



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2012

SO1000 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Sections C2 & N2

INSTRUCTOR: Alan Segal

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OFFICE: C410

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OFFICE HOURS: Mondays and Tuesdays 16:30 - 17.15. Or by appointment.

PREREQUISITE(S)/CO-REQUISITE: None

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS: Pearson Custom Library Publication

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: Introductory Sociology examines the theories, methods, and substance of sociology. These develop insight into how societies and individuals are shaped and modified by characteristics of social life, such as culture, socialization, stratification, group processes, economics, and social movements.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 University Credits

DELIVERY MODE(S): Class and Group Discussion, Lectures, Film Analyses

TRANSFERABILITY: *** Grades of 'D' or 'D+' may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students must be aware it is their responsibility to contact receiving institutions to ensure transferability.

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A+	4.0	95 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	90 – 94	
A-	3.7	87 – 89	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B+	3.3	83 – 86	
B	3.0	80 – 82	GOOD
B-	2.7	77 – 79	
C+	2.3	73 – 76	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	65 – 72	
C-	1.7	60 – 64	
D+	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

NOTE: On the College's marking grid there is no D-. Therefore no such final mark will be recorded. However, for the course assignments, I will use D- as an additional non-failing mark.

EVALUATION:

Academic assignments for this course emphasize synthesis of ideas from a sociological standpoint, and the best questions you can think of to advance that synthesis. Analysis does not mean just reporting what others have said on a topic. Important as this is, other authors' ideas or conclusions are valuable because they add insight or specific details that help you to ask questions about the topic you have selected. My assignments are a philosophical inquiry that is advanced through your and others'

investigations. Deciding what questions are worth raising is an important part of analysis. Conclusions can be valuable but aren't obligatory for any of my assignments.

Tabulating Grades:

All of your assignments will receive a letter mark. At the end of the course I will add the Total Grade Points you have received based on the letter-grades your assignments have received. The grid above shows you the Grade Point Value for each letter. Maximum Grade Points available from all your assignments for this course is 12.6. Attaining a Grade Point Total of 12.6 is the same achievement as receiving 100%. When I have your Total Grade Point I will divide it by 12.6. A percentage will be derived based on this calculation, and the percentage will be reconverted to a final grade according to the grid above.

Sociological Film Analysis Essay (Two): (F, D- to A+) (Total Grade Points 8 Out Of 12.6 = 63.5%)

Throughout the term films will be shown to you. We will discuss them sociologically, employing a variety of ideas and concepts mentioned in the course text. Following the showing of a film, you may be asked to write an essay of at least 1200 words. I will select some ideas or theories that must be included in the analysis, and you will add a number I will specify, that you can choose from any part of the book, including sections we haven't yet discussed. You should not limit yourself to saying whether or not the film deserves praise, or offer your appraisal of the plot design. Your exploration should concentrate on the sociological value of the piece. **You must completely capitalize, in bold font, the first time you use a theory or concept.** I have to be convinced that you understand these; a brief explanation of them the first time they appear in your essay, therefore, is also required. You must display a workable knowledge of the ideas you mention.

Due dates for these essays will be five days following the showing of the film.

Optional Third Film Analysis Essay:

If you send in all written assignments, and not later than the due-dates, you can write a third essay if both of your film analyses have grades lower than the 'B' range. However, this refers to essay marks that have not been reduced because of spelling or grammatical mistakes. If the mark on the third essay is higher than the lowest essay grade you already have, the third essay's evaluation will replace the lowest mark.

Two Journals: (F, C- to C+) (Maximum 4.6 Grade Points Out Of 12.6 = 36.5%)

Anything pertaining to sociology, class discussions or lectures, class interaction, personal life, relevant to our examination of sociology, or course observations and suggestions, is a suitable topic. No research is expected. The minimum length is 300 words.

Due Dates: First class of October and November.

***Grammar is important to communicating precise meaning. Therefore, while it will not be valued as highly as content, it will be evaluated and therefore can affect your mark.

******ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS EXCEPT THE JOURNALS ARE SUBJECT TO LATENESS PENALTIES OF ONE GRADE LEVEL PER CALENDAR DAY BEYOND THE DUE DATE. JOURNALS WILL BE REDUCED BY ONE GRADE LEVEL FOR EACH TWO-DAY LATENESS PERIOD. THERE IS ALSO A ONE-GRADE PENALTY FOR ASSIGNMENTS THAT ARE LESS THAN THE MINIMUM LENGTH.**

******ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SENT BY EMAIL, TO MY COLLEGE ACCOUNT: asegal@gprc.ab.ca ALSO, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE WORD 'ASSIGNMENT' IN THE SUBJECT LINE, AND INDICATE WHICH ASSIGNMENT IT IS.**

Discussion Bonus: (A, B, C, D)

Every person in the course may (but not necessarily will), receive a bonus mark based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation. Discussion postings to a Moodle discussion forum also will be considered class participation. You will be eligible for a bonus mark only if you display commitment to the course by reading the books and completing all written assignments. Although attendance is not relevant to the regular assignments for the course, it is important to your eligibility for a bonus mark. The bonus mark offers an A, B, C, or D. No plus or minus signs will be used. If you receive a bonus mark, it will be added to your overall grade total prior to working out a final mark. Eligibility for the bonus is nullified if you are absent for more than 4 classes. The bonus will not result in more than a 3-level rise in final grades.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

University courses provide the best intellectual and perhaps social experience, when students arrive prepared for the day's work. My classes are heavily discussion - oriented and therefore require commitment from students.

1. Read assignments.
2. Participate in class conversation about the material.
3. Complete all written work.
4. Indicate on submitted material your name; section and course number; and which assignment is being sent to me.
5. All written work must be sent via email to asegal@gprc.ab.ca You MUST use the word 'assignment' in the subject line.
6. *** Electronic Devices: People who must have contact with others during class time may leave their cell phones on 'vibrate', and leave the room if a response is required. Otherwise, texting or use of phones will result in you having to miss that particular class. Please do not put me in a position of having to do this.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

In an academic setting, presenting others' work as your own is a serious violation. However, referencing articles and books and online academic products do not prevent you from building on their ideas and speculations. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Admission Guide at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/**

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

1. Introduction to SO1000
2. Chapter 1 - Understanding the Sociological Imagination

Class Discussion: What is sociology? What is a sociological imagination?
/ Prepare an explanation of the different types of sociology introduced in the chapter. / What are hegemony, discourse, political economy, status, social facts, and relations of production?

3. Chapter 2 - Socialization and Social Interaction

Class Discussion: Why distinguish values, mores, and norms from each other? Explain ethnocentrism and socialization. In what sense might these be connected?
/ Who or what are 'agents of socialization'? What have been the more substantial forms of socialization you have experienced? What have been the most significant? Be aware that 'substantial' and 'significant' do not always reference the same

occurrence or development. / Have you experienced conflicting types of socialization? Have you experienced re-socialization? / Why might sociologists link cultural capital with socialization?

4. Chapter 3 - Understanding Social Mobility Through the Movies

Class Discussion: How does Dowd convey the idea of mobility to you, and do the films he mentions provide adequate examples of his purpose? Are they good illustrations of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital? / We usually think of movies as popular culture media. When you watch films, do you think of the broad culture surrounding them? Have movies taught you anything? Can film reflect accurately, and provide motivators for change in, any society?

5. Chapter 4 - Culture

Class Discussion: What do sociologists mean when they allude to culture, subculture, counterculture, mass culture, popular culture, material and non-material culture, and cultural capital? Can you think of examples that solidify these terms? Is culture applicable to human societies only? / Is culture shock overblown? / Evaluate the 'Canadian Values' list on page 91. / What is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis? / When sociologists assess cultural diffusion, what are they examining? / Do examples exist in today's Canada that show our ethnocentrism? What might the existence of discrimination in our country imply for our belief that Canada is a pluralistic society? / What is cultural pluralism?

