

Introductory Sociology
Soc 115 C (Fulfills M4 Requirement)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:50-2:00; PPHAC 116

Professor Daniel Jasper

PPHAC 316

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Fridays 8:30-9:30; Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-4:30; Other times by appointment

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Course Overview: This course is designed to provide an introduction to the academic discipline of sociology. Students will, therefore, be introduced to the theoretical principles, empirical methods, and historical development of the sociological perspective. Students will also be introduced to the ways of sociological observation and analysis. We will begin by looking at the historical development of Sociology and the central concepts of the discipline. We will then look at how Sociology makes sense of both the structuring principles and dynamic processes of modern societies.

Course Goals: By the end of the summer students will:

- understand sociology's intellectual origins and its current underpinnings
- understand the basic ideas and perspectives of sociology
- understand the types of questions that can be answered with a sociological analysis
- understand how to apply the three main theoretical perspectives of sociology
- understand the role of social structure in our everyday lives

Course Requirements and Expectations: It is expected that all students conduct themselves as professional scholars in this course. This means that students will arrive for class on time, prepared to participate in the collective work of the course. Students will have all necessary materials with them—including the texts under discussion, and leave unnecessary distractions (such as cell phones) behind.

It is expected that all students will have thoroughly and thoughtfully completed the weekly readings, and be prepared to discuss these, by our first meeting of each week. Students are expected to regularly contribute to in-class discussions with reactions and responses that deal directly with the issues and texts being considered. Towards this end, all students will be responsible for preparing a weekly reading note due on the first course meeting of each week. Reading notes will be further discussed the first week of class. **Periodic and unannounced quizzes** will be counted towards the participation component of the final grade.

Students must abide by the conventions of scholarly work, most importantly, the conventions of citation. All students should read and be familiar with the college policy on Academic Honesty included in the student handbook. All written work must include full and proper citations. There are no exceptions, including ignorance. Cheating and plagiarism will result in failing this course.

Students who wish to submit their writing assignments through electronic mail may send it to my email address only as an attached Word document. Assignments submitted in this way must be received by 10:00pm the evening **before** the due date. No late reading notes will be accepted, other late assignments will be penalized 10 % per day.

Grading:

Two Tests	20% (10% each)
Final Exam (Cumulative)	20%
Journal Review Essay	20%
Book Review Essay	20%
Weekly Reading Notes	10%
Class Preparation and Participation	10%

Required Texts:

All required texts are available for purchase through the Moravian College Bookstore.

Witt, John. *The Big Picture: A Sociology Primer*. (McGraw-Hill, 2007)
Haenfler, Ross. *Straight Edge: Clean-Living Youth, Hardcore Punk, and Social Change*. (Rutgers, 2006)

Additional texts will be accessible through Reeves Library.

Course Schedule

Please note, the outline below is merely a guide. Changes are possible as the semester progresses.

Course Outline:

Week 1 (August 28 & 30): **Course Introduction**

Week 2 (September 4 & 6) **What is Sociology?**

Witt: Chs. 1-3

September 6: Bill Ayers Lecture “Free People, Free Minds: Teaching and Learning in a New Age”. Prosser Auditorium, 7:00pm.

Week 3 (September 11 & 13) **Foundations of Sociological Thought**

Witt: Chs. 4-6

Journal Review Article Selection Due on September 13

Week 4 (September 18 & 20) **Culture**

Witt: Chs. 7-9

Week 5 (September 25 & 27) **Culture, part 2**

Journal Review Essay Due September 25

Week 6 (October 2 & 4) **Sociological Foundations: A Recap**
Test 1: October 4

Week 7 (October 11) **Selves and Society**
Readings: TBA
No Class October 9: Fall Break

Week 8 (October 16 & 18) **Social Institutions**
Witt: Chs. 9-11

Week 9 (October 23 & 25) **Stratification**
Witt: Chs. 12-14

Week 10 (October 30 & November 1) **Sociological Structures: A Recap**
Test 2: November 1

