

Bellevue Community College

SOC& 101 Introduction to Sociology**

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D.

Winter Term January 5th - March 23rd

Daily 9:30 - 10:20 C-164

Office Hours Daily 11:30 - 12:30

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course acquaints you with basic sociological concepts and perspectives as you become aware of and explore the importance of social topics such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and the way in which these subjects intersect with one another. You will also learn about the field of Sociology and become familiar with various “subfields” of the area. Through lecture, film and other media, as well as assigned readings, this course will take you on an exploration of the many 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?

Check out BC Sociology’s MySpace page and add us as a Friend!

<http://www.myspace.com/bccsoc>

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:

- O'Brien, Jodi A. and David R. Newman. *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*. 7th Edition Pine Forge Press, 2009.
- Renov, Michael. *The Subject of Documentary* (Visible Evidence, V. 7). University of Minnesota Press, 2004.
- Handouts and articles. All handouts (syllabus included) are available on. It is your responsibility to download all required material.

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: <http://www.dianahacker.com/>

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 at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/>

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 bccref@bcc.ctc.edu.

- Main Library Media Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/>
- For the LMC online catalog: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/catalogs.html>
- For article databases: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/periodicals.html>



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:

- Come to class every day and ***on time*** (yes – I do keep track!).
- Complete readings and homework assignments ***on time***.
- Emailed assignments ***are not accepted*** without prior arrangement.
- Late homework assignments ***are accepted***, but make-up exams and make-up in-class assignments ***are not***.
 - Late homework is docked 10% for every day the work is late, including Saturdays and Sundays.
 - If you miss an in-class assignment, you may not make it up. **Please see me if you participate in extracurricular activities at BCC that take you away from campus.**
- I expect that your behavior in our classroom be respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class may result in your being asked to leave and will result in your grade lowering. **Electronic devices are *not allowed* without permission.**
- **There are no extra credit assignments for this class.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: For this course, you will be writing short response papers on the films we watch in class, which are meant to engage the process of storytelling from a sociological perspective. There is a Midterm and a Final this quarter. You will also be doing one major project at the end of the term, which you can do in pairs, alone, or in a group. The project will be your brainchild – all you need to do is relate it to course material. What you decide to do is up to you and we’ll discuss this during the first couple of weeks into the course.

Remember: Falling behind can be hazardous to your health!

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:

Attendance and Participation:	150 points
Documentary Responses (3):	150 points
Final Project (1):	200 points
In-Class Assignments (3):	150 points
Course Midterm (1):	125 points
Course Final (1):	225 points
TOTAL:	1000 points

The Fine Print (or, what I really mean by that table above):

Attendance & Participation: Come to class and on time regularly, provoke energetic and polite discussion, speak out, listen actively, work diligently and respectfully with your colleagues in class, take loads of notes in class and from your readings, look up words you don't understand or know, ask questions, etc. Think critically about the world around you. A lot. There are also many mini-assignments done throughout the quarter that go into your participation grade. Yet another reason to never miss class! ☺

Midterm and Final: Your Exams will cover everything up through the week they're scheduled and will usually include multiple choice and short-answer questions (either or both). Your responses should be clear and concise. Your short-answer responses must range from no less than **one full paragraph**, to three full paragraphs. Study guides will be made available to you, based on group work (my students write their own exams). Questions are expected to be based on readings, in-class discussion, and lecture material. Point distribution info will be on the exams.

Documentary Responses: You will be writing about your ideas based on class discussion and documentaries. You will all explore your own style of storytelling, based on your **social landscape**. For example, why do you believe what you do? Who or what helped create your various stories? What do you think will (or may) change in the future about how you think about things? Use these assignments as a space to create your own critically sound argument/s, based on your interpretation of the films.

