

Introduction to Sociology

SOC 100 – J

Professor Information

Dr. J. Sumerau
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Class Information

Place: JS 286
Time: MW 4:00 – 5:50
Office Hours: T 4:00 - 7:00 pm
Or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

How do people understand and respond to the social world? How do you simultaneously influence social structures while being influenced by them? How does your social environment continuously influence your life, and how you may respond in specific situations? How does your position within society influence your own interpretations of the world faced by others in the course of their ongoing social lives? How do your actions, regardless of intention, contribute to the reduction or reproduction of social inequalities? These are simply a few of the questions sociologists ask while investigating contemporary society. In this class, we will explore these questions and others while drawing upon theories and methods employed by sociological practitioners.

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to teach this class because this material has helped me to make sense of my self, my everyday life, and my relationships with others in a meaningful and coherent fashion. I hope that each of you will also find ways to make the theoretical and methodological approaches covered in this class relevant to your personal lives and social worlds. I have designed this course to facilitate this possibility not only through my choice of readings, but also through a number of participation activities to be undertaken in class. I encourage each of you to talk with me in order to clarify course material and assignments, further explore ideas that the course may evoke, and share your experience in this class more generally.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will increase your understanding of the nature of social life and help build skills you can use to bring about change in the world. Two themes will run throughout the course: first, an **international/ global perspective**. We live in a global community where what happens in distant countries affects us here in the United States. Studying social behavior from a global perspective will allow you to see how others live different but rewarding lives and to see the connections between the way others live and your own way of life.

Second, the theme of **applied sociology** will emphasize how we can enhance our understanding and increase the likelihood of resolving social problems using sociological insights, theories and research methods as tools for change.

COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES

To familiarize students with:

1. The subject matter of sociology and the sociological perspective.
2. How sociologists conduct their work.

At the end of this course, successful students will:

1. Understand the structures of society and how they can work within those structures.
2. Understand how sociological knowledge can be useful to them in bringing about change in the world.
3. Be acquainted with a global perspective on social life.

BACCALAUREATE GOALS

Introduction to Sociology is one of the core courses in the Baccalaureate experience at the University of Tampa. Introduction to Sociology is designed to meet the following baccalaureate goals:

1. To learn to communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and observing, so as to acquire, develop, and convey ideas and information.
2. To examine issues rationally, logically, and coherently.
3. To understand the foundations of science, scientific methods, and the impact of science upon society.
4. To understand both the commonality and diversity of human social existence in an increasingly interdependent world.

REQUIRED READINGS

Cragun, Ryan T., J. Edward Sumerau, Bruce Friesen, Katherine Carter, and Deborah Cragun. 2014. *Introduction to Sociology*. St. Petersburg, Florida: Wikibooks.
https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Sociology.

NOTE: THE TEXTBOOK IS FREE ONLINE AT THE LINK POSTED SO THERE IS NO NEED TO BUY THE BOOK AND IN CLASS WE WILL USE THE ONLINE VERSION SO YOU WILL BE BETTER OFF IF YOU USE THE ONLINE FREE VERSION AS WELL

Academic Journal Articles that may be accessed online in the “content” area of the course website.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

All course requirements must be completed for a passing grade in this course. Grades will be posted on the course website. Final Grades will not be rounded up.

Course Requirements:

Participation Activities	100 Points	20%
Midterm Exam	100 Points	20%
Final Exam	100 Points	20%
Group Project One	100 Points	20%
Group Project Two	100 Points	20%
Total	500 Points	100%

Grading Scale:

A	92 – 100%	4.0
AB	89 – 91%	3.5
B	82 – 88%	3.0
BC	79 – 81%	2.5
C	72 – 78%	2.0
CD	68 – 71%	1.5
D	60 – 67%	1.0
F	<60%	0.0

PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES (20%)

Participation Activities: Participation activities will include a variety of individual and group assignments. These will often consist of short-answer or multiple-choice questions concerning the reading or videos for that day, short writing assignments concerning topics discussed in class previously, or creative exercises employing concepts discussed in class, readings, or videos. Each of these activities will be timed and graded as Pass or Fail (Students may expect between 10 and 30 participation activities in a semester, and to calculate grades, I will divide your total number of participation activity grades by the number of participation activities offered in the course to arrive at a final participation grade). During these exercises students may not use notes, books, or computers. Further, students will not be able to talk to others during individual assignments or members of other groups during group assignments. Violation of either of these stipulations will result in a fail grade for the activity. I will drop your **TWO** lowest participation activity scores, which may include any zeros you receive as a result of absences.

