

**Understanding Human Society (SOC 2000:005 & SOC 2000:008)**  
Fall 2014

**Instructor:** Dr. Michelle Jacobs  
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<i>Course</i>	<i>CRN</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
2000	12734	[005]	M W	11:45 am - 01:10 pm	0128 STAT
2000	17843	[008]	M W	03:00 pm - 04:25 pm	1125 SCI

*\*\*You are responsible for the information in this syllabus. Read it carefully & ask questions if necessary.*

**Course Description & Learning Objectives**

**Welcome!**

This course is designed to introduce you to the field of sociology. As an academic discipline, sociology is unique because it focuses on people in their social environments. The primary goal of this introductory course is to help you develop what is called a “sociological imagination,” or the ability to see how social forces impact individual lives. Course content areas include sociological theory and research methods, culture, socialization, social control, and social inequalities.

In this course you will have the opportunity to:

- (1) Develop and apply the sociological perspective to the world in which you live.
- (2) Develop an understanding of the basic elements of the scientific process.
- (3) Develop a “theoretical tool bag” to make sense of observations you make in the social world.
- (4) Learn about yourself by applying course content to your everyday experiences.
- (5) Cultivate abstract and critical thinking skills.
- (6) Engage in intellectual discussions with your classmates.
- (7) Work on your reading, writing, and verbal skills.

**Required Course Materials**

Textbook: *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking like a Sociologist (core third edition)*, by Dalton Conley. ISBN 978-0-393-91945-5.

\*Additional readings and assignments will be posted on *Blackboard*. You are expected to log in to Blackboard regularly to access course materials (e.g., readings and homework assignments), check email, and review announcements.

**Course Requirements & Expectations**

ASSIGNMENT	%	POINTS
Attendance, Preparation, & Participation (APP)	20	100
Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Chapter Quizzes (8)</li> <li>▫ Exploring Census &amp; Community Survey Data (4)</li> </ul>	20	100
Exam I	20	100
Exam II	20	100
Exam III	20	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>

**Attendance, Preparation, & Participation (APP): 20%**

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High APP scores will be earned by students who 1) correctly and completely compile and submit *APP materials*, 2) attend class regularly, and 3) participate respectfully and knowledgeably.

1) The largest portion of your APP grade will be based on your *APP materials*:

You are responsible for keeping & assembling artifacts from in-class discussions and activities. Such “artifacts” will include notes and written responses to questions posed in class (among other things). You must be present on the day of the assignment to receive credit. APP assignments will not be announced in advance and they cannot be made up, so class attendance is crucial to receiving a high APP score. I will collect APP materials twice during the semester – around the middle of the term and before the final exam. *I will not accept APP materials that are submitted in a folder or binder.* Simply staple the components together in the order they were assigned and make sure your name is visible on the first page.

2) *Attend class regularly*: Information that is critical to your understanding of course materials will be provided during class time, so it is necessary that you attend. If you miss class for any reason, *you are responsible* for the following: submitting homework assignments on time; obtaining class notes from a classmate; continuing with the reading; and scheduling a meeting with me if you have specific questions about the materials you missed. In addition, chronically arriving late for class and/or leaving class early

is disrespectful and disruptive and will have a negative impact on your APP grade. Please note that I do not expect to be informed of singular absences and I do not make arbitrary judgments regarding “excused” or “unexcused” absences. In the case of an emergency that will result in excessive absences, please contact me immediately.

3) *Participate respectfully and knowledgably*: You are expected to treat all members of the class and the broader community with *respect*. This means *listening attentively* when others are speaking and using *inclusive language* when it is your turn to speak. We will discuss sensitive topics in this course. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these discussions, but personal opinions should be presented in a way that does not marginalize any person or group. *Respectful participation* also means refraining from participating in private conversations (in person, on the phone, or on the computer) during class time.

- Cell phone use is not permitted when class is in session (barring extraordinary circumstances, of which I must be informed before class begins). I will reduce your course grade by 3% for each unauthorized use of your cell phone. The same rule applies to tablets.
- You may use a laptop computer in class. However, if I discover that you are not using your computer for class purposes, I will reduce your course grade by 3% and revoke your computer use privileges.

In addition, you are expected to complete all assigned work prior to class so you are able to contribute *knowledgably* to class discussions. This includes asking thoughtful questions and responding thoughtfully to verbal and written questions, as well as participating actively in group work. Your opinion is valuable, but you must be able to critically assess the readings and relate them to your personal experiences and broader social phenomena to demonstrate that you understand and can apply the sociological perspective. The more actively you engage in class, the more everyone will gain from this experience.

### **Homework | Quizzes and Data Exercises: 20%**

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Chapter Quizzes (8 quizzes x 10 points = 80 points) and Census and Community Survey Data Exercises (4 exercises x 5 points = 20 points) must be completed on Blackboard. These assignments are *open book* and *open notes*. The quizzes are designed to familiarize you with course materials before we discuss the materials in class. You must complete each Chapter Quiz by 10 am on the day it is due (typically Wednesdays). The Data Exercises are designed to assist your development of analytical skills. They are also due at 10 am (typically Mondays). Due dates are noted on the course schedule\*. Late assignments are not eligible for full credit and will be evaluated at my discretion. Assignments more than one week late will *not* be accepted.

