

SOC 2710: Intro to Sociology Spring 2008

Instructor Information:

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Office hours: Tu/Thu 4-5:30pm & Wednesday 10-11am

A central goal of this course is to introduce students to “the sociological imagination.” We will seek to understand the connections between our everyday lives and the (mostly) invisible social processes, institutions, and structures of the social world. We will learn to identify these connections and then use them to explain why things are the way they are and why we do the things we do.

We will explore the discipline of sociology in three ways. First, we will examine *how* sociologists study the social world by learning the main theoretical and methodological approaches in the discipline. Second, we will examine how the social world is even *possible* by learning about social interaction and the structure of society. Third, we will examine the incredible influence of social institutions. Did you know the military is the greatest source of slang in American culture? Though we won't study the military per se, we will study two key institutions, education and the economy. Since you are all in school you may find it intriguing to think about education from a sociological view. And, since many of you work, and you nearly all anticipate working in the future, you are likely to be invested in learning more about the economy and the changing nature of work.

Course objectives

The actual content of this course is better expressed in terms of what you will be able to do after you complete it. Students who fulfill all course requirements, attend all class sessions, and engage in a good faith effort to comprehend the material, will be able to:

1. Develop a sociological imagination
 - Understand how different sociological approaches explain society
 - Apply the sociological imagination to current issues in work and education
2. Summarize the key theoretical approaches to two major social institutions, the economy and education
 - Summarize key research findings on the influence of these institutions
3. Identify the general forces shaping our life chances
 - Summarize approaches to stratification in the areas of class, global inequality, and race and ethnicity.

Textbook

Macionis, John. 2007. *Sociology*. 11th Edition. You must bring this text to class! You will need it to participate fully in class. It is available from online booksellers at a greatly reduced price. I encourage you to buy your own copy.

Course Requirements

You are expected to attend every class, having read and prepared for a discussion, in class exercise, and/or guest speaker. You must come willing and capable of participating. To be capable of participating you must have read the material and you must have developed your own interest in the issues covered in the assigned chapter.

Assignments	My Points	Points
Reading Quizzes (5 count)		
Individual score 40 % (40 points each)		200
Group score 20% (20 points each)		100
Midterm Exam 15%		75
Comprehensive Final Exam 25%		125
Total		500

Please keep track of your points; I do not take kindly to being asked (again and again) for point totals by individual students.

Quizzes & Exams

You will take **7** reading quizzes over the term. Your lowest two quiz scores will be dropped. Therefore, if you miss a day that there is a quiz, it is recorded as a zero but, if you miss two or fewer quizzes, you will not be penalized. You cannot make up quizzes and you cannot make up team points.

We will take quizzes in what's called a **RAP session** format. Each student takes the quiz individually, first. Then, small teams of students re-take the quiz and we score those quizzes right away.

The midterm covers both the reading and **lecture** material. You will be tested on six chapters out of the ten we cover over the semester, plus every lecture up to that date. Your final exam is **cumulative**. All the material from the term is fair game for the final exam. You may see some questions from the quizzes again.

The format of quizzes and the final exam will be **multiple choice**. Every quiz and exam will test both lower and higher-level thinking (that is, knowledge and understanding of concepts).

You may schedule midterm make-ups during finals week. Individual quizzes and team quizzes cannot be made up; instead, we will drop your lowest score so if you miss one quiz, the zero will not adversely affect your grade.

Classroom Courtesy

All electronic devices must be turned off or to "silent" mode when you enter the classroom. That is the rule—you are asked to take 75 minutes out of your day to attend class and let your voice mail take a message. For the sake of your own impression management, please remove headphones. You want to present your best self; that is, your attentive, intelligent, and engaged self.

Simply turning your device to vibrate is not sufficient, as we can all still hear it "buzz" and it will be distracting to your fellow students.

It's an amazing thing that when you turn off your phone, you can check it AFTER class and see who called or texted you while you were busy getting an education. Do NOT pull your cell out to see who called. You are in class and not available to anyone.

If you have some special circumstance where you MUST see who has called you or you MUST take a particular call, let me know.

Attendance

We all need to be here because the quality of each student's engagement matters to the learning of the entire class. Therefore, perfect attendance will get you 20 bonus points; these bonus points are equivalent to 4% of your grade.