EXAMS (40%)

There will be **TWO** exams in this class. Exams are **NOT** cumulative – the first exam will cover the first half of the course and the second exam will cover the second half.

Both exams will cover reading materials, mini-lectures, individual and group activities, and video clips shown in class. Basically, any and every thing we do in class is fair game, and may show up on a test. The difficulty of questions will vary throughout the examination with questions designed to evaluate (1) familiarity with the material, (2) understanding of particular concepts, theories, methods, findings, and implications, and (3) ability to apply concepts and theories to social situations.

GROUP PROJECTS (40%)

You may choose your own groups. Groups must contain five people, and should be agreed upon by the beginning of the third week of the course (February 2nd class meeting). If you cannot find a group, I will put you in one.

You will be required to complete two group projects in this course. Each of these projects will involve working with your group members to (1) gather data (observational or media based) outside the classroom, (2) collectively analyze this data for recurring themes, (3) situate the data you have gathered and analyzed with existing sociological literature as well as readings from the course, (4) present the findings from your group project with your classmates in a professional manner, and (5) use your data in combination with sociological literature and course readings to compose a 5 – 7 page research report on your project.

Specifically, the first project will involve conducting breaching exercises in the local community – breaching refers to the act of deliberately breaking social norms and rules in order to reveal the taken-for-granted agreements upon which social structures rest (detailed instructions as well as a grading rubric for this assignment will be available on the course website). I will demonstrate breaching in class so that you have an idea of how to go about these exercises. As a group, you will select breaching exercises from a list provided to you, and go out and try these things in the community. During these exercises, two or three members will actually engage in the activities while the others take notes on how people react as well as their own feelings during the exercise. In so doing, students will gain a deeper understanding of the social norms, rules, and controls operating everyday in the world around them as well as the ways people may attempt to bring unusual events back into line with societal expectations.

In the second group project (detailed instructions and a grading rubric for this assignment will be available on the course website), group members will choose a social issue (such as health care, gay marriage, crime, etc.) that interests them and seek to gain knowledge about how others see this issue. To accomplish this, group members will conduct an analysis of media content collected from different sources. I will demonstrate what counts as “media content” and methods for analyzing this content in class so students are properly equipped to handle this assignment. Group members will then gather scientific literature to compare their findings with what other studies have shown. In so doing, they will see how media outlets respond to and shape social issues, and compare these responses to the findings in the sociological literature.

For each group project, group members will assign a grade to each member of their group indicating the quality of participation in the project. I will use these grades along with the grade assigned to the finished project and presentation to assign individual grades (how I adjust group members’ grades is up to me). Generally, if everyone in your group says you didn’t do anything, you will get 0 points. If they say you didn’t do much more than zero, you get a lowered grade. If they say a couple people did most of the work,

those members may get more points. Grading your group members will count as 5% of the total project, and these grades will be due at the same time as the project – NO EXCEPTIONS!

You will have some time in class for group work, but this will not be enough time to plan or complete your projects. Each project will require group members to work individually and collectively outside of class. This means you need to communicate with your group members outside of official class meetings.

CLASSROOM CULTURE

Organization of Class Time: During class sessions, I will give lectures on the readings, but my goal is to facilitate discussions that allow students to apply concepts to real life or fictional situations. In this manner, we may use concepts together in discussion and group activities. Since my goal is to engage students in active discussions, you will be required to take notes on issues as we discuss them and be responsible for asking clarifying questions when necessary.

