

Principles of Sociology

Sociology 3AC

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Class Meetings: MWF 10-11am
Class Location: 10 Evans
Office Hours: Wed 3-4:30, or by appointment
Location of Office Hours: Free Speech Movement Cafe

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the discipline of sociology, with a focus on American cultures. We will consider various forms of inequality, the social institutions that reproduce inequality, how these institutions have changed over time, and what brings about this change. We will examine the way individuals both shape and are shaped by institutions. Given the emphasis on individualism in U.S. culture, we often overlook institutions and how they shape our lives. We have a deeply ingrained belief that anybody who works hard will be upwardly mobile. We will examine how our existing social institutions make this easier to achieve for some people than for others. This course satisfies U.C. Berkeley's American Cultures requirement because it focuses on the institutions that create and perpetuate racial and ethnic inequality in the U.S. and considers the distinct experiences of African-Americans, Latino-Americans, Asian-Americans and European-Americans situated in the larger context of U.S. history, society and culture.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to look at and understand the world through a sociological lens.
2. Students will understand that race is socially constructed and that it has distinct and socially significant impacts for different racial categorizations.
3. Students will gain knowledge of the different historical experiences of different racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., and how these distinct historical experiences have shaped the racial and ethnic inequalities that exist today.
4. Students will learn about discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation, and the social implications for different groups.
5. Students will understand how institutions can structure the opportunities available to different groups, how institutions can perpetuate inequality, and how institutions change over time.

6. Students will gain knowledge of the mechanisms by which the U.S. political system marginalizes some voices and obscures the expansion of policies that exacerbate certain forms of inequality in the country.
7. Students will learn about social movements that historically produced social change in response to inequalities in U.S. society, as well as contemporary social movements responses to the various forms of inequality that continue to exist.

Course Requirements

Clicker

You will need to purchase an iclicker remote and register it. The clicker will help me get a sense of what you are getting and what I need to talk further about, as well as a way to make lecture more interactive.

The mobile application, i>clicker GO will not be allowed. To receive credit for the responses you submit with i>clicker, you must register by the drop/add deadline, (February 20th). Students who register after this time will not receive credit.

During lecture, I will ask clicker questions. If you answer 75% of the clicker questions each class meeting, then you will get a point for the day. If you come in late or leave early, you may miss clicker questions and not get a point for the day.

Clicking in for your friends is cheating. In cases where students are found using more than one iclicker (that is helping somebody else cheat), the students linked to both iclickers will forfeit all clicker points for the whole semester.

Exams

Exam I will be on March 2nd during our regularly scheduled class time.

Exam II will be on April 10th during our regularly scheduled class time.

Exam III will be on Tuesday May 12th 3-6pm.

U.C. Berkeley Honor Code

The student community at UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code: "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." The hope and expectation is that you will adhere to this code. Anyone caught cheating during the exams will receive a failing grade in the course and will be reported to the University Center for Student Conduct.

Grade Breakdown

Your final grade for the class will be calculated based on the following weightings of the assignments:

Clicker	5%
Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Exam III	45%

Office Hours

I really like to get to know the students in my classes so I encourage you to come chat with me in office hours. I promise that I am not intimidating! You don't have to have a particular question in mind. Come introduce yourself!

Laptop and Tablet Policy

Laptops are not allowed in class because they often become a distraction not just for the student using the laptop, but for surrounding students as well. I know that some people like to type their notes so tablets will be allowed in class for students sitting in the front three rows as they seem to be less of a distraction. Exceptions on the laptop policy will be made for DSP accommodations that require note takers that need to use computers.

Course Materials

You should be looking at our bcourses site on a daily basis. For each week, there is a module that very clearly lays out the expectations for that week.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Class #1 (1/21): Course Overview

Class #2 (1/23): The Sociological Imagination

You will be introduced to the discipline of sociology, and how sociologists look at and understand the social world.

Readings:

Mills, C. Wright. 1959. "The Promise." In The Practical Skeptic: Readings in Sociology, ed. Lisa J. McIntyre. New York: McGraw Hill, pgs. 1-6.

Week 2

Class #3 (1/26) and Class #4 (1/28): Sociological Research Methods and Ethics

You will learn how sociologists go about answering questions, and how sociology differs from both other social science disciplines and other types of social commentary. We will consider the importance of a comparative and an historical approach to the study of society in order to understand how social patterns have emerged and have changed over time.

Readings:

Ragin, Charles and Lisa M. Amaro. 2010. Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method. Sage Publications Inc., pgs. 5-30.

