



SOC 101: Introduction to Sociology

Classroom: Wheatley 02-0200

Time: Tuesday and Thursday: 12:30-1:45

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This course is designed to be a broad introduction to the field of sociology. One of the most valuable skills developed in this course is the sociological imagination, which is a particular way of looking at the world, our place in it, and our everyday experiences and choices. Instead of focusing on characteristics of individuals and their personalities, sociologists examine how lives are shaped by social forces, and how the very free choices we think we make for ourselves are influenced by the society in which we live.

Sociologists are especially concerned with the relationship between individuals and societal forces that shape us in ways we may not immediately recognize. In this course, we will look at this relationship and practice applying the sociological imagination to many different topics, from economic inequality, to the family, to race and ethnicity.

Thinking sociologically will help you in your own life by making you aware of the complexity and interrelatedness of the social world. This class will give you vision to see beyond the obvious patterns, which will inform your decisions, relationships with others, and your contribution to society. Beyond individual benefits, introducing people to sociological imagination helps create a more compassionate, analytical, and critical society where people question existing arrangements and create a more equitable future.

Course objectives

- practice applying your sociological imagination to many topics and your own life
- have a solid understanding of the difference between sociological explanations and psychological, biological, and moral explanations
- be able to critically analyze multiple systems of stratification and inequality and grasp the complexity and interrelatedness of the social world

Required Materials:

All required reading materials are available free of charge through the class Blackboard site. This is less convenient than having a textbook. However, with rising tuition rates at UMass Boston, and difficult financial circumstances of many of our students, I have chosen to prioritize affordability over convenience.

I encourage you to print out the readings and bring them to class as much as possible. Start by printing this syllabus. You can print up to 200 pages per semester for free on campus. After that, it costs 10c/page with a copy card. Multiple research studies have shown that reading and marking up a text on paper leads to better retention of material than reading on a screen. However, I understand if at times, you choose to read on your screen. Due to the laptop policy in the class (see below), if you do your reading on a screen, take notes and bring them to class so you can fully participate.

iClicker Transmitter/REEF app: All students must have an iClicker transmitter or a REEF app on their smartphone for each class. These are available from many sources, including the UMB Bookstore. Please note that you will need to be able to read the serial number of your iClicker in order to register it. If you buy a used iClicker, be sure that you can read the 8-character serial number on the back of it. Any of the different iClicker models (iClicker, iClicker+, or iClicker2) will work. Make sure the battery is not dead. You may not share your iClicker with another student in this class, although you are welcome to share one with someone in a different class, as long as it is not at the same time.

An alternative to iClicker is the REEF iOS app (<https://reef-education.com/>) If you opt to use REEF, be sure to limit your in-class smartphone use to REEF only. Be aware that the free trial period will expire before the semester is over and you will need to pay to continue to use it.

Why do we use a classroom response system? In a large classroom, it helps everyone have a chance to participate. Pausing to answer questions and engage actively during class has been shown to enhance student learning and motivation.

Assignments

Written Assignments

Discussion Board: This assignment is meant for you to practice ethnographic observation skills and apply concepts from class material on social interaction and networks. This helps you to learn to see beyond the obvious! You have to post three short posts, as well as comment on other students' writing. Detailed instructions are available on Blackboard.

Sociological Imagination Paper: Apply sociological imagination to a situation you are facing or have faced in the past in your own life. Some suggestions: relationships with others, dynamics at work or in the family, work/school/family balance, substance abuse, discrimination, financial struggles. Scholars consistently show that building connections between course material and your life helps people learn. It also makes the class more interesting. There will be two writing exercises to help you with this assignment. The final paper will be a maximum of 4 pages. Detailed instructions can be found on Blackboard.

Reading Response: Starting in Week 2, students will keep a response journal located on the class Blackboard site and are expected to write *one entry by noon prior to each class period (two each week)*. The syllabus specifies each time a reading response is required. Each journal entry should include 2 things: 1) the selection of *one direct quote (with page number)* from the reading material that they found particularly engaging, and 2) their reaction or thoughts regarding that quote. Students must post their responses to the class blackboard page BEFORE class each day; late entries will not be graded. Please mark specific entries with a note stating “*Please Do Not Share*” if you would not like your ideas shared with the class. Ideas for responses include, but are not limited to making connections between something in the assigned reading and:

- a personal experience
- another text (something you have read for this class or another)
- current or historical events

Aside from encouraging you to do the reading, this assignment, like the paper, is meant to help you learn by making connections between new material, what you already know, other class material, news, etc. When we make these connections, we improve our retention and analytical skills, which will serve us well beyond Sociology 101.

Tests

Syllabus Quiz: This short online quiz will test your understanding of the requirements for this class. It will also give you practice taking online tests for this class.

