

SOC 101 – Introduction to Sociology – Honors

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Course Description

As the course title states, this class is intended to introduce you to the discipline of Sociology. The course will acquaint you with a number of sociological perspectives, theoretical orientations and methodological tools. By taking this course, you will develop a sense of the range of issues covered by sociologists and the various perspectives and tools used to understand these issues. Sociology is, by its very nature, a discipline that dissects the world we live in.

Many people in our nation and other nations are profoundly ignorant of how contemporary society operates. Sociology uses scientific investigation to expose the unrecognized forces affecting us in our everyday lives. Because Sociology is a scientific analysis of the everyday, it is bound to conflict with the misperceptions and misinformation that many people harbor. The best Sociology requires that you confront your long held beliefs and open up your mind to new perspectives regarding the social world.

This course, while covering selected topics in Sociology, will attempt to challenge you to think differently about a variety of sociological issues including the media, race/ethnicity and gender. You will be required to understand the world sociologically instead of based on your own misperceptions, which can be challenging to you at times.

Course Objectives

- Students will be familiarized with the basic perspectives in Sociology.
- Students will expand their knowledge of basic Sociological issues.
- Students will be exposed to issues of globalization.
- Students will learn about problems facing people living in other areas of the world.

Required Texts

- Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Churchill, Ward. 2004. *Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools*. San Francisco: City Lights.
- Torres, Bob. 2007. *Making a Killing: The Political Economy of Animal Rights*. Oakland: AK Press.
- DeCaralo, Jacqueline. 2007. *Fair Trade: A Beginner's Guide*. London: Oneworld.
- Durand, Cliff, and Steve Martinot. 2012. *Recreating Democracy in a Globalized State*. Atlanta: Clarity Press.
- Ching Yoon Louie, Miriam. 2001. *Sweatshop Warriors: Immigrant Women Workers Take on the Global Factory*. Cambridge: South End Press.
- Fraser, Jill Andresky. 2001. *White-Collar Sweatshop: The Deterioration of Work and Its Rewards in Corporate America*. New York: Norton.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2008. *Black Feminist Thought*. New York: Routledge.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2009. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- McChesney, Robert. 2004. *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Shiva, Vandana. 2008. *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis*. Cambridge: South End Press.
- Research Unit For Political Economy. 2003. *Behind the Invasion of Iraq*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Course Requirements

Desire to Learn (D2L)

- Be sure to check the D2L regularly for assignments.
- Lecture slides will also be posted on D2L.

- **Grading for the Course Will Be Based on the Following:**
 - Participation and Attendance 30%
 - In-class and Homework Assignments 30%
 - Service Learning Experience 10%
 - Capstone Project 30%

- Grades for the course will use the +/- scale and will have divisions as follows: 92 and above = A, from 91.99 to 90 = A-, 89.99 – 88 = B+, 87.99 – 82 = B, etc.

Class Participation and Attendance:

Since you must be present to participate in class, attendance will be part of your participation grade. I will also evaluate your participation and performance.

In-Class and Homework Assignments:

The assignments are designed to relate the course material to the world that exists around us. The assignments will use the readings from the previous and current weeks. We will discuss your homework, so it is imperative that you complete the readings before class.

Each paper varies with respect to its questions. Answer the questions as if you are trying to explain them to a friend or family member who does not know the subject of sociology.

From time to time, I will give you assignments to work on at home and bring to class to discuss. These assignments are designed to build your skills in applying sociology to contemporary, real-world situations.

Quality of Work and “Academic Honesty”

- Students are responsible for ensuring that their assignments, essays and general intellectual contributions are their own.
 - In other words, I demand that the students’ contributions are the result of their own creativity and critical assessment of the material covered during this course.
 - I encourage students to study together and discuss the course material outside of class, but do not write your assignments together.
 - Intentional or unintentional similarities in papers, exams, assignments or answers **will result in the students failing the course.**
 - This includes but is not limited to:
 - borrowing portions or whole essays from another source such as a friend, website or “paper mill.”
 - using authors’ ideas without proper credit,
 - submitting a paper that is not your own work,
 - similarities between student papers,
 - copying answers from others in class,
 - using notes during exams,
 - submitting work for others such as attendance sign in, assignments, “clicker” entries, etc.

