SOAN 111: Introduction to Sociology

Professor: Liz Raleigh  
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Office Hours:  Tues: 2:00 - 3:00 pm  
          Wed: 3:00 - 3:45 pm  
          Fri: 3:30 - 4:30pm  
          And by appointment, if necessary

Course Objectives:
This course is an introduction to the ‘study of society’ and to what C. Wright Mills called the “sociological imagination”: a way of locating in socio-historical context the events, relationships, and social phenomena that shape individual lives and the collective experience. In the next ten weeks we will explore the major theoretical issues and methodological approaches that constitute sociological inquiry. Topics of discussion will include socialization, stratification and inequality, race and ethnicity, families, and education. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on using the lens of the sociological imagination to interpret these issues. In doing so, our goal is to unpack how we have constructed society and how society has in turn shaped us.

Student Learning Outcomes:
The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has specified six student learning outcomes (SLOs) that we want students to acquire. In this course, our focus is on the following three:

- Learning how to connect information about historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena;

- Applying sociological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena;

- Drawing upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena to engage the world.

Required Course Materials:
Several journal, magazine, and newspaper articles can be downloaded from the course’s Moodle page. The following three books are also required, and they can be purchased from the Carleton Bookstore:


Assignments and Evaluation:
Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 page mini essay</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profile a Sociologist (15 points total) Content</td>
<td>5</td>
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Policy on late work: The ten week term is short and falling behind is a recipe for disaster. Get your assignments done on time. In general, I do not accept late work and I do not give makeup exams. For assignments due in class, papers handed in 10 minutes after class starts will be considered late!

Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>&lt;88-84</td>
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FREE Resources for Students
Take advantage of the FREE resources that will improve your educational experience!

For your presentation, I strongly recommend that you make an appointment with the coaches from the Speakeasy to help you plan your presentation and delivery! [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/speakeasy/]

Don’t forget about the Writing Center! Again, go early and often to take advantage of these resources. Trust me, after college, you will have to start paying for these things out of pocket so soak up as much as you can now! [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/]

Get to know your professors! Carleton will pay for you to take two professors per term to lunch at the college dining hall. I imagine that this is an under-utilized perk of a your tuition dollars. Take advantage of it.

Reading Tips
Please read the day’s assigned materials before class, and be an active and critical reader. We’ll all benefit if you engage the readings, take lots of notes, and bring your thoughts to class along with copies of the readings. At the very least you should be able to talk about the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of each reading. To help get the most out of your readings, Paul and Elder (2008) recommend asking the following questions:

1. Can I summarize the meaning of this text in my own words?
2. Can I give examples from my own experience of what the text is saying?
3. Can I generate metaphors and diagrams to illustrate what the text is saying?
4. Can I connect the core ideas in this text to other core ideas I understand?
5. What is clear to me and what do I need clarified?

**Academic Integrity**

In line with Carleton’s policy on academic integrity, it is assumed that the student is the author of all coursework. Please refer to Carleton’s full policy for additional information or see me if you have questions. [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/)

Please also see this helpful post on plagiarism from the blog *Everyday Sociology* [http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2011/05/writing-sociology-papers-how-not-to-plagiarize.html](http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2011/05/writing-sociology-papers-how-not-to-plagiarize.html)

**Disability Services for Students**

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process.

**Attendance/Class participation/Respectful use of electronic devices**

Just showing up to class is not sufficient. You are encouraged to speak up, raise questions and take risks. *There is no such thing as a stupid question!*

Students who are consistently tardy or miss three or more classes will forfeit their participation grade. I am a reasonable person so should you have an extenuating circumstance and the documentation to verify it (i.e. a note from a doctor, class dean, etc.), we can work something out.

It should go without saying but in addition to being present, students should refrain from inappropriately using electronic devices during class time.

The “default” participation grade is 5 out of 10, so students who actively and productively contribute to class will substantially increase their grades. Egregious absenteeism and tardiness will significantly affect your grade beyond participation points.

**Part 1: What is Sociology?**

Monday Sep 15. What is sociology?
- Historical Contexts of Naming – where have all the Mildreds gone?

Wednesday Sep 17. Generation Millennial
- Selections from It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens (moodle)
- Preface to the Promise of Sociology (moodle – it is very short!)
- Generation Nice: The Millennials Are Generation Nice (moodle)
• Take the online quiz, *How Millennial Are You*?

**Due Friday September 19th at the START of class**
Two page essay on the narrative that led up to your given name

Friday Sep 19. The Sociological Imagination
• Mills, *The Personal Experiences and Public Issues*
• Beamish, *The sociological imagination: beyond everyday stocks of knowledge*

Monday Sep 22. Sociological Dimensions: Medical Sociology
• Gladwell, *The Roseto Mystery*
• Szymczak and Bosk, *Training for Efficiency: work, time and systems-based practice in medical residency*
• Remaking Surgical Socialization: *Work Hour Restrictions, Rites of Passage, and Occupational Identity*

Wednesday Sep 24. The sociological imagination: A life course perspective
• What is the life course?
• Growing up faster, Feeling older
• Growing up is harder to do by Furstenberg, et al.

  **Part 2. Early Life Course: The Intersection of Race, Class and Gender**

Friday Sep 26. Birth and Babies
• From Baby Farms to Baby M by Zelizar
• Watch this short video (13 min) on Baby M
• The Best Laid Plans? Women’s Choices, Expectations, and Experiences of Childbirth
• The Score by Atul Gawande

Monday Sep 29. Gender in early childhood
• What’s so bad about a boy who wants to wear a dress?
• What it means to be gendered me by Betsy Luca
• Excerpts from *The Gender Trap* by Emily Kane

Wednesday Oct 1. Marx and class struggle
• Karl Marx (see excerpts from Marx, Durkheim, Weber on Moodle)
• Everyday Sociology Blog – *Are college athletes the new Proletariat?*

Friday Oct 3.
• Watch Poor Kids in Class
• Begin reading Lareau’s Unequal Childhoods (pgs 1-103)
  • Unequal Childhoods (107-220)

Wednesday Oct 8.
  • Unequal Childhoods (233-310)

Friday Oct 10.
  • Meet in Library (no reading!)

  **Part 3. Power and Social Relations: A Look at the Teenage Years**

Monday Oct 13. Weber and interpretive understanding
  • Readings on moodle
  • Everyday Sociology: *How our modern lives reflect ‘old fashioned’ theories*

Wednesday Oct 15. The creation of the teenager
  • Milner, Freaks Geeks and Cool Kids
  • Ritzer, McDonaldization

  **Wed Oct 15**
  Part 1 (annotated bibliography) of the sociological biography due at the START of class

Friday Oct 17. Review for Midterm
  • Midterm evaluations

Monday Oct 20. No Class, Midterm Break

  **Wednesday Oct 22. Midterm in Class**

  **Part 4. What are social facts?**
  Documenting college life and the age of independence

Friday Oct 24. Durkheim
  • Readings on moodle
  • What makes sociology different by Emile Durkheim

Monday Oct 27. Race in College
  • Race and class matters at an elite college by Elizabeth Aries
  • Reading TBD

Wednesday Oct 29. Non-traditional unions and the age of independence
  • The age of independence by Michael Rosenfeld
  • Breaking the Last Taboo: Interracial Marriage in America by Qian
Friday Oct 31. Presentation Day 1

**Part 5. Marriage and the Family**

Monday Nov 3. Union Formation
- Marriage, A History by Stephanie Coontz
- The Changing Landscape of Love and Marriage by Hull, et al.

Wednesday Nov 5. Globalization and the family
- The accordion family: Introduction, Chapters 1-2

**Wednesday Nov 5**
Part 2 of the sociological biography assignment due at the start of class

Friday Nov 7. Presentation Day 2

Monday Nov 10. The Accordion Family (con’t)
- Read chapter 3, skim chapter 4 (pages 81-93, 114-125), and read chapter 5

**Part 6. Aging and Death**

Wednesday Nov 12. Life in an Aging Society
- Families and Elder Care in the Twenty-First Century
- Policies and Politics for an Aging America


**Monday Nov 17**
Final version of your sociological autobiography due at the start of class

- We will watch a frontline documentary on facing death
- What is a good death? Health Care Professionals’ Narrations on End-of-Life Care

**Tuesday November 18: Study Break – OPTIONAL dinner at my house, 5:30pm**

Wednesday Nov 19: Review for Final
- Life after your sociology class

Final Exam in Class Saturday November 22