

# INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

SOC 110

Winter 2008

## Bellevue Community College

Instructor: Elizabeth Apple

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(when emailing me, please put "SOC 110"  
in the subject line)

Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:30

Ask for me at the front desk of the Center for Career  
Connections, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the B building

Class Meets: TTh 12:30-2:40

Class Location: C164

## COURSE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our class, "Introduction to Sociology." I look forward to working with you this quarter and sharing with you my fascination with sociology! Hopefully, you enter this class with some degree of curiosity about why human beings behave the way we do. If so, you should find sociology intellectually rewarding as well as illuminating and useful in your own life.



This course is designed as a broad introduction to the field of Sociology. Over the course of the quarter, we will review many of the major topics frequently studied in sociology, with a particular focus on inequality and the distribution of power in society. We will discover how social institutions (such as education and the economy) depend upon and perpetuate inequalities between people. You will also learn how to use the "sociological imagination" to see how large institutions affect all of our lives for better or worse. As José Ortega y Gasset once said, "Tell me the landscape in which you live, and I will tell you who you are." Indeed, our social environments profoundly influence not only who we think we are, but also how we behave, what we think, and how we see others. The overarching goal of this course is to examine and understand this process.

Sociology is a field that relies on scientific research and evidence, not personal opinion or casual observation. In many cases, the ideas sociology has to offer are difficult to grasp and accept because they challenge many of the taken-for-granted attitudes and opinions that we all tend to operate by in our everyday lives. Science and research often contradict opinion. Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we sometimes talk about provocative material in class. Please be advised that, when we explore these topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. If you have any questions or concerns about course content or climate, don't hesitate to let me know.

## LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

I believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this is an *active, interactive* course where you will often *learn by doing*. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our class as a "collaborative learning community" where we all teach and learn from each other. In general, at the beginning of each class we will review the reading, use the media to examine the reading in everyday life and then discuss. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you'll enjoy it and learn a lot in the process!

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing the course, the successful student will be able to:

- Question the obvious;
- Describe the “sociological perspective”;
- Identify the ways in which culture and social institutions (such as education, the economy, the media, and the family) shape our everyday experiences;
- Distinguish between factual statements and value judgments;
- Put aside personal ethnocentric attitudes, becoming culturally relative;
- Better understand perspectives different from your own;
- Formulate logical conclusions;
- Apply sociological knowledge to real-life situations;
- Look at your own life sociologically; and
- Describe how life experiences and opportunities differ according to race, class, and gender.

## REQUIRED TEXTS AND MISCELLANEOUS PURCHASES

Texts:            Sociology Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, by David M. Newman  
                          Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America, by Barbara Ehrenreich (please note: this  
                          book is not at the BCC bookstore but is available at many other retail and on-line booksellers)  
                          Additional readings are posted on the course website

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

The following outlines what you may expect of me as your instructor:

- *A sincere effort to help you learn the course material.* Since my ultimate goal is to help you learn and succeed, I intend to spend enough time and effort on class preparation to make the material as understandable and as interesting as I possibly can.
- *Accessibility.* I agree to be available to you outside of class should you desire help. I encourage you to come to my office hours whenever you have a question or concern. I am more than happy to help. Please try to make it your personal goal to visit my office hours at least once this quarter. I think you will find it helpful. If my office hours are not convenient for you, we can schedule an appointment that fits your schedule.
- *Attention and courtesy.* When you are speaking, you will have my undivided attention. And I will never ridicule you or express disagreement with you in an impolite fashion.
- *Fairness.* Your grade will be based upon what I detect that you have learned and how I assess your performance. It will not be based upon any purely personal consideration. I will not negotiate final grades.

The following outlines what I expect from you as a student in this class:

- *A sincere effort to learn the course material.*
- *Preparation.* You should come to class having done the assigned readings and homework, and you should always bring the proper supplies with you. You should bring the readings (textbooks). Note that the BCC guideline for homework is two hours outside of class for each hour spent in class.
- *Attendance.* Please attend all class sessions – your presence in class contributes significantly toward your final grade in the course as I cover a lot of material in class that can not be found in the readings. If you do need to miss class, please note that you will not be able to make up any in-class work that you

may have missed (such as group work or quizzes). I highly recommend that you get the names and contact information of one or two of your classmates so you can contact them for any assignments or notes you may have missed while absent.

