss how American ideals have been shaped by social, cultural and technological change since our nation’s founding. For example, we will discuss how slavery in this country has affected race relations in our modern world.

Methodology - The way in which sociology as a discipline and sociologists as social scientists are able to report on and study societies must be examined as well as the findings themselves. As part of becoming a critical thinker and an examiner of everyday life, this course will challenge all approaches to obtaining sociological “knowledge” in order for students to better understand our society and other societies. In order
to do this we will be considering the various techniques employed by sociologists including interviews, surveys and ethnography. We will weigh the positives and negatives of each method in order to better understand the science of sociology.

Creating a Personal Philosophy – This course, in its attempt to help students think more critically about everyday life, our social structures, and social change, will help students uncover what their own, unique approach to life is. More specifically, each student will, in effect, create his or her own sociological perspective. In order to achieve this end, students will be presented with a wealth of information on some of our most important social issues (e.g. racism, sexism, etc.). This information will come in many forms that are familiar to students including books, magazine articles, movies, music and of course prepared lecture. From this they are expected to cultivate their own viewpoint on the issues and then present them in the form of class discussion, homework assignments, reaction papers and exams.

Course Readings:

Readings will be required throughout the course and they will be available online through Blackboard. The readings will be posted at least one week before they are to be discussed in class. I will be posting announcements on Blackboard as well as sending out emails to inform students when a reading has been posted but it is the student’s responsibility to listen for any classroom announcements regarding the readings.

Course Requirements/Grading:

Class Attendance is required. You should attend every class unless you are ill or faced with an emergency. Many in-class activities cannot be made up and papers must be turned in on time. It is extremely difficult to understand sociological topics without being able to relate them to your own life and experiences. You can get a lot of information from the readings, but without coming to class you risk missing important discussions, and we will miss your input.

Ten percent of your final grade will be based on your attentiveness and contributions. You must listen to the lectures, to your fellow students and to anyone else addressing the group. Asking questions and speaking out is encouraged, but interruptions or disrespect will not be tolerated, so please raise your hand before addressing the class.

BE WARNED: ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION OF YOUR FINAL GRADE. The class lectures are meant to complement the readings, but they will not repeat the readings. New, original information will be available in every class session. You can get a lot of information from the readings, but without coming to class you risk missing important discussions. Because of this, you will earn a portion of your grade from your attendance and participation in class activities. If you miss a class activity or if you do not participate, you will lose points from your final point total. I do not excuse absences as you are all adults and can decide whether your personal issues warrant missing a class. This will be worth 10% of your grade.

REACTION PAPER

For this assignment, you are to read and review a news article. This paper will be graded on content, clarity, and relevance to the course. Your topic will be given to you two weeks before the paper is due. This paper should be based on your opinion, but it also must provide insight into something that you
learned. You can agree or disagree with the topic. This paper will be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. font, numbered, and at least 1,000 words. A prompt will be presented when the topics are given out. These are due on the specified due date and cannot be made up or turned in late. This paper will be worth 20% of your grade.

CRITICAL REVIEW OF A POPULAR MOVIE/ALBUM

For this assignment, you are to watch a movie or listen to an album for a written review. Whereas critics tend to review media for its entertainment value, your job is to review the sociological content of the film or album. This paper will be typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. font, numbered, and should be at least 1,000 words. I will provide an example of what this paper should look like when we discuss it in class. These are due on the specified due date and cannot be made up or turned in late. This assignment will be worth 20% of your grade.

EXAMS

We will have two (2) exams throughout the course. Each exam will be worth 25% of your grade. I reserve the right to use a variety of question types including, but not limited to, multiple choice, True/False, short answer and essay questions. Students will be eligible to take a make-up exam only at the instructor’s discretion with proper documentation.

POP EXTRA CREDIT/QUIZZES

I reserve the right to give pop extra credit/quizzes at any time throughout the semester.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Activities, Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connection Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Movie/Album Review</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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|                           | 100% |

POINT CONVERSION SCALE

97-100 = A+  77-79 = C+  0-59 = F
90-96 = A     70-76 = C
87-89 = B+    67-79 = D+
80-86 = B     60-66 = D

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy:

I take cheating and plagiarism VERY seriously. I have included an excerpt of the university’s academic integrity policy in the addendum. It is your responsibility to know what the policy is and to ask questions if anything is unclear. When in doubt, ask!
Other Important Notes:
✧ For other important dates and information such as withdrawal, audit, incomplete, and repeat course policies refer to your college handbook and calendar.

✧ Instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and class schedule if necessary. If this is the case, an announcement will be made in class.

Course Schedule

**Wednesday, September 5**
- Introduction to Course
- Review of Syllabus
- Overview of Class and Topics

**Friday, September 7**
- What is Sociology?
  - *The Promise* by C. Wright Mills - 10
  - *The Craft of Sociology* by Peter L. Berger - 6

**Monday, September 10**
- What is Sociology?

**Wednesday, September 12**
- Research Methods and Ethics
  - *Audience Evaluating Statistics* by Joel Best - 8
  - *The 6 Most Frequently Quoted Bullsh*t Statistics* – 2
  - *Numbers Don’t Lie* by Karen Cerulo - 7

**Friday, September 14**
- Research Methods and Ethics
  - *If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute A Stranger, Would You? Probably* by Philip Meyer - 11

**Monday, September 17**
- Sociological Theory
  - *No, Poverty Has Not Disappeared* by Herbert Gans - 6

**Wednesday, September 19**
- Sociological Theory
  - *Behavior in Public Places* by Henslin and Biggs - 13

**Friday, September 21**
- Sociological Theory

**Monday, September 24**
- Class
  - *6 Things Rich People Need to Stop Saying* - 2
  - *5 Things Nobody Tells You About Being Poor* - 2
Playing the Lottery by The Simple Dollar - 2

