

SC 103: Introduction to Sociology
T/Th 3-4:15
O'Neil 211
Fall 2009

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Course Objective:

Throughout the semester, you will be introduced to theories and topics in the field of sociology. You will be asked, through personal reflection, participation in class discussions, active learning exercises, and the completion of written assignments, to apply these theories to issues that are integral in your own lives and the broader contemporary world. Through the examination of subjects relevant to all of our lives, you will be charged to gain a better and deeper understanding of the world around you.

The Core Curriculum:

This course explicitly examines the relationships between individuals and the societies in which they live. The notion of diversity is a central theme, with a specific focus on class, gender, race and ethnicity. We will examine the primary methodological issues in the social sciences both directly through reading about research methods and indirectly through examining the methods used in the research we examine. We will examine the historical progression of the field, and gain historical perspective by looking at past and present cultures sociologically. There is a writing component comprised of a sociological journal, which will encourage you to make connections between the course, our world around us, and your own life. Finally, the course will aid and encourage you in the examination of your place in society, and the ways in which we can all work to improve our lives and our world.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

This course will involve classroom discussion, small group activities, lectures, and films/videos. There are regular reading assignments and you are required to read them by the date noted on the syllabus.

In this course, I would like to foster an open atmosphere of discussion, learning, questioning, dialogue, and teamwork. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, who saw education as part of a larger struggle for liberation from oppression and social change, referred to traditional teaching styles as being based on *a banking concept of education*, in which the teachers *deposit* knowledge into the students. In this model, teachers are seen as being knowledgeable and students ignorant. The teacher is the subject and students are the objects; the teacher is made active and students are made passive with the focus being on memorizing rather than really understanding. Rather than *depositing* knowledge, I will seek to pose problems and foster critical thinking. Much of the regular class sessions will involve small group work and discussions committed to this purpose.

In this class, the goal is for you to be an active learner—rather than a passive learner. In order for this to work, your participation and your preparedness with the readings (not to mention your attendance) is pivotal.

GRADING

- Class Participation and Active Learning Exercises 15%
- Sociological Writing Journal 35%
- Midterm Exam 25%
- Final Exam 25%

Your journal is basically a series of short papers in which you will explain the relationship between the readings and class content to your own personal lives. You are to use ideas (concepts & principles) from the readings and the class sessions to interpret something you have personally experienced or something with which you are very familiar. I will hand out an information sheet with further instructions for this journal as well as optional questions from which you may choose to answer. There is no required length for each entry, but there should be 10 entries total.

Your mid-term and final exam will be a mixture of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer questions and will require you to be familiar with readings and class content. It will be a closed book exam. Please note: There are no make-up exams in this class. Please make arrangements to attend both the in-class midterm and the final exam.

The grading scale will be:

| | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| 93-100: A* | 87-89: B+ | 77-79: C+ | 67-69: D+ | <59: F |
| 90-92: A- | 83-86: B | 73-76: C | 63-66: D | |
| | 80-82: B- | 70-72: C- | 60-62: D- | |

** Please note, there is no A+ in BC's grading system**

READINGS

Books can be purchased in a package at the BC Book Store and are also on reserves at the O'Neill Library:

SOCIETY: THE BASICS (10th ed.) by John J. Macionis

SEEING OURSELVES: CLASSIC, CONTEMPORARY, AND CROSS-CULTURAL READINGS IN SOCIOLOGY (7th ed.), edited by John J. Macionis and Nijole V. Benokraitis

Please note: I reserve the right to alter this syllabus at any time, but with fair and appropriate warning.

COURSE OUTLINE

The Sociological Perspective: Theory and Methods

What do sociologists do? What can I expect to learn in this class and in the field more generally? How do sociologists endeavor to understand the world around them, and past and present world cultures? What are the primary theoretical perspectives of sociologists, and what are their primary methodologies?

Tues., September 8th

Thurs., September 10th

✓ Macionis, pp. 1-16

✓ *Invitation to Sociology* by Peter L. Berger (M&B, pp. 6-9)

Tues., September 15th

✓ Macionis, pp. 16-33

✓ *The Importance of Social Research* by Earl Babbie (M&B, pp. 25-27)

Thurs., September 17th **Video - Quiet Rage: Stanford Prison Experiment**

✓ *The Promise of Sociology* by C. Wright Mills (M&B, pp. 1-5)

Culture

What is culture? How does it affect us? How can a sociological analysis of culture help us to make sense of ourselves and the surrounding world? Are we free or are we bound by culture?

Tues., September 22nd

✓ Macionis, Chapter 2

✓ Please bring M&B reader to class

Socialization

What does sociology have to say about how each of us became who we are? How and through whom have I been socialized?