You may miss four times without penalty (but you're no longer eligible for the bonus).

Four absences is equivalent to missing two weeks: missing class beyond this is unacceptable. With the fifth and subsequent absences, you will suffer a 4% reduction in your final grade. That means your fifth absence costs you a 20 point subtraction from your total points. Your sixth absence costs another 20 points, and so on.

I understand that sometimes students miss class because of unforeseen or uncontrollable circumstances. The only absence that will not count against a student for the attendance bonus is an absence that is a documented instance of a university-sanctioned activity in which the student is acting as a representative of the university.

Grade appeals

Keep all of your graded work in case you find a discrepancy with your final grade in the course. It is up to you to maintain your own documentation that you were in class and completed the assigned work. **Date** your notes and **keep** your quizzes!

I am always willing to talk with you about how your work is evaluated. If you would like me to re-evaluate an exam, I ask that you provide a write-up of the reason for your grade appeal. I must receive this write-up within one week of returning the graded assignment.

I will only address questions about grades that are turned in to me in writing. Be aware that in re-evaluating student work, it is possible that I will lower the grade.

The burden here is on you. You must keep your **dated** notes and quizzes as documentation of your work and of your attendance.

Communications Policy

I encourage you all to contact me at anytime if you have questions, need assistance, or simply want to chat more about the content of the course or sociology more broadly. I hold office hours three times a week. My office hours are especially for this class and that time is set aside for all of you, I welcome and strongly recommend that you all come to see me regularly during office hours.

Without question, email is the best way to reach me; however, my email gets very full very quickly. Therefore, I have some simple guidelines I ask you to follow when communicating to me via email.

- always include the **class name** (SOC 2710) in the subject line of the email.
 - I do not open spam or junk mail and therefore, if the subject line does not catch my attention your email will be deleted without being read
- always begin the email in a professional manner (“Dear Professor Deerman” is good) and end it professionally (“Thank you” is good).

- ALWAYS... I repeat ALWAYS, sign your email with your first and last name!
- Finally, please keep in mind that our relationship is a professional one between a professor and a student and therefore you should use proper English in your email and avoid slang and various forms of text message language (e.g., “LOL”, “C-ya”, “Bcuz”)

Academic Dishonesty

It is dishonest to copy someone’s exam, to use notes or texts during an exam when prohibited from doing so, to have someone complete assignments for you, or to claim another person’s written work as your own. It is also an act of academic dishonesty to misrepresent your class attendance.

The definition of academic dishonesty and its consequences are in the Student Code of Conduct. In the past, I have failed students who plagiarized and I have failed students who misrepresented their class attendance. **I will report every incident** to Judicial Affairs regardless of the severity of the offense.

I take seriously the fact that there are people who dream of going to college and have no chance of ever attending; thus, I hold college students to a very high standard of conduct and expect unimpeachable behavior from each of you.

Note: All material in this course syllabus, including exam dates, may be subject to change, especially when student learning will benefit from instructor flexibility responsiveness..

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.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY STATEMENT

For medical emergencies, go to the nearest phone and call 911. All faculty offices have telephones and during normal business hours (8-12 and 1-4:30), the Sociology Office (Blair 3170) is open. Be sure to state the floor and room number of the emergency to the 911 operator. If possible, someone should go to the central entrance of Blair Hall to direct EMS personnel to the medical emergency scene. If the medical emergency is on the second or third floor, someone else should hold the elevator on the first floor for EMS use.

TORNADO STATEMENT

In case of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor, near the posted severe weather signs. Under no circumstances should you attempt to leave the building.

BUILDING FIRE STATEMENT

In case of fire, activate the fire alarm and exit the building. When a fire alarm sounds, everyone must exit the building and cannot re-enter the building until allowed by the building coordinator or fire department official. Fire alarms are located at the north and south ends of the corridors just inside the fire doors. The closest exits for all classrooms in Blair are on the north and south ends of the building. Under no circumstance should the elevator be used. Group assembly areas for all classes in Blair are either on the patio area between Blair and Old Main or on the southeast corner of the North Quad. As you exit the building, continue moving well away from the exits so that you do not impede the egress of other students or the work of fire officials. Move a safe distance away from the building.