

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
SOC1101 – Summer 2015

Meeting location and times:
Uris Hall 360
Monday to Friday 2:30 – 3:45

Instructor:
Alicia Eads
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Office hours:
By appointment

Course description:

This course provides a broad overview of sociology that focuses on central concepts and substantive areas. In the first part of the course we will consider important sociological concepts including classical conceptions of social order versus disorder and contemporary understandings of social networks. We will also examine several of the most important social institutions in Western society: family, education, the economy, and government. We will end this section by exploring how cultural meanings influence social interaction. After establishing this foundation, in the second part of the course we will see how scholars use these theoretical concepts to understand areas of sociological study. Including inequality and culture, family and work, mass incarceration and inequality, and social movements and politics. In the final section of the course we will consider the implications of technology, especially the Internet, for social life.

Learning objectives:

1. Examine different social structural forces that shape individuals, groups, and societies.
2. Develop reading and writing skills.
3. Survey the substantive areas of study in sociology.
4. Become familiar with some methodological approaches in sociology.

Required course materials:

Readings will be available on Blackboard:
<https://summer.blackboard.cornell.edu/home.html>

Disabilities:

Please let me know as soon as possible if you require any accommodations. It is Cornell policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services and their instructors for a confidential discussion of their

individual need for academic accommodations. Student Disability Services is located in 420 CCC. Staff can be reached by calling 607.254.4545.

Course requirements and evaluation:

You are responsible for all material covered in class, assignments, and readings. The readings that are listed for a given class date will be addressed on that day, so you are expected to have completed the readings by the start of that class. Your final grade will be based on your performance on exams, your attendance and participation in class, and your performance on assignments, as follows:

Attendance and participation (20%)

Midterm exam (20%)

Reaction paper (15%)

Final exam (20%)

Final paper (25%)

Final grades awarded as follows:

A+ \geq 96.6

A 93.3 – 96.59

A- 90.0 – 93.29

B+ 86.6 – 89.99

B 83.3 – 86.59

B- 80.0 – 83.29

C+ 76.6 – 79.99

C 73.3 – 76.59

C- 70.0 – 73.29

D+ 66.6 – 69.99

D 63.3 – 66.59

D- 60.0 – 63.29

F \leq 59.99

Exams – There will be two exams. The first one will take place during regular class time in the usual room. The second one will be during the designated final time in the usual room. If you have a family or medical emergency and have to miss an exam, you must contact me prior to the start of the exam or your exam grade will be penalized, even if you have a valid excuse for missing it. If you miss an exam for any reason, you will be required to complete an alternative essay-based exam.

Assignments – There are two assignments – a reaction and final paper, which together constitute 40% of your final grade. The purpose of these assignments is to give you an opportunity to explore class material in-depth and relate it to topics of interest to you, as well as develop writing skills. If you are going to be turning an assignment in late due to a family or medical emergency, you must let me know ahead of time or your assignment grade will be penalized.

Attendance and participation – You are expected to attend all classes. You are also expected to do the assigned readings and contribute to class discussions. In addition to regular attendance and participation there are two additional exercises:
1- you will choose one class to co-lead the discussion for the day.
2- you will choose three days during each week to submit questions and/or comments on that day's reading assignments. The purpose of these exercises is to

help you stay current with the readings as well as kick-start critical thinking. Attendance and participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Class, Readings, and Assignments Schedule

NOTE: the schedule and/or specific readings are subject to change. If that happens, you'll be the first to know.

Monday, June 22 – Introduction to the Course

Tuesday, June 23 – Introduction to Sociology

Reading:

Mills, C. Wright. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press. CHAPTER 1, "THE PROMISE."

Watts, Duncan. 2011. *Everything is Obvious: How Common Sense Fails Us*. Crown Business. PREFACE, "A SOCIOLOGIST'S APOLOGY."

Part 1: Central Sociological Concepts

Social Organization

Wednesday, June 24 – Solidarity versus social disorder

Reading:

Durkheim, Emile. 1893 [1984]. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Macmillan. LEWIS COSER'S INTRODUCTION AND DURKHEIM'S INTRODUCTION.

Thursday, June 25 – Social networks

Reading:

Christakis, Nicholas and James Fowler. 2009. *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Networks*. New York: Little Brown and Company. CHAPTER 1, PP. 3-24 AND 30-32.

Friday, June 26 – Organizations

Reading:

Scott, W. Richard and Gerald Davis. 2007. *Organizations and organizing: Rational, natural, and open systems perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. CHAPTER 1 ONLY.

Monday, June 29 – Bureaucracy

Reading:

Weber, Max. 1922 [1968]. *Economy and Society*. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Eds.), Berkeley: University of California Press. CHAPTER XI, "BUREAUCRACY," PP. 956-958, 973-975, 978-980, 983-984, 987-994, 998-1001, 1002-1003.

Tuesday, June 30 – Markets

Reading:

Fourcade, Marion. 2007. "Theories of markets and theories of society." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50 (8). PP. 1019-END.

