Introduction to Sociology

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Course Description and Course Objective:

Although we all have first-hand experience with social life, this course is designed to help students move beyond their “common sense” knowledge of the social world. Through developing their sociological imaginations, students will learn to think critically about the roles of individuals, institutions, and social structure in society. We will use fundamental sociological concepts and theoretical perspectives to examine modern societies, with an emphasis on American society. The course will survey a broad range of topics, with many touching on controversial debates that surround social stratification issues. By the end of the course, students should have the conceptual and theoretical tools to apply sociological perspectives to their everyday lives and to the lives of “others.”

Required Readings


Approved sociological book of your choice from list provided.

Most of the material covered in lectures will not be on the readings, so you will be responsible for covering many of the readings on your own. I will ask you to prepare ahead of time for the readings that will be specifically discussed in class, but I expect you always to be prepared to discuss the weekly readings.

Grading
Participation 5%
Journals 15%
Exam I 20%
Exam II 20%
Exam III 20%
Book Critique Paper 20%

Grading Scale
A+ 99-100 B+ 87-90 C+ 77-79 D+ 67-69 F 59 or lower
A 95-98 B 83-86 C 73-76 D 63-66
A- 91-94 B- 80-82 C- 70-72 D- 60-62
Course Requirements

1. **Attendance**: You are expected to attend and participate every class period. However, you can miss up to 3 days of class for emergencies or illnesses with no penalty. For *every class missed after three absences*, you will have 3 points subtracted from your final grade.

2. **Class Participation**: Class discussions are an important element in this course. What you get out of the course is as much dependent upon the preparation and participation of you and your classmates as it is upon my instruction. What you learn from one another can be as valuable as the lecture and reading materials. Thus, everyone is expected to actively participate in class. You will be graded on the level and quality of your participation.

3. **Journals**: Students are required to keep a journal beginning the second week of class. Students will write six, assigned journal entries during the semester. The entries will focus on analyzing the readings/lectures and connecting that analysis to your personal experiences and to current social issues. Each entry should be at least two pages typed (double space).

   You will receive each journal assignment through e-mail and you will have approximately a week to complete it; see the class schedule for specific dates. The entries will be graded on a 10 point scale. There will be a letter grade reduction for every day an entry is late (e.g. one day late, grade reduced from a B to a C).

   The completed journal is due in class **Wednesday, November 10th**. The final journal grade will be based on the individually graded entries and an overall assessment your work.

4. **Exams**: Exams consist of multiple choice questions, short-answers, and short essays. The exams cover lectures, readings, and all class activities.

5. **Book Critique Paper**: Each student will choose and obtain a sociological book to read throughout the semester. I will provide a list of options. Each student will finalize their book selection by **Wednesday, September 1st**.

   By the end of October you must have completed reading the book. You will turn in a *detailed paper outline* and an *8-10 page (double space) final paper* summarizing the main points of the book, connecting those points to class lectures and reading materials, critiquing the book’s strengths and weaknesses, and discussing how the book connects to your everyday life and the lives of others in important ways. Detailed guidelines will be handed out in class.

   The detailed paper outline is due in class on **Wednesday, November 17th** and the final paper is due in class on **Friday, December 3rd**.

Course Guidelines
1. Please avoid disrupting class by arriving late or leaving early.

2. Do not disrupt me or your classmates by talking amongst your neighbors while other people are speaking.

3. You are responsible for all announcements and assignments made in class.

4. You are required to check your e-mail once a day for any updates from me.

5. If anyone has special needs that require modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements, please contact me in the beginning of the semester and provide documentation from disability services, so that suitable accommodations can be made.

6. Make-up exams will only be allowed in the event of a documented emergency. If you cannot take the exam for any reason, you must contact me prior to the exam. Failure to do so may mean that you will not be able to take a make-up exam.

7. Academic misconduct and dishonesty (such as cheating or plagiarism) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the Honor Code.

8. The following reading and lecture schedules are subject to revisions, however, the exam dates and the assignment due dates will remain the same.

9. This class will require you to look at your life and the lives of others through many different perspectives. This can be a very challenging experience. Although I want you to feel free to share your ideas, I expect you to respect one another when listening to other viewpoints.

**Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 27, 30, September 1</td>
<td><em>What is Sociology?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henslin Part I, pp.1-2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Henslin #1, #2, #3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ferguson, #2, #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER 1</td>
<td>JOURNAL ENTRY 1 DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BOOK SELECTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 3, 8, 10, 13, 15</td>
<td><em>Theoretical Perspectives</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henslin Part II pp.29-34</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Henslin #11, #20, #30</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ferguson #4, #16, #38, #39</td>
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<td>SEPTEMBER 15</td>
<td>JOURNAL ENTRY 2 DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 18, 20</td>
<td><em>Research Methods and Ethics</em></td>
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<td>Henslin #4, #6</td>
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September 22, 24, 27, 29  
**Culture and Socialization**  
Henslin Part III pp. 75-77  
Henslin #7, #9, #10, #12, #38  
Ferguson #7, #8, #10, #13, #14

SEPTEMBER 29  
JOURNAL ENTRY 3 DUE

October 1, 4  
**Deviance and Social Control**  
Henslin Part VI pp. 245-247  
Henslin #18, #21, #23, #24, #40  
Ferguson #19, #21, #22

October 6  
Review

October 8  
**Exam I**

October 11, 13, 15  
**Social Stratification: Class**  
Henslin Part VII pp.307-311  
Henslin #19, #31, #32, #35

October 18  
Fall Break  
No Class

October 20, 22  
**Social Stratification: Class**  
Ferguson #23, #26, #35, #36, #44

OCTOBER 22  
JOURNAL ENTRY 4 DUE

October 25, 27, 29, November 1  
**Social Stratification: Race**  
Henslin #29  
Ferguson #17, #24, #30, #31, #32, #33, #34

NOVEMBER 1  
JOURNAL ENTRY 5 DUE

November 3, 5, 8, 10  
**Social Stratification: Gender**  
Henslin Part IV pp. 129-131  
Henslin #13, #14, #15, #16  
Ferguson #11, #12, #27, #29

NOVEMBER 10  
JOURNAL ENTRY 6 and COMPLETE JOURNAL DUE

November 10  
Review

November 12  
**Exam II**

November 15, 17  
**Social Institutions:**  
*Marriage, Family, Work*  
Henslin Part VIII pp.361-363  
Henslin #17, #33  
Ferguson #28, #50

NOVEMBER 17  
BOOK CRITIQUE PAPER OUTLINE DUE

November 19, 22  
**Social Institutions: Education**  
Henslin #34  
Ferguson #15, #47, #48, #49
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 24, 26</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 29,</td>
<td><strong>Social Institutions: Mass Media</strong></td>
<td>Henslin #27, #37</td>
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<td>December 1</td>
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<td>Ferguson #37, #43</td>
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<td>December 3</td>
<td><strong>BOOK CRITIQUE PAPER DUE</strong></td>
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<td>December 3, 6</td>
<td><strong>Social Change</strong></td>
<td>Henslin Part IX pp.471-473</td>
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<td>Henslin #43, #45</td>
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<td>Ferguson #53, #54, #56</td>
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<td>December 8</td>
<td><strong>Review</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
<td>Friday, 8:30am</td>
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