

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY: SOCY 1

Department of Sociology, UC Santa Cruz

Instructor: Mario J. Avalos, mavalos1@ucsc.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday's 2-3 PM and by appointment

Office hours spreadsheet: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qWeEn-fEP9jUH0H_H1O5WQftHBvrdvfKXF5bRK7h5Pk/edit#gid=0

Teaching Assistants: Cameron Hughes

TA Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3 PM

link:

<https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/98187633787?pwd=TDhXdGpuMmFXU3hiaZl5bIB6QUFUZz09>

Course Description

The course is designed to introduce you to the field of sociology, its major theories and methods, and notable works. This class delves into the theories, methods, and several areas of study sociologists have contributed to such as culture, race, crime, education, social movements, gender (and the list goes on). Sociologists are concerned with social problems, social facts, and use sociological methods to make sense of the world around us. Sociologist Candace West once said, "Sociology is the study of what people say and do". By this, she meant anything tangible or affective that dealt with people, at any scale, could be useful for understanding people. For example, in the late 19th century and early 20th-century Pan-Africanist public intellectual, educator, and civil rights activist W.E.D. DuBois used sociology methods to study the African American community and identify its social problems. His work gave the earliest structural analysis of social inequality in America, challenging the regressive ideas and opinions of that time while documenting the African American experience in the United States (See: *Souls of Black Folk*, *Black Reconstruction in America*, *The Philadelphia Negro*).

Learning Outcomes

- To use the concept of the Sociological Imagination to coherently express a sociological perspective on contemporary social problems and patterns in the social world.
- To understand and use vocabulary sociologists use to talk about the social world.
- To understand the basic premises and methods of sociological inquiry.

My Role

I am here to assist you in your knowledge-seeking endeavors. First, and foremost, to instill the practice of picking up and setting down ideas. Second, this is a Sociology course and I will guide your exploration of the field of Sociology. These are my primary functions, other than that; I will do my best to maintain an open and inviting (regrettably only online) space for your growth. This class fulfills the lower-division major requirements.

Your Role

I leave this up to you; I only have two rules you must follow. Help yourself, and help others. You are here as a student—and education is a fundamental vehicle to self-empowerment—so while you participate in lectures or doing assignments (or anything related to the class), use the time to help yourself grow in whatever way this class can do that for you. And, along that path, help others if possible. You will find, when you help others, you help yourself.

Class Format

The lecture will be held at the scheduled times. Attendance is mandatory. Lectures for that day's class will be posted on Canvas. You must have read that week's readings by the date it is assigned to. For example, week 1 readings for Wednesday must be read by Wednesday at 9:00 AM. Films must be seen by the weekend, as we will be discussing them the following week. Assignments and due dates will be posted on canvas. Reading material can be found on canvas. I did not want you to pay for an expensive book. However, you may have to rent (or buy) a film from an online platform— though I doubt it. I know not everyone has Amazon Prime or Netflix. Nonetheless, you are required to have seen these films and you will be tested on them.

Weekly Required Reading, Assignments, & Films

Week 1- Introduction, Theory, & Methods

Monday

- None

Wednesday

- Peter Berger—“Sociology as an Individual Pastime”
- Wright Mills—“The Sociologic Imagination”
- Orlando Patterson— “About Public Sociology”

Assignment: None

Film: Century of the Self-Pt.2 (2002) (free on YouTube)

Week 2- Social Interaction: Culture, Socialization, and People

Monday

- Patricia Hill Collins— “Matriarchs, Mammies, and Other Controlling Images”
- Raymond Williams—“On Culture”
- Clifford Geertz— “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight”

Wednesday

- Erving Goffman— “On Face-Work”
- Howard Becker— ‘Becoming a Marijuana Smoker’
- Laud Humphreys—Excerpts from *Tearoom Trade*

Assignment: Reading and Discussion Responses

Film: One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest (1975)

Week 3- Social Inequality: Groups, Institutions, & the Stratifying Privilege

Monday

- Charles Tilly— “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime”
- Herbernt Gans—“The Positive Functions of Poverty”
- Barbara Ehrenreich— *Nickel and Dimed*: Intro and Ch.1

