Introduction to Sociology
SYG1000
Florida State University
Spring 2021
Online
Instructor: Pierce Dignam, M.S.
Email: pdignam@fsu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday, Noon - 1:00PM or by appointment

Course Description
Sociology is a scientific field of study that investigates society and human behavior. This course is intended to introduce you to a broad range of sociological topics to develop your understanding of the field. This course will cover topics including: culture, socialization, deviance, race, class, gender, family, and education. Sociology is a critical examination of the world around us, which allows us to identify how external social forces contribute to our opportunities, constructions of reality, and behavioral tendencies. By applying the sociological perspective, we can understand how people’s lived experiences are influenced by their surrounding society.

Teaching Assistants: Kristen Amaya (Groups 1 and 2) and Tara Henry (Groups 3 and 4)
Email: Kristen: kma14d@fsu.edu
Tara: th20bz@my.fsu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Objectives
- Students will differentiate the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology, understand the underlying assumptions of each perspective, and actively apply these perspectives to social life.
- Students will understand the diversity of cultures, norms and values in the world and in our classrooms, and practice open-mindedness and mutual respect regarding them.
- Students will analyze the myriad ways in which differences in social class, race, and gender affect a person’s life chances and choices.
- Students will develop and exercise a sociological imagination, or the ability to relate large-scale social processes to events in their own personal life, thereby allowing them to evaluate personal beliefs and practices, and make better personal choices.
- Students will analyze and clarify complex social issues, and develop communication skills to articulate their views on such issues.
- Students will demonstrate effective information literacy skills by identifying and selecting the most appropriate tools to locate and select information from sources which are reliable, relevant and authoritative, by demonstrating an understanding of plagiarism and intellectual property, and by selecting main ideas from sources such that the information expands and deepens their understanding of the subject matter.
- Students will apply critical and creative thinking skills to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize ideas.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and their influence on individual, social, historical, and political events or on cultural expression.
- Students will compare and contrast the findings from various social science specializations to explain diverse perspectives and their influence on social, cultural, political and economic global events.
- Students will apply social science theories and research findings to individual and group experiences.
Teaching Philosophy

I aim to have you actively engage with the theories we will read and consider how they can inform our perspectives of the time and place in which we live. Thus, I have included several exercises intended to facilitate you forming a deeper connection with the material.

Required Textbook

Essentials of Sociology


Scholarly Comments

Class discussions can stimulate strong feelings and heated debate. Because this is a college course, all discussions must be scholarly.

- **Scholarly comments are:** respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow-up questions and/or disagreement; related to course materials; motivated to advance the discussion of issues related to course materials rather than personal beliefs; delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner.

- **Unacceptable behaviors are:**
  - Personal attacks. This includes attacks on a person’s appearance, demeanor, political beliefs.
  - Interrupting the instructor or classmates.
  - Using the discussion to argue for personal political positions or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed as scholarly endeavors.
  - Ignoring the instructor’s authority to protect the integrity of the classroom.

Anyone who violates these guidelines will be asked to stop and will receive appropriate sanctions related to their behavior.

Groups and Email Protocol

At the beginning of the second week of our semester (1/11), you will be assigned into one of four groups. Each TA is in charge of two groups. Your group’s TA will be your first line of contact for any questions related to the course. Your group will also determine what discussion board you will use for our class discussions.

We will answer emails sent during the weekday within approximately 24 hours, and emails sent on the weekend within 48 hours.

When you email me or our TAs, please:
  - Use a clear subject line
  - Use a salutation and signature
  - Review the syllabus and course Canvas site for an answer prior to contacting us.

All other required readings will be posted to the course Canvas site under the Module called “Course Library”
First-Day Attendance  
6% of final grade  
To record your attendance during the first week of the course, you must complete a short quiz on Canvas that will review your knowledge of the syllabus and course structure.

Mini-Quizzes  
20% of final grade  
EVERY WEEK (except for the first week, midterms and finals week), you will complete short quizzes concerning the course material covered that week. These quizzes will be due by Sunday at 11:59PM on the week they are assigned. As the quizzes will be available for an entire week, you will not be able to make up these assignments without documentation concerning significant illness or crisis. At the end of the semester, your lowest quiz grade will be dropped, so only 12 mini-quizzes will count towards your final grade.

Discussion Boards  
10% of final grade  
Throughout the semester, you will participate in various discussions, usually about once every two weeks. There will be 5 discussion boards in total. I will provide the prompt for each discussion board.

As we have a very large class, you will be split up into four different, equally sized groups for these discussions. This is the same group that will determine your assigned TA. You will be assigned to a group on 1/11. You will then only participate in your group’s discussions for the entirety of the course.

Your participation will be measured in two parts: an original post concerning the discussion that must be made by 11:59PM on the Friday of the week it is assigned, and a follow up post replying to another student that must be made by 11:59PM on the Sunday of the week it is assigned.

For more information, please see the rubric “Discussion Board Guidelines” on Canvas, in the module “Discussion Boards.”

Exams  
30% of final grade (15% for each exam)  
You will have two exams in this course. Exams may consist of multiple choice, true/false, key term matching, figure labeling, and short answer items. These exams will be administered and completed in a time-sensitive manner. Exam 1 will be administered on 2/28 and Exam 2 will be administered on 4/22.