Course Requirements Continued

Course Expectations

- I have certain expectations for you when you are in the classroom.
 - **The use of laptops or cell phones is not permitted in the classroom.**
 - Other distractions such as text messages, conversations between students, etc. are not permitted.
 - I will stop the class if students are using laptops, checking cell phones, texting, or otherwise distracting other students in the class.
 - If the problem persists, students distracting others will be asked to leave and/or failed for the course.
 - I request that you abide by these expectations, not for my benefit, but for the students around you.

Students' Needs

- If you are having trouble in the class understanding the material or doing well on the exams, **I encourage you to contact me.**
 - If you are worried about how you are doing in the class, contact me early in the term.
 - There are also resources on campus to aid your study skills and provide tutoring.
 - Check the list of resources on the next page, or ask me about your options.
- Please let me know if you have any need for accommodations in the classroom to meet your needs.
 - I realize that students have different learning styles and different needs.
 - I will do my best to help you in any way I can.
 - My objective in this course is to get you to look at the world in a different, more sociological, way.
 - My goal is not to “weed out” those who cannot do well on a test.
 - In this way, I do encourage you to use my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the course material, concerns you may have, or general issues relevant to the course.
- For those of you who may have more specific needs, MSU-Mankato provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in education programs, activities or services.
- Students with disabilities requiring accommodation to participate in-class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the Office of Disability Services (contact info below) and then contact me as soon as possible.

Resources for Students on Campus

There are many resources on campus for students, especially those new to the campus. Below you can find the location and contact information for various services on campus. They are there for you, so take advantage of them. All of these resources are aimed at helping you succeed and excel while you are here. Please ask me if there is anything I can help you find. I may be able direct you to other offices that can help you out.

Tutoring and Other Services for All Students

Center for Academic Success
Memorial Library in ML 125 (lower level)
Phone: 507-389-1791
Email: academicsuccess@mnsu.edu
<http://www.mnsu.edu/success/>

General Information and Help with Study Skills

Student Relations, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Advising "U"
Armstrong Hall 114
Phone No: 507-389-6307
<http://sbs.mnsu.edu/advisingu/advisingu.html>

Resources for International Students

The International Student Office (ISO)
Kearney International Center
250 Centennial Student Union
Phone: 507-389-1281 (V) or 800-627-3529
(MRS/TTY)
E-mail: isss@mnsu.edu
<http://www.mnsu.edu/international/>

Facilities and Resources for Students with Disabilities

Office of Disability Services
132 Memorial Library (lower level)
Phone: 507-389-2825 (Voice/TTY)
Email: julie.snow@mnsu.edu
<http://www.mnsu.edu/dso/index.html>

Sexual Violence Awareness Education

The Women's Center
218 Centennial Student Union
Phone: (507) 389-6146
<http://www.mnsu.edu/wcenter/>

Diversity Resources

Institutional Diversity Departments
<http://www.mnsu.edu/cultdiv/departments/>

Resources for First-Generation College Students and Others

Student Support Services
355 Wiecking Center
Phone: (507) 389-2797
<http://www.mnsu.edu/sss/>

Confidential Help to Assist Students in Resolving Personal, Social, and Educational Concerns

The Counseling Center
245 Centennial Student Union (CSU)
Phone: (507) 389-1455
<http://www.mnsu.edu/counseling/>

Student Health Services

Medical Clinic
21 Carkoski Commons
Phone: 507-389-6276
<http://www.mnsu.edu/shs/>

Health Education

100 Carkoski Commons
Phone: 507-389-5689

Honors Course Goals and Competencies

General Honors Course Goals

You will be challenged in this course to develop complex literacy skills designed to both interpret authors' arguments and better understand the world Sociologically. To accomplish these goals, you will have regular homework that focuses on the authors' arguments in the readings and applying the terms learned in the course to these readings. We may also have guest speakers such as the peer education group P.E.A.C.E. from the Women's Center to challenge our thinking. Weather permitting, we may take a field trip to tour the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry community gardens to look at local alternatives to environmental problems.

Your course will include regular in-class discussion based assignments designed to apply Sociological terms and to put yourself in other's shoes. Some of the discussions will involve your readings, which may prove challenging at times. Other discussions will be based on exercises developed to contemplate contemporary social issues more deeply. We will look at the media and housing policy in the United States for example.