Classroom Courtesy: Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions. Here are some basic rules of conduct for our class meetings. Students must not be late or leave early. You should be sitting in your seat as class begins. If this is a problem, drop this class immediately. Cell phones, mp3 players, laptops, and other electronic devices must be turned off before class begins. Students should not be reading other materials, talking or whispering with each other when others are talking, or sleeping during class. Importantly, no student should attack other students for their political or religious beliefs, personal appearance, race / ethnicity, gender, gender identification, sexuality, age, or abilities. Moreover, students should not come up to the front of the room to ask me questions during class time (do so before and after the class meeting). If you require a cell phone to receive emergency calls from children, partners, or family members, keep it on vibrate throughout the class.

Consistently violating the rules will affect your participation grade and may lead to your dismissal from the class.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity: In the event that a student violates any provision of the University of Tampa's policy on academic integrity spelled out in the student handbook, I reserve the right to assign any grade for the course I deem to be appropriate (including an F) without regard for a student's accumulated points in the class. Any violation of academic integrity will be handled in accordance with the University's policies. **You are responsible for knowing and observing the University's Academic Integrity Policy,** which you may find at <http://www.ut.edu/provost>.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Plagiarism consists of passing off the work and / or ideas of someone else as your own. As such, you are committing plagiarism if you copy someone else's work and turn it in as your own. This means that if you wish to quote someone

else, you must reference or cite them in your papers. It is **YOUR** responsibility to properly cite any materials you use in your writing assignments (for example, the articles and books used in this course are properly cited in this syllabus), and to be aware that I may use software to see whether portions of writing assignments have been taken from other places (such as books, journals, and websites). If you do plagiarize, you will receive **ZERO credit and I WILL REPORT YOU**.

Attendance: I do not take attendance in my classes, but I do give regular, random participation activity assignments over the course of the semester. Basically, participation activities serve as an informal method for taking attendance. It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to come to class. Therefore, you **CANNOT MAKE UP** participation activities. If you do miss class, it is **YOUR** responsibility to keep up with happenings in the course. Specifically, you are responsible for all materials covered in class while you were gone as well as any in-class exercises, videos, schedule changes, and / or deadlines announced or given during the class you missed. REMEMBER, everything we do in class is fair game on the exams.

Blackboard: I use blackboard to facilitate materials for this class. Specifically, I will post the syllabus, lecture notes before each class, and anything else I think will be useful for the course on the course website. Further, some of your reading assignments must be downloaded from the blackboard website (these are titled Online Article in the schedule below). You will thus need to enroll in Blackboard ASAP!!! To accomplish the best results in this class, you should make a regular habit of checking blackboard before each class for my lecture notes and any other postings, announcements, or materials. If I do not post my notes (usually in the form of a powerpoint) before a class, email me because I have probably just forgotten to do so.

Assignment Submission Procedure: Your written assignments (both group projects) **MUST** be turned in electronically. **I DO NOT ACCEPT HARD COPIES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES**. If you do not know how to submit assignments electronically, you should ask me well in advance of the first due date.

Your assignments **MUST** easily open in Microsoft Word. For both assignments, you **MUST** name the file as follows: Group_#_Project_#. Each person in the group **MUST** also have their name listed at the beginning of the document itself. All assignments must be typed in Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins and 12 point font.

Late Papers: If you are unable to turn in a paper on time, it will only be accepted if (1) you contact me by phone, email, or in person BEFORE the due date, and (2) you provide a written doctor's note stating that you were incapacitated and unable to turn in the paper. As stated above, I DO NOT accept hard copies of papers, and thus you should not attempt to slip a paper in my mailbox or under my door. I will not accept paper copies! That said, you will know the deadlines on all assignments well before the deadline, and thus if you miss the deadline you will **NOT** receive credit.

Make-up Exams: Make-up exams will only be offered if you do **BOTH** of the

following: (1) contact me by phone, email, or in person before the exam you will miss or in the 24 hours immediately following the exam, **AND** (2) provide a written doctor's note stating that you were incapacitated and unable to take the exam – **NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

Extra Credit: I generally do not offer or allow extra credit in my classes. That said, I may occasionally offer an extra credit opportunity. When this does happen, I will give the assignment in class and only those in class that day will be allowed to gain extra credit. My advice to each of you, however, is to do things right the first time because I am not likely to offer many (if any) opportunities to make up points on tests or exams.

