**Understanding Human Society**

SOC 1010 - 008

Winter 2020

**Instructor**: Abberley Sorg **Email**: abberley.sorg@wayne.edu

**Class Location:** SCI 1125 **Class Date/Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:00- 2:15pm.

**Office Hours:** Thursday, 3:30 - 4:30pm, or by appointment, in FAB #2262.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course is designed to introduce you to the discipline of Sociology, the study of human society and social behavior. Sociology provides us with a unique means of understanding the ways in which human society is structured and how different individuals and groups experience the world. The primary goal of this course is to help you to develop a “sociological imagination,” or an ability to see the impact of social forces on groups and individuals through the lens of sociological theory and methodology. Over the course of the semester, we will learn about and discuss how sociology approaches issues like socialization, social inequality, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, the structure of the family, and globalization.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

* Describe the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of society and our roles within it.
* Demonstrate an understanding of how sociology differs from and is similar to other social sciences.
* Describe how sociology contributes to a liberal arts understanding of social reality.
* Understand major sociological perspectives and analyze social interactions, structures and inequalities by applying these perspectives to “the real world,” including current events.
* Apply your own sociological imagination to understanding our society and your role within it.
* Cultivate abstract and critical thinking skills.
* Engage in intellectual discussions with your peers.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Textbook: *Introduction to Sociology 2e.*

This course utilizes an open source textbook, published by OpenStax, which is available to students at no cost. OpenStax, a non-profit organization owned and managed by educators, develops peer-reviewed textbooks and other educational materials. This textbook is the collaborative work of numerous sociology professors, editors, and reviewers, who believe accurate, up-to-date and engaging textbooks should be accessible to all students.

*The book is available at the following link:* [*www.openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e*](http://www.openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e) *.*

All additional course materials are available on canvas.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

In addition to academic tasks, you are expected to conduct yourself respectfully and responsibly while you are in this class. This means showing others the same respect that you would wish to receive if you were in their shoes. Show other students the consideration of listening while they speak, and do not interrupt or seek to speak over them. We will be discussing difficult topics in this class, and you are entitled to your own opinions on these issues but not to your own facts; the point of these discussions is to explore social issues from sociological point of view. The use of insults, demeaning language or slurs will not be tolerated.

You should check the gradebook on canvas frequently to assure that your grades have been posted accurately. Additionally, check your canvas messages and email regularly to ensure that you do not miss important information. I reserve the right to make adjustments to the syllabus; if I do so, you will be informed of these changes in class or via email.

**COMMUNICATION POLICY**

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the course, please feel free to communicate them to me in person during office hours or via the canvas messaging system. **Please use the canvas messaging system rather than email.** I will always seek to reply to your messages within 48 hours; you don’t hear back from me by then, assume the server ate your message and please send it again.

**ATTENDANCE AND MISSED WORK**

While there is no formal attendance policy in this class, regular attendance is expected. You are expected to attend class regularly, to arrive to class on time with the assigned readings completed, and to stay until the session is completed. Your failure to do so may result in you missing critical information for the quizzes and exams, which will have a negative impact on your grade.

That said, please do not come to class if you are contagious. You might consider yourself capable of toughing it out with a fever of 102 degrees, but bear in mind that some of the other students or their loved ones may have health problems that make coming into contact with your germs a major risk.

If you require an extension on an assignment it is your responsibility to get into contact with me before the assignment in question is due.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**

Wayne State University is working to build a community that is inclusive and welcoming to all people, including those with disabilities. 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. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from me without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.  
  
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 about students with disabilities and the services we provide for faculty and students: http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/ . Once you have documentation from SDS, contact me during office hours or via email and to put your accommodations into place.

**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.” If this is a concern for you, please get into contact with me and we will set up an alternate date for you to complete your assignment.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Please review the student Code of Conduct, which can be found here: <http://www.doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct-services.html>. You are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Cheating other forms of unethical academic behavior will have an extremely negative impact on your final grade, as it will result in a zero on the assignment in question; a second violation will earn you an F in the course. Furthermore, I am required to report all instances of suspected academic dishonesty to university administrators, and repeated incidents of academic dishonesty may result in your expulsion from Wayne State.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

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| --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Percentage of Total Grade** |
| Quizzes (5) | 20% (4% each) |
| Exam #1 | 20% |
| Exam #2 | 20% |
| Exam #3 | 25% |
| Final Paper | 15% |
| Total | 100% |

**QUIZZES**

You must complete 5 online Quizzes. They will available on Canvas under the “Quizzes” tab and are open book and open notes. Each Quiz include multiple choice and short answer questions. Due dates are in boldface type on the course schedule. Note that due dates may change if the course schedule is adjusted. You MUST complete the quizzes on your own, and MAY NOT work with other students.