Depending on the needs of the Mankato Area Free Trade Town Initiative (MAFTTI), we may develop a capstone project that facilitates their goals in our region. A portion of your course will deal with the issues of globalization and inequality in the world-economy. MAFTTI is attempting to establish an awareness of fair trade issues in the Mankato area. They have met one of their major goals by achieving Fair Trade Town status for Mankato. MAFTTI is now in the process of working to make MNSU-Mankato a fair trade university. Our capstone project could help them achieve this goal. The completion of this capstone project would be a great addition to your honors portfolio. If we are unable to coordinate with MAFTTI, we will find a similar capstone project to challenge you to link local issues with broader social forces.

Honors Course Competencies

- Exhibits cultural competency and awareness
 - Level One
 - You will be challenged to understand a number of sociological concepts relative to the issue of cultural competence and awareness.
 - For example, we will apply the different forms of ethnocentrism (Dehumanization, Ideological Camouflage, Civilizational Mission and Political Denial) throughout the term.
 - * Assessment will include applying these terms in your homework and in-class discussions.
 - We will study the frames of color-blind racism by Bonilla-Silva and apply them in different contexts.
 - * Assessment of these frames will be through homework assignments and in-class discussion of various topics.
 - Level Two
 - You will be challenged to analyze global interrelations.
 - Our course focuses on global political and economic relationships that give rise to our contemporary social problems.
 - * Assessment will include homework and in-class discussions to understand the complex global relationships.
 - In another section of our course, we look at the political and economic underpinnings of war, specifically the second Gulf war in Iraq.
 - * Assessment will be based on homework that challenges students to compare the arguments and theories of those who supported the war in Iraq with sociological theorists who provide a historical backdrop and theoretical understanding of the invasion. We will also discuss this homework in class.

- Level Three
 - The course will provide opportunities for you to interact directly with people who are experts in various social or cultural issues.
 - We will integrate guest speakers (based on availability) to provide their perspective on contemporary social issues including P.E.A.C.E. regarding issues of sexual assault, a service learning experience at the Mahkato Wacipi (powwow), Lisa Coons regarding community gardens and environmental issues, etc.
 - * Assessment will include exams, discussions and reflections regarding these interactions.
- Recognizes global contexts that shape leadership decisions
 - Level One
 - When discussing the global economic and political institutions, you will be able to identify various models of global leadership.
 - In the class, we will compare the goals of these global economic and political institutions with their critics.
 - * Assessment will include discussion and possibly your capstone project if we are able to coordinate with MAFTTI.
 - Level Two
 - To understand the contemporary issues of global inequality, we will use sociological theories and analysis to understand this problem.
 - Our course will attempt to understand, theoretically, the connections between colonialism and contemporary economic inequality.
 - * Assessment will include discussion, homework assignments and your potential capstone project.
 - Level Three
 - You will critique the models of development that are associated with understanding the causes of global inequality.
 - Crucial to the understanding of the problems is a critical analysis of what promoters of “modernization” or “neoliberal” economic models of development.
 - * Assessment will be based on our discussions, but our potential capstone project will require a detailed critique and critical analysis of the views regarding economic development in the poorer regions of the world.
 - Level Four
 - Contingent on our potential project with MAFTTI, you will be able to connect the broader issues of global inequality with the local issue of fair trade in your community.
 - Your capstone project will tie the shortcomings of the global economy with the actions of people in your local area.
 - * Assessment will be the successful linkage of global inequality with local consuming habits and corporate behavior.

Critical Thinking and General Education

- Many of the issues that we will cover in this course are complex and do not lend themselves to easy answers.
 - Hopefully, you will develop more questions as we progress through the class.
- We will focus on *Sociological* views to understanding contemporary issues.
 - Sometimes, the material may make you uncomfortable – this is natural, and it means that you are confronting commonly held beliefs, which is one of the goals of Sociology.
 - We will look at the world from a variety of Sociological theories to address a number of social issues like the media, workplace dissatisfaction, racism, etc.
 - Some issues that we will cover may appear unfamiliar to some of you.
 - While I understand that it may be new material to some of you, it is rooted in historical sociological analysis and is information firmly acknowledged internationally.
 - For example, an international student asked me why some of the US students were surprised by the content. For her, it was common knowledge and something that some international students had witnessed first-hand.
- This course is designed specifically to meet the goals of the **General Education Requirements** it fulfills.
 - For example, we will “develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues” - one of the goals of Goal Area 5: History and Social and Behavioral Sciences
 - We will also “analyze specific international problems illustrating cultural, economic, ... social and political differences which affect their solution.” Goal Area 9: Global Perspective
 - In this class, I stress that you “understand the role of a world citizen and the responsibility world citizens share for their common global future.” Goal Area 9: Global Perspective
 - This course also helps you “identify the impact of oppression for individuals from diverse populations.” Diverse Cultures - Purple
- Other General Education Requirements
 - In this course, students will be exposed to the methods and theories used by social scientists.
 - The course will look at a number of social institutions, especially the media, economy and others.
 - Students will also be exposed to other cultures and the relations between various cultures within the US and also other regions of the world.
- Any unease you feel regarding these goals or the course content is part of your intellectual growth and a necessary part of expanding your understanding of the world.
 - The purpose of the course is to create a more informed citizen in an increasingly globalized world to better cope with both the personal and social issues looming on the horizon.