Tests: There are three tests. They are cumulative. This means that test 1 will cover roughly one third of the semester. Test 2 will cover the middle of the semester plus contain about $\frac{1}{4}$ questions from the first third of the semester. And Test 3 will focus on the end of the semester plus $\frac{1}{3}$ questions from the first and second thirds. In other words, each test will have most of the questions on just that part of the semester, but will also include material from earlier. The reason for doing it this way is that it helps students learn the material through multiple opportunities to recall and use it. These tests will take the form of multiple choice and short answers and will be administered ONLINE through Blackboard. You will be able to take each test multiple times if you

wish, and use your notes and readings. You will have three days to complete the test. For this reason, there are no make-up tests. There is no final exam.

Students with family responsibilities or other extenuating circumstances should contact Prof. Aptekar by email regarding missed or late work – before the deadlines.

Extra Credit

For extra credit, you can attend an event that relates to class. Suggestions for such events are posted on our Blackboard site. For example, you can watch a film in the UMB Film Series, go to a presentation on mass incarceration, or attend a rally against rising tuition. Write two 1.5-spaced pages, with about one page summarizing what you saw, and the second page explaining your reaction and how it relates to class material. Another possibility is watching a feature-length documentary that relates to class. In either case, you should run your choice of event or documentary by me first, to make sure it is appropriate. The latest you can turn in extra credit assignments is December 8.

Attendance and Participation: iClickers/REEF

Beginning with the second week, I will ask multiple-choice questions relating to class material. Using your iClicker or REEF app, you will submit your answer and receive credit whether your answer is correct or not. Answers are due during the lecture on the day the question was asked. No late answers will be accepted. There are no make-ups for missed iClicker questions. Note that clicking in an answer for another student is considered cheating and will not be tolerated.

You will need to register your iClicker serial number so you can get credit.

You do this by going to the course Blackboard site, clicking on the “Register your iClicker” link, and following the directions there. You should not register through iClicker.com.

Instructor expectations

Attendance policy

Punctual attendance is crucial to successfully complete this course. In-class material will differ from what is covered in the readings, and you are responsible for both.

Attendance and participation are worth 10% of your final grade, and are graded based on iClicker. There is no making up of iClicker questions. Extra points are built in, but more than occasional lateness and absences will affect your grade.

If you anticipate having to miss class, be late, or leave early please communicate with me as soon as possible, preferably via email. You may not email me to ask me “What did I miss in class?” It is my responsibility to teach the class material in class and to help you

understand it during office hours. Your responsibility is to find out from another student what happened in the class that you missed.

Laptop Policy

Although some students prefer to use their laptops to take notes, research shows that the most effective notetakers (the ones with best retention of the material and best grades) are students who are taking notes by hand. Moreover, laptop screens have been shown to be distracting to other students, even when they are not using a laptop themselves. Finally, laptop use is distracting to me as an instructor. If you feel strongly that you must use a laptop in class, please speak to me directly to obtain permission to use it. The same policy applies if you need to look at the readings on your laptop because you did not print them out. You will be asked to sit in the front row on the far right or left of the room, to minimize distraction for others. Smartphone use is limited to those who purchased the REEF application to use instead of iClickers.

Class participation

When expressing your ideas in class, treat others with utmost respect. Sociology is full of sensitive topics that may evoke strong emotional reactions. Err on the side of politeness and civility. Support your opinions with evidence. Behavior that intimidates others or limits participation of others will not be tolerated. *We do not have a right to be protected from ideas that make us uncomfortable, but we have a reasonable expectation that any idea will be expressed in a civil and respectful manner.*

PowerPoints and note-taking

I will strive to make my PowerPoint slides available to you on Blackboard before class, although I might tweak them a little afterwards. Many students like to print out the slides and follow along in class. You will find that my slides provide only the outline. You must take extensive notes in class, and not only copy what is on the PowerPoint or the board. I recommend a dedicated notebook or binder, where you keep your class, reading, and study notes, as well as the syllabus for easy reference.

Communication Protocol

Check your email regularly, preferably daily, for updates from the instructor. The email that you check must be the UMass Boston account that is connected to our Blackboard site. If you are having difficulties accessing Blackboard or with your netID, it is crucial to sort it out immediately. I will write emails to the class through Blackboard.

I will respond to your communications with me in a prompt manner, although please do not expect instantaneous responses. Questions that could be answered by referring to the syllabus will not be answered (e.g. when is the paper due?). Please observe basic

civility when emailing (e.g. write “Dear Professor Aptekar” instead of “Hey, prof.” or no salutation; sign with your full name). More guidance is available on Blackboard. If you have a lengthy question or concern, it is probably best to come to office hours or stay after class, and explain in person.