Wednesday

- George Lipsitz- The Possessive Investment in Whiteness”
- Tom Shakespear— “The Social Model of Disability”
- John H. Tucker " The Unlikely Story of a Sex Trafficking Survivor and the Instagram Account that Saved Her Life" Elle Magazine, [linkhttps://www.elle.com/culture/a36898189/0086-0088-megan-s-account-august-2021/?utm_source=digg](https://www.elle.com/culture/a36898189/0086-0088-megan-s-account-august-2021/?utm_source=digg)

Assignment: Capture “Controlling Images”

Film: El Cuento de Colobri (2015) (free on Kanopy)

Week 4- Stratifying Privilege in Gender, Sex, & Race

Monday

- Drucilla Cornell— “Gender in America”
- Raja Ben Slama— “From the Arab World: Gender Violence”
- Andrea Smith—“Native American Feminism, Sovereignty, and Social Change”

- Joffe—5 Women (1 hour podcast) link here:
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/640/five-women>

Wednesday

- Victor Rios—“The Hyper Criminalization of Black and Latino Youth”
- Laura Pulido— “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California”
- Coates— “The Case for Repatriations”

Assignment: Socio-biography

Film: Sleep Dreamer (2008)

Week 5 Sociology and Social Change

Monday

- Reardon— Excerpt from *Race to the Finish*
- Howard Becker— “What are Drugs?”
- Robinson, Williams— “Aquí Estamos y No Nos Vamos”
- Asef Bayat— “Plebeians of the Arab Spring”

Wednesday

Final (9:00AM) You do not have to sign in to the lecture zoom link, but I will be there to answer questions.

Assignment: none (study for final)

Film: none

Grading & Course Requirements

Reading and Discussion Responses (10%)

Controlling Images (20%)

Socio-Biography (30%)

Attendance (10%)

Final (30%)

Writing Assignments

The purpose of these writing assignments is to have you practice writing sociologically as well as give us a sense of how the material is being understood. Beyond an exercise in exchange for a grade, why do we write? We write because literacy makes you powerful, in every way that you can possibly imagine, except the **immediate**. When you write, you make a case for something. And if you are making a case—to your boss for example—as to why you deserve a raise, writing it down allows you to be persuasive, to shape your ideas (revise and edit your argument), marshal defenses to counterpoints— and this makes you powerful and strategically precise. You become convicting. Students are not stringently informed of this.

Additionally, a lot of civilization and effort has been spent building the institutions you are now a part of, and everyone is hoping you come here and learn everything you possibly can, and go out in the world, and do as much good in the world as you can. This is a basic generalization but gets to the point as to why learning to write, in particular, is important. I will get off my soapbox, but lastly, we think in words, irrespective of our understanding of them. The more we know about them, the more we know about us, people, the world, and how to communicate and not to communicate with it/them.

Evaluation of Work

I say this to say you will be held to a college-level writing standard. That means you must follow prompt instructions, have paragraph structure, and use proper grammar. Formatting can be done in Chicago, ASA, or whatever you decide—so long as it is consistent.

For any help you may need with writing, please contact the Writing Center (<http://oakes.ucsc.edu/academics/writing-center/index.html>) or Learning Support Services (lss.ucsc.edu).

POLICIES

Emails

I will do my best to respond to your emails, and I am most reachable from 8 AM to 6 PM (Monday to Friday). On the weekends, it is less but still within that time frame. I will respond within 24 hours of your initial message. If for whatever reason I do not, forward it again with the original message.

Office Hours

Please sign up to my office hours using this spreadsheet:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qWeEn-fEP9jUH0H_H1O5WQftHBvrdvfKXF5bRK7h5Pk/edit#gid=0

If you cannot make that time, we can set up another time that works for both of our schedules.

Make-Ups

There are no make-ups for lectures. However, everyone has one “excused” absence. If life changes so that it prevents you from temporarily doing coursework, please speak with me in private.

Late Policy

On the first day an assignment is late, 1 letter grade will be deducted.

On the second day an assignment is late, 2 letter grades are deducted.

On the third day, you will receive half credit max.

Cheating

It should go without saying that cheating will not be tolerated. Please do not do it. It is unnecessary, you cheat yourself, and I hate being the bad guy. In the course of this unfortunate event, you will fail the assignment and the class.

TITLE IX

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential, counseling support, (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University’s Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1.