

Syllabus
Spring 2006
Introductory Sociology 115

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Purpose of Course

The purpose of this course, in a broad sense, is to provide you with answers to the questions: What is sociology and what does it have to do with me? In order to answer these questions as fully as possible in a one-semester course, we will look at various theories, concepts, and methods sociologists use. By doing this, you will develop a sociological perspective of human behavior that will make you see sociology all around you. This way of looking at the world is called the sociological imagination, which I'm not sorry to say, most former students tell me they can't shake, even 10 years later.

Get ready for a sociological adventure around your world!

Classroom Climate

Sociology involves many controversial topics and we'll be doing lots of talking this semester about some of those topics. In our conversations, I'd like to use the following statement as our guide in the classroom:

Respect is the cornerstone of all our interactions and behaviors. We acknowledge the dignity and worth of one another and strive never to diminish another by our conduct or our attitudes.

From www.tolerance.org; created at Mariner High School in Everett WA

Helpful Hint

Here's a poem I thought you might find useful for this class, especially if you label yourself as a procrastinator. It appeared in:

James, Simon. 1999. Days Like This: A Collection of Small Poems. Cambridge: Candlewick Press.

Tomorrow

Tomorrow's never there.
It always runs away.
Every time I catch it
It says it's called Today.

Student Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

1. Define and explain the basic concepts, theories, and research methods of sociology.
2. Acquire knowledge about some of the primary subfields within the discipline, including specific knowledge about class, race and ethnicity, gender, and age.
3. Increase cultural sensitivity and knowledge regarding diversity in the US and around the world.
4. Apply concepts and theories to a particular case, including your own experience, using your skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In the process, you will be engaging in abstract reasoning.
5. Logically organize ideas according to social science criteria in written assignments.

Grading Based on Outcomes

A Excellent mastery of basic knowledge (1-3) and analysis and writing (4-5)

Exams, In-Class Work, and Out-of-Class Work are completed on time and according to directions, showing you can both remember and use the knowledge gained through reading and class work. Your writing shows organizational skill, the ability to use abstract reasoning, and the use of knowledge gained in the classroom and readings.

B Good mastery of all outcomes

C Moderate mastery of basic knowledge and minimal mastery of analysis and writing

D Minimal mastery of all outcomes

F Little, if any, mastery of outcomes

A 93-100 / A- 90-92

B+ 87-89 / B 83-86 / B- 80-82

C+ 77-79 / C 73-76 / C- 70-72

D+ 67-69 / D 60-66

F Below 60

Book

Schaefer, Richard T. 2006. Sociology, 10th Ed. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Policies

Attendance

While I do not grade your attendance directly, I do take attendance and it is clearly counted indirectly in your grades. I can't stress this enough. I'll be straight up. Students who miss class do not do as well as those who attend on a regular basis. I try to make class as interesting as possible so attending isn't painful.

When you miss class, you get out of sync. Missing class means missing notes and discussions that become part of your exams. You also might miss discussions about topics or further explanations about work due. Also, in-class work can't be made up.

Due Dates

The due dates for various assignments and tests are in the schedule. I should tell you now that make-up exams are tough and I wouldn't recommend them. You need to hand in any homework or papers at the beginning of class or they will be considered late. Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day, not per class. It's not fair to the other students who hand in their work on time if I accept late work without a penalty.

Academic Honesty

I will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. You will receive an automatic F for the course.

Withdrawal

The last day to withdraw from the class with a W is March 31st. After that time, you will receive a grade.

Methods of Assessment

Exams = 30%

Your exams will consist of essay questions. You will need to recall facts, discuss and explain concepts, apply your knowledge using illustrations and examples, and analyze information by comparing and contrasting various concepts.

Test#1 = 10%

Test#2 = 10%

Final = 10%

In-Class Work = 20%

As a group and individually, you will do various assignments during class such as reaction papers, example specifications, debates, discussions, and maybe even a mock trial.

Out-of-Class Work = 50%

You will be given homework assignments pertaining to topics covered in class, such as personalization and short reactions to classroom themes, TV viewing, experiments, and treasure hunts.

Homework = 20%

You will be given 3 projects called The I See Projects that apply knowledge gained in the class to the world around you. See directions under next heading.

I See Class Stratification = 15%

I See Gender Stratification = 10%

I See Sociology = 5%

Directions for "I See" Projects

These projects show you, as promised, that sociology is all around you. There are no page limits, but you must fully address all the parts asked for. Feel free to, in fact I encourage you to, hand in a draft of the first two projects early. I'll give you suggestions for improvement or maybe even an A and then you can move on to something else. Most people who do this end up with an A on the papers. How's that for an incentive to stop procrastinating, given the projects' worth to your overall grade?

I See Class Stratification

This assignment is based on the observation method of data collection. After data collection, you will analyze your data using your stratification knowledge from your book and notes.

Take a ride or walk (preferable) around two neighborhoods - the wealthiest one you can think of and the poorest one you can think of, taking notes for the paper.

Write out the names of the streets and/or development and city or town you used for your observation, as well as the date(s) and time(s) of your observations.

Tell me your observations of each neighborhood, being certain to describe the areas IN GREAT DETAIL. Use lots and lots of details. Sentences are not necessary, just phrases. Paint a picture of the areas with words so I can "see" the areas. DO NOT write opinions or conclusions such as "the houses were beautiful" or "the houses were run-down" or "the lawns were big and manicured" or "they must have been at work." Instead, tell me via details why you had that opinion or conclusion WITHOUT using that opinion or conclusion. Go when people are present and give descriptions of them as well. Remember, this is observation, not opinion so it may sound sort of dry. Be a reporter of facts, not a commentator.