\* *Due days/dates may change if the course schedule is adjusted.*

### **Exams: 60%**

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Three exams – each worth 20% of your final grade – will be given in this course. Exam questions will focus on the specific areas covered leading up to each exam, but Exams II and III are cumulative in the

sense that previously learned knowledge (e.g., the sociological theories and methods discussed prior to Exam I) serves as the foundation for knowledge and skills developed later in the course. Exams are mostly objective (multiple-choice, true & false, completion), but they may have subjective components (short answer essay) as well.

*Make-up exam policy:*

If you know in advance that you must miss an exam due to extenuating circumstances, you can schedule a make-up exam *prior to* the exam date. Make-up exams taken after the regularly scheduled exam date will be comprised of ESSAYS. If you miss an exam without contacting me in advance, you will be permitted to take the make-up exam as long as you schedule to do so *within one week* of the regularly scheduled exam. In addition, missing an exam without prior permission will result in an automatic grade deduction of 20%.

*Class cancellation policy:*

If classes are cancelled on exam day, the exam will be given the next scheduled class meeting. If classes are cancelled the class prior to exam day, we will review for the exam when classes reconvene and the exam will be given during the next scheduled class.

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*Please note:* Clear and concise writing is an essential aspect of college-level work. All written work should be properly punctuated, grammatically correct, and clearly written. Handwritten APP materials must be *legible*. If you need writing assistance, please contact the WSU Writing Center (2310 Undergraduate Library, 313-577-2544). For more information about the Writing Center, visit <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/writing>.  
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**Grades**

You will be graded according to the following scale:

Grade	Percentage	Points
A	94 – 100	470 – 500
A-	90 – 93	450 – 469
B+	87 – 89	435 – 449
B	83 – 86	415 – 434
B-	80 – 82	400 – 414
C+	77 – 79	385 – 399
C	73 – 76	365 – 384
C-	70 – 72	350 – 364
D+	67 – 69	335 – 349
D	60 – 66	300 – 334
F	59 and below	299 and below

**Final grades are FINAL:** Opportunities for “extra credit” will *not* be made available. No points will be added to any student’s grade at the end of the semester. Do not ask me to make an exception on your behalf.

## Additional Student & Instructor Responsibilities

### Student responsibilities:

- You are *strongly encouraged* to communicate with me (the instructor) through email and/or in person if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. I cannot assist you if you do not let me know that you need assistance. *Please schedule an appointment to meet with me*, whether you would like to meet during office hours or at another designated time.
- *Emails* must have a clear and informative subject line that includes your full name, the course name, *and the SECTION* in which you are enrolled. Emails without this information in the subject line will be promptly returned to sender. I also ask that you send emails that are appropriate for the university setting, meaning that they should have a salutation and should be written in complete sentences with real words – i.e., “you” instead of “u.”
- *Religious holidays*: “It is University policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students with classes or examinations that conflict with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that mutually agreeable alternatives may be worked out.”
- *Accommodative services*: "If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.” *Please refer to the SDS website for further information: <http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/>*
- *Academic dishonesty*, which includes cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of unethical academic behavior, *will not be tolerated*. Cheating and plagiarism are forms of academic theft that destroy the integrity of academic communities. It is expected that all students enrolled in this class support the letter and the spirit of the Student Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to review the Code of Conduct, which is available for download at the Dean of Students Office website: <http://www.doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct-services.html>. Ignorance is not a viable defense against allegations of student conduct violations.

***My policy on academic dishonesty:*** Suspected academic dishonesty will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students suspected of academic dishonesty may receive a score of 0 on the assignment or a score of 0 in the course, depending on the magnitude of the offense. Moreover, *I am obligated to report all instances of suspected academic dishonesty to university administrators.*

**Instructor responsibilities:**

- I will provide you with the necessary tools for learning and doing sociology.
- I will come to class prepared to discuss the materials and to facilitate the educational process.
- I will be available to answer questions you have about course materials during class times, office hours, independently scheduled meetings, or by email. I will do my best to answer emails received Monday through Thursday within 48 hours. I will also make every effort to respond to emails received Friday through Sunday by the following Monday. If you do not receive a response from me within these time frames, you should assume that I did not receive your email and resend it.
- I will explain class assignments and outline my expectations for graded work.
- I will grade your work as consistently and fairly as possible.
- I will grade and return your written assignments and exams in a timely fashion.
- I will treat all students with respect.
- I will acknowledge and correct my mistakes.

