

SOCIOLOGY 101 (FALL 2017)
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
T/R 10:05AM-11:30AM
Mosher Hall 3

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Course Website: <https://moodle.oxy.edu/course/view.php?id=22574>

COURSE OVERVIEW

Sociology focuses on the systematic understanding of social interaction, social organization, social institutions, and social change. Major themes in sociological thinking include the interplay between the individual and society, how society is both stable and changing, the causes and consequences of social inequality, and the social construction of human life.

This course introduces you to some of the main themes, concepts, and perspective in sociology. The primary goal is to develop your “sociological imagination”—the ability to understand human lives as shaped by historically-conditioned social forces. We will start our intellectual journey by defining sociology. Next, we’ll learn about the methods that researchers use to answer sociological questions and generate knowledge about a variety of phenomena. We’ll then discuss the structures of social inequalities. In the latter part of the semester, we’ll learn focus on two books of recent sociological scholarship—*Paying for the Party* and *American Zoo*. The course will conclude with the section on “sociology and you” to link sociological inquiry with our everyday lives.

In this course, you will need to examine your own experiences and observations, and you may need to be open, as assumptions about our society are challenged by sociological data and analysis. Doing this enables you to develop a more sophisticated understanding of your social world and, thus, yourself. I will also help to develop writing skills, careful reading, effective communication, and critical thinking abilities that will be useful in your college career and beyond.

COURSE REQUIREMENT

Grading

Your grade will be based on your class participation, writing assignments, and midterm and final exam. The grading rubric is as the following:

Participation	20%
Writing Assignments	40%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

The letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A=94.0 and higher	A-=90.0 to 93.99	B+=87.0 to 89.99	B=83.0 to 86.99
B-=80.0 to 82.99	C+=77.0 to 79.99	C=73.0 to 76.99	C-=70.0 to 72.99
D+=67.0 to 69.99	D=60.0 to 66.99	F=59.99 and lower	

Letter grades in this class have the following meaning:

- A Outstanding performance. You have demonstrated very thorough knowledge and understanding of all the material, truly superior critical thinking, and expressed insightful and original thoughts clearly. You have completed all required assignments and they have been among the best in the class.
- B Good performance. You have demonstrated solid knowledge and understanding of the material and good critical thinking. You have also shown the ability to express your ideas clearly. You have completed all required assignments and they have been of good quality.
- C Satisfactory performance. You have demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding of the major concepts taught in the class and some critical thinking. You have completed all or most of the required assignments and they have routinely been free of significant problems.
- D Deficient performance. You have only acquired a limited understanding of the class material. You have failed to complete all the required assignments and they have routinely had serious problems.
- F Failure. You have failed to learn a sufficient proportion of the basic concepts and ideas taught in the class. You have failed to complete many required assignments and they have routinely had serious problems.

Participation (20%)

The quality of our collective learning experience depends on your participation. To do well in this class, you should come to class having already read the assigned reading for the day and ready to contribute to the discussion. As you are preparing for class, you should get into the habit of taking careful notes on the readings and, in advance, you should spend time thinking about the readings or talking about them with a classmate to develop some initial reactions.

In the second half of the semester, you and colleagues will be in charge of leading class discussion on *Paying for the Party* and *American Zoo*. The performance of your group also counts for your participation grades. We will talk more about this during the semester.

You have to attend the class to participate. I will exercise attendance checks regularly. You are allowed to be absent without any reason **twice**. Beyond the two absence, you will lose 1 out of your 20 participation points for every absence. If you are late to the class by more than 10 minutes, you will be considered absent for the day.

Writing Assignments

There will be 4 short paper assignments throughout the semester, and they are due before class on the due date. Please submit your work to Moodle on time. You will lose 20% of your points for a late submission. Each paper should be about 800 words in length. Please include your name in the page heading, use spell check to avoid typos, and follow the format of single line spacing and 1-inch margin.

Office Hour

My office hour is on Monday and Wednesday 930am-11am. I enjoy talking to students and I encourage you to stop by. If you need to meet up with me in times other than my regular office hours, you can make an appointment with me. Office hours will not be devoted to tutorial for materials that students miss when not attending class. Also, please strive to ask routine questions of clarification in class.

Email Policies

The primary mode of communication for this course (outside of class meetings) will be email. I will send emails to your Oxy email address. I will send course-related information to you at least 24 hours in advance of any deadlines. I will likewise respond to your emails within 24 hours.

Academic Honesty

The College takes academic honesty very seriously. All of the work that you submit for this class must be your own work, and you are required to quote and cite all references properly. Although this appears straightforward, it can sometimes be confusing. Wherever you are unsure about quoting and citing, I am happy to help you figure out the best strategy.

The penalty for academic misconduct can include disciplinary probation, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, or expulsion from the college. Every student is responsible for understanding what constitutes academic misconduct. Please read the college's academic honesty primer here: <http://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics>. If you have any question about whether your work upholds the standards set forth by Oxy, please speak with me.