**EXAMS**

Three online exams will be given in this course. Exams are comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions. They will available on Canvas under the “EXAMS” tab and are open book and open notes. Exam #1 covers chapters 1 – 7, plus all supplemental readings and lectures up to that point. Exam #2 covers chapters 8 – 12 and 14, plus all associated readings and lectures. The Final Exam is cumulative, meaning that it will cover chapters 15 – 21 and the associated lectures and readings, as well as the material covered in Exam #1 and Exam #2. Exams will be available for 48 hours and are due by 11:59pm of the date on which they are scheduled. You MUST complete the exams on your own, and MAY NOT work with other students.

**FINAL PAPER**

The purpose of this paper is to allow you to apply one of the theories that we have learned over the course of this semester to a topic or current event that is important to you. This will help you to apply the skills that you learned in this course to real world social issues. By understanding how sociologists apply theory to understanding social problems, you will better be able to understand your role social order and social dysfunction and will be able to engage critically with the way our society is constructed.

For this assignment, you will write a short paper in which you will apply one of the sociological theories we have learned this semester to a social issue. To support your analysis, you will use two academic sources. The paper is to be between 2 - 3 pages long, double spaced, with 1 inch margins and 12 point Times New Roman font. It is worth 15 points.

There are many ways in which you can approach this assignment, but one effective way to do so is by selecting your topic and the sociological theory through which you wish to explore it first. The topic can be anything that interests you. You can apply any of the sociological theories that we covered over the course of the semester.

Next, you should select two academic sources to use in your paper. Academic sources are articles published by reputable academic journals. You can locate academic sources through the Wayne libraries page, at this link: https://library.wayne.edu/. Google Scholar is another good place to find academic articles. You may use news articles or other non-academic sources in your paper as well, but these do not count towards the two required academic sources.

When you write your paper, you should either use your sources to support your own argument, or critique why you think the authors are incorrect. You do not have to agree with the author(s) but you must engage honestly with what they have to say.

Your final paper should cover the following:

1.) Explain your topic.

2.) Apply the theory that you chose to the topic.

3.) Summarize what your sources have to say about the topic, and explain why you agree or disagree.

4.) Suggest some ways in which the situation surrounding your topic might be improved. What kinds of policy or social changes might be applied to address the problems you have explored?

Make sure that you include a thesis statement in your opening paragraph and a closing paragraph explaining the significance of your overall argument. Additionally, bare in mind that this assignment is NOT asking you to simply express your personal opinions, but rather to engage with theory and social issues through an academic perspective. All direct quotes taken from sources must be enclosed in quotation marks and sourced, because failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will have a SEVERELY negative impact on your grade.

**GRADE SCALE**

Your final grade will be calculated according to the following scale:

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| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Percentage** |
| 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 | 63 - 66 |
| D- | 60 - 62 |
| F | 59 or lower |