Office Hours

Please make use of my office hours and the teaching assistants’ office hours. Making connections to your university instructors has been shown by researchers to improve your college outcomes – beyond doing well in this class. It is disappointing to only see students in office hours to argue about exam points. Other reasons to see me during office hours include: introducing yourself, clarification on something in the reading or lecture, concerns about class dynamics or your personal performance, exploring an interest that connected to class or was sparked by class, advice on career in social science or academia, etc. Coming to office hours with me or the teaching assistants at least once will earn you 10 points. *If you have a commitment that conflicts with my office hours, please email me to arrange an alternate time that works for you.*

Support outside the classroom

I encourage you to take advantage of tutors available through the Campus Center. These tutors can help you work on your written assignments, get the most out of your readings, and develop effective studying techniques for exams. Sign up online through the link on Blackboard or from UMB website. Remember that your tuition pays for these services. You should use them!

Exam make-up and late assignment policy

Make-up tests will only be given in cases of excused absences and *official documentation is required*. Excused absences are: illness with a doctor's note, death in the immediate family, required University activities, and required court appearance. Documentation must contain information on the specific dates for which you are unable to take the exam, and you are expected to take the exam immediately after the circumstances have passed. I must be notified *prior* to missing an exam for me to consider giving you a makeup unless the documentation reveals the detaining event occurred the day of the exam.

Assignments are due at the *beginning* of class on the date listed on the class syllabus. Once class has started, any work handed in is considered late. Late submissions will incur a penalty of half a letter grade reduction (A to A-; A- to B; etc.) for each day that it is late. A “day” is 24 hours from the due date (start of class). This includes weekends and holidays.

University policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Plagiarism is representing the work of others as your own, including copying other students' work or using Internet resources without proper citation. All work that you submit is assumed to be your own unless you cite source material. If you use words (either exact or paraphrased), facts, or ideas from another document (including course materials and web pages), you must cite them. Not doing so is considered plagiarism, and the result will be a zero on the assignment. If you are at all unsure about what you should be doing, please talk to me immediately. Students are required to adhere to the University Policy on Academic Standards and Cheating, to the University Statement on Plagiarism and the Documentation of Written Work, and to the Code of Student Conduct as delineated in the Catalog of Undergraduate Programs. The Code is available online at: http://cdn.umb.edu/images/life_on_campus/Code_of_Conduct_5-14-14.pdf

Disability accommodations

Please inform me at the start of the semester (or ASAP if a disability is verified during the semester) regarding the need for accommodation of a disability. I will work with you and the Ross Center to provide the approved accommodation. Contact information: Ross Center for Disability Services, Campus Center, UL Room 21; Phone: 617-287-7430.

Grading

There are 700 points available in the course. See the table below for how much each assignment is worth. Note that the final grades for the course are based on a 650-point scale, which means you get a 50-point "safety net" for missed assignments, etc.

585-606 = A-	607-650 = A	
488-519 = B-	520-551 = B	552-584 = B+
390-421 = C-	422-454 = C	455-487 = C+
292-323 = D-	324-356 = D	357-389 = D+
0-291 = F		

Grade component	Maximum points	My points
Syllabus quiz	20	
Discussion Board assignment	75	
Sociological Imagination Paper		
Writing exercise 1	10	
Writing exercise 2	10	
Final paper	100	
Test 1	80	
Test 2	100	
Test 3	120	
Online reading responses	70	

Participation and Attendance	70	
Extra Credit	35	
Total	700	

Grade appeals

If you feel that a mistake has been made in grading of an exam or an assignment, you may ask me to re-grade. To do so, please submit at least a paragraph-long written explanation, with the original test/assignment. Please be aware that re-grading may result in your grade going down, as well as staying the same or improving, because I may find a mistake I overlooked the first time.

Course Schedule

1	September 6 (Tue)	INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY What is Sociology? Expectations for the course
	September 8 (Thu)	SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION □ Ritzer, <i>Essentials of Sociology</i> , pp. 13-18
2	September 13 (Tue)	SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION Guest 1: Tehya Saylor, MASSPIRG □ Ackerman, “The Rise of the “Illegal Alien”” □ Watch video, take notes on examples of social construction http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVVWmZASn8 *Reading response due by noon
	September 15(Thu)	<u>NOTE: CLASS WILL START AT 12:50.</u> *Extra credit opportunity at noon on the plaza CULTURE □ Giddens et al, “Culture”, p. 43-65 * Reading response due by noon
	September 16-18	TAKE SYLLABUS QUIZ ON BLACKBOARD
3	September 20 (Tue)	MEDIA □ OpenStax, p.163-191 *Reading response due by noon
	September 22 (Thu)	SOCIAL INTERACTIONS I Guest: Chico Colvard, UMB Film Series □ Ritzer, <i>Introduction to Sociology</i> , p. 145-156 □ Wade, “Reading the Camouflage” Discussion Board, Post 1 due at noon
4	September 27 (Tue)	SOCIAL INTERACTIONS II □ Goffman “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” □ Howey “Irony of Understanding” Discussion Board, Post 2 due at noon
	September 29 (Thu)	GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

