OVERVIEW

General Information

*When/where*  Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-3:20pm, College Ave Campus, AB 1180

*Office hours*  Thursdays 12-2pm, virtual

*Use the following link to sign up for 15 minute appointment slots for office hours (you are welcome to sign up for more than one if we will need additional time):*  
https://calendly.com/falzon/falzon-office-hours-spring-2024

*Emails*  Please ensure that you include **SOC101** at the start of your email subject line to guarantee that your message will not be missed or mis-categorized. You can expect a response from me within 24 hours on weekdays, or by the end of the weekend if you email between Friday afternoon and Sunday evening.

Course Summary

This Intro to Sociology course is a survey of a broad range of areas and concepts in the field of Sociology. It first works to answer the question: What is Sociology? (It’s okay if you don’t already know!) Sociology is the study of society. First, we analyze and elaborate core concepts of power, inequality, structure, and agency to understand social phenomena. Next, we analyze some of the axes of inequality that are central to sociological study: class, race & ethnicity, gender & sexuality, and culture. After that, we delve into social institutions that shape individual action and inform our choices through social structures and norms. Finally, we look at contemporary social issues that reflect key subfields in Sociology. This is not an exhaustive list of the issues that are studied in the field, but represent some central problems that are important in today’s world. These are also some of our own specialties in the Rutgers Sociology department so you can take more classes in these areas in the future!

Why Should You Take This Course?

Sociology helps us understand some of the central issues in our world today. With the concepts that will be introduced in this course, you will have the tools to begin to make sense of your social world. You may come to see how social inequalities and privilege have
shaped your life, how social institutions have informed your outlook for the future, and how social problems that you see in your hometown and on the news have emerged. Even if you are taking this course for a major, minor, or general education credit, you should spend time engaging with the materials and concepts to broaden your thinking and help yourself grow. It may even convince you to become a Sociology major or minor, or to complete one of our department’s minors in criminology or health and society. If you are coming from a field that is quite different from Sociology, this course will help you develop your critical thinking skills in ways that can be applied broadly across disciplines, and will be useful in your future careers.

GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Learning Goals

My aim is for students to come out of this course with a greater and more nuanced understanding of their social worlds. By the end of the semester, you should expect to be able to:

1. Understand and remember key concepts in sociology.
2. Draw connections between social structures and institutions, and individual events and outcomes.
3. Understand how inequalities across race, class, gender, and culture shape the circumstances of your own life, and the lives of those different from you.
4. Think critically about the socially constructed causes and consequences of contemporary issues, and the solutions that are needed to address them.
5. Apply your sociological imagination in your future courses and careers, regardless of the field.

Rutgers SAS Core Goals

This course satisfies Rutgers’ School of Arts and Sciences' core curriculum requirement of social analysis (SCL), Goal SCL-1: Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization. It may be used to meet the CC requirement for students enrolled at Rutgers-NB prior to Fall 2019. Consult an advisor and the SAS Core requirements webpage [https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/core] for more details.
What I Expect from You in This Course

**Community standards**  In this course we treat each other with respect. We focus on listening and hearing each other and work together to better understand the course materials. Everyone learns and participates differently, so we will use the *step up, step back* technique to ensure everyone has a chance to be heard. This means that I encourage everyone’s participation but be conscious of taking up too much space in the class discussion. After you step up to speak, step back to create space for others. (Please see the diversity and inclusion statement below for more guidance on community standards.)

**Attendance**  This course is built around in person engagement, including lectures and recitation, so attendance is very important. You will miss explanations and elaborations of the course materials, central questions, and key concepts if you are not in lectures (all of which will be reflected in exams). Attendance in recitation is required and is included in your final grade (see below).

However, it is inevitable that life happens and gets in the way. If attendance is going to be consistently difficult for you, please come to me and we will discuss to come up with a solution. If you know from the beginning of the semester that you will miss more than two weeks’ worth of classes (4 classes) you should consider taking this course another semester.

