

## Sociology 101: Introduction to Sociology

Fall 2009  
M: W 9:00am to 10:15am  
Instructor: Joshua Terchek  
Clark Hall 309

Office Hours: By apt.  
Office: Mather Memorial 222a  
joshua.terchek@cwru.edu

### Course Description:

This course examines the basic principles that underlie how sociologists look at the world: "The Sociological Imagination". It addresses the basic questions: How is social order possible and how does change occur? The course is designed as a foundation for further study in field of sociology and related disciplines. It introduces the student to the role that culture and social institutions play in modern society and examines important concepts such as socialization, deviance, social control, patterned inequalities, and social change. These concepts are discussed in the context of both contemporary and historical social theories. Additionally, the student will be introduced to the methods of inquiry used by practicing sociologists.

### Required Readings:

*Sociology a Brief Introduction: 8th Edition* by Richard T. Schaefer.

Additional Readings are listed on the syllabus. They will be supplied in class or through Blackboard.

**Readings are to be COMPLETED by date listed on syllabus. You are expected to read all readings in the class.**

### Exams:

There will be 2 in class room exams worth 30% of your grade each (60% of your overall grade in total). Exams will be cumulative and will include true-false questions, multiple choice questions, and short essays.

### Reaction Papers:

You will be responsible to write a total of 6 (of 12 possible assigned) reaction papers throughout the semester. Reaction Papers are graded on a 5 point scale. These papers make up 30% of your overall grade. Completing more than 6 papers will result in the lower scores being dropped from your final grade. Papers should be 2 pages long double spaced, using a 12 point font and have one inch margins. The reaction paper should demonstrate you have read/viewed the assigned material and grasp the concepts it introduces or utilizes. However, you should react to the material. I want your viewpoints, thoughts, and emotions related to the reading. A guide is included below:

- Begin with a brief summary of the reading (no more than one paragraph). The first sentence should include the title of the article (i.e. In this article, \_\_\_\_\_, the author...) The summary should include the author's thesis and the main points that support his thesis and argument.
- Identify & explain any concepts or theories from the textbook that are pertinent to the article. Clearly state the pertinence in each case. Be sure to identify the concept and the textbook pages where they are discussed. Is the author convincing in his/her argument?

- How has this article impacted your thinking? Did you like or dislike it? Did it have “shock value”? How does it relate to your life?
- How will you integrate the exposure of this literature into your professional path?
- Have fun with this. If you would like to include an artistic expression, cartoon, song, poem, suggest a movie, or any other appropriate element that helps you express your feelings about the subject --- please share. The goal is to become impassioned about life and all that it offers.

## Participation:

Class room participation will make up 10% of your grade. Classroom participation is graded on the scale below.

- 10: A student receiving a 10 comes to class prepared; contributes readily to the conversation but doesn't dominate it: makes thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups.
- 9: Comes to class prepared and makes thoughtful comments when called upon, contributes occasionally without prompting: shows interest in and respect for others' views; participates actively in small groups.
- 8: A student receiving an 8 comes to class prepared, but does not voluntarily contribute to discussions and gives only minimal answers when called upon. Nevertheless these students show interest in the discussion, listen attentively, and take notes. Students in this category may be shy or introverted. The instructor may choose to give such students a 9 if they participate fully in small group discussions or if they make progress in overcoming shyness.
- 7: A student receiving a 7 participates in discussion, but in a problematic way. Such students may make rambling or tangential comments, continually interrupt the instructor with digressive questions, bluff their way when unprepared, or otherwise dominate discussions without contributing. Students in this category often profit from a conference with the instructor.
- 6: Students receiving a 6 often don't participate because they haven't read the material or done the homework.
- 5 or less: Students receiving a 5 don't participate because they haven't read the material and also may actually disruptive, radiating negative energy via hostile or bored body language, or be overtly rude. Such students may come in late consistently, use computers for non-related classroom activities, or talk while others are talking.

**This scale assumes regular attendance. You are allowed 3 unexcused absences before being penalized 2% for every unexcused absence following. This percentage will be subtracted from your total grade.**

## Attendance:

As noted above, attendance in class is expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class period using an attendance sheet. You are allowed 3 unexcused absences. For every additional class missed, 2% will be subtracted from your total grade. In other words, if you had a 100% in the class, and missed 23 classes, you would get a 60%. You are also expected to be in class on time. Repeatedly coming late into class will result in a lower participation score. **If you are over 15 minutes late for class, it will count as an absence.**

## Excused Absences:

Please notify your instructor regarding any absence ahead of time. Written documentation regarding absences is expected. Whether or not an absence will be excused is solely at the discretion of the instructor. **Late registration for class does not count as an excused absence.**

## Extra Credit:

Your instructor will make extra credit opportunities available throughout the semester.

