

Bellevue College

SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology

Fully Online Course

Dr. Sara Sutler-Cohen

2016 Winter Quarter

January 4 - March 23

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D.

Office Hours: Online Only. Email for appointment.

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

****Please always email me through the Canvas site first.
If you don't hear from me within 24 hours, then email at the above address.****

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

acquaints you with basic concepts and perspectives as you and explore the importance of as class, race, ethnicity, gender, and the way in which these with one another. You will also field of Sociology and become various "subfields" of the area. film and other media, as well as readings, this course will take you exploration of the many



This course sociological become aware of social topics such and sexuality, subjects intersect learn about the familiar with Through lecture, assigned on an dimensions of

contemporary sociology. We will make broad use of popular culture to understand the many complexities of our world. By the end of this course, I hope to have all of you thinking critically about the way things work, why things work the way they do, and who we are within the social fabric of the global entity in which we live. You will be asked, over the course of the term, to confront the things you take for granted. Everyday occurrences will be challenged and thought through critically. Imagine yourself as Neo from "The Matrix" when he decides to take the Red Pill or Alice when she decides to explore the rabbit hole. Both must deal with what's at the end of their adventures. What will *you* find at the end of *this* adventure?

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we talk about provocative material. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Keeping in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, and you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please note, however, that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.

READING REQUIREMENTS:

- [*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*](#) by Sherman Alexie

- [*American Born Chinese*](#) by Gene Luen Yang
- [*Birth of A Nation: A Comic Book Novel*](#) by Aaron McGruder, Reginald Hudlin, and Kyle Baker
- [*Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*](#) by Alison Bechdel
- [*Parable of the Sower*](#) by Octavia Butler
- [*Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life: READINGS, 10th Edition*](#) by David M. Newman and Jodi O'Brien
 - ****NOTE:** Please make sure you have the *Readings*. We're not reading the full textbook. Check your ISBN and make sure your book says *Readings* on the side. ISBN#: 978-1452275772
- All handouts (syllabus included) are available on our Canvas site.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:

- Any current Dictionary of the English Language
- Any current [Sociology Dictionary](#)
- *A Writer's Reference, 6th Ed.* By Diana Hacker. See the companion website [here](#).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email or come to see me during office hours. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, I can refer you to our Disability Resource Center (DRC). If you prefer, you may contact them directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their [website](#).

EXPLORE THE LMC! The Library Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the LMC at least once a week, but you can also access it via the web. Talk to a Reference Librarian at the Library (D-126), by calling (425) 564-6161, or by [email](#).

- [Main Library Media Center](#)
- [For article databases](#)



LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES: Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you will demonstrate:

- 1) A general understanding of basic concepts most widely used in sociology today. You will review some of the “classics” in sociology as well as exploring the recent move toward cultural studies.
- 2) A critical idea of society and community, including where in your social landscape you live, and how you observe those around you.
- 3) A general knowledge and comprehension of how social, political, and cultural forms of power are played out, and how some folks perceive those experiences.
- 4) A general understanding of the representation and identity construction of various groups in historical and contemporary analyses of culture in the United States. In addition, we will explore the way in which these representations are culturally subverted and contrasted in popular culture texts, particularly through the lens of documentary film.

GENERAL RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

- Check in to our online classroom no less than *four times per week* (yes - I do keep track!). This means you log on and surf around the site. No need to check in with me. Make this work for you on your own time.
- Complete readings and homework assignments *on time*. I do not check whether you complete your readings; this is on the honor system! You do need to read your required material in order to complete homework assignments. Skimming is not an option.
- Late homework assignments *are accepted*, but *late exams are not*. **Do not email me asking for special treatment or favors. You're responsible for your own work.**
 - Late homework is docked 10% for every day the work is late, including Saturdays and Sundays.
 - Late Discussion Boards that do not include responses to colleagues are eligible only for half credit. Responses to your colleagues are due three days after the Initial Posts are due (see schedule for details). A large part of these assignments is your communication with other students. Late points are assessed separately. So, if you turn in your Initial Post and Responses on Saturday, your Initial Post is two days late, but your responses are on time. Think of them as separate assignments in the way they're graded.
- I expect that your behavior in our virtual classroom be respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class will result in your grade lowering. Please keep your postings to discussion boards (DBs) thoughtful and polite. One-on-one conversations should be taken off-board and onto email so our DBs don't get clogged. If you find at any point that you are uncomfortable with anything posted to a DB, please email me right away. Be wary of soap boxing in this class; you may be tempted to present your opinion and editorialize, but refrain from doing this.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: In this course you will be completing assigned readings, participating in discussion board assignments, and completing short homework assignments. The work you do for this class will keep you critically engaged with the world around you from a sociological perspective. There are scheduled exams for this course; be sure to prepare. Expect to be writing every week. The key to this course is your thoughtful reflection on course material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (DETAILS):

