



## **SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

Sociology 01:920:103  
Loree Hall #022  
TTH 2:00PM-3:20PM  
Office hours: WED 8-9am or by appt.

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### **Course Description**

Many of you have been thinking in sociological terms without knowing it. You might have found yourself wondering about - or attempting to give reasons for - many social phenomena that come to your attention.

- ✚ Why does a woman earn 79 cents for every man's dollar?
- ✚ Why do some families stay in the city, while others move to the suburbs?
- ✚ Why is drug use prevalent in some regions of the country and not in others?
- ✚ Why do dual income families still have trouble making ends meet?

These are questions that interest sociologists. This course goes beyond introducing you to sociology as a social science. It also teaches you how to think analytically, to write critically, and to look at social issues systematically. The class serves as a building block for you to acquire a sociological imagination. The skills that you'll learn from this course will benefit you as you navigate the enormous amount of information thrown at you from numerous sources, and will be helpful as you try to make sense of social issues beyond your personal experiences.

You will be evaluated in terms of your ability to master and apply course content through effective in-class participation and written exams. Not all of you will go on to be sociology majors, but my hope is that the information and perspectives presented in this class will be useful to you throughout your lives and in any intellectual pursuit or vocation.

### **Course Objectives**

After taking the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop your sociological imagination and use it to connect private problems with societal issues.
2. For each of the topics covered (stratification, race, gender, poverty), you will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the social problem, comprehend and evaluate alternative explanations for such problems
3. Identify, and distinguish between causes and consequences of social problems.
4. Find and interpret qualitative and quantitative data to support your argument about social problems.
5. Describe to relevance of social policy in addressing social problems to an educated layperson.

## Courses in the COVID-19 pandemic:

I understand that this course is being offered in a time of tremendous uncertainty, and I recognize that you (and I) may encounter unexpected challenges during this semester. That includes challenges related to health and illness, technology, caregiving responsibilities, work responsibilities, and more.

My goal this semester is to support you in doing the best work you can in light of the challenges you face. I understand that college students face tremendous pressure to work hard, get “good” grades, and be as “successful” as possible. That said, I encourage you to remember that your health and well-being are far more important than the work you do in this class or any class. And I encourage you to take the time you need to care for yourself and for your loved ones.

If you are finding it difficult to balance your health and well-being with your work in this class, please let me know. It is okay to ask for help and to acknowledge when you are struggling, and I am happy to help connect you with resources and services on campus and also make accommodations to our course plan as needed.

I also ask that you be patient with me if the challenges of this semester force me to make last-minute changes to the course plan. I will do my best to communicate any changes clearly and make them with respect for the inconvenience, frustration, and confusion that change may cause.

When we are asynchronous in January, I plan on uploading the video lectures before end of business on Thursdays every week. I expect you to have watched the content by Sunday at midnight. Video lectures are posted under “My Media” and “Media Gallery” on Canvas.

## Communication

Office hours are great for getting detailed answers and clarification. Please feel free to schedule an appointment for office hours to talk about the course materials, lectures, or assignments. I encourage everyone to come to office hours at least once this semester. We will meet virtually via Zoom. **If you have not activated Zoom for your Rutgers account, the instructions to do so are [here](#).** This will give me an opportunity to get to know you more and for you to get your questions answered. Attending office hours is shown to help your grade.

*If you contact me by email, please note that emails received Friday afternoon/evening will likely not receive a response until the following Monday.* Use your Rutgers emails. Please write emails that are professional in style and nature. Be specific when you write your message subject and avoid generic subjects such as

“Question” or “Soc questions”. Always include SOC103 in the subject line. Examples of proper subjects are: “SOC 103: Question about upcoming midterm” or “SOC 103: Question for Chapter 2.” I will not be able to respond to emails sent after 8:00 PM until the next day. I will also have virtual office hour appointments available for you to meet with me to discuss any questions or concerns or thoughts you have about the course or the material or sociology more generally. Please check the [email etiquette guidelines](#) before sending me a message. Emails with improper etiquettes might not get a response.

