

# BOSTON COLLEGE

## S U M M E R S E S S I O N

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### **SOCY 1001.02: Introductory Sociology** Summer 2019 (May 14 – June 21)

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**Instructor:** Jared Fitzgerald

**Email:** jared.fitzgerald@bc.edu

**Class Location/Time:** Stokes Hall 115N, T/Th 1:15 – 4:45 PM

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Office Hours:** T/Th 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM and by appointment

**Office:** 410B, McGuinn Hall

#### **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 conveys a sense of the history of sociology and introduces students to the most essential concepts, ideas, theories, and methods of the discipline. Special topics may include interaction in everyday life, sociology of the family, gender roles, race and ethnic relations, and the sociology of work, among others. We will deal with fundamental questions about what it means to be a human being living in a society at a given moment in history.

## **What should I expect to get from this course?**

By the end of this course, you will:

- Understand how sociologists study the world and be able to utilize your “sociological imagination.” This will be demonstrated clearly in the sociological autobiography assignment and in the sociological analysis paper as well as in-class discussions.
- Be able to critically examine the social world and engage in discussions about important social issues to increase your awareness of social and cultural differences across society.
- Gain knowledge of, and critically examine, the various sub-fields of sociology. You will demonstrate your knowledge of these sub-fields in the exams, through in-class discussion and written assignments.
- Understand how social structures shape the world we live in and how history plays a vital role in shaping our current social structures. This will also be demonstrated through exams, in-class discussions and written assignments.
- Demonstrate knowledge across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, race and sexuality in sociology as demonstrated by in-class discussions, written assignments and exams.
- Demonstrate understanding of ethical concerns pertaining to sociology as demonstrated by in-class discussion, written assignments and exams.

## **Required Book(s)**

Conley, Dalton. 2017. *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*. 5th edition. W.W. Norton and Company: New York. (Earlier editions are OK).

\*There will also be a few additional readings posted to Canvas you will be expected to read.

## **What will I do in this class?**

1. **Exams:** There will be two exams in the course. Each exam will be worth 22.5% of your final grade (225 points each). They will be a mix of multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and short essay questions.
2. **Assignments:**
  - a. **First Paper:** The first paper you will write in this class is a 5 page (double-spaced) sociological autobiography. In this autobiography, you will highlight the sociological factors that have shaped your life. Some of these factors could include social class, family, religion, race/ethnicity, or other sociologically relevant topics. This paper is worth 12.5% of your final grade (125 points). There will be more specific instructions provided via Canvas as well as in class.
  - b. **Second Paper:** The second paper you will write in this class will be a sociological analysis. It is 7 pages (double-spaced). As sociology is a broad area of study, you are free to choose a topic that interests you most to discuss. For instance, you could choose representations of gender in video games as your topic of discussion. This paper is worth 20% of your final grade (200 points). There will be more specific instructions provided via Canvas as well as in class.

- i. ***In-Class Presentation:*** You will each present on the topic you choose for your second paper. The presentation will be a short 7-10 minute presentation with a short time for questions after. The presentation is worth 3.5% of your final grade (35 points).
- c. ***In-Class Quizzes/Attendance:*** Reading prior to class is important for us to have good and informed discussion during class. As such, I expect you to come to class having read the material(s) outlined in the course schedule for that day. In order to ensure this is done, there will be quizzes given at random throughout the semester. The quizzes will not be difficult if you have done the reading, but it will be clear if you have not read. These quizzes will be worth 15% of your final grade and also function as your attendance grade for the course as well (150 points).
  - i. ***Discussion Leader:*** You will also be required to lead two group discussions on one of the assigned readings in class. For this, you will meet with your group and lead the discussion on the assigned reading. The day prior to class you must submit a list of at least 5 discussion questions to Canvas. This is worth 4% of your final grade (20 points each).

**You will submit all assignments online via Canvas unless otherwise noted.**

*\*If you are having trouble with any of the above assignments or are having anxiety about the exams or assignments, do not hesitate to contact me. This class is designed for you to develop a sociological perspective not for you to stress out!*

**Grading and Evaluation**

- 1. **Exams:** 45% of final grade (450 points)
- 2. **Assignments:** 55% (550 points)

Course Grade	Total Points	Percentages	Course Grade	Total Points	Percentages
A	930-1000	93-100%	C	730-769	73-76%
A-	900-929	90-92%	C-	700-729	70-72%
B+	870-899	87-89%	D+	670-699	67-69%
B	830-869	83-86%	D	630-669	63-66%
B-	800-829	80-82%	D-	600-629	60-62%
C+	770-799	77-79%	F	0-599	0-59%

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the [Office of Student Services](#).

## **Can I get extra credit?**

You bet you can get extra credit! There are two extra credit assignments that you can complete. Both extra credit assignments entail you selecting a magazine, a newspaper, a TV program, or a movie and discussing the sociological aspects of it. You can choose any one of the topics we cover on the syllabus as “sociological.” Each assignment is worth 15 points. Thus, you are able to get 3% extra credit in this class. There will be more specific instructions posted on Canvas.