Week 11 (November 6 & 8) **Straight Edge: A Case Study – Background and Basics**
Haenfler: Chs. 1-4

Week 12 (November 13 & 15) **Straight Edge: A Case Study – Structures and Processes**
Haenfler: Chs. 5-9

Week 13 (November 20) **Straight Edge: A Case Study – Putting it all Together**
Book Review Essay Due November 20
No Class November 22: Thanksgiving

Week 14 (November 27 & 29) **Sociology in a Globalizing World**
Witt: Ch. 15; Additional Readings: TBA

Week 15 (December 4 & 6): **Course Conclusion**

Final Exam during scheduled exam period.

Guidelines for reading notes

For weekly readings, students should prepare a reading note. Unless otherwise noted in the course schedule, reading notes are due at the beginning of class on Tuesdays. They may also be emailed to me as a MS Word attachment no later than 10:00 pm. on Mondays. Late reading notes are not accepted.

Students can also prepare listening notes for public lectures delivered on campus. These, like reading notes, should briefly articulate the main idea(s) of the lecture, how it fits into your developing sociological understanding, and critical questions raised in your mind. Upcoming lectures will be announced in class. If a lecture is not mentioned, you should feel free to ask me whether it would be relevant.

Reading notes are brief preparations that should assist students in formulating reactions to and raising questions about, the shared texts. Reading notes should briefly articulate the main idea of the text(s). This should be a clear statement, in your own words, as to what the text(s)—as a whole—is about. You should also include a two or three other key sub-points of the text(s). Again, the point is to clearly and concisely state the main ideas of the text.

After presenting the main ideas, the reading note should include a two or three questions that are raised in the reader's mind by the text(s). These questions should be theoretical questions that address the key arguments of the text(s) and link these arguments to the wider body of sociological knowledge. Questions should not be factual or content specific.

Reading notes should be typed, include a proper citation for the text, and have your name on them. Notes will be graded on a gpa scale (0 – 4), the highest ten will account for the reading note portion of your final grade. Notes lacking a proper citation will receive no credit (0).

Journal Review Essay

Read one of the following journal articles and write a critical reaction essay. Essays should present the argument of the author(s) and critically evaluate the degree to which the argument is convincing. What is the article about? Try to write a thesis statement for the author, including sub-theses. Does the author(s) convince you that the thesis is correct? Why or why not? What would make the argument more or less convincing? In writing your essay, you should directly address how the author understands 'culture'; you should be explicit about how evidence is used to support the author's claims; you should include questions that are raised.

You will first submit the article that you have selected with a brief statement as to why the particular article is of interest to you. Here, you will want to state what you see as the primary theme(s) of the article.

Hayes, Sharon.1994. "Structure and Agency and the Sticky Problem of Culture." *Sociological Theory* 12(1):57-72.

Schwartz, Barry. 1991. "Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington." *American Sociological Review* 56(2): 221-36.

Swidler, Ann.1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51(2):273-286.

Wagner-Pacifici, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *American Journal of Sociology* 97(2):376-420.

Reaction essays should be 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced, 12 point font. Provide a complete and proper citation for the article, include page numbers. Include your name, but no title page.

Due Dates:

September 13: Journal Article Selection

September 25: Journal Review Essay

Book Review Essay

The purpose of this essay is to rewrite a review of the Ross Haenfler's book *Straight Edge*. Your review should be geared towards a college professor who may be considering assigning the book for a sociology course. You should present the key arguments of the book, show how certain arguments are strong or weak, and clearly state how a student (based upon your reading) might relate to the work. You will want to show how the text deepens or confuses a student's sociological imagination and sociological understanding. There is no need to cover all of the topics that Haenfler analyzes, but you should show how the text would be useful or not for understanding particular sociological ideas (e.g. gender relations, youth culture, etc.).

Reviews should be approximately 1500 words. Include a reference to the text and proper citations for any quotations or paraphrases included. You should number the pages of your review essay. Double-space and use 12 point font. Include your name, but no title page.

Due Date: November 20th