Paper One  
10% of final grade  
For Paper One, you will write a sociological autobiography. The instructions can be found in the Canvas Module called “Paper One.” The paper will be due by 11:59PM on 1/31.

Paper Two  
12% of final grade  
The second writing assignment involves demonstrating your understanding of how media reinforces gendered or racial behaviors and attitudes by applying course concepts concerning race and gender. The instructions can be found in the Canvas Module called “Paper Two.” The paper will be due by 11:59PM on 3/21.

Paper Three  
12% of final grade  
The last writing assignment involves demonstrating your understanding of how political parties try to sway voters into supporting them by applying course concepts concerning not only race and gender, but also ideas about the American Dream and political theory. The instructions can be found in the Canvas Module called “Paper Three.” The paper will be due by 11:59PM on 4/11.

Each paper’s prompt will be posted three weeks before its due date in its own separate module.
### Grading Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper One</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Two</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Three</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Day Attendance</td>
<td>6%</td>
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### Extra Credit

There is one opportunity for extra credit available in this course, which will specifically be available when the Course Evaluation Kit becomes available on Canvas. If 85% of enrolled students complete the course evaluation, I will add 5 points to your final exam grade. Please do not contact me about additional opportunities.

### FSU Academic Honor Policy

[https://fda.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/upcbnu636/files/Media/Files/Academic%20Honor%20Policy/AHP_Updates_Apr_2020b.pdf](https://fda.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/upcbnu636/files/Media/Files/Academic%20Honor%20Policy/AHP_Updates_Apr_2020b.pdf)

### Late Work & Missed Test Policy

Late work will only be accepted if university-approved documentation is provided. Valid excuses include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. This missing work will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

If you are experiencing circumstances which will cause you to miss an assignment, please provide documentation to me in a prompt manner (within 24 hours of missing the assignment). In the instance that documentation is provided, I will schedule make-up assignments. **However, note that because the Final Exam takes place during finals week, you will not have the opportunity to make up that exam.**

Some assignments will require that you turn in your work via the TurnItIn service on Canvas. **Problems experienced with this service will not be adequate excuses for missing assignment due dates, unless said problem is widespread (such as an outage occurring for EVERY user of the service during the time that an assignment was due).** I will not accept work turned in via-email for assignments that require TurnItIn submissions. I highly encourage you to turn in assignments at least one hour before their deadline, as many problems can result from students attempting to turn in assignments at the last minute.
Americans with Disabilities Act

Florida State University provides accommodations to eligible students in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA 2008). Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class or accurately assess achievement of learning outcomes, please seek the services of the Office of Accessibility Services. All accommodations MUST be approved through OAS. You can find more information about OAS here: https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Additional Notes

If you are experiencing some personal challenges throughout the semester, I cannot stress enough how important it is that you meet with me. It is not a weakness to need extra help! I respect the strength it takes to admit when you need assistance. If you meet with me sooner rather than later in the semester, it will be easier to find a workable solution.

Title IX

As a recipient of Federal financial assistance for education activities, FSU is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to ensure that all of its education programs and activities are free from discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual discrimination includes sexual misconduct (sexual violence, stalking, intimate partner violence, gender-based animosity and gender based stereotyping). If you have questions about Title IX or wish to file a Title IX complaint, please visit the FSU Title IX website: https://knowmore.fsu.edu/title-ix/title-ix-policy/
# Course Schedule

All required readings are listed below. Textbook readings are denoted by *italics*. All other required readings will be posted to the course Canvas site in their week’s module. You must also review all lecture materials posted to the course Canvas site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read for Class (note: “p.” always refers to our textbook)</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: 1/6-1/10</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>First-Day Attendance (due by 1/7 11:59PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2: 1/11-1/17</td>
<td>Sociological Imagination and The Research Process</td>
<td><em>p.2-29</em> Mills 1959</td>
<td>Mini-Quiz 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3: 1/18-1/24</td>
<td>Culture and Society, Society Over Time</td>
<td><em>p.40-71</em></td>
<td>Mini-Quiz 2 Discussion Board 1</td>
<td>Original post due Friday, reply due Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5: 2/1-2/7</td>
<td>Social Interaction, Social Groups</td>
<td><em>p.102-155</em></td>
<td>Mini-Quiz 4 Discussion Board 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7: 2/15-2/21</td>
<td>Stratification, Poverty, Globalization</td>
<td><em>p.190-223</em> Fessler 2012 (NPR article)</td>
<td>Mini-Quiz 6 Discussion Board 3</td>
<td>Original post due Friday, reply due Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8: 2/22-2/28</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td><em>p.248-281</em> Smirnova 2018</td>
<td>Midterm Exam (available from 2/28 6:00AM-11:59PM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9: 3/1-3/7</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td><em>p.284-315</em> Bonilla-Silva and Dietrich 2008</td>
<td>Mini-Quiz 7</td>
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To gain the most from this course:

Sociology and the sociological perspective are often regarded as subversive and sometimes controversial. You may find the nature of the material to be different; you are not alone. Sociology is much like learning a new language. It is, in effect, learning a new way of thinking. Make it a challenge; but, above all, have fun with it. Do not be reluctant to participate. There are many other students just as nervous or as uncertain as you. Plan to enjoy learning; the more energy and interest you bring to this class, the more you will be able to enjoy and get in return from the process.