

Vanguard University
School for Professional Studies
Degree Program

“INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY”
SOC 100C

Student Guide

09/09
v1.2

TEXTS

Required texts:

Henslin, James H. (2009). Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach (8th Ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN: 0-205-44444-X

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the study of society, considering the fundamental concepts of sociology in each of three great areas: social structure, social processes, and social problems. Sociology deals with the way individuals, groups, and institutions are related to one another. (Satisfies Social Science requirement)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sociology, one of the social sciences, is the scientific study of society. It offers a perspective - a view of the world - which stresses that people's social experiences underlie their behavior. In this class, the student will receive an overview of the theories of sociology. The class focuses on groups and social control adding to the student's understanding of how significantly social groups influence our lives. Social inequality will be examined to determine how those inequalities impact our lives. Cultural diversity will be investigated concentrating on how it challenges our orientations to the world. The impact of the new global economy and technology will be explored. Consideration will be given to the influences of heredity and environment on people's behavior. We will explore the definitions of deviance and how societies choose to enforce social control. Marriage and family will be explored in a societal context. The course will allow the student the opportunity to learn to think critically about social issues and how to examine various sides of those issues.

OVERVIEW

This class will consist of students reading the assigned text (three chapters per week), lecture, class discussions, in-class group projects, video reviews and commentary, responses to essay questions, and one in-depth paper. Essentials Of Sociology: A Down To Earth Approach will serve as the academic foundation for students to achieve an understanding of the science of sociology. Students will apply to their learning activities, their personal experiences of society's tools of education, culturalization, control, and support.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Explain the sociological perspective and discuss the contribution that it makes to our understanding of human behavior.
- Identify and apply the three major theoretical perspectives: symbolic interactionism, functional analysis and conflict theory.
- Define culture and explain its material and nonmaterial components.
- Define socialization and exhibit an understanding of the theories regarding human development.
- Discuss social structure and explain why one's location in this structure affects people's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.
- Distinguish between groups, aggregates, and categories and explain why they are important to individuals and societies.
- Define deviance and recognize its various roles in societies.
- Understand the characteristics of social stratification.
- Define social class and compare the three components of social class.
- Differentiate between prejudice and discrimination and explain the extent of prejudice among racial and ethnic groups.
- Analyze the social factors in aging.
- Understand the factors that resulted in women being considered a "minority group".
- Distinguish between power, authority, and coercion and discuss the role of the state in the exercise of legitimate violence.
- Identify the common cultural themes that run through marriage and the family.
- Understand the functions of religion and education.
- Define social change and describe the four major social revolution

COURSE POLICIES

- **ATTENDANCE AND TARDY POLICY**

You must attend class on time and remain present until dismissed. Class attendance is necessary in order to complete the course. The School for Professional Studies relies on the dynamics of class interaction and group processing in order to integrate and apply the learning of academic content. This model also emphasizes the development and practice of interpersonal communication skills and teamwork (e.g., group problem solving and negotiation). The format therefore necessitates class attendance. In practical terms, one course session is equivalent to three weeks of traditional semester course work.

Due to the concentrated scheduling and the emphasis upon participatory learning, students need to be in attendance every week. Students who miss more than one class meeting (or more than five class hours) in any given course will automatically receive a failing grade and need to retake the course to obtain a passing grade. If an instructor deems that a student's second absence was under extremely unavoidable and unusual circumstances (i.e., an auto accident), the professor may file an academic petition on behalf of the student to the Dean of SPS. If the academic petition is approved, the instructor may give the student a "W" (Withdrawal) grade in place of a failing grade. The student will still be required to retake the course.

Students who arrive late disturb the class. At the professor's discretion, students who arrive late may not receive participation points for the unit covered. Students who are habitually late may be asked to drop the course.

- **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must achieve a minimum grade of C- for all major course requirements. Any major course in which the student receives a grade below C- must be retaken.