**Wednesday, September 26**
- Class
  - Welfare is Ruining This Country by Karen Cerulo - 11

**Friday, September 28**
- Class
  - Million-Dollar Murray by Malcolm Gladwell - 11

**Monday, October 1**
- Race
  - The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander – The Rebirth of Caste - 40

**Wednesday, October 3**
- Race
  - The Sports Taboo by Malcolm Gladwell - 8

**Friday, October 5**
- Race

**Monday, October 8**

***No Class – Columbus Day***

**Wednesday, October 10**
- Gender
  - “Night to His Day”: The Social Construction of Gender by Judith Lorber - 13
  - 5 Gender Stereotypes That Used to Be the Exact Opposite
  - If Men Could Menstruate by Gloria Steinem - 2

**Friday, October 12**
- Gender

**Monday, October 15**
  - Gender
    - Female Chauvinist Pigs by Ariel Levy - 4
    - Women, Men and the Bedroom by Conley et al. - 5
    - Slut!: Growing Up Female With a Bad Reputation - Introduction and Chapter 1 by Leora Tanenbaum - 19

**Wednesday, October 17**
- Prejudice and Discrimination
Friday, October 19
- Prejudice and Discrimination

***CONNECTION PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT !***

Monday, October 22
- Race, Class, and Gender
  ➢ *White Privilege* by Peggy McIntosh – 4
  ➢ *Race As Class* by Herbert J. Gans - 5

Wednesday, October 24
- Race, Class, and Gender
  ➢ *Forty Acres and a Mule: What if America Pays Reparations?* by Dalton Conley - 6

Friday, October 26

***Midterm Exam***

Monday, October 29
- Media and Technology
  ➢ *FARK* by Drew Curtis - 56

Wednesday, October 31
- Media and Technology
  ➢ *Technology is Taking Over Our Lives* by Karen Cerulo - 9

Friday, November 2
- Media and Technology
  ➢ *Safe At Home* by Mark Warr – 6
  ➢ *Seven Dirty Words* by George Carlin - 2

Monday, November 5
- Crime and Deviance
  ➢ *5 Pro-Marijuana Arguments That Aren’t Helping* - 2
  ➢ *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander – Chapter 2 - 42

Wednesday, November 7
- Crime and Deviance
  ➢ *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander – Chapters 4 and 5 - 81

Friday, November 9
- Crime and Deviance
  ➢ *What’s Wrong With Sex Work* by Christine Overall - 21

Monday, November 12
- Education
  ➢ *A Matter of Degrees* by William Beaver - 5
  ➢ *The Price of Admission* by Daniel Golden - 20
**Wednesday, November 14**
- **Education**
  - *Shadow Education, American Style* by Buchmann, Condron and Roscigno - 28
  - *Tuition Hikes Leave College Students in Debt…* by Mutari and Lakew – 5
  - *How Schools Really Matter* by Downey and Gibbs - 5

**Friday, November 16**
- **Family and Relationships**
  - *Being Single on Noah’s Ark* by Leonard Cargan - 5

**Monday, November 19**
- **Family and Relationships**
  - *The Way We Never Were* by Stephanie Coontz - 83

**Wednesday - Monday, November 21 – 26**

***Thanksgiving Break! - No Class***

**Wednesday, November 28**
- **Religion**
  - *We Are One Nation Under God* by Karen Cerulo - 9

**Friday, November 30**
- **Religion**
  - *Religion and Spirituality Among Scientists* by Elaine Ecklund - 4

**Monday, December 3**
- **The Environment**
  - *Growing Smarter* by Robert Bullard - 31
  - *Cradle to Cradle* by McDonough and Braungart - 42

**Wednesday, December 5**
- **Corporations, Work and Consumerism**
  - *The Impacts of Wal-Mart* by Gereffi and Christian - 18

**Friday, December 7**
- **Corporations, Work and Consumerism**
  - *The More We Pay, the More It’s Worth* by Karen Cerulo – 5
  - *5 Jobs Everyone in the World Should Have At Some Point* - 2
  - *Maternity Leave* by The Washington Post - 2

***MOVIE/ALBUM REVIEW DUE BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT***

**Monday, December 10**
- **Final Thoughts and Course Wrap Up**
  - *Keeping Up With The Trumps* by Juliet Schor - 4
***Final Exam – December 14th @ 12:30pm***
Addendum to Syllabus

Email: Please do not email me for the following reasons:

* You are not going to attend class, but you just wanted to let me know.
* You missed a class and wanted to find out if “we did anything important.”

Please do not be personally offended, but emails of these types will not be answered. Please see the category below for more information on solving these types of problems.

There are some times when email is helpful. Please email for the following reasons:

* You need to talk to someone but you can’t attend the office hours- you want to make an appointment.
* You have an EMERGENCY situation and need immediate attention (from an instructor… for other types of emergencies, please dial 911).

Also, please be sure to be very specific in your email. “I want to stop by to talk about my paper grade” doesn’t help me as much as “I want to stop by on Tuesday to talk about the grade I got on Paper #2.”

SOME ADVICE: Come to office hours if you have a problem. It is much easier to solve a problem when I can work with you face to face.

Class Notes: All of my class materials including PowerPoint’s and lectures are my personal property and are not to be distributed without my permission. In addition, my lectures are NOT to be recorded.

Academic Integrity (excerpt from www.bc.edu/integrity)

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 it 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.