

Sociology 101

Instructor: Seema Bahl
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Online Course

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Office hours: Via Skype (Soc205) or phone. In person appointments available upon request

REQUIRED READING: David Newman: *Sociology*, 11th ed.
Various readings, available on our Soc 101 course page on Canvas

THE COURSE:

What makes you, you? Are you free to choose your own destiny, or does society determine your path? Explore how our different identities impact our everyday lived experiences and develop useful ways to think about the world around you. Themes include power dynamics, culture, identities, deviance, stereotyping, and/or the social construction of knowledge.

Sociology is the scientific study of social groups and human behavior. A key concept in sociology that drives sociologists' work is what C. Wright Mills termed "the *sociological imagination*," or the understanding of the relationship between individuals and the wider society. We will look at various aspects of society, including socialization and family, culture and media, race, class, gender, religion, and globalization. Within each subcategory of sociology, we will look at the importance of thinking like an 'objective researcher' or an 'impartial outsider' when analyzing and investigating these issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The aim of this course is to foster a passion for the field of sociology in you! Sociology is relevant for every person, every day. This includes minute interactions that you may have with your peers to larger, 'macro' issues that impact the world such as natural disasters, the global economy, and national politics.

This course will help you:

- understand how sociology uses research methods and theories to provide possible explanations for social life
- understand how social institutions are interdependent as part of larger social structure
- understand how culture is created and maintained through our daily lives, including being able to see how patterns of inequality influence individuals in negative and positive ways
- understand how social forces impact individual choices, and how individual choices feed social forces

Outcomes:

- Identify and demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts most widely used in sociology today, such as the sociological imagination, social and institutional norms, ethnocentrism and cultural relativism, perspectives on social order and conflict, and/or social stratification;
- Describe some of the “classics” in sociology and explain the shift within sociology toward cultural studies;
- Critically examine the social landscape in which you live and understand how groups, communities, and institutions impact individual lives;
- Identify the ways in which culture and social institutions (such as education, economy, media, family) shape our everyday experiences; and
- Explain social constructionism and how life experiences and opportunities differ according to race, class, gender, and sexuality.

Online learning: Online classes demand independence, discipline, self-motivation, good writing and reading skills (I will be grading your reading comprehension, analysis, and proper citations where relevant. However, this is not a reading or writing class, so I won't be able to spend loads of time with each student correcting basic mistakes in grammar, spelling, citation, etc.). It is **CRUCIAL** that you have basic computer technology competence. You will be primarily interacting with your peers and myself online, through discussion posts, forums, papers, and emails.

You must be competent in CANVAS operation and navigation. In addition, you must be able to commit to:

1. Checking the course website *almost* every day,
2. Referring to this syllabus and your course calendar **OFTEN** to keep up with due dates,
3. Keeping up independently with the readings, multimedia clips, and assignments, and
4. You absolutely must be confident enough to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. We may or may not meet face to face, and that should be okay with you.

Can you meet these requirements? Then you are ready to take this course!

Disability

If you need course adaptations or special accommodations because of a disability, and/or if you have emergency medical information, please contact me. Please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made. The Disability Resource Center may be contacted at: (425) 564-2498 (phone), (425) 440-2025 (video phone) or TTY: (425) 564-4110.

Diversity

While this course is conducted on the Internet, we are still committed to establishing a community of learners, readers and writers. Respect for the diversity of perspectives, histories, experiences and identities that exist in any community is crucial for the productive functioning of the course.

Cheating: Do not plagiarize!! Do not use other people's ideas, interpretations and language without proper citation. Scholastic dishonesty includes having others do work for you, doing work for others,

and plagiarism, and can lead to failure of the assignment or course. Please obtain help from the Writing Center or the Tutoring and Help Center. Please contact me with any questions.

Communication: I will hold office hours over Skype or phone via appointment, so you must have a Skype account to speak with me. **Send me an email as soon as possible if you are not able to access Skype, and we will set it up together.** You can send me an email to set up an appointment. We can also communicate over email. You must include a proper greeting (Dear Ms. Bahl) and put your topic in the subject line. Do not leave the subject line blank! I will make every effort to respond within 24 hours.

LATE WORK: Late work will be penalized 5 points per day and no assignments will be accepted 1 week or more after the due date. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** This policy accounts for any potential computer glitches, family emergencies, etc. (this is quite a lenient policy), so I will not deviate from instituting these penalties under any circumstances.