- **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

You must be prepared and participate in all discussions. Criterion: Is the student engaged in classroom discussions? Does the student demonstrate an ability to handle assigned material with a degree of proficiency? (E.g., demonstrate the type of questions and issues consistent, and reflecting a familiarity with the assigned material). Participation evaluated according to quality, not quantity, of participation. Attendance will be scored, and no participation points will be awarded if the student is absent.

- **SUBMISSION OF FINAL EXAMS / PAPERS**

The School for Professional Studies office does not assume responsibility for any final papers. No homework or final papers will be accepted for professors in the SPS office, nor will final papers be returned to students through the SPS office.

The method for the submission of homework and the final exam or final paper will be determined by the professor. The professor will discuss the method which will be employed during the first night of class. All exchanges of papers will be between the student and the professor.

- **LATE PAPER POLICY**

You are responsible for submitting assignments on time. Unless authorized by the Professor in advance, no credit will be given for assignments not turned in when due.

- **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Work submitted for assessment purposes must be the independent work of the student concerned. Plagiarism, or copying and use of another's work without proper acknowledgment, is not permitted. Nor is it permissible for any former or present student to allow another student to refer to, use as a sample, or in any way copy or review their work. If a student needs guidance, he or she must seek the Professor's assistance.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated by the University's 4.0 grading system. You should refer to the Student Handbook or the Academic Catalog for further details on the grading system. Also, refer to the "Assignment Guidelines" under the "STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS" section for assignment completion guidelines. The criteria for determining the final grade for this course will be as follows:

1. Chapter Questions/Responses	250 points
2. 1 Video Review	100 points
3. Final Paper	500 points
4. 1 Sociological Experiment	100 points
5. Participation in class discussion and group activities	<u>50 points</u>
TOTAL	1,000

STUDENT EVALUATION

Percentages	Points	Grade	Significance	GPA
93-100%	930-1000	A	Exceptional	4.00
90-92.9%	900-929	A-		3.67
87-89.9%	870-899	B+	Above Average	3.33
83-86.9%	830-869	B		3.00
80-82.9%	800-829	B-		2.67
77-79.9%	770-799	C+	Average	2.33
73-76.9%	730-769	C		2.00
70-72.9%	700-729	C-		1.67
67-69.9%	670-699	D+	Below Average	1.33
63-66.9%	630-669	D		1.00
60-62.9%	600-629	D-		0.67
00-59.9%	000-599	F	Failure	0.00

CLASS STRUCTURE:**ASSIGNMENTS DUE:**

WEEK ONE.....	CHP. QUES.1-3
WEEK TWO.....	CHP. QUES.4-6
WEEK THREE.....	CHP. QUES. 7-9/ VIDEO REVIEW
WEEK FOUR.....	CHP. QUES.10-12
WEEK FIVE.....	CHP.QUES.13-15/ SOC. EXPERIMENT

*****THE PAPER WILL BE DUE NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK FROM THE LAST CLASS MEETING.**

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

Assignments are due at the beginning of each class meeting, i.e. Week One assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the first class meeting, etc. The only exception is the final assignment as noted below.

WRITING STANDARDS

Students must follow writing standards set forth in the VUSC Student Handbook and those noted in this Student Guide. Submitted work that does not meet the established standards will not be accepted.

Including relevant personal experience in assignment work will result in higher grades. For example, if an assigned question refers to norms and deviance, you might comment on an experience in which you broke a norm and were treated by others as if you were deviant through their use of specific negative sanctions. The point is to relate that you understand the principles of sociology, can identify them in daily life, and apply the principles to your own world.

CHAPTER QUESTIONS:

CHAPTER RESPONSE QUESTIONS ARE DUE EACH WEEK AND THE QUESTIONS ARE LABELED AT THE END OF THE STUDENT GUIDE.

FOR WEEK ONE, YOU MUST COME TO THE FIRST CLASS PREPARED, HAVING READ THE FIRST THREE CHAPTERS OF THE TEXT AND ANSWERED ALL OF THE QUESTIONS UNDER "WEEK ONE."