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Attendance and Participation*: | 150 points <i>collected via 6 - 25 point assignments</i> |
| Critical Reflections (10): | 250 points <i>25 points each</i> |
| Main Discussion Boards (3): | 150 points <i>50 points each, note description below</i> |
| Midterm Examination (1): | 150 points |
| Final Examination (1): | 200 points |
| TOTAL: | 900 points possible |

Participation points accrue with various short assignments in the Discussion Area, such as your Introductory DB. These are labeled PARTICPATION DBs. The Main DB assignments are labeled MAIN DBs.

Remember: Falling behind can be hazardous to your health!
The Fine Print (or, what I really mean by that table above):

Attendance & Participation: Check in no less than four times per week, be engaged with all of your discussion board assignments, provoke energetic and polite discussion, listen/read/comprehend actively, work respectfully with your colleagues in class, take loads of notes from your readings, look up words you don't understand, ask questions, think critically about the world around you, etc. Make use of the Q&A Board as well as our Internet Café. These are not scored, but even if you don't have questions, you might be able to answer somebody's query - so have some presence there.

Critical Reflections: You are reading comic books, novels, watching films, and reviewing scholarly essays in your main textbook. *Keep up with the reading.* Your Critical Reflections are either 1-2 paragraph answers to a series of questions I pose to you, or short free-form essays. If you're writing essays for the Crits, they will be 2-3 pages in length (writing guidelines are listed below).

Main Discussion Board Assignments: The work done in the Discussion Board area will have you engage course material and work closely together. You are expected to participate in these assignments in order to generate critical discussion amongst one another. Be aware that some of these require a few days, or even a week, of preparatory work. Make sure you look ahead at your homework! This method of learning gets you going socially and is in place to mimic live and in-person discussions in the classroom. These assignments are always due on Thursdays and Sundays (your initial posts go up Thursdays and your responses to one another are due by Sundays). Your DBs are graded on two things: your original post and your responses (usually two of them) to your colleagues' Initial Posts. You must do both to earn full credit. A submission with no responses posted earns ½ credit at most, and responses without an original submission receive zero credit. Important note: Responding to people in your own thread is great, you should do it. But you won't get those Response Points for them. You must respond to others' initial posts. In addition, when I pop in and engage in the dialogue (I don't always do this, but I will on occasion), it's great to respond to me, but you also do not get points for this. Keep an eye out for my responses; I may be trying to help you improve your grade.

Participation Discussion Board Assignments: These are meant to support you throughout the course. They are required and the grades get folded into your overall Participation Grade.

For *all* of your written work: Submit proofread work **only**. Work not proofread will be returned **once** for a rewrite, expected to be handed in within 48 hours. If you need help with your writing, please make use of the following student support services:

- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [TRiO Student Support Services](#)

Required Writing Guidelines:

- Twelve-point sized Times font, double-spaced
- 1” margins all around
- APA Citations where appropriate – credit must be given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own (see notes below about avoiding plagiarism)
- Title pages and bibliographies are not counted as pages due
- Student information is at the top left of the page, single spaced
- There are no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Paragraphs contain no less than four sentences.
- Magazines, newspapers, journals, and books are *italicized*. Movie titles, article titles, song titles, etc. are “in quotation marks.” Quotes inside of a quotation use ‘single quotation marks.’
- Avoid the universal “we”, “our”, “us” – ask yourself: Can I speak for everyone? If you cannot, do not write it. Also avoid phrasing such as “nowadays...” and “since the beginning of time.” Be accurate. Know what you’re writing and why.
- Do not ever use Wikipedia, CliffNotes, or other such encyclopedic references. Wikipedia is not peer-reviewed and therefore unreliable. Do your own research. If you’re going to research online (which is absolutely encouraged and totally legit), make sure you understand what you’re looking for. Do a deep dive into the internet to find your stuff.
- Be sure that no more than 20% of your papers are outside sources. You must be providing your own analysis while you draw from material presented to you in class.