Accommodations: If there is a student who has special needs because of any disability, please go to the Academic Success Center in North Walker Hall for information regarding registering as a student with a disability. You may also call (813) 257-5757 or email disability.services@ut.edu. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

Email: If you wish to reach me via email, you should allow for at least 24 hours for a response. This time may be even longer during weekends or vacations, although sometimes I may respond sooner. Please keep in mind that email is not the best way to discuss course material at length, and thus you should come to my office hours or schedule an appointment if you need to go over course materials and / or grades. **For clarity, you should include the course and section number (SOC 100) in the subject line of any email you send me.**

Adverse Weather/Emergency Situations: In case of any adverse condition or situation that could interrupt the schedule of classes, each student is asked to access www.ut.edu for information about the status of the campus and class meetings. In addition, please refer to ut.blackboard.com for announcements and other important information. You are responsible for accessing this information.

Syllabus Change Policy: Changes to the Syllabus Topics in lecture may vary a bit from the schedule, below, depending upon the pacing of lectures and the interests of the class. However, students should keep up with the posted reading schedule unless I instruct you otherwise. I also reserve the right to modify this syllabus as conditions warrant. ***You are responsible for schedule or assignment changes whether or not you are in class when they are announced.*** All schedule, assignment, or other syllabus-related changes will be posted on our Blackboard site.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment
January 21	Course Introduction Introduction to Sociology	No Required Reading Text – Introduction
January 26	Research Methods	Text – Sociological Methods
January 28	Sociological Theory	Text – General Sociological Theory
February 2	Society and Culture	Text – Society Text – Culture
February 4		ONLINE ARTICLE Ezzell, MB. 2008. “Pornography, lad mags, video games, and boys: reviving the canary in the cultural coal mine.” In <i>The Sexualization of Childhood</i> , ed. S. Ofman. Westport: Preeger
February 9	Socialization	Text – Socialization
February 11		ONLINE ARTICLE Ausdale, Debra Van and Joe Feagin. “Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Critical Case of Very Young Children.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 61: 779-793.
February 16	Groups	Text – Groups
February 18		ONLINE ARTICLE Adler, Patricia A., and Peter Adler. 1995. “Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Preadolescent Cliques.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> , 58:145-162.
February 23	Deviance and Social Control	Text – Deviance and Norms
February 25		ONLINE ARTICLE Goffman, Alice. “On the Run: Wanted men in a Philadelphia Ghetto.” <i>American Sociological</i>

		<i>Review 74: 339-357.</i>
March 2	Group Presentations	No Required Reading GROUP PROJECT ONE DUE BY 11PM SUNDAY NIGHT MARCH 8TH
March 4	Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam
March 8 – 15	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
March 16	Stratification and Social Class	Text – Stratification
March 18		ONLINE ARTICLE Lareau, Annette. 2002. “Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in black Families and white families.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 67: 747-776.
March 23	Race and Ethnic Group Stratification	Text – Race and Ethnicity
March 25	No Class	No Class
March 30		ONLINE ARTICLE Feagin, Joe R. 1991. “The Continuing Significance of Race: Antiblack Discrimination in Public. <i>American Sociological Review</i> 56: 101-116.
April 1	Gender and Sexual Stratification	Text – Gender
April 6		No Required Reading
April 8		No Required Reading
April 13	Family	Text – Family
April 15	Family	ONLINE ARTICLE Fields, Jessica. 2001. “Normal Queers: Straight Parents Respond to Their Children’s “Coming Out.”” <i>Symbolic Interaction</i> 24: 165-187.
April 20	Religion	Text – Religion
April 22	Religion	ONLINE ARTICLE Wilkins, Amy C. 2008. ““Happier than Non- Christians”: Collective Emotions and Symbolic

		Boundaries among Evangelical Christians.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 2008 71: 281-301.
April 27	Social Change	Text – Collective Behavior
April 29		Text – Social Movements
May 4	Group Presentations	No Required Reading GROUP PROJECT TWO DUE BY MAY 6th AT 11:59PM
Friday May 8 from 3:45 – 5:45 pm	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM