Introduction to Sociology

SOC 105: 800

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(Also by appointment and
email, of course)

Preface to the Syllabus:
You can consider this your contract for the course. Most of the questions you have
throughout the semester can be answered right here! Questions about missed
assignments? Check here first! Questions about grading? Check here first! (etc...)

Required Text:
Forge, 2014.
ISBN: 978-1-4129-9246-6
(The e-book not required but it's handy with lots of cool links)

Blackboard:
Please familiarize yourself with Blackboard Learn
(http://www.uncw.edu/itsd/learning/UNCWITSDBlackboardLearn.html) and contact
the HELP desk should you encounter problems. Don't contact me with specifics related
to your technology issues – most likely I will not be able to resolve them. The people at
TAC are there to help you. Do not stay off-line and get behind in assignments due to
tech issues. Immediately contact TAC and get the problem resolved!
Call: 962-HELP. Email: tac@uncw.edu. TAC is located on the first floor of the library.
**Students Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives**
1. Students will learn the basic terminology, concepts, and theoretical approaches in sociology. (HIB1)
2. Students will learn to recognize and understand sociological methods of research and how they differ from non-scientific processes. (HIB2)
3. Students will learn to apply scientific principles to specific myths and common sense understandings in society. (HIB2)
4. Students will learn to develop critical thinking skills in consuming information from the government, media, and other sources. (HIB3)
5. Students will learn to apply the processes and results of sociological analysis to issues and problems in the larger society. (HIB4)

**Online you will find**
1. Each chapter and the accompanying instructions are located in “Learning Modules.”
2. You are always instructed to read the chapter.
3. Chapters are “opened” to you as we approach them according to the calendar.
4. PowerPoint slides are released as we enter each chapter. The slides are NOT meant to replace the reading – they are another supplement. Treat them as a guide while reading the book.
5. Some of the chapters have audio power point slides. Take the time to listen/watch these lectures.
6. There are additional items in each chapter: short videos, articles, etc.
7. For the chapter discussion questions, look to the left – below the general menu list. You will see the group to which you are assigned. (Breaking the class into groups does not happen until after the first discussion question [that first one is under “Discussions” on the left]).
8. The calendar for the class is posted on the main content page. Print this and keep it close! I will not remind you of all due-dates. Do not assume a due-date – always keep your eye on the calendar. Discussion due-dates don’t fall on the same days of the week so always check the calendar. (Just a note: would love to have them all due on the same days of the week but the number of chapters and organization does not allow for that...sorry).
9. On the home page is a link to student resources for each chapter. Lots of cool stuff to help you study including practice quizzes.

**Course Requirements**
1. **Assigned readings.** It is expected that you will complete the readings! You will be responsible for any material in the book that is not covered in PowerPoint slides or short lectures.

2. **Exams.** You will be given four exams, including the final exam. These will be multiple choice and essay exams. The dates for these exams are noted on the calendar. The syllabus quiz and the exams are located under “Assessments.”

3. **Discussions.** With all but one chapter we will have a topic for discussion. The class will be randomly divided into groups of 15 to 17 students. Each student is expected to enter the conversation in two ways: 1) contribute an original posting and, 2)
respond to a posting of another student. Students will be graded on their contributions to the discussion forums. These are due no later than 11:59 pm on the days stated on the Calendar. No late discussion posts are accepted so always watch the calendar. The discussions are worth 15 points each and must be at least 300 words. The guidelines for grading the discussions are given below in the Grading section of the syllabus.

A note on Netiquette: Please treat all others with respect and ‘argue’ about ideas only. The classroom should be a safe place for the respectful exchange of ideas and points of view. Also, please refrain from using ALL CAPS (as this appears as shouting) and text shorthand (e.g., “u r 2 plz avoid”).

No make-ups for these will be accepted (you have several days to spend reading material, posting your discussion, reading the posts of others and, posting a reply). They must be posted by the dates indicated on the calendar. If you miss the deadline for the first post, the most you can receive is a 5, assuming the reply post is on time. If the initial post is on time but the reply is late, the most you can receive is a 10. If both are late you will receive a 0.

