

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2023

SO1000 (A3/C3): INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15

Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 8 territory, the traditional homeland and gathering place for many diverse Indigenous peoples. We are honoured to be on the ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene/Beaver, and Métis, whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work, learn, and live on this land.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Mohana Mukherjee **PHONE:**
OFFICE: Off-campus **E-MAIL:**
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the theory, methods, and substance of sociology. How societies and individuals are shaped and modified by culture, socialization, deviance, stratification, group processes, industrialization, and social movements will be covered.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE

None.

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS

Cumming, S. (2020). *Sociology Unlocked*. Oxford University Press.

DELIVERY MODE(S)

Remote Delivery. This course is delivered remotely. There are no face-to-face or onsite requirements. Students must have a computer with a webcam and reliable internet connection. Technical support is available through helpdesk@nwpolytech.ca.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES REQUIREMENTS

- A computer with a supported operating system & the latest security, and malware updates.
- A current and updated web browser.

- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone.
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled.
- A stable broadband internet connection.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Be shown how to apply the theories and methodologies of sociology as a science, and how it relates to people's individual lives
- Be introduced to essential sociological concepts, perspectives, and historical foundations
- Be provided with strong foundational knowledge in preparation for further studies in sociology
- Be familiarized with the key sociological concepts, theories, and debates in present society.
- Encouraged to develop essential skills in critical thinking, writing, referencing, and research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- summarize, compare and apply analytic frameworks and theories to studying society and elements thereof.
- differentiate and compare methodological approaches commonly used by sociologists.
- describe the sociological imagination using examples from their own lives.
- critically reflect on the relationship between social forces and individual experiences using examples from their own lives.
- compare and contrast common-sense and sociological explanations of various social phenomena, current social events and societal conflicts.
- critically debate dimensions of social inequality in Canadian society, referring to their historical context and institutional embeddedness.
- read efficiently, take lecture notes effectively and study for exams proficiently.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<http://www.transferalberta.ca>.

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be accepted for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability and transferable grades.**

EVALUATIONS:

Assessment	Total Point Value	Weight
Class participation / Reading Quiz	100 pts.	10%
Reflection Essays (× 4; 20 pts. each)	80 pts.	40%

1 Midterm	60 pts.	20%
Final Exam	100 pts.	30%
Total	340 pts.	100%

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EVALUATIONS

Reading Quiz: This timed assessment will be available on MyClass at the beginning of class at 4:00 p.m. and will be available for 24 hours. This assessment will consist of 3–4 multiple-choice and true–false questions.

Class Participation: Your class participation will be recorded online via your verbal in-class conversation and the chat. I will be noting the names of individuals who contribute to the class discussion in this manner. You are expected to do the reading before coming to class. While in most of the classes I will lecture, in others, I will expect participation from you. I want this to be a collective learning experience where you share your understanding of the readings and lectures with your peers. This is a comparatively smaller class, which may encourage students to speak out in such an environment. I will try and make it as comfortable for you to speak, but I also urge you to make the effort to do so and take part in the chat function whenever possible. If you make yourself speak out in class just once, it will be much easier the second time around.

Reflection Essays

This is a short essay assignment where each student has to submit only four essays throughout the semester. These essays emphasize interpretation and much more. During the semester, you will be expected to turn in **four** well-written reflection essays. Each of these essays will account for 20 points (i.e., $4 \times 20 = 80$ pts. in total) and all four together determine 40% of your semester grade. The purpose of the reflection essays is to further your exploration of the textbook units. Try to show me that you have read the text units critically and thought deeply about what you have read. Focus on **interpreting** a specific aspect of the unit rather than skimming the surface or giving general comments or opinions. A good starting point is to briefly identify how the work impacted you then move on to a critical approach, theme or analysis of basic elements (such as looking at how the unit’s point of view, setting, voice or other element influences the way you interpret the unit). Develop the heck out of one interesting idea. The best essays are those that strive to discover something significant that the casual reader would not have noticed and then support and explore effectively with quotes from the text.

a) **General guidelines:**

- There will be six opportunities during the semester to write a reflection essay. The only essay I require everyone to write is the first one on sociological imagination. After that, you will get to pick and choose the units you respond to, as long as you complete four essays on time.
- Reflection essays are **due on or before the due date given on the course schedule**. Essays turned in after that due date will not receive full credit. The later they are, the more points they will lose.
- Essays will be graded on a twenty-point scale (i.e., 20 = A+, 18 = A–, 16 = B, etc.). In grading these, I consider “16” to be the grade for doing a good job and **fulfilling assignment expectations**. In order to earn a grade higher than “16” you must exceed

assignment expectations. A grade lower than “16” means your reflection essay did not fulfill assignment expectations, or it was late. Consider putting more thought and care into your reflection essay, developing your points further, including more textual support, and revising your writing more before turning it in. Please do not hesitate to take advantage of the office hours to meet with me or go to the Writing Centre if you are having difficulty writing the reflection essays.

- The topic and approach of your reflection essay are up to you. The Reflection Essay can be an explication, an analysis, or a compare and contrast, as long as it is **interpreting some aspect of the assigned units that you find interesting and significant**. Your essay should shed light on what the units (e.g., a specific concept, a specific theory, an empirical example from a chapter etc.) means and support all ideas with quotes from the text. I will try to give you ideas of different things you could write about during the lecture, and class discussions will be another good source for ideas.

b) Reflection Essay Expectations:

- Essays must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, around two pages (no more than 2.5 pages!) Revise several times to make your essay concise and brilliant.
- The reflection essays **must interpret** the text rather than merely summarize the text or give unsupported opinions.
- You must **support ideas with quotes** from the text/unit. Outside research is not required, but you may use it if you wish. I recommend keeping a narrow focus in your essay so you can support things adequately.
- Pay attention to grammar, punctuation, style, clarity, and spelling. Since the essays are short, I would expect them to be very well-crafted and well-revised pieces of writing.

