

Introduction to Sociology
Sociology 101
MW 6:00-9:45pm
Summer 2008 5/27/08-7/03/08
Tillett Hall: Room 116 LC

Instructor: Kate Burrows
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Office Hours: MW 5:00-6:00pm or by appointment
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Course Description: Sociology is the systematic, scientific study of the patterns and processes of social life. The study of social life focuses on many major dimensions: cultural, political, economic, religious, interpersonal, physical/medical, and criminal to name merely a few. As sociologists we are concerned with everyday phenomena, as well as events that occur at a much grander social scale, and ultimately all events that happen between the two.

As vast as social life is we can not cover all of it in the course of a single summer course. Thus, rather than a comprehensive view of sociology, I offer an introduction to several major themes and works within sociology. Again, the format is not comprehensive of what sociology is or what sociologists do, but should provide a good orientation to the vast world that is sociology.

My goal therefore is to introduce you to the sociological perspective; in other words, a sociological way of looking at the world. I hope that this sociological imagination, as well as the writing and critical thinking skills that spring from this viewpoint, will allow you to see your everyday life, as well as events that happen in the world around you, in a new way. This course provides the foundation for further study in sociology and other social sciences and humanity programs, but is also suited for students in other programs of study who want to develop a new way of “seeing the world.”

Required Text: Ruane, Janet and Karen Cerulo. 2004. *Second Thoughts: Seeing Conventional Wisdom Through the Sociological Eye. Third Edition.* Pine Forge Press.

This text is available at the Livingston Bookstore as well as New Jersey Books on 108 Somerset in New Brunswick.

We will do a lot of other reading in this class. Articles and assignments will be posted on the course Sakai website. Please note that **connectivity problems are not a sufficient excuse** to not have readings done prior to the class. If you are having a hard time accessing Sakai, please let me know ASAP and connect with a fellow student to access the readings.

Optional Texts: Some students also find it helpful to purchase, or have access to, a standard intro text book. *It is not required* for you to purchase such a book, but you can buy a good one on Amazon.com or Half.com for about a dollar and can be a good reference, especially for vocabulary and studying for tests. Some suggestions are:

Andersen, Margaret and Howard F. Taylor. 2000. *Sociology: Understanding A Diverse Society First Edition*. New York: Thompson and Wadsworth.

Giddens, Anthony, Duneier, Mitchell, and Richard Appelbaum. 2005. *Introduction to Sociology. Fifth Edition*. New York: Norton

Grading: I follow Rutgers University's grading scale:

- A: 90-100 pts
- B+: 86-89 pts
- B: 80-85 pts
- C+: 76-79 pts
- C: 70-75 pts
- D: 60-69 pts
- F: below 60 pts

Grades will be based on the following class exercises:

Take-home question and presentation to class:	10
Journal Review paper:	10
Breaching Experiment:	10
Sociological Autobiography:	20
Mid-term Exam:	25
Final Exam:	25
Total:	100

I do not take attendance. However, test questions will include material from lecture, as well as your fellow student's take-home question presentations and in-class exercises and films, so you are unlikely to pass the tests unless you attend every course and take scrupulous notes. I will not post powerpoint slides on Sakai before the class period. If you miss your in-class presentation day, there is no make-up unless you have a documented excuse. No late work will be accepted without a documented excuse. **I do not negotiate grades.** If you are having a problem with the coursework, **please come see me** early in the course.

Course Format: As an intensive summer course, we have eleven meetings of almost 4 hours each. Although the time frame is condensed, the content is not. There is a lot of writing and reading required to begin to develop the sociological imagination. Therefore, we have a lot to work on in every class session, and I expect each of you to come prepared (i.e.: have read all required readings, done required homework or presentation prep, etc). The course is broadly broken into two sections: the first part of the class is devoted to foundational concepts in sociology, and in the second six class sessions we will explore major topics that sociologists study, including areas of inequality and stratification. For everyone's sake, I will not be lecturing for 3 ½ hours every day; your participation is critical. Daily sessions will be a combination of lecture, student

presentations, small discussion groups, and films. Most days we will go for the full class period- please do not ask to be let out early.

Assignments: There are 4 major assignments in this course.

Take-home questions and class presentations: Every day at the end of class I will hand out 3-4 questions for research and presentation for the next class session. You are expected to select one question during the course (i.e.: four students each day will select a question). For the week you select a question, research the assigned topic (I expect you to use sources in addition to Wikipedia!) for its sociological significance. You must do more than merely define terms- give us an idea of what the concept means “in real life.” Some questions will require internet research; others will ask you to use your own experiences to demonstrate sociological concepts; others will demand both. Come prepared in the next class session to present your findings to the rest of the class. This assignment is worth 10 points.