Thurs., September 24th

✓ Macionis, Chapter 3

Tues., September 29th **Video– Merchants of Cool**

✓ *Socialization & the Power of Advertising* by Jean Kilbourne (M&B, pp. 95-100)

Social Interaction in Every Day Life

What are the rules that guide behavior in everyday situations? How do face-to-face interactions create the reality in which we live?

Thurs., October 1st

✓ Macionis, Chapter 4

Tues., October 6th **Dramaturgy Breaching Experiment**

✓ *The Presentation of Self* by Erving Goffman (M&B, pp. 108-113)

✓ *Invisible Privilege* by Paula Rothenberg (M&B, pp. 114-117)

✓ *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen (M&B, pp. 118-123)

Social Groups

How does living as members of groups affect us? What do sociologists have to say about group conformity?

Thurs., October 8th **Video – Obedience: The Milgram Experiment**

- ✓ Macionis, pp. 120-130
- ✓ *'Even if I don't Know What I'm Doing, I can Make it Look Like I Do:'*
Becoming a Doctor in Canada by Brenda L. Beagan (M&B, pp. 143-153)

Deviance and Social Control

What is deviance? Why and how does society encourage both conformity and deviance?

Tues., October 13th

- ✓ Macionis, pp. 176-189

Thurs., October 15th

- ✓ *On Being Sane in Insane Places* by David L. Rosenhan (M&B, pp. 157-169)

MIDTERM EXAM: October 20th

Social Stratification

What is social stratification and why is it important? What do the different sociological theories suggest are the reasons for our different social positions? What does inequality in the US look like and what difference does class make?

Thurs., October 22nd **Guided Fantasy Titanic Game**

Tues., October 27th **Video – Waging a Living**

- ✓ Macionis, Chapter 8

Thurs., October 29th

- ✓ *Who Has How Much and Why?* By Andrew Hacker (M&B, pp. 223-228)

Global Stratification

What accounts for the unequal distribution of the world's wealth and power? How did it come about? Are richer countries part of the problem or part of the solution?

Tues., November 3rd **Video – Mardi Gras: Made in China**

- ✓ Macionis, Chapter 9

Thurs., November 5th

- ✓ *The Uses of Global Poverty: How Economic Inequality Benefits the West* by Daina Stukuls Eglitis (M&B, pp. 229-236)

Gender

How do difference and social stratification intersect in this realm to define and confine individuals in particular roles? How do definitions of gender and sexuality differ across space and time?

Tues., November 10th **Video – Tough Guise or Killing Us Softly**

- ✓ Macionis, pp. 274-282
- ✓ *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* by Margaret Mead (M&B, pp. 237-242)
- ✓ *'Night to His Day': The Social Construction of Gender* by Judith Lorber (M&B, pp. 243-248)

Thurs., November 12th

- ✓ Macionis, pp. 282-300
- ✓ *How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works* by Nijole V. Benokraitis (M&B, pp. 249-254)

Race & Ethnicity

Is race a biological reality or a social construction? If the latter, how is race and ethnicity socially constructed by society? As the case with gender, how do difference and social inequality intersect in this realm to define and confine individuals in particular roles?

Tues., November 17th **Video – Race: The Power of an Illusion**

- ✓ Macionis, Chapter 11
- ✓ *How Did Jews Become White Folks* by Karen B. Brodtkin (M&B, pp. 274-283)

Thurs., November 19th

- ✓ *The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. Du Bois (M&B, pp. 261-265)

No class on the 24th or 26th for Thanksgiving.

Social Change / Social Movements

What causes social change? What role do social movements play? What would you like to change if you could?

Tues., December 1st **Video – Eyes on the Prize (or related film)**

- ✓ Macionis, pp. 484-490
- ✓ *Additional reading to be decided*

Thurs., December 3rd

- ✓ *No readings*

Reflection/Wrapping Up

How do we relate to sociology? And how does sociology relate to our lives? Sharing and expanding what we are taking away from the course.

December 8th & December 10th **Journal Entry Presentations**

FINAL EXAM IS: Dec. 15th, 9:00 a.m.

Academic 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 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:

- 0. the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;
- 0. 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;
- 0. falsification of papers, official records, or reports;
- 0. copying from another student's work;
- 0. actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
- 0. unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination;
- 0. the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers;
- 0. submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved;
- 0. 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:

- 0. the misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity for academic purposes;
- 0. the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities;
- 0. the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;

- 0. the alteration or falsification of official University records;
- 0. the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
- 0. the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
- 0. 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;
- 0. the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally- identifying human subject data;
- 0. 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.