Finally, using your knowledge from the book and notes, we will perform an analysis of your observations in class. To prepare for this, go through your book and notes looking for info that applies to what you saw. In other words, how does what you saw in the areas tie in with your sociology knowledge?

I See Gender Stratification

In this paper, you will analyze and contrast 2 television shows in terms of gender roles. Pick two shows which have a male and a female character in a marriage relationship. Use shows you've seen in the past as well as a current episode for this project, so you can give an overall picture as well as details of the particular episode.

Your first two paragraphs should include the name of the show, the date and time you watched the episode, and a brief summary of the plot.

Next, tell me the tasks and temperaments of the male and female in each show via 2 charts. You should use the table function in Word to keep the chart lined up. The list of tasks will probably be much longer than the list of temperaments, since TV concentrates on actions. Include both general tasks you've seen on past episodes and all of those you saw in the particular episodes you watched for the paper. I suggest you make the charts ahead of time and fill it in as you watch the episodes, listing all the tasks you see the characters perform, even little things like putting an empty coffee cup in the sink or putting it on the table.

Then, in paragraph form, make comparisons between the characters' roles in the 2 shows. Write one paragraph comparing the males and one comparing the females. Then, write a conclusion in which you include which show portrays more gender stratification.

Hint: Pick shows that are as different as possible to make this paper easier, maybe a current show and a re-run of an older show.

I See Sociology

This one isn't a paper; it's a mini-presentation. You will find and share with the class written material about a topic covered this semester. It can be a song lyric, a comic strip, a newspaper or magazine article, a children's book, a billboard, etc. If you're not sure about what you found, run it by me. You will bring it (or a picture of it in the case of a billboard) to class and: 1) tell us when and where you saw it; 2) summarize or describe what it says; and 3) describe what it has to do with sociology using terms and concepts from the course.

Sites for Your Perusal

General Resources

- SocioSite

<http://www.sociosite.net>

Stuck on a topic in sociology? This site has a vast array of sociological topics and links. You'll find an answer here and maybe even more questions.

- Social Science Dictionary

<http://www.elissetche.org/dico/index.htm>

Here's a dictionary you can use for any of the social sciences.

- Sociology Internet Resources

<http://www.wcsu.edu/socialsci/socres.html>

Here you'll find gobs of links to resources on the internet for sociology.

- A Sociological Tour through Cyberspace

<http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/>

Want to learn more about sociology while staying in your seat?

General Stratification

- Tolerance

<http://www.tolerance.org>

This site covers all areas of stratification and seeks to eliminate them.

- Educational Inequality

<http://www.ascd.org/>

Check out the dramatic findings of Kozol by typing "Savage Inequalities" into the search engine and then read "On Savage Inequalities: A Conversation with Jonathon Kozol".

Race & Ethnicity

- Palfi's Photos

<http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu/branches/ccp/education/guides/reframe/palfi.html>

Check out the photos of Marion Palfi, a "social research photographer."

- Race: The Power of an Illusion

<http://www.pbs.org/race/>

Learn how race is constructed on this PBS site based on a California Newsreel 3-part video.

- ARC

<http://www.arc.org>

The Applied Research Center (ARC) is a public policy research center focused on race issues. Check out what's happening in the US on racial issues here.

- Moore's Photos

<http://www.kodak.com/US/en/corp/features/moore/mooreIndex.shtml>

Click on "About Charles Moore" and then "photographs" to see his photos taken during the Civil Rights Movement.

Gender

- "X: A Fabulous Child's Story"

http://www.trans-man.org/baby_x.html

Read Lois Gould's story written in 1972 to understand gender role socialization.

- Women's Issues

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/wvwmt/>

Click on "Resources" on the bottom menu to find links to topics about women.

- Guerilla Girls

<http://www.guerillagirls.com>

Check out this wild site to see how this group of feminists approaches discrimination in the art world and beyond.

Social Class

- Poverty

<http://www.inequality.org>

There's lots of info about poverty here. My favorite part of the site is the quotes. It slays me when I read what some people think of poverty.

- Urban Poverty

<http://povertycenter.cwru.edu>

This site from Case Western Reserve University brings you overviews of their research on poverty issues.

- Hunger

<http://www.greaterphiladelphiafoodbank.org>

Check out the ?Hunger Profile? pages in the left menu.

SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading	Notes
1/17	Intro to Class		
1/19	Intro to Sociology	T: Ch 1	
1/24	Theory	T: Ch 1	
1/26	Research	T: Ch 2	
1/31	Questionnaires		
2/2			
2/7	Culture	T: Ch 3	Bath List
2/9			
2/14	Socialization	T: Ch 4	Folkway Violation
2/16			
2/21	TEST #1	T: Ch 1-4	
2/23	Questionnaires		Quest. Results
2/28	Interaction & Groups	T: Ch 5 & 6	
3/2	Deviance	T: Ch 8	
3/7	SPRING BREAK		
3/9	SPRING BREAK		
3/14	Social Class	T: Ch 9 & 10	
3/16			Observations due
3/21			
3/23	TEST #2	T: Ch 5-6, 8-10	
3/28	Race & Ethnicity	T: Ch 11	
3/30			
4/4			
4/6	Gender	T: Ch 12	I See Class Due
4/11			
4/13	Age	T: Ch 13	

4/18	Family	T: Ch 14	I See Gender Due
4/20	TEST #3	T: Ch 11-14	
4/25	<u>Material World</u>		
4/27	I See Sociology		
5/	FINAL EXAM		

Remember, this syllabus is merely a guide. I will announce any changes made to it in class.