

Introduction to Sociology

Sociology 2710-600 (Fall 2007)

online course

Sociology & Anthropology

Eastern Illinois University

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Required Text:

Macionis, John J. 2007. *Sociology* (11th Edition) Prentice Hall.

Course Description & Objectives:

This course examines the scientific description of the regularities and patterns of behavior that characterize our society and the larger global environment. We also analyze the social forces that affect our daily lives integrating both theory and experience.

More specifically, viewing the everyday scenery of society from a new perspective is the fascination of sociology. According to Berger (1963:24) "...the first wisdom of sociology is this – things are not what they seem. This is a deceptively simple statement. It ceases to be simple after a while. Social reality turns out to have many layers thus, enhancing your understanding of the relationship between society and the individual." I am concerned that you learn about the social forces that influence us and our understandings of reality and social life.

Students will:

1. develop a sociological imagination, with attention to both social structure and culture;
2. identify and understand the social forces that influence society and individuals;
3. and continue to develop your critical thinking skills.

Class Format:

This class is online and utilizes WebCT as the primary source of instruction. Students are expected to participate in the weekly discussions on WebCT and to keep up with your readings. As your exams are based on your readings, it is to your extreme disadvantage to consider the readings optional.

Your User ID for WebCT is your E-mail User ID. All EIU students have an E-mail User ID that is assigned a few days before beginning of their first semester at EIU. If you can't remember it, you can go to the [EIU Home Page](#) and search for your name in the electronic phone book.

If you have changed your password and can't remember what you changed it to, contact the ITS Help Desk in the Gregg Triad Student Lab or call 581-HELP. You can also access the following website to find out more information about WebCT <http://www.eiu.edu/vce/student/index.php>

After you get your password information, go to the main WebCT login screen and proceed with your login. Once you successfully log in, you will see a current listing of all courses that are available to you on WebCT. Our class will be listed as **SOC2710WEL – Introductory Sociology**

Click the link to our course. There you will find links to the syllabus, a weekly assignment schedule, ALL quizzes and exams, a discussion board and a grade book. You should check WebCT daily as I may also post bulletins/announcements for the class.

Class Policies:

As with any course, online class discussion may, at times, concern controversial sociological issues. Students are expected to respect the viewpoints expressed by others. If you disagree with what someone has said, you are encouraged to express your disagreement but are expected to do so in a civil, respectful and polite manner. Failure to comply will result in a dismissal from the course.

Course Etiquette:

Missed Work – There will be no make up quizzes or exams for this course. If you have a conflict with a quiz or exam, you must contact me prior to the quiz or exam and we can make arrangement to resolve the issue.

Plagiarism - You should be aware of plagiarism in every paper or assignment you write. Plagiarism is the use, without adequate attribution, of another person's words or thoughts as if they were ones' own. You will receive a zero for any work that shows evidence of plagiarism and documentation will be filed with the Judicial Affairs office as a violation of the student code of conduct (which could result in being expelled from EIU).

Assignments:

Exams: There will be 3 term exams (100 points each), a final exam (100 points), weekly quizzes (10 points each), answers to discussion questions (5 points each) and responses to other student postings (2 points each response; 2 each week = 28 total). All of the assignments will be completed on WebCT and have a timed limit. A description of the discussion questions for posting is at the end of this syllabus.

Evaluation:

Course Exams (3)	300 pts.
Final Exam	100 pts.
Quizzes (12)	240 pts.
Discussion Q's (15)	75 pts
<u>Student responses (28)</u>	<u>56 pts.</u>
TOTAL	771 pts.

Grading Scale:

A=(100-90%)	771-693
B= (89-80%)	692-616
C= (79-70%)	615-539
D= (69-60%)	538-462
F= (0-59%)	461 or below

Disabilities Statement

Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) if they wish to discuss any necessary academic accommodations.

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK	TOPIC (ASSIGNMENTS)	READINGS	ASSN DUE DATE
8/20,22,24	Understanding Sociology	Macionis Ch 1	Quiz 1 8/24
8/27,29,31	Research	Macionis Ch 2	Quiz 2 8/31
9/3,5,7	Culture	Macionis Ch 3	Quiz 3 9/7
9/10,12,14	Society	Macionis Ch 4	Exam 1 9/14 (1-4)
9/17,19,21	Socialization	Macionis Ch 5	Quiz 4 9/21
9/24,26,28	Social interaction	Macionis Ch 6	Quiz 5 9/28
10/1,3,5	Deviance	Macionis Ch 9	Quiz 6 10/5

10/8,10,12	Stratification & Mobility	Macionis Ch 10	Exam 2 10/11 (5,6,9,10)
10/15,17,19	Social Class	Macionis Ch 11	Quiz 7 10/19
10/22,24,26	Gender Inequality	Macionis Ch 13	Quiz 8 10/26
10/29,31,11/2	Racial/Ethnic Inequality	Macionis Ch 14	Quiz 9 11/2
11/5,7,9	Economy & Work	Macionis Ch 16	Exam 3 11/9 (11,13,14,16)
11/12,14,16	Families	Macionis Ch 18	Quiz 10 11/16
11/26,28,30	Population & Urbanization	Macionis Ch 22	Quiz 11 11/30
12/3,5,7	Collective Behavior & Mvmnts	Macionis Ch 23	Quiz 12 12/7
Finals	time to be determined		FINAL EXAM

** Labor Day 9/3; Fall Break 10/12; Thanksgiving Break---November 17-25

***This syllabus serves as a contract between the student and instructor and the student is responsible for all information contained within this syllabus. This syllabus may be amended and any changes that the instructor deems necessary will be announced in class.