VIDEO REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS:

IN PREPARING YOUR VIDEO REVIEW, USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE HOW YOU WILL REVIEW AND RESPOND TO THE VIDEO. IDENTIFY ISSUES AND SUPPORT YOUR CONTENTIONS. USE SPECIFIC SCENES TO SUPPORT YOUR COMMENTS.

- Identify sociological perspectives - symbolic interactionism, functionalism, conflict theory
- Socialization - identify behaviors and/or techniques that are learned and how they serve the individuals or society - who are the agents of socialization?
- Social control - how are characters subjected to social control? Who is doing the controlling and how; how effective is it? Would stronger or more lenient control effect the desired change?
- Deviance - consider the definition of deviance - which characters do you identify as deviant and why? Would they be labeled deviant in another environment? Are there characters identified as "normal" who are actually "deviant"? How do you arrive at that conclusion?
- Social Groups - to what social groups do characters belong? Is it chosen, forced or happenstance?

- Social Class - to what social classes do characters belong? Are efforts made to change to another class? How do others perceive those methods in the story? Is there support or resistance?
- Inequality - identify the prejudice or bigotry exhibited; is it consistent or situation dependent? How does society condone or dispute the inequalities?
- Politics and media - how are political views or media coverage influencing the characters? What could policy makers do to assist or deter such situations?
- Family - identify the family dynamics; are characters behaving in manners that comply with family expectations or requirements? Are the dynamics normal or deviant? How do roles vary in different situations?
- Culture - who or what facilitates cultural transmission? Can the cycle be broken? How or why not?
- Religion - identify any religious issues or the obvious lack thereof. Is religion used as a positive support to the characters or is it a method of social control?

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO ADDRESS ALL OF THE ABOVE ISSUES, ONLY THOSE THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE VIDEO. YOU ARE TO SHOW YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES AND THEIR UNDERLYING OR OBVIOUS AFFECTS ON HUMANITY.

YOUR ESSAY SHOULD BE A MINIMUM OF TWO DOUBLE-SPACED, TYPED PAGES AND NO MORE THAN FIVE PAGES.

***NOTE: YOU CAN CHOOSE THE MOVIE OF YOUR CHOICE!

SOCIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT:

You will observe an environment sociologically by using the *unobtrusive* model of observation while keeping in mind ethical considerations. The purpose of this assignment is to “open up our eyes” and view our social world sociologically. You will choose your population in which you are studying, the time of day you are watching, and what you had hoped to get from this experience. Additional information will be provided in class. You will write a 1-2 page response to what happened and include:

1. how you selected your topic-idea
2. what you thought would happen-hypothesis
3. and what really did happen-results

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE PAPER ASSIGNMENT - FINAL

Think about the social institutions (economy, family, law, etc.) discussed in class and your personal experiences within them. Reflecting on their interdependent nature, write about how your personal experiences within one of these social institutions has affected your life within another social institution. How have these patterned, organized ways of meeting society’s basic needs impacted your life? Examples will be discussed in class.

This paper is to be 5 to 6 pages typed, double-spaced. You are required to use course concepts and theories in your paper. The paper will be due no later than one week from the last class meeting (if the class meets on Thursday night, you must submit it by the following Thursday).

It may help you to keep a journal throughout this class to use in preparing your final paper.

WEEK ONE ASSIGNMENT**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Students must complete all of the questions for week one.

Chapter OneThe Sociological Perspective

1. The sociological perspective provides a specific view of the world. Briefly describe this perspective and the assumptions this perspective is based on.
2. Summarize the main points of Karl Marx's theory of class conflict.
3. Summarize Max Weber's ideas about religion, rather than economics, being the central force in social change.

Chapter TwoCulture

1. Explain the significance of language to human life.
2. Explain the difference between a subculture and a counterculture and give an example of each.
3. Define cultural leveling and discuss how technology contributes to this process.

Chapter ThreeSocialization

1. Describe Piaget's theory of how individuals develop reasoning skills.
2. Explain how society channels out behavior through gender socialization.
3. Discuss why total institutions are effective in stripping away people's personal freedom.

