Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
This course offers an introduction to a number of perspectives on the social world. We will begin the course with an examination of what defines sociology as an academic field. We will then analyze different ways one can interpret, or frame, the social world. Lastly we will look at subjugated, or oppressed ways of understanding the world, and examine how social positioning effects the way we understand society.

Course Objectives
1.) To enhance students’ critical thinking skills through social theory
2.) To enhance their understanding of their social positioning within society and how that relates to their understanding of the world
3.) The student will demonstrate knowledge in analyzing sociology across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in understanding society as demonstrated by a final paper
4.) The student will demonstrate ethical knowledge in sociology pertaining to race, class and gender as demonstrated by a final paper which relates to a social issue on race, class and gender

The Social Science Core
Introduction to Sociology addresses the central elements of the Boston College Core:

Analyzing society raises a series of **perennial questions**: are issues we see in society a result of individual failings or societal forces? Are social categories like
race and gender products of nature or socialization? How do we understand social injustice and how do we produce social change?

The course is also guided by historical perspective. We will examine how historical context shapes the way we understand the world, and the way social theorists understood the world. Issues of cultural diversity will be addressed. The course will make clear that patterns of experience influenced by race, class, gender and sexuality and one’s access to social and economic power based upon these categories greatly influences one’s understanding of the world.

The materials covered draw on a range of different methodologies. From Erving Goffman’s ethnographic research, where he lived in a mental institution, to Foucault’s analysis of historical documents, we will examine how different sociologists made sense of the world. This will also be a writing intensive course. The main course assessment is a research paper.

I will also encourage you to apply the course material to your personal life. How does our social positioning effect the way we understand and interact with the world? What produces social inequality and how do we challenge it? I hope the course will provide a space for this kind of reflection: informing your personal philosophy, and getting you thinking about the actions that will most help bring about the world you want to live in.

Course Expectations

1. This is a reading and participation intensive course. Readings are due on the date they are listed. Come to class with HARD COPIES of the readings and be ready to discuss them. THERE WILL BE READING POP QUIZZES.
2. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate
3. A doctor, school administrator or other certified official must verify an absence in order for it to be excused. Notes from parents or other legal guardians will not be accepted
4. DO NOT come to class more than five minutes late unless you have permission from the professor. After the class has been in session for five minutes the door will be shut. DO NOT ENTER IF THE DOOR IS CLOSED.

No Electronics

1. No computers will be allowed out in class. If you have a special reason why you need to use a computer to take notes, please schedule a meeting with me.
2. No phones are allowed out in class. If you have a phone out in class I will ask you to put it away and it will negatively impact your attendance grade.

Grading

1. 15% Class Participation/Attendance
   Class attendance is obligatory and is a part of your participation grade. This grade will also include contributions to class discussion, and pop-quizzes (if needed). Two of the pop-quiz grades will be dropped.
2. 40% Exams
   Exam 1 will be worth 20% of your grade and Exam 2 will be worth 20% of your grade. They will be written exams.
3. 45% Final Paper
Will be due on the day of the final.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Scaling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100=A</td>
<td>70-73=C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93=A-</td>
<td>66-69=C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-89=B+</td>
<td>62-65=D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-85=B</td>
<td>58-61=D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78-81=B-</td>
<td>54-47=D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-77=C+</td>
<td>53-00=F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (0.0), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Important Policies

Written Work
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for
accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at [http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html](http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html).

**Attendance**
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate’s notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

**Deadlines**
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.

**Make-Up Assignments/Exams**
The university requires that make-up exams be given only in exceptional circumstances. They may be negotiated only in the event of an excused absence constituted by: (1) an EMERGENCY, defined as a death in the family or a contagious/incapacitating illness, or (2) an out-of-town sports event for athletes. In such cases, you will need to produce a note from your dean, or coach.

**The Classroom as a Safe Space/Ally**
Introduction to Sociology is a welcoming, supportive and safe environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students. When expressing your sentiments you should use “I think...” statements, and be sure to not cut off or belittle other students' sentiments.
Books to Buy


Readings marked with an (*) indicates that it is from one of these books

**THE REST OF THE READINGS WILL BE EMAILED TO YOU OR PLACED ON COURSE RESERVES**

It is expected that 8 hours per week of your study time out will be spent on out of class assignments and exercises. These are listed below. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time but the average is approximately 8 hours per week over the semester

**SECTION 1**

The Practice of Sociology

**Tuesday 5/12 Sociology: In Search of Distinction**


**Thursday 5/14 The Sociological Imagination**


**SECTION 2**

Interpreting the Social World

**Tuesday 5/19 Karl Marx – Interpreting Capitalism**


**Thursday 5/21 Karl Marx Continued**


**Tuesday 5/26 Emile Durkheim – Interpreting Modernization**

Thursday 5/28 Max Weber – Interpreting Culture
- The Spirit of Sociology, Chapter 43 “The McDonaldization of Society” pp. 479-495.

Tuesday 6/2 Erving Goffman – Interpreting Interaction

Thursday 6/4 Michel Foucault – Interpreting Knowledge

SECTION 3
Social Positioning: Race, Class, Gender and Beyond

Tuesday 6/9 Intersectionality and Class
- “Unequal Childhoods”, pp. 1-9
- The Spirit of Sociology, Chapter 14 “The Saints and the Roughnecks” pp. 130-145

Thursday 6/11 Race
- The Spirit of Sociology, Chapter 25 “Race Matters”, pp. 260-266
- “Racism with Racists”, pp. 1-17.

Tuesday 6/16 Gender
- “Sexual Assault on Campus” pp. 483-496.

Thursday 6/18 Review
Appendix

My students will enhance their social critical thinking skills. These skills will be advanced through in class discussion and learning where we critique common sense ways of viewing the world, and systems of power. I will check students progress on these skills through class discussion, in class exams and a final paper, which will use critical social theory to analyze a current social issue.