## Required Texts and Materials

Students are required to purchase/rent and read the following textbook:

Conley, Dalton. 2017. *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: W.W. Norton. ISBN: 978-0393614275

The ebook might be a good option given its price.

## Core Goals:

SCL-2: Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

CCD-2: Analyze contemporary social justice issues and unbalanced social power systems.

## Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Canvas

## Technology skills necessary for this specific course

- Recording a slide presentation with audio narration
- Recording, editing, and uploading video

## Required Equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7 or newer) with high-speed internet connection
- Web Browser: Current version of Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome

## Required Software

- Word Processing: Microsoft Word, Google Docs, etc.
- Presentation: Microsoft PowerPoint, Google Slides, etc.

## Course Layout:

This course includes 8 chapters. Much of the content of this course will be available on Canvas, and are organized into folders. You may log into Canvas [here](#). Around March 9, there will be an opportunity for students to fill out a mid-term course evaluation. This evaluation is a chance for you to let me know how you are enjoying the course, what is working/not working, what you'd like to see more of or less of in the second half of the class. The survey is completely anonymous and voluntary. I will send out a reminder about this survey as the date approaches.

## Course Requirement:

### 1. Attendance and Participation (30% of final grade)

Active participation and attendance are crucial to learning the course material. The in-class lectures, your notes, documentaries, and the textbook are the most important learning materials. When we follow the asynchronous schedule in January, I plan on uploading the video lectures before end of business of Thursdays every week. I expect students to have watched the content and submitted the Discussion posts by Sunday at midnight.

I also expect students to attend class regularly, be on time for class and stay for the duration of the class. The classroom should be a place for the free exchange of ideas, and students should act with mutual respect and use common courtesy. I hope for, and certainly encourage, debate among students. I welcome thoughtful discussion and critical thinking; but discourteous remarks will not be tolerated, and disruptive students will be asked to leave. Students are expected to follow the Code of Student Conduct, which can be found [here](#):

If you miss multiple classes because of medical issues or personal problems, contact your Dean of Students. This office can help you manage these issues and stay on top of your schoolwork. If you are struggling to keep up with material in this course because of factors outside of your control (e.g. illness, financial aid, personal problems), I can direct you to services at the University that can assist you.

### 2. Midterm Exam (35% of final grade)

One open-books, open-notes exam determines 37.5% your final grade. The tests are designed to assess your understanding of all materials discussed. The exams will cover all course materials include readings, lectures, videos, and other exercise. If it's talked about in class, it might be there in the exam.

On the dates of the exam, be sure to bring your pencils and your RUID. Exams start at the beginning of class, and finish at the end. You will not receive extra time if you arrive late. If you arrive after a student turned his/her exam in, you will not be permitted to take the exam.

Make up exams will only be allowed under extraordinary circumstances with approved excuses. Approved excuses include a medical excuse or family emergency that can be properly documented (e.g., doctor's note, police report, funeral program). If you have a religious observation that conflicts with a scheduled exam, please notify me no less than two weeks prior to the exam. University athletes with *prior approval* for events are also excused. Personal holidays, broken alarm clocks,

weddings, jobs, exams in other courses, and the Rutgers bus system are not acceptable reasons for missing an exam.

### 3. Final Exam (35% of final grade)

The final exam online constitutes of 37.5% of your grade. More about this exam will be announced as the exam date approaches.

#### Course Grades:

A	=	90 – 100	%
B+	=	85 – 89.99	%
B	=	80 – 84.99	%
C+	=	75 – 79.99	%
C	=	70 – 74.99	%
D	=	60 – 69.99	%
F	<	60%	☹☹☹

If you have any questions on the gradebook, please calculate your grade by hand, before emailing me.

#### Course Policies:

1. Respectful In-Class Behavior: Our classroom is a “safe space.” I don’t expect you to agree with everything your classmates say, but I do expect you to express your opinions with tact and respect. Feel free to be critical of classmates’ points, but *ad hominem* remarks have no place in our learning environment.
2. Make-Up Policy: Students will receive a make-up exam, ONLY in cases of excused absences (as defined in the section on attendance above). Make up exams will be given during the Sociology Department scheduled make up times and will be harder than regular exams.
3. Honor Code: Students are expected to adhere to the procedure listed in the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct. This includes not plagiarizing or presenting other people’s work as your own when writing papers, as well as not cheating in any way on exams. Violations of the Code will result in failing grades and/or referral to the Office of Student Conduct, the Office of Student Affairs, and the corresponding Dean’s Office. More below.
4. Disability Policy: I will do everything I can to accommodate students with disabilities; please notify me soon if this is the case.

