

**Sociology 1200 (Introduction to Sociology: 6.0 credit hours) Section A08**  
**September 2011 – April 2012**  
**325 St Paul's College**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30-9:45 a.m.**

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**Office Hours: Tues 10:00-11:30 a.m., #307 Isbister Bldg**

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Macionis, J.J., and Gerber, L.M. (2011). Sociology: Seventh Canadian Edition. Toronto: Pearson Canada.

### **OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, you will be familiar with the foundations of sociology as a social science discipline, including major research strategies, and will be able to demonstrate and apply the ability to “think sociologically.” You will be able to compare and contrast how different theoretical perspectives in sociology might understand a phenomenon, and to apply basic sociological concepts to analyze real world social issues, phenomena and behaviours. Through your active participation in and outside of class, you will be introduced to concepts such as the following: social structure; agency; culture; social networks; socialization; social interaction; stratification; social institutions; social control; norms; solidarity; social movements; and social change.

### **OUTLINE, DUE DATES and READINGS**

**Introduction (Sep 8)** Introductions, overview, and “what can I do with training in sociology?”

#### **Thinking Sociologically**

**(Sep 13, 15)** We will examine the works of Berger, Mills, and Bauman & May, to understand what it means to think sociologically. **Read: Chapter 1**

**(Sep 20, 22)** We will consider four overarching ways of looking at the world in sociological thought: positivist, interpretive, critical and postmodern. Drawing on real world examples, we will compare these approaches. **Read: Chapter 2, “Three ways to do sociology”**

#### **Research in Sociology**

**(Sep 27, 29)** We will address the nature of sociological research questions (and how these differ from other questions). Then we will examine how quantitative approaches explain social phenomena, including the basic principles of this research. Strategies such as survey interviews, experiments and secondary analysis of existing datasets will be described. **Read: Chapter 2**

**(Oct 4, 6)** We will examine how qualitative approaches seek to understand social phenomena, and address the basic principles of this kind of research. Strategies such as observations, in-person interviews, discourse analysis, focus groups, and historical analyses will be described.

**OCT 11: IN-CLASS EXAM 1 (10%)**

#### **Sociologists and Change**

**(Oct 13)** We will examine ways that sociologists seek to change the world for the better, through applied research in policy and practice, community-based and participatory action research, “knowledge translation” activities and public sociology.

**Foundations of Society**

**(Oct 18)** We will examine different approaches to the study of society, and seek to define and understand the concept of what sociologists call “social structure.” The tension between social structure and agency will also be considered. **Read: Chapter 4.**

**OCT 20: “OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT” DUE (15%)**

**(Oct 20, 25)** We examine how sociologists define and study “culture”, as well as identifying the components of culture, and defining concepts such as “cultural capital,” “subcultures” and considering phenomena of cultural diversity and cultural change. **Read: Chapter 3.**

**(Oct 27, Nov 1)** We examine socialization processes across the life course, engaging with the “nature versus nurture” debate, identifying socialization agents, and considering particularly sociological approaches to the study of socialization. As a case example, we consider how “total institutions” resocialize individuals and reshape identities. **Read: Chapter 5.**

**(Nov 3, 8).** We examine how micro-level interactions between individuals are socially structured. Drawing on different sociological approaches to the study of interaction, you will be introduced to concepts such as roles and status, identity, symbols, self-presentation, “feeling rules,” and “dramaturgy.” **Read: Chapter 6.**

**(Nov 10, 15).** Social groups are a basic element of social structure, and we will examine the bonds and ties that form between people in societies. Group characteristics and dynamics are reviewed; following this, we examine the ways sociologists study groups, communities, “social networks,” “social cohesion” and solidarity, social integration, and “social capital.” **Read: Chapter 7.**

**NOV 17: “POP CULTURE” ASSIGNMENT DUE (10%)**

**(Nov 17, 22).** The sociological study of formal organizations will be reviewed, with a focus on concepts such as bureaucracy, rationality, McDonaldization, and organizational culture. We will also examine corporations.

**Nov 24: IN-CLASS EXAM 2 (10%)**

**(Nov 29, Dec 1).** This week, we examine the oppositional concepts of social norms and deviance, from a sociological perspective. How is deviance defined? Is deviance functional or dysfunctional for a society? How are deviant stigmas managed? Different theoretical approaches will be reviewed. **Read: Chapter 9**