**COURSE SCHEDULE - note that the schedule and readings may be subject to change.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date/Week** | **Topics and Readings** | **Assignments** |
| **WEEK #1**  **01/07**  **01/09** | *Syllabus and Introductions*  *What is Sociology?*  No readings.  *The History of Sociology and Theoretical Perspectives*  Chapter One.  Excerpt from The Sociological Imagination, By C. Wright Mills (“The Promise”) (PDF on canvas). | None. |
| **WEEK #2**  **01/14**  **01/16** | *Sociological Research*  Chapter Two.  “‘[You’ve Got Bad Blood’: The Horror of the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/05/16/youve-got-bad-blood-the-horror-of-the-tuskegee-syphilis-experiment/),” by DeNeen L. Brown.  *Culture*  Chapter Three. | **Quiz #1 due by 11:59pm on Saturday 01/18.** |
| **WEEK #3**  **01/21**  **01/23** | *Society and Social Interactions*  Chapter Four.  *Socialization*  Chapter Five.  “Same-Sex Parent Socialization: Understanding Gay and Lesbian Parenting Practices as Cultural Socialization,” by Marykate Oakleya, Rachel H. Farrb, and David G. Scherera (PDF on canvas). | **Quiz #2 due by 11:59pm on Saturday 01/25.** |
| **WEEK #4**  **01/28**  **01/30** | *Groups and Organizations*  Chapter Six.  *Deviance, Crime and Social Control*  Chapter Seven.  Excerpt from “The New Jim Crow,” by Michelle Alexander. (PDF on canvas). | **None.** |
| **WEEK #5**  **02/04**  **02/06** | *Exam #1 Review*  *Exam #1* | **Exam #1 due by 11:59pm on Thursday 02/06.** |
| **WEEK #6**  **02/11**  **02/13** | *Media and Technology*  Chapter Eight.  [“How Central are Female Characters to a Movie?” by Amy Blumenthal.](https://viterbischool.usc.edu/news/2017/08/central-female-characters-movie/)  *Social Stratification in the United States*  Chapter Nine.  "Inequality by Design," by Claude Fischer. (PDF on canvas). | **Quiz #3 due by 11:59pm on Saturday 02/15.** |
| **WEEK #7**  **02/18**  **02/20** | *Global Inequality*  Chapter Ten.  *Race and Ethnicity*  Chapter Eleven.  [“The Racial Wealth Gap: How African-Americans have been Shortchanged Out of the Materials to Build Wealth,” by Janelle Jones.](https://www.epi.org/blog/the-racial-wealth-gap-how-african-americans-have-been-shortchanged-out-of-the-materials-to-build-wealth/) | **Quiz #4 due by 11:59pm on Saturday 02/22.** |
| **WEEK #8**  **02/25**  **02/27** | *Gender and Sexuality*  Chapter Twelve.  “No Way Out of the Binary: A Critical History of the Scientific Production of Sex” by Veronica Sanz (PDF on canvas).  *Marriage and Family*  Chapter Fourteen. | None. |
| **WEEK #9**  **03/03**  **03/05** | *Exam #2 Review*  *Exam #2* | **Exam #2 due by 11:59pm on Thursday 03/12.** |
| **WEEK #10**  **03/10**  **03/12** | *SPRING BREAK*  *SPRING BREAK CONTINUED* | None. |
| **WEEK #11**  **03/17**  **03/19** | *Religion*  Chapter Fifteen.  *Education*  Chapter Sixteen.  “The Color of Reform: Race, Education  Reform, and Charter Schools in Post-Katrina New Orleans, by Adrienne D. Dixsol, Kristen L. Buras, and Elizabeth K. Jeffers (PDF on canvas). | None. |
| **WEEK #12**  **03/24**  **03/26** | *Government and Politics*    Chapter Seventeen, pages 376 - 394.  *Work and the Economy*  Chapter Eighteen. | **Quiz #5 Due by 11:59pm on Saturday 03/28.** |
| **WEEK #13**  **03/31**  **04/02** | *Health and Medicine*  Chapter Nineteen.  "Today I Had an Eye Appointment, and I'm Still Blind": Crip Humor, Storytelling, and Narrative Positioning of the Disabled Self,” by Teresa Milbrodt (PDF on canvas).  *Population, Urbanization, and the Environment*  Chapter Twenty. | **Final Paper due by 11:59pm on Saturday 04/04.** |
| **WEEK #14**  **04/07**  **04/09** | *Social Movements and Social Change*  Chapter Twenty-One.  *Social Movements and Social Change Continued*  [“Student Activism 2.0: A Look Back at the History of Student Activism and Whether Today’s Protesters are Making a Difference,” by Zachary Jason.](https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/18/08/student-activism-20)  [“A Year Inside the Black Lives Matter Movement.”](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/a-year-inside-the-black-lives-matter-movement-204982/)  “History of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Social Movements” by Bonnie J. Morris (PDF on canvas). | None. |
| **WEEK #15**  **04/14**  **04/16** | *Final Exam Review*  *Make-up Day/Wiggle Room* |  |
| **FINALS WEEK** | **Final Exam** | **Final exam due by 11:59pm on Thursday /04/23.** |