Please note: In order to write a thoughtful/insightful post, you need to have read, listened to and/or viewed all of the material posted for a particular chapter and then integrate that material into your post. Your posts should reflect the material in this sociology class (all materials in the module if possible). They are not a place to post personal opinions with no sociological grounding. Again, your posts should demonstrate your understanding of the material and your ability to think sociologically and critically.

Also – it is important that your read most, if not all, of the discussions posted by your group members in order to then post a thoughtful/insightful response to one or more of them. (When I grade these I will be able to see the number of posts that you read!)

I will make visible the discussion questions the day after the chapter opens. Read/watch the chapter materials first and then turn to the discussion question.

It should work this way:

1) Look for the discussion question to “open” the day after the chapter becomes available.
2) Post your first discussion according to the date on the calendar.
3) Post a reply, not on the same day as your initial post but by the deadline stated on the calendar.

Do NOT wait until the last minute to post your first response. Reasoning: There can’t be any real “discussion” if everyone waits until the night it’s due to post!
The reply(ies) must be posted after your original post, but not on the same day.

I can see the days and times that you open the discussion – so, I expect you to look in on the comments several times from the time you post to the time you reply. (And you can reply more than once – that’s actually how a discussion gets started!)

*Note: I can also see how much time you spend on it! So, if you log on at 11:50 and are finished with the whole thing in 4.5 minutes….well, that can’t be a very insightful post.

*See below for more detail concerning discussions and the grading of them.

4. Paper Assignment. We will have one paper assignment during the course. This will involve some additional reading, watching a video, or conducting an observation and then writing a response essay to be submitted to me online. The paper is worth 100 points and will be posted on the home page as we approach the due date. NOTE: do NOT wait until the last minute to post papers. Inevitably some tech problem will rear its head!

All due dates are posted on the course calendar. Using the Calendar is how you will keep up with all postings and due dates. Print it and keep it handy. The due days for discussion posts vary.

Grading

DISCUSSION GRADING RUBRIC:

Read the above notes (in red).

No make-ups for discussion questions will be allowed. (Except in the case of an emergency -- which will require documentation. See “make-ups,” under policies). They must be posted according to the above stated rules and the due dates that appear on the class schedule.

Original Posting – worth 10 points (at least 300 words). For your original posting keep the following in mind: (See calendar for due dates of first and reply posts.)

If you have questions about your discussion question grades, refer to the below

- Post yours before reading others’ posts.
- I expect grammatically correct and proofread posts.
- Construct paragraphs as you would any other essay.
- Critically analyze the content - your posting should not be just a summary of the reading.
- *Your post should reflect your ability to think sociologically.*
• You can relate new content to what you have already learned in the course to date.
• You may relate content to your personal experiences ONLY IF you stay within the subject matter and stick to the class material (frame an experience within the course material).
• Your post MUST reflect the material in the reading/chapter module. Avoid “common sense thinking” (that is, personal observations of the world that don’t reflect the course material…as we’ll find out, our personal experiences don’t always apply to the larger social world).
• Do NOT plagiarize the book or other readings! Always indicate others’ words. In most cases, you will use your own words and not those of the authors.
• Keep this in mind: it’s a sociology class! We study people (groups, social forces and trends, etc.). If we are talking about race or gender or family – it might seem easy to write about your ideas and observations. After all, you have a race, a gender and a family. Writing solely about the personal, or inserting personal opinion is not sociological.

Response(s) to Other Student Postings - 5 points (at least 130 words).

Your responses to other students should...

• be posted AFTER you post your own. The reply(ies) must be posted after your original post, but not on the same day.
• incorporate from the other postings.
• be logically reasoned and supported.
• be grammatically correct and proofread for spelling errors.
• actually respond to someone (and name them as I can’t see who you are talking to when you say, “I agree with what you said about…”).