Social Institutions

Wednesday, July 1 – Family

Reading:

Lareau, Annette. 2011. *Unequal childhood: The importance of social class in family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press. CHAPTER 1, PP. 1-10 AND APPENDIX A, METHODOLOGY: ENDURING DILEMMAS IN FIELDWORK.

Thursday, July 2 – Education I

Reading:

Kozal, Jonathan. 1991. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York; Crown Publishers. PP. 20-43, 54-57.

DeParle, Jason. 2012. "For Poor, Leap to College Often Ends in a Hard Fall." *New York Times*, 2012, December 22:
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/education/poor-students-struggle-as-class-plays-a-greater-role-in-success.html?_r=0

Friday, July 3 – NO CLASS

Monday, July 6 – Education II

Reading:

Small, Mario Luis. 2009 *Unanticipated Gains: Origins of Network Inequality in Everyday Life*. Oxford University Press. CHAPTER 1, PP. 1-5.

Collins, Randall. 1976. *The Credential Society*. New York: Academic Press. PP. 118-127.

Tuesday, July 7 – Economy I

Reading:

Weber, Max. 1904-1905 [2009]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. W. W. Norton & Company Inc. SWEDBERG'S PREFACE AND CHAPTERS 1 AND 2.

Wednesday, July 8 – Economy II

Reading:

Dobbin, Frank. 2011. "Why The Economy Reflects the Polity: Early Rail Policy in Britain, France, and the United States." In *The Sociology of Economic Life*, (Eds.) Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Thursday, July 9 – Government

Reading:

Weber, Max. 1922 [1968]. *Economy and Society*. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Eds.) .Berkeley: University of California Press. CHAPTER IX. 901-910, 921-926.

Culture

Friday, July 10 – Elements of culture

Reading:

Eliasoph, Nina & Paul Lichterman. 2003. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:735-794.

Monday, July 13 – REACTION PAPER DUE. No new readings, wrap-up and review.

Tuesday, July 14 - EXAM

Part 2: Combining concepts in areas of sociological study

Wednesday, July 15 – Inequality and culture

Reading:

Rivera, Lauren. 2015. "Guess who doesn't fit in at work?" *New York Times*, 2015, May 30: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/31/opinion/sunday/guess-who-doesnt-fit-in-at-work.html>

Thursday, July 16 – Inequality and the economy

Reading:

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 1999. "Nickel-and-Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America." In *Social Stratification: Class, Race, Gender in Sociological Perspective*, (Ed.) David Grusky, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Maslin Nir, Sarah. 2015. "The Price of Nice Nails." *New York Times*: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/nyregion/at-nail-salons-in-nyc-manicurists-are-underpaid-and-unprotected.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=1

Friday, July 17 – Family and work

Reading:

Slaughter "Why Women Still Can't Have It All,": <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-can-8217-t-have-it-all/9020/>

Gerson, Kathleen. 1993. *No Man's Land: Men's Changing Commitments to Family and Work*. New York: Basic Books. CHAPTERS 1 AND 2.

Monday, July 20 – Selves and society

Reading:

Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Ellison, Nicole, Rebecca Heino, and Jennifer Gibbs. 2006. "Managing impressions online: Self-presentation processes in the online dating environment." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11 (2): 415-441.

Tuesday, July 21 – Deviance and conformity and authority

Reading:

Chambliss, William. 1973. "The saints and the roughnecks." *Society*, 11 (1): 24-31.

Rosenhan, David. 1973. "On being sane in insane places." *Science*, 179 (4070): (1973): 250-258.

Wednesday, July 22 – Mass incarceration and inequality

Reading:

Wakefield, Sara, and Christopher Uggen. 2010. "Incarceration and stratification." *Annual Review of Sociology* 36: 387-406.

Thursday, July 23 – Politics and elite influence

Reading:

Domhoff, William G. 2011. "Who Rules America? Power and Politics." In *Social Stratification: Class, Race, Gender in Sociological Perspective*, (Ed.) David Grusky, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Friday, July 24 – Social movements

Reading:

Meyer, David. 2003. "How Social Movements Matter," *Contexts*.

Goodwin, Jeff. 2006. "A theory of categorical terrorism." *Social Forces*, 84(4): 2027-2046.

Part 3: Technology and Social Life

Monday, July 27 – Technology and the economy

Reading:

Ford, Martin. 2015. *The Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future*. Basic Books. INTRODUCTION, CHAPTER 1, AND CHAPTER 3.

Tuesday, July 28 – The Internet, social networks, and mobilization

Reading:

Boase, Jeffrey. 2006. “The strength of internet ties.” *Pew Internet & American Life Project*.

Malcolm Gladwell 2010, October 4. “Small Change: Why The Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted,” *The New Yorker*:

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell>

Wednesday, July 29 – The Internet and society

Reading:

DiMaggio, Paul and et al. 2001. “Social Implications of the Internet,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27: 307-336.

Thursday, July 30 – Video.

Reading:

Lohr. 2009. “For Today’s Graduate, Just One Word: Statistics.” *New York Times*:
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/06/technology/06stats.html?_r=0

Friday, July 31 – **FINAL PAPER DUE**. No new readings, wrap-up and review

Tuesday, August 4 – **FINAL EXAM**