Class #5 (1/30): Individualism and the American Dream in U.S. Culture

We will discuss individualism in American culture, including different types of individualism historically, the relationship between individuals and society in these various forms of individualism, and how they compare with modern individualism. This will lead into a discussion of what are institutions and how sociologists think about the relationship between individuals and institutions.

Readings:

Bellah et al. 1985. Habits of the Heart. Berkeley: University of California Press, pgs. 142-163.

Bellah et al. 1991. The Good Society. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pgs. 10-16.

Rank, Mark Robert, Hirschl, Thomas A., Foster, Kirk A. 2014. Chasing the American Dream : Understanding What Shapes Our Fortunes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pgs 1-6.

Week 3

Class #6 (2/2): Social Norms and Socialization

We will examine some social norms that exist in U.S. society, how we come to learn these social norms, and how they are enforced.

Class #7 (2/4): Social Stratification and Social Class

We will learn about the concept of social stratification, how social categories are created and people placed in them, as well as consider the implications of being placed in different social categories. We will also discuss the concept of social class.

Readings:

Massey, Douglas S. 2007. Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pgs. 1-7 and 15-27.

Class #8 (2/6): The Development of Capitalism and Inequality

We will consider the development of capitalism, and the relationship between markets and stratification, as well as economic and cultural changes with the rise of neoliberalism.

Readings:

Rank, Mark Robert, Hirschl, Thomas A., Foster, Kirk A. 2014. Chasing the American Dream : Understanding What Shapes Our Fortunes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pgs 29-50.

Ventura, Patricia. 2012. Neoliberal culture: Living with American Neoliberalism. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., pgs. 87-105.

Week 4

Class #9 (2/9): The Working Poor

We will discuss changes in the nature of work from the mid-twentieth century to the present, and what that means for workers and their families. We will examine wages over time, how the gap between the highest paid and lowest paid workers has changed over time, and the existence of a class of people in our society who have full-time work, but do not earn enough to maintain a basic standard of living.

Readings:

Rank, Mark Robert, Hirschl, Thomas A., Foster, Kirk A. 2014. Chasing the American Dream : Understanding What Shapes Our Fortunes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pgs 67-132.

Class #10 (2/11) and Class #11 (2/13): Economic Inequality Over Time

We will examine how the tax system has changed over time and the implications of this change for inequality, how patterns of inequality and patterns of economic mobility changed over the 20th century, U.S. perceptions of inequality, as well as the implications of housing segregation along class lines.

Week 5

Class #12 (2/18): The Occupy Movement

We will study recent social mobilization in opposition to this growing inequality. We will examine the Occupy movement, and the impact it had.

Readings:

Castells, Manuel. 2012. Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age. Cambridge: Polity Press, pgs. 156-200.

Class #13 (2/20): Different Forms of Capital

We will take a look at the concepts of cultural capital and social capital, and how these forms of capital help reproduce inequality.

Week 6

Class #14 (2/23): Cultural Capital and the Educational System

We will examine how the cultural capital that children learn in their families differs by social class, and the implications when these children enter and navigate the educational system.

Readings:

Lareau, Anette. 2003. Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life. Berkeley: University of California Press, pgs. 1-13 and 233-257.

Class #15 (2/25): Public Education Over the 20th Century and into the Present

We will examine how the financing and quality of public education has changed over time, both K-12 and college level. We will put U.S. education in international context to consider how it differs and variations in quality. And, finally we will look at the student movement on U.C. campuses today.

Class #16 (2/27): Education and the Reproduction of Inequality (cont'd)

We will discuss tracking within schools, as well as changes in the nature of public education over the last forty years. We will consider how each of these changes impacts children differently by race and class.

Readings:

Oakes, Jeannie. 2005. Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality. New Haven: Yale University Press, pgs. 61-92.

Week 7

Class #17 (3/2): Exam I

Class #18 (3/4) and Class #19 (3/6): Race & Ethnicity

We will talk about the social construction of race and ethnicity, and the social implications of race.

Week 8

Class #20 (3/9): African-Americans

We will examine patterns of racial inequality, and consider the historical roots of these patterns. We will discuss the Jim Crow system and its dismantlement, mechanisms through which residential and occupational stratification persisted post-Jim Crow, and the dismantlement of the New Deal as the Civil Rights Movement pushed to open government programs to African-Americans, and demand equal opportunity in housing and labor markets.

Readings:

Massey, Douglas S. 2007. Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pgs. 51-112.