- *Promptness.* You should be in class on time except when delayed by an emergency, and you should stay until class is over unless you become ill or have made arrangements with me to leave early. Furthermore, you should comply with all due dates. I believe that one of the major lessons students take away from college is the importance of meeting deadlines. As a result, if you need to be absent when something is due you may email it to me BEFORE the start of class. Late work will receive a zero grade. If you know you are going to be absent on the day an assignment is due, then turn it in early. Major due dates are indicated on the attached Course Calendar.
- *Contribution.* Learning about each other's experiences and perspectives is an integral part of the learning process in this course. I believe that you will learn a lot about yourself and your fellow classmates. To work effectively in this course, therefore, you are expected to be an active participant in our learning environment. You should do your best to contribute to class discussions and activities. Please be advised that your grade will suffer if you do not participate and contribute to the intellectual life of our class.
- *Respect, courtesy, and tolerance.* Since learning about diverse experiences is central to this course, it is of the utmost importance that you respect your classmates' experiences, differences, and opinions. Disrespectful attitudes will not be tolerated.
- *Good behavior.* I understand that for most of you this goes without saying, but it nevertheless must be stated. This is a college classroom; as such, I expect students to behave as adults. I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Side-talking and whispering is disruptive to the class as a whole as well as to individual students. This is not acceptable in my classroom, so I insist that you refrain from it. Sleeping is also not permitted. Continued disrespectful behavior in class may result in your being asked to leave.
- You will be asked to leave the class if you are disruptive.
- *Honesty.* If you cheat, you fail. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge in your papers if you have borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate. If you have any hesitation, or if you are in doubt about one of these issues, feel free to ask me.

## GRADING

Grades are based on: (1) performance on quizzes, (2) performance on homework assignments, (3) performance on a group presentation, (4) Performance on the final paper and (5) class participation. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Quizzes (2 @ 100 pts each)	200 points (20% of final grade)
Homework Assignments (4 @ 50 pts each)	200 points (20% of final grade)
Group presentation	150 points (15% of final grade)
Final Paper	250 (25% of final grade)
<u>Participation</u>	<u>200 points (20% of final grade)</u>
TOTAL	1000 points

The following are the letter-grade equivalents to the course points:

Course Grade	Point Total	Course Grade	Point Total
A	= 930-1,000 points	C+	= 770-799 points
A-	= 900-929 points	C	= 730-769 points

B+	=	870-899 points	C-	=	700-729 points
B	=	830-869 points	D+	=	670-699 points
B-	=	800-829 points	D	=	600-669 points
			F	=	0-599 points

- (1) Quizzes: these quizzes are given over the course of the quarter. They may consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. I will do a brief review of the material the class period before the quiz. **Please note that I do not give make-up quizzes.** If you are absent on the day of a quiz, you will receive a zero grade. Please review the attached Course Calendar and make note of the exam dates. Plan ahead!
- (2) Performance on Homework Assignments: You will complete homework assignments throughout the quarter that require you to reflect on the course material and/or observe the social world. You should do your best to address every assignment thoughtfully, clearly, and completely. Homework will be graded not only on completeness (Did you adequately address all the components of the assignment?), but also thoughtfulness (Does your assignment show that you thought hard about the topic, or did you give the topic just a little superficial attention?) Homework assignments should always be a minimum of two pages. Please note that I will not accept late homework, so homework that is not handed in on time will receive a zero grade. Additionally, I will not accept homework that isn't typed. Some homework assignments are described in the attached Course Calendar, and others will be announced during class.
- (4) Performance on a Group Presentation: Students will divide into groups and give a 15-20 minute presentation to the rest of the class about an assigned reading. These presentations should: (a) highlight the major points and topics from the reading, (b) make sociological connections to the lecture material, films, and/or other readings, (c) hold the interest of your viewers, and (d) be interactive. (Note: these presentations are not intended for you to share your personal opinions about the readings – they are meant for you to help your classmates understand what the readings are about and how they relate to the course themes.) In short, you are supposed to *teach* your classmates. Each group needs to make their presentation as understandable and interesting as possible– you might design a short activity that involves your classmates, or you might use visual aids to “energize” your presentation, or both. I would be happy to consult with each group ahead of time to make sure you’re on the right track (in fact, I recommend this highly). Each group will sign up in advance for a particular day and reading.
- (5) Participation: Participation is essential to the format of this class and will therefore contribute significantly toward your grade. In short, your success in this class depends on your *active* participation. “Participation” includes attendance, class discussions, group work, and independent in-class assignments. Missing more than four classes will drop your participation points significantly. *Do not take this portion of your grade lightly – excellent attendance and participation can significantly improve your final grade!*