Electronic Devices

No use of Laptops, Tablets, Phones, or Other Electronic Devices in this class. Although computers are a valuable tool for research and study, they often hinder participation and collegiality in the classroom. Plus, we're really not that good at multi-tasking. If you are interested in this policy, I recommend *The New Yorker's* article "[The Case for Banning Laptops in the Classroom](#)"

Support Services

- The Writing Center (<http://www.oxy.edu/writing-center>) offers students from all disciplines two types of support to work on their writing: peer-to-peer, drop-in consultations with knowledgeable Writing Advisers and appointments with Faculty Writing Specialists from the Writing and Rhetoric department.
- Students who have disability-related needs, please contact me AND the Coordinator of Disability Services—(323) 259-2969—as soon as possible and we will make the appropriate accommodations. Please refer to the information on Disability Services' website: <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>
- Finally, the Emmons Health and Counseling Center (<http://www.oxy.edu/emmons-health-center>) is available for assistance with medical and mental health concerns.

Changes to the syllabus

The syllabus is a guide for the course and your learning is my top priority. If the course requires any changes, I will post a revised syllabus on Moodle and inform the class of any changes.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND LIST OF READINGS

Unit 1: Introduction

- 8/29 NO CLASS (Convocation)
- 8/31 Course Introduction: What is sociology?
The Syllabus
Demographic Facts You Need to Know
The Pencilword: On a plate
- 9/5 Sociological Imagination
Mills, "The Sociological Imagination"
Johnston, Cairns, and Baumann, "Sociological Thinking Frame"
Caplow, "Rule Enforcement without Visible Means: Christmas Gift Giving in Middletown"
- 9/7 Socialization and Social Interaction
Du Bois, "The Souls of Black Folk" (Chapter 1)
Goffman, "Presentation of Self in Everyday Life" (excerpt)
Schor, "Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture" (excerpt)
- 9/12 Groups and Social Network
Christakis and Fowler, "Connected" (excerpt)

Unit 2: Sociological Research Methods

- 9/14 Sociological Research Method
Schwalbe, "Finding Out How the Social World Works"
Schuman, "Sense and Nonsense about Surveys"
Lovaglia, "From Summer Camps to Glass Ceilings: The Power of Experiments"
Paper 1: "Weirding the Normal" due
- 9/19 Sociological Research Method
Stuart, "How Zero-Tolerance Policing Pits Poor against Poor" and "Methodological Appendix: an Inconvenient ethnography"
Weiss, "In Their Own Words"

Unit 3: Structures of Social Inequality

- 9/21 Gender
Messner, "Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters"
Damore, "Google's Ideological Echo Chamber"
The Economist, "The e-mail Larry Page should have written to James Damore"

9/26 Race and Ethnicity

Omi & Winant, "Racial Formations"
Buck, "Constructing Race, Creating White Privilege"
Pager, "The Mark of a Criminal Record"

9/28 Citizenship and Immigration

Brubaker, "Immigration, citizenship, and the nation-state in France and Germany"
National Academy of Sciences, "The Integration of Immigrants into American Society"
New York Times, "[Room for Debate: Should 'Birthright Citizenship' Be Abolished,](#)" and "[Just What Do You Mean By 'Anchor Baby'?](#)"

10/3 Capitalism and class

Wright, "What kind of a country is this?", "The market: how it is supposed to work", and "The market: How it actually works"

10/5 Globalization and Global Inequality

Rosling, "TED Talk: The best stats you've ever seen"
McMichael, "Development: Theory and Reality"
Paper 2: "Sociology of Pop Music" due

10/10 NO CLASS (Fall Break)

10/12 Sociology of pop music presentation

10/17 **Midterm Exam**

Unit 4: Paying for the Party

10/19 Groups Discussion

10/24 *Paying for the Party*: Preface, Introduction, Chapter 1 and 2

10/26 *Paying for the Party*: Chapter 3 and 4

10/31 *Paying for the Party*: Chapter 5, 6, and 7

11/2 *Paying for the Party*: Chapter 8 and 9

Paper 3: "Oxy's Pathways" due

Unit 5: American Zoo

11/7 *American Zoo*: Introduction, Chapter 1 and 2

11/9 *American Zoo*: Chapter 3-5

11/14 *American Zoo*: Chapter 6-8

11/16 Field trip to the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens

Unit 6: Sociology and You

11/21 What you buy

Sociological Images, "[From Our Archives: Thanksgiving](#)"
Babb and Carruthers, "Marketing and the Meaning of Things"

Paper 4: "Field notes from L.A. Zoo" due

11/23 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

11/28 How we gather to make change

Meyer, "How social movements matter"

Christensen, "Changing Society Through Social Movements"

11/30 How you love; who you love

Ansari and Klinenberg, "Modern Romance" Introduction, Ch1, Ch2, and Conclusion

12/2 What do you want to ask?

Final Take-home Exam TBA