2014

101 Introduction to Sociology

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This course satisfies 3 hours toward the requirements for the Social Science Core, the Diversity Core, the Sociology major or minor, and the Gender and Diversity Studies major and minor.

**The Promise of Sociology…**

No social study that does not come back to the problems of **biography**, of **history** and of **their intersections within a society** has completed its intellectual journey.

…those (social analysts) who have been imaginatively aware of the promise of their work have consistently asked **three sorts of questions**:

-What is the structure of this particular society as a whole?
-Where does this society stand in human history?
-What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and in this period and what varieties are coming to prevail?


**Required Texts**


Additional readings posted on Canvas.

All course videos are on reserve at the CLC 3rd floor reference desk.

**What will you learn in the class?**

Sociologists explore both how people are shaped by and the shapers of society. In this course we will study how sociologists think about and systematically examine a variety of social processes. We explore how we develop a sense of who we are and how we define ourselves. We ask questions about how these identities and larger social forces shape how people interact with each other in social spaces. We examine the histories and social implications of inequality along the lines of race, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, and geography. We ask questions about who benefits from existing social arrangements and who does not. We look at what leads to the maintenance of these social relationships and delve into how social changes are brought about.
Over the course of the semester we will also explore the discipline of sociology itself. We examine:

- How do sociologists develop research questions? How do they relate to each other as a community of knowledge producers?
- How do sociologists draw on and reshape existing social theory in their examinations of social realities?
- How do sociologists use specific methodologies to systematically gather empirical data about social life?
- How do ethical dimensions of sociological research shape the approaches sociologists take in their studies?
- What are the social policy implications of sociological research?

A central goal in our work together is to develop our sociological imaginations by linking our lives as students, workers, consumers and meaning makers to broader social, cultural, economic, historical and political forces in our globalized world.

This involves developing your ability to understand the following:

1) the kinds of questions sociologists have typically addressed and the role sociology plays in contributing to our understanding of social reality.

2) the methods sociologists use to answer important questions about society.

3) the connections between the individual and society and how social relationships are informed by social structure, culture and history.

4) peoples’ roles in making, maintaining, or changing society

How is this course structured?
Class time will involve a combination of brief lectures, class discussions, in-class group exercises, documentary screenings/listening sessions, and student presentations. As much as possible, we will practice doing sociology whether that involves searching online to answer further questions about a report we read, discussing the results of an interview project or fieldwork assignment, or preparing poster sessions on a research topic in small groups.

I will lecture on some of the content in Newman but will not discuss all of the material in each chapter. You are, however, responsible for all of the assigned material in the textbook. For most classes I will introduce new material that may be an application of the content of the textbook, but that is an extension of those sociological theories, ideas, and research studies. It is important to have read all material for the day it is assigned and to bring those readings to class.

Over the course of the semester we will cover five modules that reflect broad sociological topics or orientations taken by sociologists in our work. These include:

I. Thinking and Knowing Sociologically
II. Becoming Social Selves
III. Deviance and Social Control
IV. Examining Structures of Inequality
V. Advocating for Social Change Through Social Activism

A detailed schedule will be posted on Blackboard as we work through each module. The schedule will list topics, assigned readings or listening materials, and dates for exercises and exams. While we will attempt to follow the schedule as outlined, I reserve the right to make changes to the course plan as I deem necessary. You will be given advance notice of any changes. These modifications will be announced in class, sent to you by email, and posted on Canvas (dated). I strongly recommend that you check your email regularly for any updates to the schedule.
This course relies heavily on media (video, audio and websites) that document the issues we are exploring. All of the course material, including this media, is subject to be on the exams.

**Course Requirements**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>5 highest scores of 6 quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>3 take-home exams (20% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Homework and in-class activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>Research and presentation on a social movement</td>
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**Grading Scale**

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

**Course Policies**

**Attendance**

I expect you to attend every class. Excessive absences will lower your participation score. In the case of documented extended illness or travel with university groups, I will work with you to make up any missed work.

**Make-up exams and quizzes**

I will only offer make-up exams and quizzes in cases we mutually define as emergencies. Any emergency must be documented. In these rare cases, I will determine a make-up exam period and process.

**Canvas, Communications, and Office Hours**

We will use Canvas as means of organizing course resources and communication about modifications to the schedule. If you need to meet with me outside of the office hours I have listed, please make an appointment. I am often in my office and encourage you to drop by or schedule an appointment if you have a question or concern.

**Technology**

All electronic devices must be turned off and stored by the beginning of class. Computers may not be used in class unless we are doing in-class research.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the unattributed use of the work of others. If you have additional questions about what constitutes this serious offense of Xavier’s policy on academic integrity, please consult with me and the “Preventing Plagiarism” resource on the library’s website: http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Preventing-Plagiarism.cfm.

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Xavier’s Disability Services Office provides assistance to qualified students who feel they need some additional help to perform at their best in the classroom. This includes note taking, exam proctoring, alternate form textbooks, sign language and C-Print, and additional assistance on in-class writing assignments. If you need additional accommodations contact Disability Services at 513-745-3280 or e-mail Cassandra Jones at jonesc20@xavier.edu to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Their offices are located on the Fifth Floor of the Conaton Learning Commons, Room 514.