## Make up:

Make-up on exams will be given with a documented excuse and notice of absence to instructor prior to the scheduled exam. There is no make up for missed classes.

## Grading Scale:

- 89.5% or more = A
  - 79.5-89.4% = B
  - 69.5-79.4% = C
  - 59.5-69.4% = D
  - 59.4% or less = F
- Reaction Papers: 30%  
Exams: 60%  
Participation : 10%

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to uphold Case Western Reserve University's Academic Integrity Policy. It is available at <http://www.case.edu/provost/ugstudies/acintegrity.htm>

**Student Responsibility:** It is my hope to provide a fun and interactive class. Please speak up during class. Please be on time and turn off your cell phones.

**Disability Statement**---If you have a physical, sensory, medical, or learning disability that inhibits learning under usual circumstances, please inform me. I will make whatever adjustments are necessary to improve the learning environment. In addition, please be sure to contact Susan Sampson, the Coordinator of Disability Services, Kelvin Smith Library, Room 105, 368-5230 ([sms17@po.cwru.edu](mailto:sms17@po.cwru.edu)).

**Changes to the syllabus:** The instructor retains the right to make changes to the syllabus at anytime, however I will let you know about changes ahead of time. Regular classroom attendance is suggested to keep up with changes to readings.

**NOTE: READINGS ARE LISTED BY DAY THEY ARE TO BE COMPLETED BY.**

***Week 01 Course overview and Introduction***

---

- 8/24: Not Applicable  
8/26: Chapter 1: Understanding Sociology p. 2-27

***Week 02: Sociological Imagination and Research***

---

- 8/31: Reaction Paper 1: *The Sociological Imagination*, C. Wright Mills  
9/2: Chapter 2: Sociological Research p. 28-53  
Reaction Paper 2: *Telling the Truth About Damned Lies and Statistics*, Best

***Week 03: Culture***

---

- 9/7: Fall Break  
9/9: Chapter 3: Culture p. 54-76  
Reaction Paper 3: *Doing Field Work among the Yanamomo*, Chagnon

***Week 04: Ethics and Social Interaction***

---

- 9/14: Reaction Paper 4: *Racism and Research*, Brandt  
Belmont Report  
9/16: Chapter 4: Socialization and the Life Course p. 78-101

***Week 05: Socialization and Deviance***

---

- 9/21: Reaction Paper 5: *Unequal Childhoods*, Lareau  
9/23: Deviance and Social Control p. 152-181

***Week 06: Institutions: Education and The Family***

---

- 9/28: Chapter 13: Education and Religion p. 310-326  
Reaction Paper 6: Death at an early age  
9/30: Chapter 12: The Family and Social Relationships: p. 286-309  
Reaction Paper 7: *Why I Let My 9-Year-Old Ride the Subway Alone*, Skenazy

***Week 07: Mass Media***

---

- 10/5: Chapter 6: Mass Media p. 128-151  
10/7: *Steal this Film Part 2* (in class movie)

### ***Week 08: Mass Media and Midterm***

---

- 10/12: Reaction Paper 8: Steal this Film II  
Review
- 10/14: Midterm Exam

### ***Week 09: Government and the Economy***

---

- 10/19: Fall Break
- 10/21: Chapter 14: The Government and Economy p. 342-369

### ***Week 10: Racial and Gender Inequality***

---

- 10/26: Chapter 10: Racial and Ethnic Inequality: p. 234-263  
Reaction Paper 9: *Color-Blind Privilege*, Gallagher
- 10/28: Chapter 11: Stratification by Gender: p. 264-285  
Reaction Paper 10: *The Social Construction of Gender*, Anderson

### ***Week 11: Social Stratification and Global Inequality***

---

- 11/2: Chapter 8: Social Stratification p. 184-218
- 11/4: Chapter 9: Global Inequality p. 210-229

### ***Week 12: The Communist Manifesto and Health***

---

- 11/9: Reaction Paper 11: *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx
- 11/11: Chapter 15: Health Medicine and the Environment 11: p. 260-283

### ***Week 13: Health***

---

- 11/16: Reaction Paper 11: *The Influence of Income on Health*, by Michael Marmot
- 11/18: *Unnatural Causes* in class movie

### ***Week 14: Health and Final***

---

- 11/30: Reaction Paper 12: *Unnatural Causes* (in class film)  
Review
- 12/2: *Final Exam*