Reaction Papers:

You are to complete and submit responses to questions from each chapter. For chapters that have more than one set of questions, you may choose which set to answer. Your answers to the questions will be due each Monday (or Tuesday of holidays) by 5pm and should be between 300 and 500 words long. You will be graded on the content and depth of your answers. I expect that you will integrate key course concepts and materials into your answers.

You will also be expected to write substantive reactions to 2 different class members answers to the discussion questions each Wednesday of the week by 5pm (2-3 sentences). You are also required to take weekly quizzes will be available each Friday (except test weeks; see WebCT for time limits).

In summary...

1. answers to discussion questions are due every Monday by 5pm
2. reactions to other student postings due every Wednesday by 5pm
3. Quizzes are to be completed every Friday (time limits-see WebCT).

Chapter 1 Question A (DUE 8/24): For week one, you are required to write a general biography about yourself and post on WebCT. There are no required responses this week.

Chapter 2 Question A (DUE 8/27): What makes science a special “way of knowing”? What are important traits of scientific sociology? How are you scientific in your everyday life?

or...

Chapter 2 Question B: How and why is gender important in research? What are some of the problems you may encounter in research that involve gender? How about race and ethnicity? What could you do to confront/overcome these obstacles?

Chapter 3 Question A (DUE 9/4): How does ideal culture differ from real culture? Illustrate your essay using three examples of how ideal and real culture differ in U.S. society.

or...

Chapter 3 Question B: Identify at least one positive and one negative consequence of declaring English as the "official" language of the United States. Why do some people strongly support this goal? Why do others strongly oppose it?

Chapter 4 Question A (DUE 9/10): How does Durkheim's concept of anomie differ from (1) Marx's concept of alienation and (2) Weber's concept of alienation?

Chapter 5 Question A (DUE 9/17) : Based on the material in this chapter of the text, address the issue of human freedom in a socially structured world. That is, to what extent do you think people are free to think and act as they wish? In answering this question, consider the theories presented in the chapter--for example, why does Mead's theory point to greater human freedom than Freud's theory?

Chapter 6 Question A (DUE 9/24): Identify a number of your own statuses. What roles correspond to each? Do any operate as master statuses? How? Identify which statuses are mostly ascribed and which are mostly achieved. Use one or more examples to explain why many statuses are both ascribed and achieved.

Chapter 9 Question A (DUE 9/24): Explain the value and the limitations of biological and psychological explanations of crime. Expand the essay by explaining the strengths of a sociological approach to understanding crime.

or...

Chapter 9 Question B: The U.S. government provides a great deal of data about crime in the United States. Drawing on FBI data, what can we say about the "typical street criminal" in terms of age, gender, social class, and race and ethnicity? In each case, what can you say to explain the pattern? Finally, point to several reasons why we must treat criminal statistics with caution.

Chapter 10 Question A (DUE 10/1): Briefly explain the differences in the approach to social stratification of Karl Marx and Max Weber. How did each envision stratification? Why is Weber's approach more complex? Which approach do you think better represents social inequality in the United States? Why?

Chapter 11 Question A (DUE 10/15): Many people consider the United States to be a "middle-class society." Based on the material in this chapter, explain why people think this way, and also explain how correct you think this claim is.

or...

Chapter 11 Question B: Explain the debate over the causes of poverty in the United States. What evidence suggests that the poor are responsible for poverty? What evidence suggests that society as a whole is responsible for poverty? Which side of the debate do you find more convincing? Why?

Chapter 13 Question A (DUE 10/22): Is social class or gender more significant in shaping the life of an individual born in the United States today? How does each factor matter? Provide reasons for your choice. Consider how social class and gender interact.

or...

Chapter 13 Question B: Address the men's rights movement as outlined in the box on pages 348-349. In what ways are men disadvantaged in U.S. society today? On balance, do you think this argument is convincing or not? Why?

Chapter 14 Question A (DUE 10/29): Read the "In the *Times*" story about racial and cultural diversity in a New York neighborhood. Do you think this description is typical of much of the United States? Why or why not? What factors have helped make this country so racially and ethnically diverse?

or...

Chapter 14 Question B: Evaluate affirmative action as a social policy. Begin with a look at the Controversy & Debate box (pages 386-387). What is this policy intended to achieve? How successful has it been? What arguments are made supporting affirmative action and what arguments are made opposing it? Which position do you find more convincing? Why?

Chapter 16 Question A (DUE 11/5): Do you think large multinational corporations will dominate the world more than they do now? Is this good for the world's people? Why or why not?

Chapter 18 Question A (DUE 11/12): Why do some analysts (especially those guided by the structural-functional approach) describe the family as "the backbone of society"? That is, what important things do families do for society? To what degree could other social institutions (including government) perform these tasks in place of the family?

or...

Chapter 18 Question B: Why do some analysts (especially those guided by the social-conflict approach) describe the family as a system that perpetuates social inequality? Consider (a) class stratification, (b) gender stratification, and (c) racial and ethnic stratification. Does family encourage or discourage meritocracy? Why? Can you imagine a family form that would not play a part in supporting social inequality? Explain.

Chapter 22 Question A (DUE 11/26): Examine the two age-sex pyramids on page 583 of the text. Write an essay in which you analyze these pyramids showing how they provide information about the past, present, and future of a society's population.

or...

Chapter 22 Question B: Describe the state of the natural environment in the United States. Consider solid waste, water supply, water pollution, and air pollution. Do you think the environment is getting better or worse? Why?

Chapter 23 Question A (DUE 12/3): What have sociologists learned about disasters? What are the three types of disasters? Explain how and why the social damage caused by a disaster may end up being more serious than property damage.

or...

Chapter 23 Question B: Based on the discussion found in the final box in the chapter (page 632), why do you think so many people in the United States are reluctant to become involved in social movements? In light of this pattern, how do you explain the fact that, over our history, many people have become involved in social movements, often with significant results?