## Academic Integrity

The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious. Please review the [Rutgers' academic integrity policy](#).

Academic integrity means, among other things:

- Develop and write all of your own assignments.
- Show in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Create citations whether you are paraphrasing authors or quoting them directly. Be sure always to show source and page number within the assignment and include a bibliography in the back.
- Do not fabricate information or citations in your work.
- Do not facilitate academic dishonesty for another student by allowing your own work to be submitted by others.

If you are in doubt about any issue related to plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please discuss it with your instructor.

Other sources of information to which you can refer include:

- [Rutgers' Academic Integrity website](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity](#)

## Turnitin

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

## Additional Information

### Learning resources:

Learning Centers: <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>

Academic Advising for SAS students: <https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/advising/advising>

Online Learning Tools from Rutgers University Libraries including Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath and RefWorks <http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/tutorials>

### Current Academic Integrity Policy:

Summary: <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home-2/academic-integrity-policy/>

Resources for Students: <https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-students>

**Technology:** Please visit the [Rutgers Student Tech Guide](#) page for resources available to all students. If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons, please email Dean of Students [deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu) for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at <https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/>. Learning remotely presents new challenges. For assistance with learning how to address these challenges, please consult the resources available here: [https://rlc.rutgers.edu/remote\\_instruction](https://rlc.rutgers.edu/remote_instruction)

**Disability Services:** (848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/> Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>.

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS):** (848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counselingservices/counseling/>

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

**Crisis Intervention :** <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counselingservices/counseling/crisis-intervention/>

**Report a Concern:** <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/>

**Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**  
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

**Attendance and Self-Reporting Absence:** Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website

<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. University attendance and religious holiday policies are at [http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug\\_current/pg1433.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg1433.html). SAS attendance policy is at <http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/academics/courses/registration-and-coursepolicies/attendance-and-cancellation-of-class>

### **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

(the instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule)

Week	Day	Date	Topic
1	1	Tue	18-Jan <b>Syllabus overview</b>
	2	Thu	20-Jan Tentatively no class scheduled – Instructor away for a conference
2	3	Tue	25-Jan Chap 1 - The Sociological Imagination
	4	Thu	27-Jan Chap 3 - Culture and the Media
3	5	Tue	1-Feb Chap 3 - Culture and the Media
	6	Thu	3-Feb Chap 6 - Social Control and Deviance
4	7	Tue	8-Feb Chap 6 - Social Control and Deviance
	8	Thu	10-Feb Chap 6 - Social Control and Deviance
5	9	Tue	15-Feb Chap 7 - Stratification
	10	Thu	17-Feb Chap 7 - Stratification
6	11	Tue	22-Feb Chap 8 - Gender
	12	Thu	24-Feb Chap 8 - Gender
7	13	Tue	1-Mar Chap 8 - Gender
	14	Thu	3-Mar Exam review- Midterm Course Evals
8	15	Tue	8-Mar <b>MIDTERM</b>
	16	Thu	10-Mar No class scheduled
<b>SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS</b>			
9	16	Tue	22-Mar Chap 9- Race
	17	Thu	24-Mar Chap 9- Race
10	18	Tue	29-Mar Chap 9- Race
	19	Thu	31-Mar Chap 9- Race
11	20	Tue	5-Apr Chap 10-Poverty
	21	Thu	7-Apr Chap 10-Poverty
12	22	Tue	12-Apr Chap 10-Poverty
	23	Thu	14-Apr Chap 13 - Education
13	24	Tue	19-Apr Chap 14-Capitalism and the Economy
	25	Thu	21-Apr Chap 14-Capitalism and the Economy
14	26	Tue	26-Apr Exam review
	27		<b>FINAL – DATE TBD</b>