**For all of your written work (SERIOUSLY PEOPLE: PLEASE PAY ATTENTION!!!):**

Please submit proofread work **only**. Sloppy writing will be returned for a rewrite, expected by the following class meeting. Your font should be Times, 12 pts, double-spaced with a 1” margin all around. Your work *must* be cited using either MLA or APA format where necessary, and you must always, *always* give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Even when you don't quote directly, give credit where credit is due. Title pages are not counted as page numbers due. Similarly with bibliographies, these are not counted as page numbers due. If you decide to place your personal and class information on the first page of your paper instead (which is fine), please do not take up more than for single-spaced lines at the top right or

left corner of the page. In essence, nothing fancy, no pink plastic covers are needed or desired. Just the paper. Neat.

**Your written work will be 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 who needs help, *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. ☺

**Written Assignments Grading:**

On your first paper I will write in a brightly hued pen copious comments on your grammar, sentence structure, clarity of thought, etc. (see above points) that's what you have to go by in terms of how I grade. FYI: I rarely, if ever, change my mind about a grade, but I have been proven wrong before so come to me with a grading issue should you have one. I grade on the following scale:

A. The A paper is coveted. It's a paper that shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that 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.

B. The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively 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.

C. The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd 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.

D. Ah, the D. D is for "Don't be Discouraged." 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 there you're not responding to the questions raised in class. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all.

**Students with Disabilities.** All students are responsible for all requirements of the class, but the way they meet these requirements may vary. If you need specific academic accommodations due to a disability, please speak with me and with Disability Support Services (564-2498). You will need to obtain the appropriate documentation from DSS in room B233. The disability accommodation documentation must be given to me before it is needed rather than afterward, so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

## COURSE CALENDAR

The following Course Calendar will be revised as needed. Please note that you will be held responsible for all revisions to the calendar. So, if you miss a class, be sure to immediately check with me regarding any changes. You should make every effort to complete the readings in the order listed.

<u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES	<u>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS DUE TUESDAY ASSIGNMENTS DUE THURSDAY
<b>ONE</b> January 3 <b>Thematic Overview:</b> The Sociological Imagination What is Sociology? Who are Sociologists and what do they study?	<b>Readings:</b> <i>Sociology</i> : Chapter One: "Taking a New Look at a Familiar World" Study your syllabus! <b>Quote of the Week:</b> <i>"Number of Florida High School students who take physical-education courses online: 1,204"</i> -- Harper's Index November 2003
<b>TWO</b> Jan 8 & 10 <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Thinking Sociologically So. Who do you think you are, anyway? And how do you know what you know? Or rather, how do you <i>think</i> that you know what you know?	<b>Readings:</b> By Jan 8 <sup>th</sup> SOC: Chapter Two: "Seeing and Thinking Sociologically" (you can skip the baseball article in the middle of chapter 2) & By Jan 10 <sup>th</sup> Chapter Three "Building Reality: The Social Construction of Knowledge" By Jan. 10 <sup>th</sup> ON WEBSITE: The Crack Attack: Politics & Media in the Crack Scare by Reinerman and Levine <b>Quote:</b> "Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible." - Frank Zappa
<b>THREE</b> Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Culture, Culture, and more Culture. Is culture malleable? Is culture manipulative? Or, wait...do <i>you</i> or <i>can</i> you manipulate culture? ...and also: which came first: Society or Culture?	<b>Readings:</b> By Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> SOC: Chapter Four: "Building Order: Culture and History" <b>Assignments:</b> <b>Homework Assignment #1</b> Due Jan. 15 <sup>th</sup> Do the assignment on page 94 ("YOUR TURN"). THINK AHEAD! You need a week to do this! ☺ a minimum of two pages, a minimum of 5 different sources from the list that Newman provides. Be sure to tell me what sources you used and cite them appropriately using APA or MLA format, you can look this up on-line. <b>Mini-Group #1:</b> Teach your article this week! See handout for details. Presentations will be on Thursday
<b>FOUR</b> Jan 22 <sup>nd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Pleased to meet you. My name is.... And you are...? And also...how did we arrive here? Where exactly <i>are</i> we, anyway, and do I <i>always</i> have to perform?!?	<b>Readings:</b> By Jan 22 <sup>nd</sup> Read SOC: All of Chapter Five "Building Identity: Socialization" and Chapter Six: "Supporting Identity: The Presentation of Self" only pages 170-189 By Jan 24 <sup>th</sup> Read article by Romero on website <b>Assignments:</b> <b>Homework Assignment #2:</b> Due Thursday Jan 24 <sup>th</sup> : Exercise your sociological imagination by speculating how your life might be different under different social circumstances. You should imagine how your life circumstances would be different if you were either: a) born the other sex, b) born another race, c) born to a family of great