Your work is evaluated on:

- 1) Content
 - a. Fulfilling the entire assignment. Doing the minimum amount of work expected will likely get you a passing grade, but not an outstanding one. You’re expected to go the extra mile.
 - b. Fully developing your argument(s) and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument(s).
 - c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.
 - d. Assignments eligible for high marks must present evidence that all material has been reviewed.
- 2) Writing Style
 - a. Reasonable command of the written English language. **If you struggle with grammar and spelling, *please* take advantage of the college’s resources. You are responsible for your own writing and my expectation is that you submit readable, thoughtful work.**
 - b. Clarity of thought.
 - c. Good organization and attention to detail.
 - d. Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
 - e. Creativity. Make it an interesting read!

- f. **PROOFREAD** your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in. Read it out loud to yourself, too! It really helps.
- g. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different way of presenting your research and ideas. 😊

Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism occurs if:

- a. You do not cite quotations and/or attribute borrowed ideas.
- b. You fail to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks.
- c. You do not write summaries and paraphrases in his/her own words and/or doesn't document his/her source.
- d. You turn in work created by another person.
- e. You submit or use your own prior work for a current or past course, or work from one current course in another course *without express permission* from your professors. This may also be considered academic dishonesty.
- f. **Consequences:** If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will likely fail the assignment and possibly the course, despite points earned through other work. Acts of academic dishonesty are reviewed for disciplinary action.



Grading:

Please use the following rubric to help explain your grads. I offer general comments on your homework – sometimes more, sometimes less. Read my comments and come to me with questions. My email door is *always* open.

- A: 94-100
- A-: 90-93
- B+: 87-89
- B: 84-86
- B-: 80-83
- C+: 77-79
- C: 74-76
- C-: 70-73
- D+: 67-69
- D: 64-66
- D-: 60-63
- F: 59 and below

90-100 = **A**. The A paper shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class by utilizing quotes and ideas. It's a paper *completely free* from grammar and spelling errors, and demonstrates your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I

want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another. Your ideas should be “fleshed out” and not just a series of statements, in other words.

80-89 = B. The B tells me you’re doing very good work. You may have a couple of grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you’re being challenged and that you’re struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C. The C paper means that you’re not as invested in the material as I would like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you’re not thinking as critically as I would like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

60-69 = D. Ah, the D. D is for “Don’t be Discouraged.” I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. A D paper is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material and you’re not responding to the questions raised in class. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A D and below may be rewritten **once** if you choose to do so. It must be turned in within 72 hours, and I enter the better grade.)

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

ASSIGNMENTS ARE ALWAYS DUE BY MIDNIGHT

DO NOT WORK AHEAD MORE THAN ONE WEEK

THE SYLLABUS SCHEDULE IS MIRRORED IN THE MODULES SECTION OF THE COURSE.

Week One: January 4th

Readings:

- Newman, O’Brien, and Robertson
 - Chapter 1: Taking a New Look at a Familiar World
 - Chapter 2: Seeing and Thinking Sociologically

Assignments:

- Participation DB I: Introductions. Due Sunday, January 10th
- Participation DB2: The Sociological Imagination. Due Sunday, January 10th

Week Two: January 11th

Readings:

- Newman, O’Brien, and Robertson:
 - Chapter 3: Building Reality – The Social Construction of Knowledge
 - Chapter 5: Building Identity – Socialization
- *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler. 2024-2026/Chs 1 – 13 (feel free to read ahead)

Assignments:

