

# Introduction to Sociology

Spring 2013

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Office: 333 BEH  
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## Course Description

This class will introduce students to the basic foundations of sociology, including its evolution as a field of inquiry, its early sociological theory, and its methodology. Our primary goal, however, is to focus on how everyday experiences are linked to larger social forces. Together we will investigate how class, race, gender, sexuality, the family, education, and globalization interrelate and shape contemporary society. Ultimately, this course challenges you to step out of your comfort zone and question long held assumptions so to analyze the complexity of everyday life. This class will prepare you for further study in sociology and other social science disciplines.

## Course Goals

- 1). Students will understand key sociological concepts, methods, theories, perspectives, and approaches.
- 2). Students will be able to apply sociological analysis to contemporary examples and their own lives.
- 3). Students will practice their critical thinking and writing skills.

## Required Texts

- 1). Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Domestica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*
- 2). David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

- |                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1). Two exams (best of 3) | 200 points (2@ 100 points each) |
| 2). Three assignments     | 30 points (3@ 10 points each)   |
| 3). Attendance            | 70 points                       |
| 4). Final paper           | 100 points                      |

**Total:** **400 points**

**Exams:** There are three multiple-choice exams, worth 100 points each, that will cover material from the textbook, lectures, and films shown in class. Of the three exams, I will keep your two best scores. This means that you can miss one exam without adversely affecting your final grade. Because of this, however, there are absolutely no make-ups for missed exams.

**Assignments:** There are three brief written assignments designed to let you “do” sociology by applying sociological concepts discussed in class. The addition of these exercises in all sections of Introduction to Sociology reflects the University of Utah’s requirements for increasing the course from 3 to 4 credit hours. Assignments must be *1.5 to 2 double-spaced pages in length with 12-point font and one-inch margins*. They are worth 10 points each and are due on the dates indicated below. Late papers will not be accepted. Assignments will be graded on the following scale:

- 9-10 points: Excellent
- 7-8 points: Acceptable
- 4-5 points: Inadequate

- 0 points: Not turned in on time or plagiarized

**Assignment #1) *Theorizing the News*:** How would classical theorists analyze today's news? This assignment has you analyze a major news theory through the eyes of an early foundational figure in sociology.

**Assignment #2) *Ethnography in Action*:** Conduct a brief participant observation or ethnographic study in which you study and/or participate in a group event or social organization. Examples of events or organizations include a city council meeting, an Indian powwow, a religious service other than the one you usually attend, a "greasy-spoon" diner or fast food restaurant, a coffee shop, a sporting event, or any volunteer organization. To complete the assignment, write down your observations, highlight any patterns you observe, and point out any observations or patterns that surprise you.

**Assignment #3) *Tuning In: Media in Focus*:** In this assignment, you are asked to examine the processes that shape our understanding of gender & sexuality and race & ethnicity. This will be a group project consisting of two or three students per group. The goal of this assignment is to increase awareness of both the overt and more subtle, covert messages about gender & sexuality and race & ethnicity that are embedded in television programming.

**Final Paper: *Me: A Sociological Biography*:** An essay that brings your life (and your family's) experiences into dialogue with themes, concepts, and theories we discuss in class. (4-6 pages)

\*\*\*A detailed guide for each of these papers will be handed out in lecture as the course proceeds\*\*\*

**Attendance:** Throughout the semester, I will randomly take attendance on eight occasions. Each time you are in class on one of these occasions, you will earn 10 points. You may be absent for one of these eight occasions without it adversely impacting your final grade. However, if you are present for all eight class periods in which I take roll, you will receive 10 bonus points. (If you must miss class for university-sanctioned travel AND you notify me in writing in advance you will not be penalized. Likewise, if you must miss class for a documented emergency, you will also be excused.)

## Course Policies

### *Assignments*

Assignments are due in class on their due date. Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the grade for each day they are not turned in.

### *Make-up exams*

Make-up exams will be given only in documented cases of excused absences (e.g. emergencies, extreme illness, religious observances, etc.). In all cases, I reserve the right to change the format of the exam.

### *Computers*

If you plan to use a computer to take notes in class, please be aware of the following: Checking your email or updating your Facebook status during class is disrespectful to both me and your fellow students. If I suspect that you are not taking notes for class, I will revoke your computer privileges and deduct 10% from your next assignment and/or exam.

### *Academic Conduct*

In addition to these requirements, students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom as stipulated in the Student Code, which can be found here: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code and know that they are responsible for its content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is faculty members' responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

I expect that all work you produce over the course of the semester will be your own. If you plagiarize any material from outside sources for your written work in the class, **IT WILL RESULT IN A FAILURE OF THE ENTIRE COURSE**. There are no exceptions to this, and no second chances. When in doubt, ask.

**Accommodations Policy:** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and me to make arrangements for accommodations.

Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

### **Weekly Outline**

Note: This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.

#### **Week One:**

Monday: **Introduction: Course Goals and Objectives**

Wednesday: **Learning to Think Sociologically**

Friday: **Learning to Think Sociologically**

#### **Week Two:**

Monday: **Foundational Theories: The Development of Sociological Thinking**

Wednesday: **Foundational Theories: The Development of Sociological Thinking, cont.**

Friday: **Foundational Theories: The Development of Sociological Thinking, cont.**

#### **Week Three:**

Monday: **Foundational Theories: The Development of Sociological Thinking, cont.**

Wednesday: **The Vocabulary and Science of Doing Social Research**

Friday: **The Vocabulary and Science of Doing Social Research, cont.**

#### **Week Four:**

Monday: **The Vocabulary and Science of Doing Social Research, cont.**

Wednesday: **Ethics and Social Research**

Friday: **Ethics and Social Research, cont.**

**Week Five:**

Monday: **Ethics and Social Research, cont.**

Wednesday: **Exam #1**

Friday: **Privilege and Power by Class**

**Week Six:**

Monday: **Privilege and Power by Class, cont.**

Wednesday: **Privilege and Power by Class, cont.**

Friday: **Privilege and Power by Class, cont.**

**Week Seven:**

Monday: **Privilege and Power by Class, cont.**

Wednesday: **Sex, Gender, and Sexuality**

Friday: **Sex, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.**

**\*\*\*SPRING BREAK\*\*\***

**Week Eight:**

Monday: **Sex , Gender, and Sexuality, cont.**

Wednesday: **Sex, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.**

Friday: **Sex, Gender, and Sexuality, cont.**

**Week Nine:**

Monday: **Race and Ethnicity**

Wednesday: **Race and Ethnicity, cont.**

Friday: **Race and Ethnicity, cont.**

**Week Ten:**

Monday: **Race and Ethnicity, cont.**

Wednesday: **Race and Ethnicity, cont.**

Friday: **Exam #2**

**Week Eleven:**

Monday: **Identity and Popular Culture**

Wednesday: **Identity and Popular Culture, cont.**

Friday: **Identity and Popular Culture**

**Week Twelve:**

Monday: **Identity and Popular Culture, cont.**

Wednesday: **Identity and Popular Culture, cont.**

Friday: **Education**

**Week Thirteen:**

Monday: **Education, cont.**

Wednesday: **Education, cont.**

Friday: **Globalization and Labor, cont.**

**Week Fourteen:**

Monday: **Globalization and Labor, cont.**

Wednesday: **Globalization and Labor, cont.**

Friday: **Globalization and Labor, cont.**

**Week Fifteen:**

Monday: **Social Change: Modernity and Movements**

Wednesday: **Social Change: Modernity and Movements, cont.**

Friday: **Exam #3**