<b>WEEK:</b> <b>DATES AND THEMES</b>	<b>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS:</b> <b>READINGS DUE TUESDAY</b> <b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE THURSDAY</b>
	<p>wealth or poverty, d) born in another time (100 years earlier), or e) born in another country. In your response, you should address the five major “building blocks” of society (statuses, roles, groups, organizations, and institutions), explaining how each of these would affect your life if you were born under different circumstances. Write at least two pages.</p> <p><b>Quote of the Week:</b> “All you touch and all you see is all your life will ever be.”  -- Roger Waters</p>
<b>FIVE</b> Jan 29 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup> <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Meet the Parents! ...and the siblings and the cousins and the roommates and the kids and the best friends and the aunties and the uncles and the grampas and grampas and, well, everyone else that fits in a family. So. What <i>is</i> family, anyway? <b>Thematic Overview:</b> The Structure of Society, Organizations and Social Institutions. What is deviance, and who decides what is deviant? Who decides <i>who</i> is deviant?	<p><b>Readings:</b>  By Jan 29<sup>th</sup> SOC: Chapter Seven: “Building Social Relationships: Intimacy and Families” only pages 206-242  By Jan 31<sup>st</sup> SOC. Chapter Eight: “Constructing Difference: Social Deviance” only pages 250-283  <b>Assignments:</b>  <b>Mini-Group #2:</b> Teach your article this week! See handout for details.  Presentations will be on Thursday  <b>Review session for quiz #1 on Thursday</b></p> <p><b>Quote:</b> “In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.”  -- Alex Haley</p>
<b>SIX</b> Feb 5 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Stratification: Social Class	<p><b>Quiz #1 Feb 5<sup>th</sup> we’ll have a brief review session on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup></b>  <b>Readings:</b>  Readings: By Feb 5<sup>th</sup>: Chapter Ten: The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class Inequality  <b>On Website:</b>  By Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> Making Class Invisible by Mantsios &amp;  Savage Inequalities in American Schools: Life on the Mississippi: East St. Louis by Kozol</p> <p><b>Quote:</b> “You think you’re so clever and classless and free.”  -- John Lennon</p>
<b>SEVEN</b> Feb 12 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> <b>Thematic Overview:</b> Stratification: Race & Ethnicity	<p><b>Readings:</b>  By Feb 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter Eleven: The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity  By Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> section in the book on immigration pages 482-494  <b>On Website:</b>  By Feb 14<sup>th</sup> Blinded by Whiteness: The Development of White College Students’ Racial Awareness by Chesler, Peet, and Sevig  <b>Assignments:</b>  <b>Homework Assignment #3</b> Due Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> Imagine a family of four living in Seattle. The mother and father both work fulltime during the day, one child is 7 years old and in elementary school, and the other child is 3 and must be cared for during the day. What is the <u>minimum</u> amount of money this family needs each month in order to survive and pay the bills? Provide a detailed monthly <u>minimum</u> budget, accounting for: rent/mortgage (the average home price in Seattle in 2006 was \$410,000, utilities (electric/gas, phone, water/sewer, and cable, if desired), food, transportation, clothing, medical care, child care, school supplies, entertainment (gifts, movies, parks, etc.), and so on. (NOTE: For expenses that are not divided on a monthly basis, like clothing or gifts or car repairs, estimate the yearly cost and divide by 12.) Add up the cost of each of your budgeted items to arrive at your monthly total. Make sure that you</p>