In-Class Assignments: The work done in class will have you engage course material and have you work closely together. You will be working in pairs or groups for these assignments in order to generate critical discussion to be reflected on in the assignments. Occasionally the assignments will take more than one class period so again, it's imperative that you do not miss class. **Assignments partially completed receive partial credit (if you miss 1/3 of the assignment, you get 1/3 of the grade).**

Final Project: This is a free-flowing and creative project for which you come up with the idea(s) on your own. You may work on this independently, or in pairs or groups. You will choose an area of sociology that we cover this quarter that is of interest to you. Media, Family, Education, Religion, Deviance, anything! You could do a collage or a painting. A film analysis, or research on group behavior at sporting events. What the project ends up looking like is also up to you (although I will help you stay on track to make certain it remains sociologically relevant). You could do a skit in class, make a film, or start a band. Gain permission to do a public mural, offer "Free Hugs" (see: <http://www.free-hugs.com/index.shtml>), start a club on campus, there really is no limit to applying your sociological imagination to a project and getting something educational out of it! We'll talk about this over the first couple of weeks of class. All projects will have a writing component. If you want to do a straight research paper, that's fine, too. Guidelines for both projects are posted online. Choose one and stick with it.

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: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/academicsuccess/>
- Academic Tutoring Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/tutoring/>
- TRiO Student Support Services: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/TRiO/>
- Writing Lab @ BCC: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/>

Below is a checklist for you to go over before you hand in each written assignment.

- Twelve-point sized Times font, double-spaced
- 1” margins all around
- MLA Citations where appropriate – credit is given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own
- Title pages and bibliographies are not counted in final page count
- 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.’

Your written work is evaluated on:

- 1) Content
 - a. Fulfilling the assignment.
 - b. Developing your argument and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument.
 - c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.
- 2) Writing Style
 - a. Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. **NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, *please* let me know! I’m happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.**
 - 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.
 - g. Dude, like totally don’t write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different set of discussions. ☺

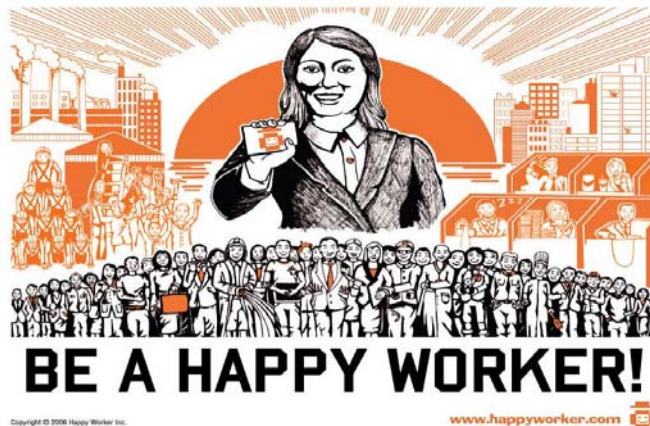
Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism 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 the grade you're given for a given assignment. You will receive a Numerical Grade from me, with little-to-no commentary. This is only because I've found that most students do not read written comments from their professors. Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions you ever have on a grade you receive. There is no limit to how many times you email me! My email door is *always* open and I'm always happy to go over grades with you.



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.)

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:

We will set the rhythm of the class in the first couple of weeks. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner and to that end I often carry away a lot more information from students than I ever expect. I’m most interested, for the purposes of this class, to see how well we can all wrap our minds around the idea of thinking critically about the various issues and themes presented about the social world in which we live and you should expect to be exposed to new and various ways of thinking and knowing. As a learning community, we’ll be helping one another think through all of the ideas that connect back to course themes.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

READINGS DUE MONDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Week One: January 5th – 9th

Thematic Overview:

- Introduction to this course
- The Social Self
- The Sociological Imagination
- Documentary Filmmaking as Sociological Storytelling

Readings (please have your reading done by Friday this week only):

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chs. 1 & 2: *Taking a New Look at a Familiar World, Seeing and Thinking Sociologically*

Quote of the Week:

“Perhaps the world's second worst crime is boredom. The first is being a bore.” - Jean Baudrillard

Week Two: January 12th – 16th

Thematic Overview:

- Social Construction of Knowledge
- Subject-as-Self, Self-as-Subject
- Beginning Discussions of Final Project

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Ch. 3: *The Construction of Self and Society*
- *The Subject of Documentary: Surveying the Subject: An Introduction*

Film Screening (Tuesday & Wednesday):

- THE U.S. VERSUS JOHN LENNON (2006. David Leaf and John Scheinfeld, Directors), 99 minutes.
- LMC Stacks. Call Number: ML420.L38U55



Assignments:

- In-Class Assignment Friday.

