

SOC 1: Introduction to Sociology

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Office Hours: MW 11-12:00 AM

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Spring 2019
Dwinelle 155
MW 9-10 AM

Course description

Sociology studies how forces beyond our control and outside the realm of nature shape what we feel, perceive, want and get. Behaviors that may at first seem like deeply personal choices or determined by nature -suicide, academic achievement, college major- are shown by sociologist to be clearly affected by how we are raised and who we interact with. Sociologist apply this distinct approach to three sets of interrelated questions:

- *Identity:* To which groups do we belong and how does this affect our behavior?
- *Inequality:* Which group gets what, when and most importantly why?
- *Integration:* How do groups produce social order and solidarity?

Sociologists believe that answering these questions lies at the heart of understanding both the history of mankind and the world we live in today. In this class you will learn how to answer these questions yourself by investigating differences within and across societies, studying how sociologists have made sense of these differences and exploring how all of this matters for you and your surroundings. Students will improve their analytical skills by drawing connections between social science theory, popular non-fiction, historical monographs and journalistic accounts. Upon completing the course, students will not only be acquainted with the main types of sociological explanation, but they will also be able to evaluate the evidence supporting the various explanations. In turn, this will help students to see society more clearly and, hopefully, with greater empathy for others.

Readings

All required readings are available on the Electronic Reserves section of the course web site. To avoid confusion, readings are ordered by week.

Requirements and Grades

The formal requirements and grade calculation are as follows:

- In class midterm: 25% of grade.
- Two short papers: 30% of grade.
- Open book Take Home Exam: 35% of grade.
- Section participation: 10% of grade.

Assignments

Students have to write 2 short papers (5 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins). Assignments will be handed out on Wednesday 2/6 and Monday 4/8. Due dates are Friday 3/8 and the first day of recitation week.

SOCIOLOGY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Wednesday 1/23: What is Sociology?

- Durkheim, Emile Suicide, pp. 152-170; 208-215; 217-222; 241-254.

Monday 1/28: The birth of the Modern Individual

- Harari, Yuval Noah. Sapiens: A brief history of humankind. Random House, 2014. Selection.

Wednesday 1/30: Sociology and the birth of the modern individual 1

- Weber, Max. The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Routledge, 2013. Selection.

Monday 2/4: Sociology and the birth of the modern individual 2

- Simmel, Georg. The metropolis and mental life. Selection.

PART II: SOCIAL FORCES AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Wednesday 2/6: The power of the social 1

- Hand out assignment 1.
- TED TALK Zimbardo, Philip. The psychology of evil. Available at this link.
- Zimbardo, Philip. The Lucifer effect: How good people turn evil. Random House, 2011. Chapter 14.

Monday 2/11: The power of the social 2

- Salganik, Matthew J., and Duncan J. Watts. "Leading the herd astray: An experimental study of self-fulfilling prophecies in an artificial cultural market." Social psychology quarterly 71.4 (2008): 338-355.

Wednesday 2/13: Institutions 1

- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty (New York: Random House, 2012), pp. 7-9, 40-44; 70-95.

Monday 2/18: NO CLASS

- President's day.

Wednesday 2/20: Institutions 2

- Koopmans, Ruud, and Paul Statham. Challenging the liberal nation-state? Postnationalism, multiculturalism, and the collective claims making of migrants and ethnic minorities in Britain and Germany. American Journal of sociology 105.3 (1999): 652-696.

Monday 2/25: Socialization 1

- Schalet, Amy T. "Raging hormones, regulated love: Adolescent sexuality and the constitution of the modern individual in the United States and the Netherlands." *Body Society* 6.1 (2000): 75-105.

Wednesday 2/27: Socialization 2

- Lareau, Annette. Unequal childhoods. Selection.
- Billig, Michael. Banal nationalism. Selection.

Monday 3/4: Interaction and the self 1

- Goffman, Erving. The representation of self in everyday life. Selection.

Wednesday 3/6: Interaction and the self 2

- Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Selection.
- Anderson, Elijah. *Code of the street: Decency, violence, and the moral life of the inner city*. WW Norton Company, 2000. Selection.

ASSIGNMENT 1 IS DUE ON FRIDAY 3/8 (BEFORE 4PM, GSI DECIDES ON HARD COPY/ELECTRONIC)

Monday 3/11: Interaction, choice and collective action

- Schelling, Thomas C. Dynamic models of segregation. *Journal of mathematical sociology* 1.2 (1971): 143-186.

Wednesday 3/13: Social networks 1

- Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. *Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives*. Little, Brown, 2009. Chapter 1.

Monday 3/18: Social networks 2

- Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives. Little, Brown, 2009. Chapter 9.

Wednesday 3/20 Deviance

- Victor Rios, Punished. Chapter 3.

Monday 3/25 and Wednesday 3/27: NO CLASS

- Spring break!

Monday 4/1: Review

- Review material.

Wednesday 4/3: Midterm

- Prepare for short answer questions.

PART III: FROM INDIVIDUAL TO SOCIAL

Monday 4/8: Class 1

- Hand out assignment 2.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party (pp. 473-491).

Wednesday 4/10: Class 2

- Rivera, Lauren A. Hiring as cultural matching: The case of elite professional service firms. American sociological review 77.6 (2012): 999-1022.

Monday 4/15: Race

- William Julius Wilson, The truly disadvantaged. Selection.
- Devah Pager, The mark of a criminal record. Selection.

Wednesday 4/17: States 1

- Ann Hironaka, Never-ending Wars, Chapter 1.

Monday 4/22: States 2

- Rueschemeyer and Stevens, Capitalism and Democracy. Selection.
- Lieberman, Evan, National Political Community and the Politics of Income Taxation in Brazil and South Africa in the Twentieth Century. Politics and Society 29.4 (2001): 515-555.

Wednesday 4/24: Social change

- Kurzman, Charles. The unthinkable revolution in Iran. Harvard University Press, 2009. Chapter 7.

Monday 4/29: Review

- Review material.

Wednesday 5/1: Take-home exam

- Prepare for essay questions.

ASSIGNMENT 2 IS DUE THE FIRST DAY OF RECITATION WEEK (BEFORE 4PM, GSI DECIDES ON HARD COPY/ELECTRONIC)