INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY I – SOCY100102 (FALL SEMESTER, 2016)
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS, 1:30 – 2:45 PM, GASSON HALL, ROOM 306

INSTRUCTOR

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TEACHING ASSISTANT

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SUMMARY

The primary goal of this course is to familiarize students at an introductory level with the field of sociology. Students will be introduced to several common sociological theories, introductory social science research methods (in applied contexts), and various substantive areas within the discipline.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

• There will be four in-class exams throughout the semester, and I will drop your lowest exam score. Each of your three highest exam scores is worth 25% of your final grade. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions. Study guides for the exams will be provided.
• You will keep a diary of your consumption and trash habits for one week and complete a short report on the exercise. This is worth 10% of your final grade. Details for this assignment will be provided later in the semester.
• You will write two short sociological reflections on in-class films (“Nursery University” and “Sicko”) where each is worth 5% of your final grade (for a total of 10% of your final grade). Details for these assignments will be provided later in the semester.
• Attendance and general participation in class discussions is worth 5% of your final grade.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The majority of required readings consist of chapters in the following textbook, available at the campus bookstore (I don’t have extra copies to loan out):


Additional assigned readings are available in pdf via the course’s Canvas webpage.
INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCE CORE

Perennial Questions: How does human society shape my lived experiences and opportunities? How are societies structured? How do societies and their social institutions change? What unites and divides people?

Historical Perspective: While the course will mostly focus on contemporary social processes and conditions, the importance of history will remain constant throughout the semester.

Writing Component: There will be various opportunities to practice writing in class (required assignments and short-answer exam questions). These are great opportunities to further develop your critical thinking and written communication skills.

Creating a Personal Philosophy: A fundamental set of questions in this course, which will push you to further develop your personal philosophy, are how does society shape my life, how do I as an individual contribute to the structure of society, and how can I help improve society in a way to become more equitable for current and future generations?

Cultural Diversity: We will focus on how differences such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, and geography shape our collective and individual positions within society as well as our lived experiences.

Methodology: Throughout the semester we will discuss the plurality of research methods used by sociologists and the role that research plays in advancing sociology as a social science.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Boston College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and integrated access for students with disabilities to all available academic, social, and recreational programs and activities. Appropriate support and referral services are provided by the Disability Services Office, which serves students with hearing, visual, mobility, medical, and psychiatric disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. If you are unsure whether or not Disability Services are appropriate for your needs, please make an appointment with Disability Services for a consultation.

BOSTON COLLEGE STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

“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.” Please review the standards on academic integrity at the website: https://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html
TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE

Week 1

Tuesday, August 30
• Course Introductions

Thursday, September 1
• Read Chapter 1 in Our Social World – Sociology: A Unique Way to View the World

Week 2

Tuesday, September 6
• Read Chapter 2 in Our Social World – Examining the Social World: How Do We Know?

Thursday, September 8
• Read Chapter 3 in Our Social World – Society and Culture: Hardware and Software of Our Social World

Week 3

Tuesday, September 13
• Read Chapter 4 in Our Social World – Socialization: Becoming Human and Humane

Thursday, September 15
• TBD

Week 4

Tuesday, September 20
• Exam 1

Thursday, September 22
• Read Chapter 5 in Our Social World – Interaction, Groups, and Organizations: Connections that Work

Week 5

Tuesday, September 27
• Read Chapter 6 in Our Social World – Deviance and Social Control: Sickos, Weirdos, Freaks, and Folks Like Us
Thursday, September 29
• In-Class Film (Film TBA) and Discussion

Week 6

Tuesday, October 4
• Read Chapter 7 of Our Social World – Stratification: Rich and Famous—or Rags and Famine?

Thursday, October 6
• In-Class Film (“30 Days—Minimum Wage”) and Discussion

Week 7

Tuesday, October 11
• Read Chapter 8 of Our Social World – Race and Ethnic Group Stratification: Beyond “Us” and “Them”

Thursday, October 13
• TBA

Week 8

Tuesday, October 18
• Exam 2

Thursday, October 20
• Read Chapter 9 in Our Social World – Gender Stratification: She/He—Who Goes First?

Week 9

Tuesday, October 25
• Read Chapter 10 in Our Social World – Family: Partner Taking, People Making, and Contract Breaking

Thursday, October 27
• Read Chapter 11 in Our Social World – Education: What Are We Learning?

Week 10

Tuesday, November 1
• In-Class Film (“Nursery University”)
Thursday, November 3
• Finish In-Class Film ("Nursery University") and Discussion
• Read “When and Why Dropouts Leave High School” and “Savage Inequalities”, both available on Canvas

Week 11

Tuesday, November 8
• Read Chapter 12 in Our Social World – Religion: The Social Meaning of Sacred Meaning
• Sociological Reflection on “Nursery University” Due at the Beginning of Class

Thursday, November 10
• Exam 3

Week 12

Tuesday, November 15
• Read Chapter 13 in Our Social World – Politics and Economics: Probing Power, Dissecting Distribution

Thursday, November 17
• Read Chapter 14 in Our Social World – Health Care: An Anatomy of Health and Illness
• In-Class Film ("Sicko")

Week 13

Tuesday, November 22
• Finish In-Class Film ("Sicko") and Discussion

Thursday, November 24 – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY!

Week 14

Tuesday, November 29
• Read Chapter 15 in Our Social World – Population and Urbanization: Living on Planet Earth
• Sociological Reflection on “Sicko” Due at the Beginning of Class

Thursday, December 1
• Read “The Human (Anthropogenic) Driving Forces of Global Climate Change”, available on Canvas
Week 15

Tuesday, December 6
• Read “The Environmental Impacts of Militarization in Comparative Perspective: An Overlooked Relationship”, available on Canvas
• In-Class Film (Scarred Lands and Wounded Lives) and Discussion

Thursday, December 8
• Read Chapter 16 in *Our Social World* – The Process of Change: We Can Make a Difference!
• Consumption and Trash Habits Assignment Due at the Beginning of Class

Exam 4 will take place on Tuesday, December 20 at 9:00 AM