Midterm and Final Exams

These timed assessments will be available on MyClass at the beginning of class on the day of the exams at 4:00 p.m. and will be available for 24 hours. When you access the assessment, you will have the length of the class (45 minutes) to complete and submit it (accommodations will be applied to extend this time, where appropriate). This assessment will consist of multiple-choice, true–false and short-answer response questions.

Psst – A Note on Writing

Written assignments are your opportunity to develop, apply, and demonstrate your mastery of the knowledge and skills you are gaining in this course. They are, in effect, your chance to learn – and apply what you have learned – by practicing sociology. Therefore, be sure to use the concepts, categories and theories from the course in your short papers and exams. Spell-check and proofread your work. Strunk and White’s *Elements of Style* is a very handy little guide to writing well.

GRADING CRITERIA

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
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A+	4.0	90-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-89		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	0-49

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:

• Jan 5 – classes start
• Feb 20-Feb 24 –Family Day-Reading Week, No classes
• Apr 7– Good Friday, No classes
• Apr 12 – Last day of classes
• Apr 14 – Exam Start
• Apr 24 – Last day of Final exams

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Ultimately, you are responsible for your learning and performance in this course.

PLEASE NOTE:

To be fair to everyone in this course, **I will not alter the evaluation**, so any missed testing or assignments will not be accommodated.

If at any point in the semester you feel you are struggling with the course material or with your course work, please do not hesitate to ask me for assistance. Please contact me by e-mail for an appointment.

Students must submit original work in this course. Work that was submitted previously in other courses will not be accepted and will receive a 0%. All work must be submitted electronically on MyClass by the due dates listed below.

Please note: It is simply unfair to alter the course evaluation for any individual. Therefore, under any conditions, there will be no alternative tests or assignments if you miss or do poorly on a requirement.

- Furthermore, it is your responsibility to **track your own grades**: Please do not contact the professor for such information.

SUBMISSION & LATE POLICIES

- Equally important to learn and apply professional communication skills, such as writing proper e-mail messages, it is very important to learn to meet deadlines. Complete your assignments on time!
- Late assignments received will be deducted 5% for every late day (including weekends!).

- Incomplete assignments will receive a grade of 0 unless you have a valid reason supported with appropriate documentation (i.e., a medical note from an M.D.) and you discuss it with me **well in advance of any due date**.
- Note: extensions will be given only when students notify the instructor prior to the deadline and present valid evidence excusing lateness.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the Northwestern Polytechnic Calendar at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/calendar/> or the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy which can be found at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- Please be aware that I respect that everyone's time is valuable, please afford me the same courtesy.
- Instead of preoccupying your mind with questions such as, "how do I get an 'A'?" Instead, ask yourself, "how can I work to expand my knowledge, perspective, and outlook on the real world?"
- Please only use your **NWP e-mail account** to avoid having your message blocked by SPAM filters.
- Always include "SO1000" (with your section) in the subject line (or I may never even receive your message).
- Finally, in our academic environment, please practice writing e-mails *formally*, as you will need to do regularly upon graduation. For example, use a simple greeting, do not use slang or abbreviations, and always sign off with your name!

COURSE-BASED INFORMATION

Topics discussed and material included in this course will be explicit at times (deviance, violence, sexuality, profanity, etc.). You might find yourself reacting to that content with discomfort or distress, either because of your personal experiences or because it conflicts with your convictions. While discomfort is part of any learning process, please do not hesitate to reach out to me should you need support/resources.

Please keep in mind that all participants in this class are diverse in terms of their positions in complex social hierarchies organized around social class, race, ethnicity, citizenship, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, etc. Material discussed in class will at times, reflect, sometimes challenge, or even contradict your own life experiences. To make this course welcoming and safe for all, please interact with all participants (fellow students and instructor) professionally and respectfully.

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may

NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Unit and Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1: Foundations of Sociology			
Week 1	Introduction to course Meet and Greet	Course Syllabus	Course Syllabus Quiz (ungraded)
Week 2	What is Sociology?	Chapter 1	RQ1
Week 3	What do Sociologists Do?	Chapter 2	RQ 2 Reflection Essay 1 “Sociological Imagination”
Week 4	What do Sociologists Do?	Chapter 2	RQ 3
2: Culture and Socialization			
Week 5	Culture, Deviance, and Crime	Chapter 3 & 10	RQ 4 Reflection Essay 2
Week 6	Socialization and Social Interaction	Chapter 4 & 5	RQ 5
Week 7	Midterm review and midterm Test covers materials from Class and Chapters 1 To 6		
Week 8	Families	Chapter 8	Bonus Quiz 1 Reflection Essay 3
3: Institutions and Organizations			
Week 9	Health and Illness	Chapter 12	RQ 6
Week 10	Communication and Media	Flew, Terry and Richard Smith. (2021). New Media: An Introduction, fourth	RQ 7 Reflection Essay 4

		Canadian edition. Oxford University Press. Chapter 5: "Social Networks and Participatory Culture"	
Week 11	Communication and Media cont'd.	Boyd, D. (2008). Why youth (heart) social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. YOUTH, IDENTITY, AND DIGITAL MEDIA, David Buckingham, ed., The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2007-16.	Bonus Quiz 2
4: Stratification and Inequality			
Week 12	Class Inequality	Chapter 6	RQ 8 Reflection Essay 5
Week 13	Race, Ethnicity	Chapter 7	RQ 9
Week 14	Gender	Chapter 9	RQ10 Reflection Essay 6
Week 15	Course wrap up; Final Exam review		Final Exams are Scheduled by the Registrar's Office

RQ=Reading Quiz