WEEK TWO ASSIGNMENT

Chapter Four

Social Structure and Social Interaction

1. Outline how societies were transformed by each of the social revolutions and analyze the effect of the division of labor on social inequality in each society.

Chapter Five

Social Groups and Formal Organization

1. Discuss the consequences of dividing our world into in-groups and out-groups.
2. Discuss the dysfunction associated with bureaucracies.
3. Describe the consequences of "hidden values" in the corporate culture.

Chapter Six

Deviance and Social Control

1. Explain how biological, psychological and sociological explanations of deviance differ.
2. Summarize strain theory and discuss Merton's types of responses to this.
3. Explain why there is a need for a more humane approach to dealing with deviance in the United States.

WEEK THREE ASSIGNMENT

Chapter Seven

Social Stratification in Global Perspective

1. Explain how social class is determined according to Marx and Weber.
2. Discuss the four ways that elites are able to maintain stratification in a democracy such as the U.S.
3. Multinational corporations have contributed to the maintaining of international stratification. Explain why they have been a major influence in maintaining the global stratification system.
4. Explain how the new information technologies contribute to global stratification.

Chapter Eight

Social Class in the United States

1. Discuss how Erik Wright modified Marx's model of social class.
2. Distinguish between the individual and structural explanations of poverty used by social analysts.

Chapter Nine

Inequalities of Race and Ethnicity

1. Discuss the factors which heighten ethnic identity and explain what "ethnic work" is for people both with strong ethnic identities and those without a firm ethnic identity.
2. Explain the difference between prejudice and discrimination and the difference between institutional and individual discrimination.
3. Describe the split-labor market and how unemployment helps to maintain the split-labor market, according to conflict theory.

WEEK FOUR ASSIGNMENT

Chapter Ten

Inequalities of Gender and Age

1. Discuss the history of the patriarchy theory, and explain why sociologists consider women to be a minority group.
2. Explain how gender discrimination occurs in the workplace. Include a discussion of the pay gap, the glass ceiling, the glass escalator, and sexual harassment.
3. Discuss the patterns of gender-related violence in the U.S. How does the feminist perspective help us better understand the crimes of rape, domestic violence, and murder?
4. Compare and contrast disengagement theory and activity theory as explanations of how older person adjust to the aging process.

Chapter Eleven

Politics and the Economy

1. Differentiate between power and authority, including the meaning and use of legitimate violence.
2. Compare capitalism and socialism as economic systems and as ideologies. In what ways are the two moving toward convergence?

Chapter Twelve

Marriage and the Family

1. Why is it so difficult to define the term family? Define the major concepts that refer to various types of families. Note some of the cultural themes that are common to marriage and family practices across cultures.
2. Discuss ethnic diversity in family life. Compare and contrast the common and uncommon elements among families of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans.

WEEK FIVE ASSIGNMENT

Chapter Thirteen

Education and Religion

1. Compare the approaches to education by the functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactionism perspectives.
2. Compare and contrast the approaches to religion by the functionalist, symbolic interactionists, and conflict perspectives.
3. Discuss Weber's arguments concerning the relationship between the Protestant ethic and capitalism. How does his conclusion differ from Marx's position?

Chapter Fourteen

Population and Urbanization

1. Describe the Malthus theorem and compare the New Malthusian and the Anti-Malthusian arguments regarding it. Critically assess each position.
2. Describe the process of urbanization and discuss why it has not occurred until recently.

Chapter Fifteen

Social Change: Technology, Social Movements, and the Environment

1. Discuss the historical social transformations of society in terms of the four social revolutions. What were the nature and causes of societal changes?
2. Explain Ogburn's cultural lag theory and use it to analyze the impact of the computer on U.S. society.
3. Describe how social movements attempt to use the mass media to spread propaganda about their goals. What does it mean to say that the mass media have become the gatekeepers to social movements?
4. Discuss the relationship between the problem of environmental decay and the globalization of capitalism. How is this related to the idea of a sustainable environment?

REFER TO “ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE PAPER” ASSIGNMENT.

The final is due no later than one week from the last day of this class.