Class #21 (3/11) and Class #22 (3/13): African-Americans and the Criminal Justice System

We will discuss changes in the criminal justice system in the 20th century, and the implications of these changes for different groups in society. More specifically, we will examine the reasons behind the growing African-American population in the criminal justice system, and what this means for African-American families and communities. We will also consider police violence against African-Americans, and the recent social movement response with the Black Lives Matter movement.

Reading:

Wacquant, Loic. 2001. "Deadly Symbiosis: When Ghetto and Prison Meet and Mesh" *Punishment and Society*, 3(1):95-121.

Week 9

Class #23 (3/16), Class #24 (3/18), Class #25 (3/20): Latino-Americans

We will consider the experience of Latinos in the U.S. from the colonial period to the present. We will examine the impacts of the Chicano movement and UFW labor organizing. We will also examine the various reasons people from Latin America immigrated to the U.S. over the 20th century.

Readings:

Sassen, Saskia. 1998. Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money. New York: The New Press, pgs. 31-50.

Spring Recess 3/23-3/27

Week 10

Class #26 (3/30): Latino-Americans

We will look at occupational segregation along the lines of race and gender, and the experience of immigrant labor. We will consider how citizenship status, or perceived citizenship status, has shaped working conditions for Latinos.

Readings:

Hondagneu-Sotelo. 2001. Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence. Berkeley: University of California Press, pgs. 3-28.

Romero. Mary. 2002. Maid in the U.S.A. New York: Routledge, pgs. 31-36.

Class #27 (4/1): Immigrant Rights Movement

We will examine the large immigrants rights mobilizations in 2006, the short-term impact it had, and the longer-term trajectory of this movement.

Readings:

Voss, Kim and Irene Bloemraad. 2011. Rallying for Immigrant Rights: the Fight for Inclusion in 21st Century America. Berkeley: University of California Press, pgs. 3-39.

Class #28 (4/3): Asian-Americans

We will examine the emergence of the model minority stereotype, and the implications of it. We will also consider the tendency to create dichotomous categories (e.g., white/black, man/woman, heterosexual/homosexual), what this means for groups that do not fit into these binary categories, and the impact that these groups have on this system and the privilege it upholds. We will focus specifically on Asian-Americans in terms of how they challenge the black-white dichotomy, as well as take a look at Asian-American stereotypes and how those can end up reinforcing the racial system in the U.S.

Week 11

Class #29 (4/6) and Class #30 (4/8): Asian-Americans (cont'd)

Readings:

Wu, Ellen D. 2013. The Color of Success: Asian-Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pgs. 1-9.

Zhou, Min. 2004. "Are Asian-Americans Becoming 'White'?" *Contexts*, 3(1):29-37.

Espiritu, Yen le. 2008. Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws and Love. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc: 123-135.

Class #31 (4/10): Exam II

Week 12

Class #32 (4/13) and Class #33 (4/15): Gender

We will discuss the concept of gender, how we learn gender roles, and patterns of gender inequality. We will examine changes to the institution of the family from the mid-twentieth century to the present, and consider changes in gender roles and patterns of gender inequality over the second half of the twentieth century, and the role of the women's movement in these changes.

Readings:

Connell, Raewyn. 2009. Gender in World Perspective. Cambridge: Polity Press, pgs. 1-11 and 72-93.

Class #34 (4/17): Sexuality

We will discuss heteronormativity, institutionalized discrimination based on sexual orientation, and violence against homosexuals today. We will consider changes over the second half of the twentieth century in terms of how homosexuality was understood or explained, degree of cultural acceptance of homosexuality, changes in institutionalized discrimination, as well as the role of the gay rights movement in these changes. Our reading looks at how high school boys construct and enforce masculinity through the use of homophobic language, as well as differences in this process along racial lines.

Readings:

Pascoe, C.J. 2011. Dude You're a Fag. Berkeley: University of California Press, pgs. 52-83.

Week 13

Class #35 (4/20): Sexuality (cont'd)

Class #36 (4/22) and Class #37 (4/24): U.S. Politics

We will discuss how the U.S. political system functions, and consider the relationship between political power and class and race. We will also look at the political, class, and racial dynamics of contemporary political issues related to changes in the major institutions of U.S. society we have studied.

Reading:

Suzanne Mettler. 2011. The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pgs. 1-30.

Piven, Frances Fox, Minnite, Lorraine C., and Maragaret Groarke. 2009. Keeping Down the Black Vote: Race and the Demobilization of American Voters. New York and London: The New Press, pgs. 164-203.

Week 14

Class #38 (4/27): U.S. Politics (cont'd)

Class #39 (4/29) and Class #40 (5/1): Course Wrap-Up

Final Exam Tuesday May 12th 3-6pm