Journal Review paper: Learning about sociology can be facilitated by learning what research actual sociologists are really doing. For this assignment, I will provide a list of the major sociology journals. You will select 1 article in any of these journals from the last 5 years and write a short (3-5 pages) review of the article, including it’s theoretical orientation, research design, major findings, and your interpretation of the “so-what” question. Detailed instructions will appear on Sakai. This assignment is due to be posted on Sakai by **6pm Monday June 9th**. Be prepared to discuss your article and findings in a small group in class. This assignment is worth 10 points.

Breaching Experiment: You will conduct a short “breaching experiment” outside of class and write a short (2-3 pages) paper on your experiment, results, and what these results tell you about socialization and social norms. Detailed instructions will appear on Sakai. This assignment is due to be posted on Sakai by **6pm Monday June 16th**. Be prepared to discuss your experiment and findings in a small group in class. This assignment is worth 10 points.

Sociological Autobiography: This is a comprehensive look at your own life, including your family of origin, educational and work experiences, from the viewpoint of sociological imagination. This paper should incorporate most of the major topics covered in the course and should be 5-7 pages long. Detailed instructions will appear on Sakai. This assignment is due to be posted on Sakai by **6pm Wednesday June 25th**. This assignment is worth 20 points.

Exams: There are two exams in this course- one at midterm and one at the end of the course. These exams will be composed of multiple-choice and short answer questions and will cover concepts covered in the readings, in-class discussion, lecture, films, and student presentations. The final exam is not comprehensive- it will only cover the material covered in class since the midterm.

Class Schedule:

Please note: All readings are expected to be completed prior to the course period in which they are listed. A typical class period will require about 40 pages of reading. If you did not get a chance to read the readings for the first day, please read them by the second class session. Selections marked with an * appear on Sakai; all others are from your text.

Foundations of Sociology

Wed, 5/28 DAY 1

Themes: An Intro to Intro
The Sociological Imagination

Readings: *Second Thoughts: The Sociological Perspective pp3-9 (7 pages)*
**The Promise C Wright Mills (5 pages)*
**Invitation to Sociology Peter Berger (read in class 4 pages)*
**This syllabus!*

Due: None

Mon, 6/2 DAY 2

Themes: Sociological Research and Methods
Research Ethics
Ethnomethodology and Breaching Experiments

Readings: *Second Thoughts: Numbers Don't Lie pp13-19 (7 pages)*
**How to Lie with Statistics Darrell Huff (5 pages)*
**ASA Code of Ethics pp3-5; 9-16 (11 pages)*
**Selections from Heritage (17 pages)*

Film: Obedience

Due: None

Wed, 6/4 DAY 3

Themes: Sociological Theory
The Big Three: Marx, Weber, Durkheim (+1)
Three Theoretical Perspectives (+2)

Readings: **What is a Social Fact Emile Durkheim (7 pages)*
**Manifesto of the Communist Party Marx and Engels (7 pages)*
**The Protestant Ethic Max Weber (8 pages)*
**Selections from Simmel (16 pages)*

Due: None

Mon, 6/9 DAY 4

Themes: Norms
Socialization

Readings: *Second Thoughts: Honesty is the Best Policy pp157-163(7 pages)*
**The Looking Glass Self Charles Cooley (6 pages)*
**Selections from Social Construction of Reality (6 pages)*

Exercise: Discuss Journal reviews

Due: Journal Review paper

Wed, 6/11 DAY 5

Themes: Deviance
Social Control
Readings: *Second Thoughts: There Ought to Be a Law pp149-155 (7 pages)*
**America's New Peculiar Institution Loic Wacquant (9 pages)*
**On Being Sane in Insane Places David Rosenhan (8 pages)*
**Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia McLorg and Taub (10 pages)*
Film: Sound and Fury
Due: None

Mon, 6/16 DAY 6

Themes: Power & Coercion
Readings: **Power: A Radical View Book Review M. Lorenzi (8 pages)*
**The Power Elite C Wright Mills (5 pages)*
**Money Talks Clawson, Neustadtl & Scott (12 pages)*
**Fear as Institution Michael Parenti (14 pages)*
Exercise: Discuss Breaching Experiments
Review for Midterm
Due: Breaching Experiments

Inequalities, Stratification, and Major Topics

Wed, 6/18 DAY 7

Themes: Class Inequality & Stratification
Readings: *Second Thoughts: More we Pay pp101-105 (5 pages)*
**Race, Wealth & Equality Oliver & Shapiro (11 pages)*
**Media Magic Gregory Mantsios (9 pages)*
**The Growing Wealth Gap Sklar, Collins & Wright (6 pages)*
**Corporate Welfare Barlett & Steele (4 pages)*
Exercise: **Midterm Today!**
Due: None