Sensitive Course Content

Because sociology addresses difficult social issues, the class may cover topics that some people have experienced personally. The following topics may produce anxiety for students who have experienced these social issues.

- *Social Movements and Use of Violence as a Means of Social Control*
 - During these sections, we will address the issues of lynching and military combat, which may include graphic images.
- *Gender and Society and Sexuality*
 - During these sections, we may address issues of sexual assault.
- If you think any of these topics will be difficult for you to experience, you have a couple options:
 - Since some in-class activities are dropped, you may be able to miss one class (and possibly more) and choose not to come during these subjects.
 - Please feel free to contact me ahead of time to make alternative arrangements.
 - If you are personally dealing with these issues or others, I have listed some resources on campus that may provide assistance. If you do not see what you need on this list, I may be able to suggest others.

Weekly Readings

Week 1

Introduction to the Course

- Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 - Chapters 1 and 2: Pages 1-57

Week 2

Higher Education in the United States

- Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 - Chapters 3 and 4, Pages 59-120

Week 3

Ethnocentrism and Genocide

- Churchill, Ward. 2004. *Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools*. San Francisco: City Lights.
 - Pages 1-82

Week 4

Sociological Theory and the Environment

- Torres, Bob. 2007. *Making a Killing: The Political Economy of Animal Rights*. Oakland: AK Press.
 - Chapters 1, 2 and 3: Pages 1-88

Week 5

Introduction to Fair Trade Issues

- DeCarlo, Jacqueline. 2007. *Fair Trade: A Beginner's Guide*. London: Oneworld.
 - Pages 1-113

Week 6

Globalization

- Durand, Cliff, and Steve Martinot. 2012. *Recreating Democracy in a Globalized State*. Atlanta: Clarity Press.
 - Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5: Pages 27-60, 97-126

Week 7

Sweatshops in a Global Economy

- Ching Yoon Louie, Miriam. 2001. *Sweatshop Warriors: Immigrant Women Workers Take on the Global Factory*. Cambridge: South End Press.
 - Introduction, Chapter 4, 5, 6 and Conclusion: Pages 1-16, 179-256
 - Either Chapter 1, 2, or 3 (case studies)

Week 8

White-Collar Sweatshops - Increasing Workplace Demands for Professionals

- Fraser, Jill Andresky. 2001. *White-Collar Sweatshop: The Deterioration of Work and Its Rewards in Corporate America*. New York: Norton.
 - Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 7: Pages 17-57, 75-96, and 135-159

Week 9

The Matrix of Domination

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2008. *Black Feminist Thought*. New York: Routledge.
 - Chapters 2, 3, 10, and 12: Pages 24-48, 51-75, 245-268, and 291-309

Week 10

Color Blind Racism

- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2009. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
 - Chapters 1, 2, and 9: Pages 1-17, 25-49, and 207-237

Week 11

Media and Society

- McChesney, Robert. 2004. *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
 - Chapters 1 and 3: Pages 16-56 and 98-137

Week 12

Ecological Consequences of Fossil Fuels

- Shiva, Vandana. 2008. *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis*. Cambridge: South End Press.
 - Chapters Introduction, 1, 3, and 4: Pages 1-47, and 77-132

Week 13

Motivations for the War in Iraq

- Project for a New American Century Documents (on D2L)

Week 14

Critical Assessment of the War in Iraq

- Research Unit For Political Economy. 2003. *Behind the Invasion of Iraq*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
 - Chapters 1 and 2: Pages 13-54

Week 15

Course Wrap Up

(No Readings)

Final Exam Week (No Exam)