**Important Dates**

Wed, August 27: Classes begin

Mon, September 1: University closed

Wed, September 10: Last day to add a course or drop a course with full tuition reimbursement

Wed, Sept 24: Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no tuition reimbursement)

Fri, Sept 26: Degree applications are due

Sun, Nov 9: Last day to withdraw from a class *with instructor permission*

Wed, Nov 26 through Sat, Nov 29: Fall break

Mon, Dec 8: Classes end

Tues, Dec 9: Study day

Wed, Dec 10 through Tues, Dec 16: Final Exams

## Course Schedule

The course schedule is *tentative* and inevitably will be adjusted throughout the semester.

*Assigned coursework should be completed on the day noted. Reading materials available on Blackboard are denoted with an asterisk (\*).*

**IMPORTANT:** Additional short readings & web links will be posted to Blackboard throughout the semester. You are expected to read all of the materials available to you under each topical heading.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Course topic</i>	<i>Assigned materials</i>
8/27	Welcome! Introductions & Syllabus	
9/01	<i>Labor Day (no class)</i>	
9/03	The Sociological Imagination: An Introduction	Ch 1, pp. 3-39 (Conley) Ch 1 QUIZ due *Should We Generalize about People?
9/08	Sociological Theory	*Three Sociological Perspectives
9/10	Research Methods	Ch 2, pp. 43-71 (Conley) Ch 2 QUIZ due
9/15	Research Methods	*Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment
9/17	Culture & Media	Ch 3, pp. 75-113 (Conley) Ch 3 QUIZ due
9/22	Culture & Media (continued)	*Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism & the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture Ch 3 DATA EXERCISE due
9/24	wiggle room   Exam I Review	
9/29	Exam I	

10/01	Socialization & the Construction of Reality	Ch 4, pp. 117-149 (Conley) Ch 4 QUIZ due
10/06	Socialization & the Construction of Reality	*The Egg and the Sperm Ch 4 DATA EXERCISE due
10/08	Social Control & Deviance	Ch 6, pp. 187-233 (Conley) Ch 6 QUIZ due
10/13	Social Control & Deviance	*The New Jim Crow *The Mark of a Criminal Record Ch 6 DATA EXERCISE due
10/15	Stratification (or, Social Inequality)	Ch 7, pp. 237-273 (Conley) Ch 7 QUIZ due
10/20	Stratification	*Families Facing Untenable Choices *Savage Inequalities Ch 7 DATA EXERCISE due
10/22	Stratification	*Poisoning the Planet *The Global Slave Trade
10/27	wiggle room   Exam II Review	
10/29	Exam II	
11/3	Sex, Gender, & Sexuality	Ch 8, pp. 277-319 (Conley)
11/05	Sex, Gender, & Sexuality	*Masculinity as Homophobia Ch 8 QUIZ due
11/10	Sex, Gender, & Sexuality	*The Glass Escalator
11/12	Race & Ethnicity	Ch 9, pp. 323-369 (Conley) Ch 9 QUIZ due
11/17	Race & Ethnicity	*Defining Racism: Can We Talk?

11/19	Race & Ethnicity	<i>*to be announced</i>
11/24	Social Change	*Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, & Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection *Visions of a Better Future: Creating a More Just World
11/26	Fall Break (no classes)	
12/01	Social Change – Resisting Oppression	Movie, <i>to be announced</i>
12/03	Social Change – Resisting Oppression	Movie, <i>continued</i>
12/08	wiggle room   Exam III Review	

#### FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 10:40 am to 1:10 pm (11:45 am class)

Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:20 pm to 3:50 pm (3 pm class)

## Engaged Reading\*

Reading provides opportunities to create new knowledge. An author writes to communicate ideas or share experiences, but cannot possibly say all there is to say about any given topic. Readers must bridge the gaps of meaning; as they do, they contribute their own assumptions, experiences, and ways of perceiving “reality.” In this way, every act of engaged reading is a process of meaning creation.

Engaged reading is *active* reading. You should take notes as you read and reread an author’s work, paying careful attention to the author’s arguments. Doing so will help you judge the strength of the author’s claims.

Think about the following questions as you read:

- What is the author’s primary focus &/or primary research question?
- What key terms contribute to your understanding of this work? How are these terms defined by the author?
- What are the author’s key claims &/or findings?
- What evidence is used to support the author’s claims/findings?
  - Which theory/theories does the author use?
  - Are data used to support the author’s claims?
  - If so, what are the data and how are they analyzed?
- Does the author acknowledge arguments that contradict her claims? What are they?
- What are the strengths of this piece?
- What are the weaknesses of this piece?
- What is the most interesting part of the author’s work?
- What assumptions / life experiences do you bring to this process that lead to your unique interpretations?

Tips for highlighting and annotating during the active reading process:

- A pencil works as well as a pen or marker; try both and see which you like best.
- Underline each claim an author makes.
- Circle or box definitions or essential terms.
- Use arrows or lines to show connections.
- Use vertical lines in the margins to mark entire passages.
- Star the most important items.
- Use question marks for confusing places.
- Use the margins to:
  - Summarize key terms, sections, or ideas in your own words.
  - Articulate disagreements with the author’s arguments.

\* Material adapted from:

<http://www.slideshare.net/UCEW/engaged-reading-and-writing>