Mon, 6/23 DAY 8

Themes: Racial and Ethnic Inequality
Readings: *Second Thoughts: Land of Equal Opportunity pp125-135 (9 pages)*
**Racial Formations Omi & Winant (8 pages)*
**How Jews Became White Karen Sacks (12 pages)*
**The Problem of the 20th Century WEB Du Bois (5 pages)*
Film: Blue Eyed
Due: None

Wed, 6/25 DAY 9

Themes: Gender & Sexuality
Readings: *Second Thoughts: You've Come Long Way pp113-123 (11 pages)*
**The Social Construction of Gender Judith Lorber (7 pages)*

**The Invention of Heterosexuality Jonathan Katz (12 pages)*
**The Five Sexes Anne Fausto-Sterling (7 pages)*

Due: Sociological Autobiography

Mon, 6/30 DAY 10

Themes: Medicine, Health & Medicalization
Mental Health

Readings: **Impure Science Steven Epstein (10 pages)*
**Treating Health Rothman & Caschetta (12 pages)*
**Speaking of Sadness David Karp (16 pages)*

Film: The Business of Being Born

Exercise: Review for Final

Due: None

Wed, 7/2 DAY 11

Themes: Wrap-up
Careers in Sociology
New directions in Sociology
Current Controversies in Sociology

Readings: TBA

Exercises: **Final Exam Today!**

Due: None

Classroom Policies

Be respectful of me, of your classmates, of the university personnel and facilities. This means, at a minimum, turning off your cell phones and minimizing disruptive behavior in class, generally paying attention in class, arriving on time, and staying for the full class period.

Please choose your words carefully. The classroom must be a place in which everyone can participate. This means that every person must feel safe enough to express their opinions without fear of ridicule or intolerance. Remember that in good discussions, people critique ideas and not other people. The more heated the political issue we discuss, the more important it is to keep this in mind. Please use inclusive (non-sexist) language, when speaking and in your written work. This means, at a minimum, not using “man” to refer to all humans, and not using “he” exclusively to refer to all people. If you have questions about what inclusive language is, please consult a current style guide or ask me.

Academic Integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offenses. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) such behavior as **quoting** or **paraphrasing** without complete citation, collaborating with others on assignments or exams without the explicit permission of the instructor, submitting work for more than one course without the instructors’ permission, and presenting another’s work as your own. Penalties range from a failing grade for the assignment to permanent expulsion from the University, depending on the severity of the offense. As an instructor, I am **obligated** to report all

suspected violations to the suspected student's Dean; the Dean's Office then makes recommendations. In other words, as soon as I suspect it, it is entirely out of my hands. Don't put me, or yourself, in this position. See the full policy (<http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/>) for details. Please ask me if you have any questions.

Makeup Exams. For in-class exams, I allow make-ups **only in very rare circumstances**. Oversleeping, missing the campus bus, getting a flat tire, etc. are NOT valid reasons for a makeup. Makeup exams consist of long-answer essay questions, and the bar is set high. It is not to your advantage to take a makeup exam in this class. See me as soon as possible if you know you will miss an exam.

Contacting me. The best way to contact me is via **email**: kburrows@sociology.rutgers.edu. Please read the syllabus thoroughly before emailing me with questions about the course. Don't email me an hour before class starts to ask me questions about the reading or exams; not only will I not have time to respond to you before class, but I will also know you put off the assignment until the last minute. When you email, please put the name of the course (e.g., "Intro") in the subject heading and include your full name in the email. Otherwise, I won't be able to tell your email apart from the spam I delete without opening. I welcome anonymous emails with suggestions, critiques, or comments about the course, but I will not respond to such anonymous emails.

Sakai. We will use Sakai in this course for additional readings, announcements, and for posting and turning in assignments. Please let me know ASAP if you have any trouble accessing this site.

Office hours. I have office hours every week, as listed on the first page of this syllabus. Feel free to just drop by or to make an appointment ahead of time; if two or more people show up at the same time, those with appointments will be given priority. If my scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule, email me or see me in class to set up an alternate time.

Classroom Accessibility. Please come see me no later than the third class if you have special learning needs. I will work with you to make the classroom and the material accessible. A great resource is the RU Learning Centers, where you can contact the Disability Coordinator for your school. Their website is <http://lrc.rutgers.edu/disabilities.html>.

Acknowledgements: Much of this syllabus has been pilfered and adopted from others at Rutgers, most notably Daina Harvey and Audrey Devine-Eller.

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, as I see fit or necessary for the course.