Examples of unacceptable (reply) posts:

• A personal example minus sociological thinking.
• I don’t agree with you (with minimal detail).
• I agree with you (with minimal detail).
• A vague generalization that does not indicate that you’ve read and understood the material.
• Anything abusive.
• A “rant” unrelated to the topic.
• Text shorthand.

Your course grade will be determined by your total points on required assignments:

Four exams: (at 100 each) 400
Introduction post 5
Syllabus Quiz 10
14 Discussion posts at 15 points each 210
One writing assignment at 100 points 100

To determine your final grade, I will divide the total possible points (725) into the total points that you earn.

93 – 100% = A 73 – 76 = C
90 – 92 = A- 70 – 72 = C-
87 – 89 = B+ 67 – 69 = D+
83 – 86 = B 63 – 66 = D
80 – 82 = B- 60 – 62 = D-
77 – 79 = C+ Below 60 = F

Policies

Drop/Add: Last day of registration/add without a grade: January 19th. Last day to withdraw with a W: February 26th.

Special Needs: Students with diagnosed disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services (962-7555). Please send me a copy of the letter you receive from Office of Disability Services detailing class accommodations you may need. If you require accommodation for test-taking please make sure I have the referral letter no less than three days before the test.
For more information, go to: http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/

Attendance: As this is an online course, your “attendance” is self-imposed. I must stress that it is easy to get behind in online courses as it is easy to put work off for another day. In order to do well in this class, you must work each week. You must post discussions by the due dates – I will not allow make-ups for these unless under very serious situations (see below). In sum – keep up with the course – don’t be tempted to put things off until the last minute!

Technology: This is a fully online course. Therefore, it is up to you to secure reliable technological resources. Should you experience problems with Blackboard, contact TAC ASAP (962-HELP or tac@uncw.edu). Don’t assume that I can help you with tech issues! Should you have computer or internet issues, get to the library or an internet space to complete assignments on time. Do not wait until the last minute to submit an assignment and then tell me that your internet was down! This will not be acceptable in the workplace so, let’s practice that professionalism now.

Make-ups: I really discourage them! It is good life-practice for you to be held accountable to due-dates! However, in the case of emergencies, contact me before an
assignment is due. Do not wait days or weeks after a due-date to tell me why you missed something. In such cases, no make-up will be allowed. Specifics:

1. **Discussion questions cannot be made up except in the case of an emergency** (which will require documentation). Should some extreme emergency present itself that would keep you from posting that week, you must contact me before or during the period that the assignment is due - NOT afterwards! I will need documentation of the emergency that kept you from posting your weekly discussion.

2. Your paper is due on the date indicated on the calendar. Any late papers will have 5 points deducted, beginning at 12:00 AM following the 11:59 PM deadline. No late papers will be received after 5 days.

3. You have a 24 hour window to take your exams. That should give you plenty of flexibility. Should some extreme emergency present itself that would keep you from taking your exam, you must contact me BEFORE the exam time frame - not afterwards! I will need documentation of the emergency that kept you from taking the exam.

**UNExcused:** Forgetting a due date; traveling during due dates; technology issues; contacting me after a due-date.

**EXcused:** Sickness that extends for a period of time AND with proper documentation.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Any unacknowledged borrowing of information constitutes plagiarism. This includes summarizing someone’s ideas (including your text), downloading internet material, direct quotations, using a classmate’s paper, or turning in a paper you have written for another class. Citations MUST contain a reference. In the event of cheating or plagiarism, a grade of zero will be given and I have the right to report the student to the dean. Cheating and plagiarizing are grounds for dismissal from the University. NEVER quote from the textbook or assigned articles without indicating the authors’ words!

Note: as an online class it is assumed that you will use your book and other materials for the exams and discussion questions. You might also know someone in the class that you exchange information with. It is **NOT** okay for you to work directly together on exams. If it begins to look like answers are too similar a grade of 0 will be given for that assignment.

