# Sociology 101 Spring 2016 TTh 3:35-4:40

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# INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

It is sometimes charged that sociology, the science of group behavior, is in actuality the science of the obvious. Sociologists, it is said, spend a lot of effort and money to "discover" what everyone already knows. This unfortunate misconception is hard to shake because, as social beings, we have all already developed an intimate, intuitive understanding of how society works. Yet, it is exactly because of this presumed familiarity with the subject matter of sociology that one must be extremely careful when speaking about matters sociological. So-called "common sense" assumptions about society may not be—indeed, they often are not!—true upon careful scrutiny.

This course fulfills SAS core curriculum learning goals. It aims to provide students with the appropriate tools and critical perspective to better discern fundamental attributes and patterns of social life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will examine some of the major approaches to the study of society and apply them to a wide variety of social phenomena across space and time: from face-to-face interactions to digital relationships, from family life to life in the city, from the American experience to the global landscape. This course is thus designed to offer you a first taste of sociological theory and research—but also, and more importantly, a deeper understanding and a fuller appreciation of the complexities of the world around you and your place in it.

COURSE LOGISTICS

### **Readings**

We will be using the following required textbook, available at the University Bookstore or any online bookseller:

• Sociology (10<sup>th</sup> Edition), by Rodney Stark

All other reading material will be posted on the course's website on Sakai.

### **Class Format and Participation**

Lecture time will be equally devoted to a close analysis of the assigned reading(s) and a broader examination of key sociological themes and issues, as they pertain to that day's topic of discussion. You are expected to read the assigned material PRIOR to our class meeting, and come prepared to discuss, question, debate, and generally contribute to the overall class experience. To that end, I will be posting lecture outlines on Sakai before class meets. Still, while lectures will provide the primary structure for this course, the large class size means it is during recitation sessions that you will have the most opportunity to truly interact with the material. Be forewarned, then, that it will be difficult to do well in the course if you do not regularly attend lectures and recitation. In case you do need to miss a session, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with one of your classmates to get lecture/recitation notes

#### E-mail Guidelines

I will happily reply to all student email, and I encourage you to get in touch with either me or one of the course's teaching assistants, Brooklynn Hitchens and Tsai-Yen Han, to discuss any issues that may arise that are not directly addressed in the syllabus or the course's site on Sakai. However, be sure to: (a) put "Soc 101" in the subject line; and (b) include your full name somewhere in the body of your message. Otherwise, you run the risk that I will take your email as spam and delete it without reading it.

# **Course Requirements and Evaluation**

- Your grade for this course will be based on THREE closed-books, closed-notes exams, each worth 30 points, or 30% of your final grade. Exams will be non-cumulative and consist of multiple choice questions, true/false statements, and one blue book essay. You will be evaluated based on your ability to effectively answer questions by drawing from readings, lectures, and class/recitation discussion. Make-up exams will only be granted under extraordinary and appropriately documented circumstances, and they will consist of short-answer and essay questions.
- ➤ The last 10% of your final grade will be based on your recitation attendance and participation.
- Final grades are absolutely non-negotiable and will be assigned according to the following scale:

$$A = 90-100$$
;  $B + = 85-89$ ;  $B = 80-84$ ;  $C + = 75-79$ ;  $C = 70-74$ ;  $D = 60-69$ ;  $F \le 59$ 

- ➤ Cheating, plagiarism, or any other kind of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It will result in a failing grade and a referral to the Dean of Students. The University Policy on Academic Integrity is at <a href="http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/201/plagiarism\_policy/">http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/201/plagiarism\_policy/</a>
- ➤ Just as your grade depends on your adhering to certain basic rules of academic integrity, so, too, will it depend on your adhering to certain fundamentals of appropriate classroom behavior, as follows:

The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by individual instructors. Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted, and encouraged.

If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at <a href="http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml">http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml</a>.

### CLASS SCHEDULE\*

\*This schedule is subject to change. Changes, if necessary, will be announced well in advance during class and on the course website on Sakai.

#### January 19 Introductions

Reading (optional): C. Wright Mills, "The Promise of Sociology," on Sakai

# SOCIOLOGY, THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY

# January 21 Thinking Sociologically

<u>Readings</u>: 1. Peter L. Berger, "Invitation to Sociology," on Sakai 2. Stark, p. 1-9

January 26 Doing Sociological Research

Reading: Stark, p. 9-24, 77-89, 96-103

ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND CULTURE

January 28 The Concept of Structure

Reading: Stark, p. 31-39, 104-107, 118-120

February 2 The Concept of Culture

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 39-62

2. Horace Miner, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," on

Sakai

**CLASSICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY** 

February 4 Exchange Theory

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 68-71, 75-77

2. Adam Smith, "Of the Division of Labor," on Sakai

February 9 Conflict Theory

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 113-115, 232-5

2. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party,"

on Sakai

February 11 Functionalism

Readings: 1. Émile Durkheim, excerpts from *The Division of Labor in* 

Society, on Sakai

2. Stark, p. 110-113, 199-200

February 16 Symbolic Interactionism

Reading: 1. Stark, p. 71-75, 156-166

2. George Herbert Mead, "The Self," on Sakai

February 18 [Catch-up and Review Session]

February 23 – 1<sup>st</sup> MIDTERM EXAM –

#### SOCIAL CONTROL

February 25 Informal Control

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 210-212, 194-199

2. Erving Goffman, "The Presentation of Self," on Sakai

**March 1** Formal Control – Part I: Defining Deviance

Reading: Stark, p. 175-194, 201-2

March 3 Formal Control – Part II: Of Crime, Punishment, and Deterrence

Reading: Stark, p. 212-226

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

March 8 The Inevitability of Social Stratification

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 236-242, 245-251

2. Herbert J. Gans, "The Uses of Poverty", on Sakai

March 10 Changes in Stratification Across Societies

Reading: Stark, Chapter 10

March 15-17 -SPRING BREAK: ENJOY!-

March 22 Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Readings: 1. Stark, Chapter 11

2. W. E. B. Dubois, "The Souls of Black Folk," on Sakai

March 24 Urban Inequality

Readings: 1. Stark, p. 550-554

2. Jonathan Kozol, "Savage Inequalities," on Sakai

3. William Julius Wilson, excerpts from *More Than Just* 

Race, on Sakai

March 29 Global Inequality

Reading: Stark, Chapter 17

March 31 Gender and Inequality

Reading: Stark, 166-170, Chapter 12

**April 5** [Catch-up and Review Session]

April 7 – 2<sup>nd</sup> MIDTERM EXAM –

### A TASTE OF OTHER AREAS OF SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY

**April 12 Sociology of the Family** 

Reading: Stark, Chapter 13

April 14 Medical Sociology

Reading: Peter Conrad, excerpts from The Medicalization of Society, on

Sakai

April 19 Sociology of Technology

Reading: New York Times article, "Wearable Computing," on Sakai

**April 21** Environmental Sociology

Reading: Stella Čapek, "The Social Construction of Nature," on Sakai

**April 26** Social Movements and Social Change

Reading: Stark, Chapter 21

**April 28** [Catch-up and Review Session]

May 6 - FINAL EXAM -

12:00-3:00PM