<b>WEEK:</b> <b>DATES AND THEMES</b>	<b>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS:</b> <b>READINGS DUE TUESDAY</b> <b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE THURSDAY</b>
	<p>investigate how much rent/utilities/childcare etc. actually cost, don't just guess. How does your monthly figure compare to the government's 2004 monthly poverty line of \$1,703? Next, describe the quality of life of this hypothetical family. What sorts of things are they forced to do without that a more affluent family might take for granted? What would be the impact of this family's income on the lives of the children? How will the family's situation translate into access to opportunities (e.g. jobs, education, and health care) for the children in later life?</p> <p><b>Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> Mini Group #3 Presentation</b></p>
<p><b>EIGHT</b>  Feb 19<sup>th</sup> &amp; 21<sup>st</sup>  <b>Thematic Overview:</b>  Inequality and Sex, Sexuality and Gender  Social Class, Race &amp; Ethnicity and Gender interaction  Global Dynamics &amp; Population</p>	<p><b>Readings:</b>  By Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> SOC: Chapter 12: "The Architecture of Inequality: Sex and Gender"  By Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> SOC. Chapter 13: The Global Dynamics of Population: Demographic Trends, only pages 461-469</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b>  <b>Homework Assignment #4</b> Due Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>, Refer to the Newman chapter as you answer this assignment. Thinking about the concepts of interpersonal (aka "individual") and institutional racism, have you ever been a victim of either individual or institutional discrimination? If so, how did it make you feel? What, if anything, did you do about it? Did the discriminatory action adversely affect your view of yourself and, if so, was the effect short-term or long-term? Conversely, have you ever committed an act of individual discrimination against another person based on racial or ethnic animosity? If so, was it an act of aware/blatant, aware/covert, unaware/unintentional, or unaware-self-righteous racism? Finally, can you think of ways that you may be overtly or inadvertently supporting institutions that institutionally discriminate against racial and ethnic minorities? Why it is so difficult for many people to publicly express their feelings about race and race relations? Is it difficult for you? Why/why not?  Write about 2 pages.</p>
<p><b>NINE</b>  Feb 26<sup>th</sup> &amp; 28<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>Thematic Overview:</b>  Sociological Change and movements  Sociological perspectives applied to Nickel &amp; Dimed</p>	<p><b>Readings:</b>  By Feb 26<sup>th</sup> SOC: Chapter 14: "Architects of Change: Reconstructing Society"  Nickel &amp; Dimed read Introduction: Getting Ready &amp; part one: Serving in Florida and  By Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> part two: Scrubbing in Maine</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b>  <b>Mini Group Presentation #4 on Feb 28<sup>th</sup></b></p>
<p><b>TEN</b>  March 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup>  <b>Thematic Overview:</b>  Sociology of Nickle &amp; Dimed  GET EDUCATED!  Why is a sociological perspective toward Society important?  Are you thinking differently? Why?  ...and also: Snacks by yours, truly and maybe a film. We'll take a vote!</p>	<p><b>Readings:</b>  Nickel &amp; Dimed – three: Selling in Minnesota and Evaluation</p> <p><b>IN CLASS:</b>  March 4<sup>th</sup> brief review of topics covered on the final quiz  <b>March 6<sup>th</sup>, final quiz, last day of class</b></p>
<p><b>ELEVEN &amp; Twelve (Finals Week):</b>  March 11<sup>th</sup> , 13<sup>th</sup> and Finals Week</p>	<p><b>March 11 (finals week) final paper emailed by 4PM (4 in the afternoon) on March 11, late papers will not be accepted and will receive a ZERO, final paper on Nickel &amp; Dimed and other class readings, refer to instructions handed out in class</b></p>