Quote of the Week:

“Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible. - Frank Zappa

Week Three: January 20th – 23rd

****NO CLASS Monday, January 19th – Campus Closed. Happy MLK Day!****

Thematic Overview:

- Culture, History, and Socialization
- Is it Real? Is it Imagined? Can it be both?
- The Religious Right’s Response to the New Left’s *Newsreels* and “Massive Sensory Anaesthesia”

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chs. 4 & 5: *Building Order: Culture and History, Building Identity: Socialization*
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Ch. 1 *Early Newsreel: The Construction of a Political Imaginary for the New Left*



Film Screening (Wednesday & Thursday):

- JESUS CAMP (2006. Heidi Ewing & Rachel Grady, Directors), 84 minutes.
- ON RESERVE @ LMC

Assignments:

- Documentary Response #1 on JOHN LENNON Due Friday
- Final Project Topic Idea Due Friday

Quote of the Week:

“You can bomb the world to pieces, but you can’t bomb it into peace.” - Michael Franti

Week Four: January 26th – 30th

Thematic Overview:

- Who we become, what we believe, why things are the way they are, and other responses to difficult questions
- Stratifications of Social Inequality

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chapter 6: *Supporting Identity: The Presentation of Self*
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Chapter 3: *Warring Images: Stereotype and American Representations of the Japanese, 1941 – 1991*

Film Screening:

- TBA

Assignments:

- In-Class assignment this week
- Outline due for Research Projects (use directions for either Creative Research or Research Paper Projects) Due Friday

Quote of the Week:

“All you touch and all you see is all your life will ever be.” - Roger Waters

Week Five: February 2nd – 6th

MIDTERM FRIDAY!

MIDTERM QUESTIONS DUE MONDAY!

Thematic Overview:

- Family and Relationships
- Intimacy, Desire, and back to the Self-as-Subject
- Film Theory
- Midterm Study Guide Available Tuesday

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Ch. 7: Building Social Relationships: Intimacy and Families
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Ch. 5: Charged Vision: The Place of Desire in Documentary Film Theory



Film Screening (Tuesday & Wednesday):

- **CONSUMING KIDS: THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF CHILDHOOD** (2008. Adriana Barbaro and Jeremy Earp, Dirs.), 66 minutes.
- LMC Stacks. Call Number: HF5415.32.C6

Assignments:

- Two Questions for Midterm due Monday (25 Participation Points)
- Working Bibliography due for All Research Projects Due Friday

Quote of the Week:

“In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.” - Alex Haley

Week Six: February 9th – 13th

Thematic Overview:

- Social Deviance, its definers and their definitions
 - Sex, and “The Community Standard of Decency”
- Inequality and Identity
 - Women, Pornography, and the Business of Wired Pornography

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chs. 8 & 10: Constructing Difference: Social Deviance, The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class and Inequality

Film Screening (Tuesday & Wednesday):



- FRONTLINE SPECIAL: AMERICAN PORN (*this film contains explicit sexual content*), 55 minutes.
- Available to view online:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/porn/vi/ew/>

Assignments:

- Documentary Response #2 on CONSUMING KIDS Due Friday

Quote of the Week:

“College isn't the place to go for ideas.” - Helen Keller

Week Seven: February 17th – 20th

****NO CLASS Monday, February 16th – Campus Closed. Happy Prez Day!****

Thematic Overview:

- How everything is made to come together, and your role in that sense of (dis)order
- Thinking differently, just for kicks
- The Global Village is spinning on an axis.
- Death in America and its Discontents

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chapters 9 & 10: *The Structure of Society: Organizations, Social Institutions, and Globalization*
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Ch. 7: *Filling Up the Hole in the Real: Death & Mourning in Contemporary Documentary Film & Video*

Film Screening (Wednesday & Thursday):

- FLIGHT FROM DEATH: THE QUEST FOR IMMORTALITY (2003. Patrick Shen, Dir.), 90 minutes.
- ON RESERVE @ LMC

Assignments:

- Creative Research Projects Detailed Plan Due Friday (see handout)
- Research Paper Projects First Draft Due Friday (see handout)
- In-class assignment this week.