## **The Fine Print**

### *The Social Science Core:*

As a core course, we will address the following issues throughout class:

- I. **Perennial Questions:**
  - a. How does society work?
  - b. Who has power in society and why?
  - c. Is society something shaped by people or does society shape people within it?
- II. **Cultural Diversity:**
  - a. In this course, much of the focus will be on understanding different types of inequality within society. Thus, we will discuss how race and ethnicity play an important role in how people experience life. For instance, a person born male and heterosexual into a wealthy white family automatically has more opportunities in life than a person born female and homosexual into a poor black family. These are stark contrasts, and there are certainly levels between these, but only through understanding these structural barriers to equality (and eschewing the notion that individuals make their own paths independent of outside forces) can we begin to address inequality in society.
- III. **Historical Perspective:**
  - a. History plays a crucial role in society. In line with the above discussion on life chances, history shows us that these social forms have developed over time. The structural benefits of being a heterosexual white male do not simply arise by default. Rather, this has developed over time. To be sure, we will not just focus on the micro-level (individuals) in this class. We will also consider the different ways that inequality has developed on a macro-level (country) as well. Much of this understanding will come through learning about theoretical perspectives in sociology.
- IV. **Methodology:**
  - a. As sociology is a social science, there are specific ways in which research can be conducted. There are various methodologies that sociologists use to study the social world and we will briefly examine these. Beyond understanding the basic methodologies utilized in sociology, though, we will focus on critically examining not only social research but also our thinking in every-day life (i.e. not taking any information as a given, but critically examining it).

- V. **Writing:**
  - a. Throughout the course, you will utilize the information and understandings from class for your written assignments. Throughout your life it will be important for you to be able to form arguments and to express your thoughts clearly. Doing these writing assignments will help you with both of these things.
- VI. **Creating a Personal Philosophy:**
  - a. This class will push you to engage with your previously held notions and prejudices. You will be compelled to think about a variety of issues including what sorts of privileges or disadvantages you have had in life, how you fit into society and the different ways in which you could change society for the better.

Class Policies:

- I. **Class Attendance:** Attending class is an important component of learning, and is especially important in a shortened summer session. You are expected to attend all class sessions. If you must miss a class, let me know beforehand. In most cases, if there is a quiz you will get a zero for it. In the rare case that you are physically unable to attend class due to illness you will need to provide a doctor's note indicating this. If you miss class for other important reasons discuss this with me beforehand.
- II. **Late to Class:** Although I am somewhat lenient, I expect that you will attend class on time. The quiz functions as your attendance grade for the course. If you arrive after the quiz has been given, you will not have an opportunity to take it after others already have. So, please make an effort to arrive in class on time.
- III. **Late Assignments:** You are able to turn in assignments late. However, you will be deducted 10% of the grade per day until it is turned in. Thus, if you turn it in 3 days late, you will be deducted 30% on top of whatever your regular grade would have been.
- IV. **Email Response:** I am generally pretty quick with my email responses. As a rule, though, you can expect a response to your emails within 24 hours so long as the email comes between Monday and Friday. On weekends, it may take longer for a response.

Academic Integrity:

Your work must be *your* words and ideas. When writing papers, use quotation marks around someone else's exact words and identify whose words they are. If you come across a good idea, by all means use it in your writing, but be sure to acknowledge whose idea it is. Failure to comply will result in (a) automatic failure of the assignment, and (b) a report to the Dean and the Committee on Academic Integrity. For further information, please review the College's policies on academic integrity here: <http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html>

Accommodations:

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](mailto:dugganka@bc.edu), at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, [paulette.durrett@bc.edu](mailto: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.

Textbook Support:

If you need support to buy books, please contact the Montserrat Coalition—go to Brock House at 78 College Road, call 617-552-8865, or e-mail Paula Dias at [paula.dias@bc.edu](mailto:paula.dias@bc.edu).

**Course Schedule\***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>	<b>Reading(s)**</b>
Week 1: May 14		- Introductions - The Sociological Imagination	Conley, Ch. 1 Mills
Week 1: May 16		- Theory - Methods - Culture and Media	Conley, Chapters 1, 2, 3 Davis Miner
Week 2: May 21		- Socialization - Networks and Groups	Conley, Chapters 4, 5 Goffman
Week 2: May 23		- Social Control/Deviance - Stratification (Class)	Conley, Chapters 6, 7 Loewen
Week 3: May 28		- Race - Gender	Conley, Chapters 8, 9 Armstrong, et. al Feagin
Week 3: May 30	<b>EXAM 1</b>		
Week 3: June 2	<b>PAPER 1 DUE (11:59 PM)</b>		
Week 4: June 4		- Poverty - Health and Society	Conley, Chapters 10, 11 Ehrenreich Dodson, et al.
Week 4: June 6		- Family - Political Economy	Conley, Chapters 12, 14 Harvey
Week 5: June 11		- Education - Authority and the State	Conley Chapters 13, 15 Clawson and Page
Week 5: June 13		- Environmental Sociology	Conley, Chapter 17 Pellow and Brehm
Week 6: June 18	<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>	- Collective Action & Social Change - Review	Conley, Chapter 18
Week 6: June 20	<b>EXAM 2</b>		
Week 6: June 21	<b>PAPER 2 DUE (11:59 PM)</b>		

\* *Course schedule is subject to change.*

\*\* *Note that, given the compressed nature of this class, I do not expect you to read all parts of each chapter. Thus, I will provide more details on which parts of the textbook chapters I want you to focus on and which parts you can skim.*