If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website: [https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](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 can be found at: [http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg1433.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg1433.html)


**Communication**  Communication is key! The semester will surely present challenges for us all, some related to the course and some unrelated. Please stay in touch and let me know if you are facing any challenges and if there is anything I can do to help alleviate them. This might entail providing an extension on an assignment, discussing how to balance work for this and other courses, elaborating on a confusing concept, explaining how to navigate the university as an undergraduate. You are welcome to disclose as much or as little as you feel comfortable with. I am here to help and open to constructive feedback if there is something I can be doing better. I also highly encourage you to attend office hours at least once this semester. It is a great opportunity to get to know me and to discuss ideas in advance of assignments and exams.
Academic integrity

Cheating is not acceptable in this course. I must report all suspected violations to the Office of Student Conduct. The University has a strict academic integrity policy (http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/), which includes penalties for all of the following activities:

**Academic Sabotage** - deliberately impeding the academic progress of others.

**Cheating** - the use or possession of inappropriate or prohibited materials, information, sources, or aids in any academic exercise. Cheating also includes submitting papers, research results or reports, analyses, and other textual or visual material and media as one’s own work when others prepared them.

**Fabrication** - the invention or falsification of sources, citations, data, or results, and recording or reporting them in any academic exercise.

**Facilitation of Dishonesty** - deliberately or carelessly allowing one’s work to be used by other students without prior approval of the instructor or otherwise aiding others in committing violations of academic integrity.

**Plagiarism** - the use of another person’s words, ideas, images, or results, no matter the form or media, without giving that person appropriate credit.

**Violations Involving Potentially Criminal Activity** - Violations in this category include theft, fraud, forgery, or distribution of illicitly obtained materials committed as part of an act of academic dishonesty.

Diversity and Inclusivity Statement

This classroom is a space where diversity is considered our greatest strength. This sounds corny, but to understand our social worlds, it is critical and enormously beneficial to have varied perspectives, especially from marginalized social groups, informing our conversations. I will do my best to bring diverse viewpoints into the course through the readings and other materials that we will discuss. Given the history of white men dominating the academy, there is a tendency for the literature in all areas to be written primarily by white men, but I have worked to balance this in this syllabus. I am happy to amend the reading list if any of you see gaps or biases in the syllabus that I missed, or if there is a new perspective that might contribute to our conversations. If you ever have any issues with accessibility, inclusivity, or learning style, please feel free to raise them with me (in person or via email) as they come up and I will adjust the course as needed.

Next, the frame of “diversity” is often used to avoid having more direct conversations about racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, etc. In this class we confront these issues in our readings, but viewpoints that promote these “-isms” are not welcome or acceptable. Full stop. Keeping that in mind, we all come from different backgrounds and have different exposures to the changing languages that are considered to be sensitive and appropriate. It is very likely that you, I, or someone else will use a word or example that is insensitive, even accidentally. In the context of this class, I hope everyone can assume that a
person is speaking with good intentions, and I ask that you take one of the following steps to address an issue like this if it comes up (if I do not catch and correct it):

1. Address the comment immediately with a statement such as “I want to point out a word/phrase that was just used: ___________. This word can be considered offensive because ___________. Instead, it is more appropriate to use the term __________.”
2. Speak to the individual one-on-one after class using a statement similar to the one above.
3. Talk to me after class or raise the issue in an email to me and I will address it in the next class or in an email to the class (you may remain anonymous if you prefer).

If you unintentionally used an insensitive term, please take this correction as an opportunity to learn from your classmates, apologize for the error, and correct your mistake by not using the term again. We are all learning and growing as we are exposed to new information, including that raised in this course, and my hope is that we can all come out of this class with a more refined and considerate view of our social worlds.

Acknowledgement of Native Displacement and Slavery Ties

I acknowledge that this course is being held on the occupied land of the Lenape people. Please refer to the websites of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation (https://nlltribe.com/about-us/) and the Ramapo Munsee Lenape Nation (https://ramapomunsee.net/) for more information on their histories and current activities. I also acknowledge that, in addition to displacing native communities, European colonizers who profited off the enslavement of Black people also contributed to the development of Rutgers University. For more information, please refer to the Scarlet and Black Research Center (https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu/).

University Resources

The last few years have been especially difficult for everyone. Events and circumstances outside of our classroom can drastically impact our ability to engage and be present. The University has several offices and sets of resources that can help you if you experience anything impacting your performance or ability to participate in this class. Of course, you can always reach out to me as well. Please also see the academic, health, and mental wellness resources on the syllabus (below) as well as others searchable at https://success.rutgers.edu/ for further support.