Note: I will not accept any work after the last official day of the course.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments and Grading:

Introductory Discussion Post	10 points
6 Forum discussions @ 30 points [due Sundays, response due the next Monday]	180 points
Exams (2 @ 150 points)	300 points
2 Module Response Papers (50 points each)	100 points
Learning Outcomes, Respect, and Cordiality	20 points
Total	610 points

You will turn in your assignments each week. Look under the 'Modules' tab in Canvas to find the appropriate assignment for that 'Module' of the week we are in and turn in your Forum Answer Sheet or your paper to the discussion or assignment drop box for that module. Refer to your class calendar to confirm due dates!

Grading: All late assignments and postings will be penalized 5 points per day (including weekends)! No exceptions! No late assignments will be accepted 1 week after the due date. After this, assignments will automatically receive 0 points.

Readings: Each week has assigned readings, found in your course textbook with occasional supplementary readings found as single files located in the appropriate module for that week (open the 'Modules' tab on the left side of this courses page on Canvas). Again, refer to your course calendar if you are confused about which module you are responsible for at the current time. Give yourself enough time to do the readings (at least once, if not twice) so that you can answer the forum

questions carefully. Do NOT wait until the last day or two to complete the readings and address the forum questions, which are lengthy!

Forums: Please read the Forum Assignment Guidelines, posted as a document to the homepage of this course site!

You are required to respond to forum questions each week. Forums are due on Sundays of each week, and peer responses are due the following Monday. Please keep in mind that this is a very large part of your grade, and it is imperative that you complete the readings/video clips (found in the Newman textbook or in Canvas under the appropriate module) on time and respond to the questions in a timely manner. **Late answer sheets will be penalized 5 points per day and no answer sheet will be accepted 1 week or more after the due date.**

In terms of length, you will have to provide thoughtful, substantial responses that are based upon your familiarity with the readings and your own critical reflection. This would mean at least a few sentences, if not a whole paragraph, per question. You must answer each part of the question for full credit! Do not ‘blow off’ these responses! I will be carefully reading everyone’s submissions. You will also respond to one of your peer’s forum posts, focusing on his or her opinion-based answers.

GRADING RUBRICS FOR FORUMS: REFER TO THE ‘FORUM ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES’ DOCUMENT ON THE HOME PAGE OF THIS CANVAS COURSE

IMPORTANT NOTE: IF YOU WERE TAKING THIS CLASS ‘ON THE GROUND’ AS OPPOSED TO FULLY ONLINE, YOU WOULD HAVE 5 CONTACT HOURS PER WEEK. THINK OF THE FORUMS AS THESE CONTACT HOURS. TRY TO ENGAGE WITH AT LEAST ONE FORUM QUESTION ON EVERY DAY DURING THE WEEK SO THAT YOU DO NOT GET ‘OVERWHELMED’ AT THE LAST MINUTE TRYING TO ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS!!

Exams: There will be two exams, each worth 150 points. Both will be open book exams, each with 30 multiple choice questions (worth 5 points each), and you will have one hour to complete each exam. The first exam will cover weeks one through four, and the second will cover weeks five through eight. **On the exam dates, I will open the exam for 24 hours, and you must click on the quiz, complete the exam (within 60 minutes), and submit the completed exam to me.**

Module Response Papers: You are required to complete two Module Response Papers. These papers will be submitted online as Word documents to the drop box found in the modules for Weeks 7 and 8. Take these papers very seriously! Instructions can be found under the modules for Week 7 and 8 and are entitled “Module Response Paper.” Each paper is worth 50 points.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Schedule	Readings and Multimedia	What is due
Week 1: What is Sociology?	Newman, Ch 1 and 2 Additional material in Canvas	Thursday: Class Intro Sunday: Forum 1 Monday: Peer Response
Week 2: Social Research and Social Constructionism	Newman, Ch 3 Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Forum 2 Monday: Peer Response
Week 3 Socialization and Social Interaction	Newman, Chapters 5 and 6: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Forum 3 Monday: Peer Response
Week 4: Culture	Newman, Chapters 4: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Forum 4 Monday: Peer Response Tuesday EXAM 1
Week 5: Deviance	Newman, Chapters 8: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Forum 5 Monday: Peer Response
Week 6: Social Class, Stratification and Inequality	Newman, Chapter 10: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Forum 6 Monday: Peer Response
Week 7: Race and Ethnicity	Newman, Chapter 11: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Paper
Week 8: Gender and Sexuality	Newman, Chapter 12: Additional material in Canvas	Sunday: Paper
Week 9:	Course wrap-up and final exam	Thursday: Final Exam