**Social Institutions**

**(Dec 6, Jan 5)** Economy/work **Read: Chapter 16**

**(Jan 10, 12)** Politics/government **Read: Chapter 17**

**(Jan 17, 19)** Family **Read: Chapter 18**

**JAN 24: “YOUR LIFE IN SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE” DUE (15%)**

**(Jan 24, 26)** Religion **Read: Chapter 19**

**(Jan 31, Feb 2)** Education **Read: Chapter 20**

**FEB 7: IN-CLASS EXAM 3 (10%)**

**(Feb 9, 14)** Medicine and health **Read: Chapter 21**

**Social stratification and inequality**

**(Feb 16, 28)** Social class/socio-economic status. **Read: Chapters 10 AND 11**

**\*midterm break Feb 20-24**

**(Mar 1, 6)** Gender and sexual orientation. **Read: Chapter 13**

**(Mar 8, 13)** Race/ethnicity **Read: Chapter 14**

**MAR 15: "OP-ED PIECE" DUE (15%)**

**(Mar 15, 20)** Age **Read: Chapter 15**

*note: March 16<sup>th</sup> = voluntary withdrawal deadline date*

**MAR 22: IN-CLASS EXAM 4 (10%)**

**(Mar 27,29)** Globalization and global stratification **Read: Chapter 12**

**Social Movements and Change**

**(Apr 3, 5)** After clarifying distinctions between social change, collective behaviours and social movements, we outline the major approaches to the study of each. We focus on sociological descriptions and explanations of social movements and social change, drawing on specific examples of social movements (e.g., food security; the environmental movement; anti-globalization). **Read: Chapters 23 AND 24**

**APR 5: IN-CLASS EXAM 5 (5%)**

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**OCT 20: "OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT" (15%)** Spend at least one hour of your time outside of class unobtrusively observing social behaviour in a public space, such as in a library, on a bus, or at a coffee shop. You can observe anything, though it will help if you have a specific aspect you want to understand (e.g. 'greeting' behaviour; power dynamics; gender roles, etc). Record your observations during this time or as soon as you can afterwards, in point form. Hand in a 5-6 page, double spaced (12 pt Times New Roman font) summary of your observations, analysis and interpretations.

**NOV 27: "POP CULTURE" (10%)** Considering a television show, movie or book you know well, explain how and why it is good sociology and/or why and how it is NOT good sociology. For instance, what sociological concepts, issues of social justice are addressed, or not? How does it use a sociological perspective, or not? Hand in 5-6 double spaced, typewritten pages about this (12 pt Times New Roman font)

**JAN 24: "YOUR LIFE IN SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE" (15%).** Hand in 5-6 pages (double spaced, typewritten, 12 pt Times New Roman) in which you analyze your own life (or particular aspects of it) from a sociological perspective, drawing on concepts you've been introduced to in the course and within text readings.

**MAR 15: "OP-ED PIECE" (15%).** Write and hand in an "op-ed" article (similar to a letter to the editor, this is a longer opinion piece) that takes a sociological perspective on a public issue of local or provincial importance. You want to educate the public about or bring attention to an

issue. Write as if for the Winnipeg Free Press or Winnipeg Sun, or a local paper such as “The Sou’Wester.” Write concisely, persuasively, and drawing on what you’ve learned in the course (e.g. based in fact). No more than 3 pages double spaced (12 pt Times New Roman).

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Grade Distribution:** University of Manitoba Senate Policy #1307 requires a “post-examination review of final grades in multi-sectioned courses that will ensure an equitable correspondence between grades and level of performance in all sections.” Accordingly, the final grade distribution in this course may be raised or lowered to achieve this equity and, therefore, your final grade may be changed.

**Grading Scheme:** All introductory sociology courses have adopted a common grading scheme: A+=90% and above; A=80-89%; B+=76-79%; B=70-75%; C+=66-69%; C=60-65%; D=50-59%; F=under 50%.

**Statement of Consequences of Missed Tests:** Missed tests cannot be taken at a later date, unless a valid note from your doctor is provided within 1 week of the scheduled test. Requests for other special consideration must be made well **in advance** and/or supported by appropriate documentation. If a make-up test is approved, you must attend at the scheduled time. Failure to complete a test will result in a mark of zero for that test.

**Statement of Consequences of Late Assignments:** Late assignments will not be accepted or graded. In **exceptional** circumstances an extension may be granted, provided you receive my permission **in advance**. Documentation (such as a doctor’s note in the case of injury or illness) may be required.

**Campus and Disability Services:** If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, or have a disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should discuss these issues with your instructor and/or one of the following Student Affairs offices as soon as possible: Disability Services; Student Counselling and Career Centre; University 1; Learning Assistance Centre.

**Faith Holidays:** I should be notified of your intended absence at least three weeks in advance, where special arrangements are needed to avoid jeopardizing your studies

**Disruptions:** Disruptions due to excessive talking or early departures are especially distracting in large classes. Be **considerate and respectful** of the needs and rights of your classmates. Persistent disruption may result in disbarment from the course. Any student with a legitimate reason for leaving class early should inform the instructor at the beginning of class.

**Academic Integrity:** Students should acquaint themselves with the University’s policies on “Personation at Examinations” and “Plagiarism and Cheating” found online under “Section 8” in “University Policies” at the University of Manitoba’s Academic Calendar and Catalog ([www.umanitoba.ca/calendar](http://www.umanitoba.ca/calendar)). The Faculty of Arts reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.