6. Chapters 6 & 7 - Deviance, Crime, and Regulation; Social Change....

Class Discussion: Rather than look at deviance and control as absolutes in a society, observe what we believe is the relationship between the two. Why might I link chapters on deviance and social change? How do sociologists differentiate between social movements and collective action? What do sociologists think social change refers to? What social factors play into social change? Are social change and social movements always connected? If not, what characteristics of them clarify the lack of connection? Deprivation is a vague concept in some respects, therefore does 'relative deprivation' become even more vague? What is stigma, and does it apply clearly to deviance and social change? Is deviance an individual or a group designation? How would you explain the link between a dominant social paradigm and our speculations about deviance, or conformity, or change?

How might you comment on deviance and social dissent if you were a conflict theorist, a functionalist theorist, or a feminist theorist? Is a theory also a paradigm? What theories are cited to explain deviant behaviour? What might explain conforming behaviour? Are 'conforming' and 'conformist' the same referent? Does punishment 'work'? If so, what is meant by 'working'? What is a moral panic? **From this point onward in this course, you will have to think of deviance and social dissent simultaneously**

7. Chapter 8 - How Gay Stays White and What Kind of White It Stays
Chapter 12 - Race and Racialization; Chapter 11 - Gender and Sexualities

Class Discussion: Why mention ethnicity and race in the same chapter? Prepare a sociological explanation of each of the categories. / Why do sociologists refer frequently to race, ethnicity, and discrimination as if they are inseparable? How, in fact, do sociologists explain the difference between them? / Why would postcolonial theory be associated with discussions of race? / Unlike common

assumptions about them, 'minority' and 'majority' are not straightforward categories. Explain how sociology perceives these. Both are forms of and foundations of status, so keep this in mind when thinking about your explanation. / Were you surprised to read of Berube's linking race (whiteness) and sexuality? What is white about gay identity and experience? / Sociologists over many years chose to separate conceptually the categories of gender and sexuality. What concept(s) would justify addressing both in the same chapter? / Prepare an outline of the various classifications of sexual and gender expression available to us in Canadian society. How would you explain to an unknowing individual, hegemonic masculinity? / In what manner can gender be compared to the other characteristics of inequality listed above? / Explain the link between feminist analyses and all forms of inequality, especially that of gender.

8. Chapter 9 - Social Inequality

Class Discussion: How would you explain the relationship between social structure and social interaction? Imagine how this interaction reflects status in a society. What do sociologists mean by 'status'? What indicators can you name that display your social status? / What are social stratification and social class? / Does this chapter convince you that ideas of inequality contribute meaningfully to knowing the world sociologically? What categories of inequality are mentioned in your text? Are some categories left out that you believe should be included? Explain how structural sources of poverty can affect social mobility. / What is social mobility? / Do any of the previous concepts intersect with the idea of meritocracy? / Some sociologists tie together development, debt, dependency, and modernization? They are convinced the tie creates the apparatus to which most of the world is subordinate. How might these people explain the social value of the tie-in?

9. Chapter 13 - Mass Media

Class Discussion: What prominence does media have in your life? Can you edit it out when you want to? Are some elements of media more prominent in your existence, experience, and development, than others? Why do we differentiate between media and mass media? Can you imagine social cohesion without media? What theoretical perspectives cited in the chapter most closely reflect what you think about media?

10. Chapter 14 - Families

Class Discussion: How would you explain 'family' to a being who had no understanding of the concept? Do the definitions presented in this chapter cover your ideas of what is a family? Can you perceive your family life in the descriptions offered in the text? / Social Diversity is cited in the text because it has a powerful influence in sociological analyses. Do the authors persuade you that social diversity is accurately and legitimately reflected in the experiences of family in this country? / What are social institutions and why do we consider the family an integral example of them?