- Main Discussion Board 1: *Parable of the Sower*. Initial Post due Thursday, January 14th, responses by Sunday, January 17th
- Critical Reflection 1: What is this Dystopic Life? Due Sunday, January 17th

Week Three: January 19th

Campus Holiday on Monday, January 18th

Readings:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson:
 - Chapter 4: Building Order: Culture & History
 - Chapter 6: The Presentation of Self
- *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler. 2027. Chs 14-25

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 2: Marriage, Love, and Family in the Dystopic Future. Due Sunday, January 24th
- Participation Discussion Board 3: Midterm Preparation. Due Sunday, January 24th

Week Four: January 25th

Readings:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson:
 - Chapter 10: The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class Inequality
 - Chapter 11: The Architecture of Stratification: Race & Ethnicity
- *Birth of a Nation: A Comic Book Novel* by McGruder, Hudlin, & Baker

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 3: Self Identity and Race in *Birth of a Nation: A Comic Book Novel*. Due Sunday, January 31st
- Participation Discussion Board 4 - Midterm Review. Due Sunday, January 31st

Week Five: February 1st

Midterm Week

- You have from February 1st (midnight) until Sunday, February 7th (11:59pm) to complete your exam. It is not timed, so you will not be locked out of it. However, you *may not save and return to it*. Once you begin your exam, you must finish it. This exam is open note and open book. You are held to the standards in this syllabus for writing guidelines and plagiarism. Your exams will be compared to your colleagues in class to scan for academic dishonesty. Good luck!

Week Six: February 8th

Readings:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson:
 - Chapter 8: Construction Difference: Social Deviance
- *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel
 - Chapters 1-4
- "[Duke Students Reject Award-Winning Book Over Gay Themes](#)" by Todd Leopold, *CNN*

Assignments:

- Main Discussion Board 2 - *Fun Home*. Initial Post due Thursday, February 11th, responses by Sunday, February 14th

- Critical Reflection 4. Due Sunday, February 14th

Week Seven: February 16th
No Classes on Monday, February 15th

Readings:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson
 - Chapter 12: The Architecture of Inequality: Sex & Gender
- *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel
 - Chapters 5-7

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 5. Due Sunday, February 21st

Week Eight: February 22nd

Reading:

- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 6. Due Sunday, February 28th
- Critical Reflection 7. Due Sunday, February 28th

Week Nine: February 29th

Reading:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson
 - Chapter 7: Building Social Relationships: Intimacy & Family
- *The Absolutely True Diary of A Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
 - "The Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club" through "Dance, Dance, Dance" (Pgs. 1-129)
 - Note: The page numbers might be different in your copy.
- "Parent calls cops on teen for giving books away at a book giveaway" by Aja Romano

Assignments:

- Main DB 3: Initial submission Thursday, March 3rd. Responses Due Sunday, March 6th

Week Ten: March 7th

Reading:

- *The Absolutely True Diary of A Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
 - "Don't Trust Your Computer" through "Talking About Turtles" (Pgs. 130-230)
 - Note: The page numbers might be different in your copy.

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 8. Due Sunday, March 13th
- Critical Reflection 9. Due Sunday, March 13th
- Participation 5: Learning Outcomes Review. Due Sunday, March 13th

Week Eleven: March 14th

Reading:

- Newman, O'Brien, and Robertson
 - Chapter 9: The Structure of Society: Organizations & Social Institutions
 - Chapter 13: Global Dynamics and Population Demographic Trends
 - Chapter 14: The Architecture of Change: Reconstructing Society

Assignments:

- Critical Reflection 10. Due Sunday, March 20th
- Participation Discussion 6: Final Exam Preparation. Due Sunday, March 20th

Final Exams Week: March 21st - 23rd

- You have from March 20th (starting at midnight) until March 23rd (11:59pm) to complete your exam. It is not timed, so you will not be locked out of it. However, you *may not save and return to it*. Once you begin your exam, you must finish it. This exam is open note and open book. You are held to the standards in this syllabus for writing guidelines and plagiarism. Your exams will be compared to your colleagues in class to scan for academic dishonesty. Good luck!

Let's have a wonderful term!