Introduction to Sociology

This course introduces students to the study of society and what C. Wright Mills called the sociological imagination: a cognitive framework for locating within socio-historical contexts the events, relationships, and social phenomena that shape individual lives and collective experience. Sociology examines a wide range of topics using varied research methods. In the next ten weeks, we’ll narrow our focus to the conceptual foundations of sociology, its theoretical foundations, and select topics in the study of social inequality. Sociology implores us to embrace a specific type of critical thinking. The assigned readings are meant to challenge and encourage you to reexamine your own beliefs and ways of seeing and engaging the social world.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has specified six student learning outcomes (SLOs) that we want students to acquire before graduating. In this course, we focus 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:

Three books are required for this course:


Additional reading is available electronically via the course Moodle. Always complete the assigned readings before class. Read the material closely, take effective notes, determine what is clear to you and what needs further clarification, and also consider how core ideas can be connected to other readings.

**Course Requirements**

**Assignments**

You will complete four course assignments in total, all of which have been designed to increase your comprehension of sociology. The first assignment, worth 7.5 points, asks you to write a short paper about your name. A second assignment, worth 20 points, involves an analysis of your own life from the perspective of the sociological imagination. The third assignment, worth 12.5 points, asks you to examine residential racial segregation in the United States and write a paper about your findings. The final assignment, worth 25 points, asks you to conduct a study of gender or racial privilege in a public setting in Northfield and write a paper about your findings. More details about each assignment will be provided in class. Please be advised that most assignments are due on non-class days. In these instances, a printed copy of your assignment is required in my SOAN mailbox by 4:00 pm on the due date.

**Tests**

A 25 point midterm test will be held on October 18. The test will cover material discussed up to and including the October 13 class. Short-answer and essay questions will be used to assess your understanding of course material. The October 18 date is firm. Without formal documentation from a legitimate source (i.e., dean of students), no last-minute special accommodations will be provided for students who want to reschedule the test.

**Participation**

Your participation, worth 10 points, will be evaluated according to mandatory class attendance, punctuality, participation in class activities, and completion of the assigned readings so that your comments and questions have solid grounding and advance discussion. Please note that participation also involves listening when others are speaking and being attentive throughout the term. Cell phones and other technology are not welcome in my classroom. You may use your personal computers to pull up class readings but in-class notes should be taken with paper and pen. If you have a personal circumstance that merits exception, please see me so we can discuss an accommodation. Students who meet the standards of class participation at only the most basic level will receive the “default” participation grade of 5 points. Students who miss more than three classes risk forfeiting their entire participation grade.
Table 1: Summary of Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Distribution Date</th>
<th>Due Date*</th>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: What is your name?</td>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: What is your sociological biography?</td>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: Exploring racial residential segregation</td>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4: Exploring privilege in Northfield</td>
<td>11/03</td>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term test</td>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>as per requirements</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No extensions will be provided. Late submissions will have a ½ point deducted for each day late.

Grade range: “A” = 90-100%; “B” = 80-89%; “C” = 70-79%; “D” = 60-69%; “F” <= 59%

Assistive Services for Students

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services to begin the process. Please note I will only respond to official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students. To learn more about acquiring official notification, please visit: https://apps.carleton.edu/disabilityservices/.

Technological resources for students with disabilities

The Assistive Technology program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil) software, speech-to-text (Dragon) software, and audio recording Smartpens. For more information, visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

Library

Ask a librarian for help with your research in this class. You can drop by the library’s Research/IT desk to ask any question you have, at any point in your process. Librarians help students find and evaluate articles, books, websites, statistics, data, and government documents; they can also show you how to cite your sources. For more information on hours and librarians, visit the Gould Library website at go.carleton.edu/library.

Time management, test preparation, and study skills

Residential Life Area Directors are trained to work with you to improve your time management and academic skills. Their goals are to heighten awareness of your personal strengths and skills and to offer different ways you can approach your academic work so you're more efficient and effective. Meetings are by appointment; you simply need to email one of them to arrange a visit. For more details and resources, visit the Academic Skills Coaching website.
Writing assistance

The Writing Center, located in 4th Libe, has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final proofreading. Hours and more information can be found on the writing center website. You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their online appointment system. Walk-ins are welcome although writers with appointments have priority.

If you are a second language writer and believe you might benefit from working individually with a writing consultant, email Renata Fitzpatrick, Multilingual Writing Coordinator, call her at x5998, or stop by her office in 420D 4th Libe. She can arrange once- or twice-a-week meetings between you and a specific writing consultant throughout the term.

Course Outline

1. The Conceptual Foundations of Sociology

9/11  What is this course about?


Code Switch Podcast. Say My Name, Say My Name (Correctly, Please). August 10, 2016. Available at http://www.npr.org/podcasts/510312/codeswitch (scroll down to find this specific podcast).

➢ Assignment 1 distributed: What is your name?

9/13  What’s in a name?


What is sociology?


**What Is Sociology? Crash Course Sociology #1**

Ansari, Aziz. 2015. *Modern Romance*. Just read: Chapters 2, 5 and 6


The sociological imagination

Ansari, Aziz. 2015. *Modern Romance*. Just read: Chapter 7, Conclusion


➢ Assignment 2 distributed: What is your sociological biography?

Library Session (class will meet in the CMC 110)


**The Life of Carleton: 150 Years at a Glance** (moodle).
2. The Theoretical Foundations of Sociology

9/25

The birth of sociology


Major Sociological Paradigms: Crash Course Sociology #2

9/27, 29

Karl Marx on capitalist society

9/27


Karl Marx & Conflict Theory: Crash Course Sociology #6

9/29


10/2

Capital in the 21st century

Max Weber on the causes and consequences of rationalization in modern society


Max Weber & Modernity: Crash Course Sociology #9

Rationalization in the 20th and 21st centuries


Emile Durkheim on social solidarity in modern society


Émile Durkheim on Suicide & Society: Crash Course Sociology #5

Social solidarity in the late 20th and 21st centuries


10/13

**George Herbert Mead on socialization in modern society**


How to tackle an in-class essay exam. Tips generated by Erica Bender, Ph.D. candidate in sociology, University of California, San Diego (moodle).

10/16

**MIDTERM BREAK**

10/18

Midterm test

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### 3. Inequality and Identity

10/20-25

**Race in American society**

10/20


Dubois & Race Conflict: Crash Course Sociology #7

➢ Assignment 3 distributed: Exploring racial residential segregation

10/23


10/25


10/27-11/3  **Gender in American Society**

10/27


**Harriet Martineau & Gender Conflict Theory: Crash Course Sociology #8**

10/30:

Schilt, Kristin. 2010. Just One of the Guys. Just read: Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

11/1:


11/3:


➢ Assignment 4: Exploring gender or racial privilege in Northfield

11/6-13  **Privilege in American Society**

11/6


11/8


Social Stratification in the US: Crash Course Sociology #23

11/10


Social Interaction & Performance: Crash Course Sociology #15

11/13


Lessons learned about self and society

Readings to be announced.