Changes in Syllabus: Students are responsible for any changes in the syllabus that are posted on Blackboard or sent via email.

Additional Services available to you:
Check [www.uncw.edu](http://www.uncw.edu) for information about each:

- **Learning Services (includes Tutoring & Learning Center and Writing Place)**
  
  THE UNIVERSITY LEARNING CENTER
  Westside Hall, first floor, office #1056
  910.962.7857
  [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/index.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/index.htm)
  The University Learning Center’s (ULC) mission is to help students become successful, independent learners. Tutoring at the ULC is NOT remediation: the ULC offers a different type of learning opportunity for those students who want to increase the quality of their education. ULC services are free to all UNCW students and include the following:
  --Learning Services (Basic Studies) [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/tutoring.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/tutoring.htm)
  --Study Skills [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/study.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/study.htm)
  --Supplemental Instruction [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/si.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/si.htm)
  --The Writing Center [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/writing.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/writing.htm)
  ULC operating hours: [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/hours.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/uls/hours.htm)

- **Counseling Services** [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/counseling/](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/counseling/)

- **Disability Services** [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/)

- **UNCW CARE -- If you have a friend who is suffering from an assault or abuse:**
  [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/care/index.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/care/index.htm)
  For consultation or crisis intervention services call 910-962-CARE or 910-512-4821 for after hours emergencies; If you are in an imminently dangerous situation, please call 911

- **Health Promotion Services** [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/healthservices/](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/healthservices/)

- **Women’s Resource Center** [http://www.uncw.edu/wsrc/](http://www.uncw.edu/wsrc/)

- **LGBTQIA Resource Center – Additional resources related to diversity** [http://www.uncw.edu/diversity/](http://www.uncw.edu/diversity/)

- **Crossroads** [http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/crossroads/](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/crossroads/)

Violence and Harassment:
UNCW practices a zero tolerance policy for any kind of violent or harassing behavior. If you are experiencing an emergency of this type contact the police at 911 or UNCW CARE
at 962-2273. Resources for individuals concerned with a violent or harassing situation
can be located at http://www.uncw.edu/wsrc/crisis.html.

“Classroom” Behavior:
1. In this class we will discuss an array of topics. For many of them, you may
   already hold strong opinions. (We will discuss “common knowledge thinking”
   and sociology very early on!) In class discussions, we keep our conversations
   professional and sociological -- respecting others and learning to discuss from a
   sociological standpoint. We will refrain from comments that are disrespectful of
   others.
2. We will strive to “think sociologically” in our discussions (and in assignments!) –
   using the skills from the course to help us think critically.
3. I expect all of you to take seriously YOUR responsibilities throughout the
   semester. Online classes involve commitment and self-discipline. YOU are
   responsible for keeping up with the class. Anne and I are available to you should
   you want to discuss your progress, problems you might encounter, help with
   assignments, and so on. We will expect, however, for you to come to us having
   done your work. If you want to talk about your grade – bring specific questions
   to us. If you know you need to earn a specific grade in this class – consider that
   early in the semester (there is nothing I can do to ‘change’ a grade and there is no
   individual extra credit given).

Okay – let’s have a good semester! Remember to refer back to this if you have
questions about the course. If the answer is not here, then contact me and/or
Anne Rinehart ajr1257@uncw.edu).

See Calendar! (link on homepage)
The Origins of Sociology. Sociologists believe that our social surroundings influence thought and action. For example, the rise of the social sciences developed in response to social changes. Persell, Caroline Hodges. 1990. Understanding Society: An Introduction to Sociology. Third Edition. New York: Harper & Row. Introduction to Sociology. Concerts, sports games, and political rallies can have very large crowds. When you attend one of these events, you may know only the people you came with. Yet you may experience a feeling of connection to the group. A dictionary defines sociology as the systematic study of society and social interaction. The word sociology is derived from the Latin word socius (companion) and the Greek word logos (speech or reason), which together mean reasoned speech about companionship.