Quote of the Week:

“You think you’re so clever and classless and free.” - John Lennon



Week Eight: February 23rd – 27th

****NO CLASS This week. See handout to assist you in course replacement assignments.****

Thematic Overview:

- Catch up on your reading this week, and see your handout for details of this week’s assignments

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chapter 13: *Demographic Dynamics: Population Trends*

Quote of the Week:

“The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV is Indians watching Indians on TV.” - Evan Adams (Coast Salish) as Thomas Builds-The-Fire in “Smoke Signals”

Week Nine: March 2nd – 6th

Thematic Overview:

- Inequality and Identity, con't
- Race and Racialization
- The Ethnography and Ethics of Race and Storytelling
- Schedule Final Presentations

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Ch. 11: *The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity*
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Ch. 9: *Technology & Ethnographic Dialogue*

Film Screening:

- THE BOYS OF BARAKA (2005. Heidi Ewing & Rachel Grady, Directors), 84 minutes.
- LMC STACKS. Call Number: HV9069.B697

Assignments:

- Documentary Response #3 on FLIGHT FROM DEATH Due Friday
- Meetings with Dr. Sara (25 points participation credit)

Quote of the Week:

“The reality is it’s up to you guys to figure out how the media works and break through.” - Claudia Dreifus

Week Ten: March 9th – 13th

Thematic Overview:

- Even more Inequality and Identity
- Sex, Gender, Gendered Sexuality, Sexual Lives, Gendered Culpability

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Chapter 12: *The Architecture of Inequality: Sex and Gender*
- *The Subject of Documentary*: Chapters 11 – 13: *New Subjectivities: Documentary & Self-Representation in the Post-Verité Age, The Electronic Essay, and Video Confessions*

Assignments:

- Meetings with Dr. Sara, con't (25 points participation credit)

Quote of the Week:

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.” - Marcus Garvey

Week Eleven: March 16th – 18th

FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS DUE MONDAY!

Thematic Overview:

- ...and in the end...

Readings:

- *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*: Ch. 14: *Architects of Change: Reconstructing Society*

- *The Subject of Documentary*: Ch. 15: *The End of Autobiography or New Beginnings?* (or, *Everything You Never Knew You Would Know about Someone You Will Probably Never Meet*)

Film Screening:

- None! This week we look at social space online (Facebook, MySpace, etc.) as evidence of new social landscapes. We'll look at one another's personal online spaces as realms of autobiographical storytelling.

Assignments:

- Final Presentations and Discussion
- 2 Final Exam Questions Due Monday (25 Participation Points)

Quote of the Week:

"A friend is someone who gives you total freedom to be yourself." - Jim Morrison

FINAL EXAM: Friday, 3/20, 9:30-11:20 am

EMAILING ME:

When you email me using my BCC EMAIL, ALWAYS put in the SUBJECT LINE the following, in this order: SOC& 101 - YOUR NAME - SUBJECT

For example: SOC& 101 - Jane Doe - Question about Midterm Question #2.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

When I'm not teaching, I'm usually whipping up some sort of baked goodness in my kitchen, doing collage art, taking photos of the world around me, hanging out with my kid, watching horror movies, or going out to listen to live music. Mostly, I go to hear metal, bluegrass, punk, or local hip-hop shows. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology (with an emphasis in American Studies) from UC Santa Cruz. I received my first MA in Sociology from Humboldt State University and my second MA in Sociology from UCSC, my BA in Sociology and Journalism from Mills College, and my AA in English and Creative Writing from Vista Community College. This is my third year as Instructor of Sociology at BCC, and my first year as Chair of the Sociology Department. I am the Programmer for BCC's Annual American Indian Film Festival. I love to write and am currently working on a memoir collection of poetry. More at: <http://sara.sutlercohen.com>

Thank you for a wonderful term!

**** This course was formerly known as SOC 110. Credit will only be given for one sociology course, SOC 110 or SOC& 101. For complete listing of affected courses and student FAQs, visit: www.bellevuecollege.edu/ccn**