

Introductory Sociology (Anth/Soc 105, Fall 1999)

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Office hrs: Mon/Wed, 9-10:20am; Tue/Th 9-9:40am C107, #3932

Course Statement

Sociology is the study of human relations and social organization. When we are born we are thrown into a complex world of normative expectations and outside influences that shape our self development and relationship to the world. Sociology studies the effect of these processes - processes that constrain and restrict while simultaneously providing the order and stability needed for survival and self development. This paradox, the state of being an individual yet always, already a social product, is sociology's key concern.

Sociology may be practiced as both 1) an empirical, social science and 2) an applied-philosophical inquiry into what it means to be human. My goal in this course is to teach both of these applications of sociology. You will learn about the history of sociology, its key concepts and findings, and how to conceptualize a sociological analysis; and you will also learn how to apply sociological concepts in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world and your place in it.

I have re-designed this course to be more interactive and participatory. Every Friday we will conduct workshop assignments that will involve the application of course material. On four occasions you will complete an essay assignment (4 pages) and use it as a point of discussion for our Friday workshops. You will then revise your essay and submit it to me to be graded. There will be a midterm and a final exam and class participation will be considered when selecting your final grade. Attendance is mandatory - more than 3 unexcused absences is grounds for an "F".

Required Texts and Grading

This Book is Not Required. Inge Bell and B. McGrane, 1999.  
Revised edition. Fort Bragg, California: The Small Press.

The Un-TV and the 10 MPH Car: Experiments in Personal Freedom and  
Everyday Life. B. McGrane. 1994. Fort Bragg, CA: Small  
Press.

The Meaning of Sociology. Joel M. Charon, ed., 1999. Saddle  
River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology, R. Lachmann, ed.  
(1991).  
Gulford, CT: Dushkin.

Essays 1, 2, 3 and 4 are worth 15% each ..... 60%  
Midterm essay exam ..... 20%  
Final essay exam ..... 20%

Wed 8/25 Course overview and discussion of sociology  
Read for Fri: Chapter 1 in Bell/McGrane  
and entries on sociology and internalization

Fri 8/27 Workshop on internalization  
Read for Mon: Chapter 5 in Bell/McGrane and  
entry on dialectic

Mon 8/30 Wisdom and knowledge  
Read for Wed: Chapter 1 in McGrane

Wed 9/1 Understanding one's "thrownness"  
Read for Fri: Chapter 2 in McGrane

Fri 9/3 Workshop on reflexivity  
(students meet in classroom, complete assignment)  
Read for Wed: Chapters 62 and 63 in Charon

Mon 9/6 No Class - Labor Day

Wed 9/8 Sociology is both conservative and subversive  
Read for Fri: Entries on Durkheim, Comte, norms  
and chapter 13 in Charon

Fri 9/10 Workshop on sui generis phenomena  
Read for Mon: handout on social facts (Durkheim)  
and entries on suicide, anomie, social structure,  
division of labor. social fact and functionalism

Mon 9/13 Social facts  
Read for Wed: NYT article on suicide in Japan

Wed 9/15 Understanding Suicide  
Prepare for Fri: Essay on preventing Columbiners  
Read: Chapter 6 in Bell/McGrane

Fri 9/17 Workshop on institutional wellness  
entry on heredity and environment

Mon 9/20 Nature and Nurture  
Read for Wed: Chapter 14 in Charon  
and entries on socialization, role and self  
concept  
(Revised essay is due)

Wed 9/22 Socialization  
Read for Fri: Chapter 55 in Charon and entry on  
latent and manifest function.

Fri 9/24 Workshop on the depths of socialization  
(students meet in classroom, complete assignment)  
Read for Mon: Chapter 19 in Charon and entries on  
Thomas axiom and social interaction



Mon 11/1           Revise essay for Monday  
                   Social controls  
                   Read for Wed: Chapter 41

Wed. 11/3           Deviance

Fri. 11/5           Workshop on social controls and order  
                   Read for Mon: Chapter 8 in Bell/McGrane

Mon 11/8           The Medium is the Message  
                   Read for Wed: Chapters 3 and 4 in McGrane

Wed 11/10           Media as social control  
                   Read for Fri: Chapters 5 and 6 in McGrane

Fri 11/12           Workshop on the body as cultural landscape  
                   Read for Mon: Chapter 33 in Charon

Mon 11/15           The social construction of gender  
                   Read for Wed: Chapter 35 in Charon

Wed 11/17           The social construction of rape  
                   Prepare for Fri: Essay on gender and  
 social institutions

Fri 11/19           Workshop on gender and social institutions  
                   Read for Mon: Chapter 10 in McGrane  
                   Revise essay for Monday

Mon 11/22           Discussion on walking  
                   Read for Mon: Handout on racism

Wed. 11/24           Thanksgiving Break

Fri. 11/26           Thanksgiving Break

Mon. 11/29           Understanding racism and thrownness  
                   Read for Wed: Chapter 30 in Charon

Wed. 12/1           The givenness of privilege  
                   Read for Fri: Chapter 31 in Charon  
                   Prepare for Fri: Essay on diversity at Rhodes

Fri. 12/3           Workshop on transpositional discourse  
                   Read for Mon: Chapters 23 and 25 in Charon  
                   Revise essay for Monday

Mon. 12/6           Superiority claims

Wed. 12/8           Final class meeting - review for final