

Introduction to Sociology
Sociology 2710-001 (Spring 2008)
Blair Hall 3103
T, Th 2:00-3:15 pm
Sociology & Anthropology
Eastern Illinois University

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Office Hours: M 12:30-2:30;
T & Th 1-2 and/or by appt.

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:

The class will be based primarily on a guided discussion of the assigned readings. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in the discussion; therefore, it is very important that you keep up with your readings. As your exams are based partly on your readings, it is to your extreme disadvantage to consider the readings optional. Guest speakers and video presentations may also be used to supplement the readings and, at times, students will be expected to participate in small group or class activities.

Class Policies:

As with any course, 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.

Classroom Etiquette:

Attendance/tardiness - You are expected to attend class regularly. Attendance is of critical importance as lectures will supplement textbook readings and provide additional information that cannot be gathered by reading the text. Excessive absences from class will negatively affect your final course grade. Furthermore, you should come to class on time. Walking into class late is

disrespectful to both your instructor and your fellow students and will not be tolerated. Also, turn off all electronic devices (i.e. cell phones) before entering the classroom!

Missed Work - It should not be assumed that you will be given make-up exams if you miss a test day. Exams missed because of serious illness, death in the family, or other serious emergencies (automobile breakdowns do not qualify), require informing the instructor **within 24 hours** of the class meeting missed. I expect that you are able to provide adequate documentation if you are to miss an exam...**this means a doctor's excuse or other official document.** At that time, appropriate measures will be discussed to complete the course requirements. Otherwise, failure to show up for an exam on the scheduled day will result in the score of a zero.

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 one's 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).

Readings - I will not discuss everything that your text covers. I see no point in simply telling you what your book has already told you. However, you are responsible for all of the information I ask you to read. This means that if you read something that you do not understand, it is up to you to ask me for clarification. We will use class time to discuss and build on the readings. I write each lecture with the assumption that you have read the assigned readings for the day. In order to follow the lecture and participate in the class discussions it will be necessary to do the readings before coming to class.

Assignments:

Exams: There will be 3 term exams (100 points each), a final exam (100 points) and two reaction papers (20 points each). The exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. You will be required to draw upon your readings, lectures, class discussions, and video's/guest lectures to answer the questions fully. A description of the reaction papers is at the end of this syllabus.

Grading Scale %:	90-100 =A
	80-89 =B
	70-79 =C
	60-69 =D
	0-59 =F

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 closes 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.

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK	TOPIC (ASSIGNMENTS)	READINGS	ASSN DUE DATE
1/8,10	PART 1: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE Understanding Sociology	Macionis Ch 1	
1/15,17	Research	Macionis Ch 2	
1/22,24	PART 2: ORGANIZING SOCIAL LIFE: Culture	Macionis Ch 3	Labor Day 9/3 NO CLASS
1/29,31	Society	Macionis Ch 4	RP 1 Due 1/29 Exam 1 1/31 Ch's 1-4
2/5,7	Socialization	Macionis Ch 5	
2/12,14	Deviance	Macionis Ch 9	
2/19,21	Stratification & Mobility	Macionis Ch 10	
2/26,28	Strat (cont'd)	Fall Break 10/12 NO CLASS	RP 2 Due 2/26 Exam 2 2/28 Ch's 5,9,10
3/4,6	Social Class	Macionis Ch 11	
3/18,20	Gender Inequality	Macionis Ch 13	
3/25,27	Racial/Ethnic Inequality	Macionis Ch 14	No Class 3/27
4/1,3	Gender/Racial/Ethnic/Class Inequality (cont'd)		RP 3 Due 4/1 Exam 3 4/3 Ch's 11,13,14
4/8,10	Economy & Work	Macionis Ch 16	
4/15,17	Population & Urbanization	Macionis Ch 22	
4/22,24	Collective Behavior/Social Movements	Macionis Ch 23	RP 4 Due 4/22
Thurs 5/1	2:45 - 4:45 pm	Blair 3103	FINAL EXAM

**Spring Break---March 10-14

***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 two 1-2 full page reaction papers during the semester (20 points each). Each set of questions have separate due dates. You will choose one question from 2 of the 4 sets to complete. For example, I can choose to complete Chapter 2 Question A (from Set 1) for my first reaction paper. Then, for my second, I can choose to wait until the end of the term and complete Chapter 22 Question B (from Set 4) for my second assignment. You must complete two of these assignments from different sets. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your response and integration of key materials from the text.

SET 1 (Due 1/29)

Chapter 1 Question A: The sociological perspective helps us recognize that the lives of individuals are shaped by the forces of society. In your own words, explain how the sociological perspective reveals “the general in the particular.” To illustrate, explain how society plays a part in your own decision to attend college.

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

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: 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.

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: How does Durkheim’s concept of anomie differ from (1) Marx’s concept of alienation and (2) Weber’s concept of alienation?

SET 2 (Due 2/26)

Chapter 5 Question A: 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 9 Question A: 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.

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: 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?

SET 3 (Due 4/1)

Chapter 11 Question A: 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.

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: 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.

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: 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?

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?

SET 4 (Due 4/22)

Chapter 16 Question A: 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 22 Question A: 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.

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: 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.

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?