*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 for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/.

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-counseling-services/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-counseling-services/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/
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.
ASSIGNMENTS AND MATERIALS

Assignments

In class writing (ungraded)
Each class will begin with a question or writing prompt on the screen that will relate to what we covered in the previous class session. You will take 5 minutes to write or type out an answer and then I will ask some students to share their responses with the class. These will not be collected or graded but they will highlight important concepts and ideas that are likely to come up on exams.

Reflection essay (15 points)
After the third week of class, you will submit a brief reflection essay (400-500 words). The goal of this assignment is to get you thinking sociologically based on what you have learned so far about structure and agency in society. You will respond to a prompt that will be made available on Canvas under the “Assignments” tab. You should submit your reflection via the “Reflection” assignment page on Canvas either as a .docx or .pdf file. A rubric detailing grading for this assignment will also be provided on Canvas.
Due: Thursday, February 1st by 11:59pm

Module exams (55 points; Modules 1&3 – 20 points each, Module 2 – 15 points)
At the end of each Module there will be a multiple-choice exam that will assess your learning from that (and only that) Module. The Module 1&3 exams will be 40 questions each, and each question will be worth a half point (40 questions * 0.5 points per question = 20 points). The Module 2 exam will be 30 questions. Exams will be held in person, in class and you will have the full class period, or as long as you need within that period, to complete the exam. Answer sheets will be provided.
Module 1 exam: Monday, February 26th
Module 2 exam: Wednesday, March 27th
Module 3 exam: Wednesday, April 24th

Final essay (30 points)
At the end of the semester you will submit an essay (1200-1250 words). The goal of this assignment is to assess your learning from the semester and to give you the opportunity to use the sociological imagination you have developed. For this assignment, you will choose one of the four contemporary issues covered in Module 3 (crime and deviance, health, environment, immigration) and respond to an essay prompt that will be made available on Canvas under the “Assignments” tab. You should submit your essay via the “Final essay” assignment page on Canvas either as a .docx or .pdf file. A rubric detailing grading for this assignment will also be provided on Canvas.
Due: Thursday, May 2nd by 11:59pm

*Extra credit* (5 points)
In the second half of the semester you will have the option to submit a written assignment for extra credit. The full assignment instructions will be posted to Canvas in early March under the “Assignments” tab. The assignment will be 400-500 words and should be submitted through Canvas any time before the final deadline.
Final deadline: Thursday, April 18th by 11:59pm no extensions
Final Grade Guidelines

A = 90-100 points  C = 70-75.5 points
B+ = 86-89.5 points  D = 60-69.5 points
B = 80-85.5 points  F = 59.5 points or less
C+ = 76-79.5 points

Exam attendance and make-up policy

You are expected to complete exams at the date and time scheduled on the syllabus. If and when circumstances arise that prevent you from attending class on the day of an exam, you must notify me as soon as possible via email, at least 24 hours in advance of the exam, and we will schedule a make-up time. If something changes at the last minute (within 24 hours of the exam), you must still notify me before the exam, and we will schedule a make-up time during a one-on-one zoom meeting as soon as possible. Make-ups for missed exams with no notifications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is your responsibility to contact me if you miss and exam and would like to reschedule. If a missed exam is rescheduled, 1 point will be deducted for each day that passed without the student contacting me, beginning the day of the exam. For example, if an exam is held on February 27th, you will lose 1 point if you contact me on the 27th after the exam has taken place and 2 points if you contact me on the 28th, etc.

Written assignment flexibility

Assignment deadlines are meant to guide you, not punish you. For this reason, all assignments have a 12-hour grace period after the stated deadline during which you will not be penalized for a late assignment. As unexpected life interruptions arise, and as you plan your assignments for this course along with other course and university requirements, you might find that there are conflicts and barriers that prevent you from submitting an assignment on time. When possible, let me know at least 24 hours before the assignment is due so that we can arrange an appropriate extension. Last minute (within 24 hours of the deadline) extensions may be granted but will require a one-on-one meeting to discuss. Late assignments that have not been granted an extension will be docked 1 point for each day they are late. For example, if an assignment is due March 20th and you hand it in on March 23rd, that is considered 3 days late and your grade will be docked 3 points.

