

SOCIOLOGY 1027 (SPRING 2022)
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
THURSDAY 9:10AM-12:10PM
Sociology Building 103

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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 of this exciting discipline. The primary goal of this course is for you to develop a “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 research methods that researchers use to answer sociological questions and generate knowledge. We’ll then discuss fundamental organizations of our societies, race, gender, culture, and social inequalities. In the later part of the semester, we’ll learn about our social worlds, such as family, education, social movement, and we’ll also strive to connect to urgent issues such as COVID-19 and climate change.

In this course, you will need to examine your own experiences and observations, and you may need to challenge your assumptions about our society. Doing this enables you to develop a more sophisticated understanding of your social world and, thus, yourself.

COURSE REQUIREMENT

Grading

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

Participation	10%
Short Papers (4)	60%
Final Exam	30%

Key Text

A Sociology Experiment available online: <https://www.sociologyexperiment.com/>

This brand-new all-online text is an effort by some of the world’s leading sociologists to produce an accessible and affordable introduction to sociology. You are likely the first students to use it in Taiwan. The text is written for students based in the United States. I encourage you to read it with a critical lens and think about how the concepts and theories may apply to Taiwan or societies.

Participation (20%)

You have to attend the class to participate. I will exercise attendance checks regularly. You are allowed to be absent without any reason **once**. Beyond the first absence, you will lose 1 out of your 10 participation points for every absence. If you are late to the class by more than 15 minutes, you will be considered absent for the day.

The quality of our collective learning experience depends on your participation. My advice is simple – I suggest viewing our time together as an opportunity to make new friends, to learn some interesting things about the world in which we live, and to push yourself academically in whatever way makes sense for you. Your high-quality contributions may be rewarded with an extra “plus” on the final grade if you fall on a borderline between two grades.

For non-native English speakers, there might be learning curve for you prepare for the class. I expect you to devote much time reading and thinking about the subject. To do well in this class, you aim to master, respond critically and creatively to, and integrate the course material.

During each class, I will mix short lectures, classroom discussions, and various activities. For many class meetings, we will devote the first two hours as a big group and break out to smaller groups in the third hour. To cultivate good conversation, please keep in mind that we are debating ideas, not each other as individuals. Listen carefully. Be respectful. And, don't be afraid to speak up!

Short Papers (60%)

There will be 3 short paper assignments throughout the semester to help you better understand the course content. In addition, you will write a response paper to one of the Taiwan-based empirical papers in the class. I expect you to talk about the main findings, know the nature of the author's evidence, and how s/he bring that to bear on the research questions. You can choose to do this at any time during the semester. You are encouraged to work in groups and I will also rely on your help to analyze the paper in class.

The papers are due before class on the due date. Please submit your work on time. You will lose 20% of your points for late submission. Each paper should be about 750 word in length. Please include your name in the page heading, use spell check to avoid typos, and follow the format of single line spacing.

Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will cover the materials of the entire semester. The date of the exam is June 2.

COURSE RULES

Office Hour

I enjoy talking to students and talk about the course, or simply about life. You can make an appointment with me through email. 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 will be email. Please check your NTU email regularly. 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

I take 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. The penalty for academic misconduct can include disciplinary probation, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, or expulsion from the college.

Accessibility

It is my goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you anticipate any issues related to the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please meet with me outside of class so we can explore potential options.

Electronic Devices

No use of electronic devices in the class. Although computers are a valuable tool for research and study, they often hinder participation and collegiality in the classroom.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

PART 1: THINKING LIKE SOCIOLOGISTS

Week 1 (2/17): Course Introduction

- The Syllabus

Week 2 (2/24): Training your Sociological Eye

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 1

Week 3 (3/3): Research Methods

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 2

Week 4 (3/10): Social Structure, Culture, and the Individual

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 3 & 5

PART 2: THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY

Week 5 (3/17): Social Class, Inequality, and Poverty

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 4
- “Weirding the Normal” Essay due

Week 6 (3/24): Gender and Sexuality

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 6

Week 7 (3/31): Race and Ethnicity

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 7

Week 8 (4/7): Fieldtrip to Taiwan Human Rights Museum

PART 3: OUR SOCIAL WORLDS (FAMILY AND EDUCATION)

Week 9 (4/14): Sociology of Families

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 8
- “Fieldtrip Note” due

Week 10 (4/21): Sociology of Education

- *A Sociological Experiment* Chapter 9

Week 11 (4/28): Sociology of Education II

- Excerpt from *Raising Global Families*

PART 4 OUR SOCIAL WORLDS (HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND CHANGE)

Week 12 (5/5): Medical Sociology

- TBA
- “Sociological Autobiography” due

Week 13 (5/12): Environmental Sociology

- *Sociology in Action* Chapter 15

Week 14 (5/19): Social Movement

- *Sociology in Action* Chapter 16

Week 15 (5/26): What Can we do then?

- Excerpt from Erik Wright’s *Envisioning Real Utopias*

Week 16 (6/2): Final Exam