		<input type="checkbox"/> Henslin, "Groups and Organizations", p. 132-159 Discussion Board, Feedback for Posts 1 & 2 due at noon
5	October 4 (Tue)	SOCIALIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> Conley, You May Ask Yourself, pp. 113-132 <input type="checkbox"/> "I Suffer Alone" Discussion Board, Post 3 due at noon
	October 6 (Thu)	SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS <input type="checkbox"/> Watch catcalling video <input type="checkbox"/> Wade article on catcalling video <input type="checkbox"/> Macionis, Chapter 1, p. 20-37 Discussion Board, Feedback for Post 3 due at noon
	October 7-9	Test 1 (on Blackboard)
6	October 11 (Tue)	<i>Presentation from the Office of Career Services and Internships</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Pinsker, "Rich Kids Study English" <input type="checkbox"/> Smajda, "Wage Gap Starts When You Pick Your Major" *Reading response due by noon
	October 13 (Thu)	FAMILY 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Ritzer, "Families", pp. 227-238 <input type="checkbox"/> Meadow and Stacey, "Families" *Reading response due by noon
7	October 18	FAMILY 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Ritzer, "Families", pp. 238-249 <input type="checkbox"/> Hayford and Guzzo, "Single Mother by Choice" Writing Assignment 1 due by noon
	October 20	GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> Ferris and Stein, Ch. 9, p. 240-255 <input type="checkbox"/> Steadman, "Sex Isn't Chromosomes" *Reading response due by noon
8	October 25	<i>Screening of Tough Guise II</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Kalish and Kimmel, "Suicide by Mass Murder" *Reading response due by noon Tough Guise Question Sheet: do during class and hand in.
	October 27	GENDER DIFFERENCES AND INEQUALITIES <input type="checkbox"/> Ferris and Stein, Ch. 9, p. 255-269 <input type="checkbox"/> Cooky and Lavoy, "Playing but Losing" *Reading response due by noon
9	November 1	GENDER IDENTITIES AND SEXUALITIES <input type="checkbox"/> Khan, Not Born This Way <input type="checkbox"/> Luff et al, Hooking Up and Dating *Reading response due by noon
	November 3	EDUCATION: INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION <i>Guest Speaker: Jeffrey Williams</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Williams, "Innovation for What?" <input type="checkbox"/> Beaver, "A Matter of Degrees" <input type="checkbox"/> Tankersley "The College Trap"

		*Reading response due by noon
10	November 8	CLASS AND INEQUALITY <input type="checkbox"/> Wright and Rogers, “Class”, p. 257-266 <input type="checkbox"/> Silva, “Working Class Growing Pains” Writing assignment 2 due by noon
	November 10	AMERICAN STRATIFICATION <input type="checkbox"/> Wright and Rogers, “Persistent Poverty”, p.267-296 <input type="checkbox"/> Play “Spent” at playspent.org *Reading response due by noon
	November 11-13	Test 2 (on Blackboard Learn)
11	November 15	RACE AND ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> Golash and Boza, p. 4-30, 51-55 *Reading response due by noon
	November 17	Screening of <i>Race: The Power of an Illusion, Part 3</i> <i>Race Question Sheet do in class and hand in</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Feagin, <i>Racist America</i> , p. 157-187 *Reading response due by noon
12	November 22	RACISM, PREJUDICE, GROUP RELATIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Thornhill, “If People Stopped Talking about Race” <input type="checkbox"/> Feagin, <i>Racist America</i> , p. 135-157 Sociological Imagination Paper due
	November 24	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday
13	November 29	GLOBAL STRATIFICATION AND IMMIGRATION <input type="checkbox"/> Read and watch Planet Money Makes a T-shirt <input type="checkbox"/> American Immigration Council, “Did My Family Really Come Legally?” <input type="checkbox"/> McElrath, et al. “Crimmigration” *Reading response due by noon
	December 1	CAPITALISM AND ECONOMY <input type="checkbox"/> Wright and Rogers, Ch. 37-70 *Reading response due by noon
14	December 6	Screening of <i>13th</i> <i>13th Question Sheet: do in class and hand in</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Prison Policy Initiative report <input type="checkbox"/> Cole, <i>The Color of Punishment</i> *Reading response due by noon
	December 8	CRIME AND DEVIANCE <input type="checkbox"/> OpenStax, p. 141-162 <input type="checkbox"/> Rios, “Stealing a Bag” *Reading response due by noon
15	December 13	WRAPPING UP LOOSE ENDS AND REVIEW FOR TEST 3
	December 16-18	Test 3 (on Blackboard)