Required Materials

1. *A Sociology Experiment* – Available online at: [https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/](https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/)
   - Please make an account as soon as possible!
   - Chapters can be purchased for $1 each. We are using most (but not all) of the chapters so please review the reading list below to see which ones you need.
   - The site also provides study guides for registered students that will help you move through the material and study for exams.
2. Also be sure to make an account for *The New York Times*, available free through Rutgers Library. All other materials will be provided (without cost) via the Canvas site.
COURSE SCHEDULE

**Week 1 – Welcome to Sociology!**

*Wednesday, January 17*
Introduction to the course and syllabus review

**Week 2 – Origins of Sociology // Structure and agency**

*Monday, January 22*
CHAPTER 1 – “A Sociology Experiment (Introduction)” by Shamus Khan, Patrick Sharkey, and Gwen Sharp

*Wednesday, January 24*
**Due: Start of semester course survey -** [https://forms.gle/Bvc87gKHNSis1fJF7](https://forms.gle/Bvc87gKHNSis1fJF7)
CHAPTER 3 – “Social Structure and the Individual” by Judith Halasz and Peter Kaufman

**MODULE 1: AXES OF INEQUALITY**

**Week 3 – Class**

*Monday, January 29 and Wednesday, January 31*
CHAPTER 4 – “Social Class, Inequality, and Poverty” by Peter Kaufman and Paltz Todd Schoepflin

**Due Thursday, February 1st: Reflection essay (by 11:59pm)**
**Week 4 – Race & Ethnicity**

**Monday, February 5 and Wednesday, February 7**

CHAPTER 7 – “Race and Ethnicity” by Matthew Clair, Rashawn Ray, and Patrick Sharkey


**Week 5 – Gender & Sexuality**

**Monday, February 12 and Wednesday, February 14**

CHAPTER 6 – “Gender and Sexuality” by Angela Barian, Jessica Brown, and Todd Schoepflin


**Week 6 – Culture**

**Monday, February 19 and Wednesday, February 21**

CHAPTER 5 – “Culture” by Jonathan R. Wynn


**MODULE 2: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

**Week 7 – Module 1 Exam**

**Monday, February 26**

*Module 1 exam*

**Wednesday, February 28**

Presentations from Jeff Dowd (Sociology) and Ava Aulisi (Office of Career Exploration and Success)
**Week 8 – Education**

**Monday, March 4 and Wednesday, March 6**
CHAPTER 9 – “Sociology of Education” by Maia Cucchiara
Read: Humphrey, Cheyanne. 2023. “Black student suspended over his hairstyle to be sent to an alternative education program” [AP News](https://apnews.com/article/hairstyles-racial-discrimination-crown-act-d4c682d334f52eac813d109b7499901c#lntmoo3g7zhigu5lofg).

**Due: Midterm feedback survey**

**SPRING BREAK! – March 9-17 (no class)**

**Week 9 – Politics**

**Monday, March 18 and Wednesday, March 20**
CHAPTER 11 – “Political Sociology” by Fabio Rojas

**Week 10 – Family and Module 2 Exam**

**Monday, March 25**
CHAPTER 8 – “Sociology of Families” by Angela Barian and Jessica Brown

**Wednesday, March 27**

**Module 2 exam**
MODULE 3: CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES

Week 11 – Deviance and Crime

Monday, April 2 and Wednesday, April 4
CHAPTER 13 – “Deviance, Crime, and Violence” by Angela Barian, Patrick Sharkey, and Bryan L. Sykes
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90flRr7T7As.

Week 12 – Health

Monday, April 8 and Wednesday, April 10
CHAPTER 15 – “Health and Illness” by Margaret T. Hicken and Hedwig Lee

Week 13 – Environment

Monday, April 15 and Wednesday, April 17
CHAPTER 16 – “Environmental Sociology” by Dana R. Fisher and Andrew K. Jorgenson

Due Thursday, April 18th: Final deadline for extra credit submissions
Week 14 – Immigration

Monday, April 22
CHAPTER 12 – “Immigration and Urbanization” by Patrick Sharkey and Jody Vallejo
https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/

Wednesday, April 24
Module 3 exam

Week 15 – Review for final paper

Monday, April 29

FINAL ESSAY due Thursday, May 2nd at 11:59pm