

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A+	4.0	95 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	90 – 94	
A-	3.7	87 – 89	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B+	3.3	83 – 86	
B	3.0	80 – 82	GOOD
B-	2.7	77 – 79	
C+	2.3	73 – 76	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	65 – 72	
C-	1.7	60 – 64	
D+	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

NOTE: On the College’s marking grid there is no D-. Therefore no such final mark will be recorded. However, for the course assignments, I will use D- as an additional non-failing mark.

EVALUATION:

Academic assignments for this course emphasize synthesis of ideas from a sociological standpoint, and the best questions you can think of to advance that synthesis. Analysis does not mean just reporting what others have said on a topic. Important as this is, other authors’ ideas or conclusions are valuable because they add insight or specific details that help you to ask questions about the topic you have selected. My assignments are a philosophical inquiry that is advanced through your and others’ investigations. Deciding what questions are worth raising is an important part of analysis. Conclusions can be valuable but aren’t obligatory for any of my assignments.

How your grade is calculated?

Assignment 1: Film analysis I Weight: 33.3%
Assignment 2: Film analysis II Weight: 33.3%
Take home final exam Weight: 33.4%

Please note that you will be required to submit three film analyses out of which the two receiving the highest mark will be used to establish your grade.

The two assignments and the take home final exam are equally weighted. Each assignment and the final take home exam will be given a letter grade (A to F) corresponding to a numerical score value (4 to 0) as per the grading criteria table shown above. The final grade for the course will be determined by the average of the scores on the two assignments and the final take home exam. The following example illustrates the determination of how the grade is calculated:

Task	Grade	Score	Final score & Grade	
Assignment 1	B	3.0	3.0	
Assignment 2	B-	2.7	Ignored	
Assignment 3	A-	3.7	3.7	
Final Exam	B+	3.3	3.3	
			$(3.0+3.7+3.3)/3=3.33=B+^*$	

***Please note that your final grade will be based on the two assignments and the take home final exam. However, your grade may go up by at least one letter grade beyond the average of these three assignments as a result of participation as outlined later in this document.**

Sociological Film Analysis Essay (Two):

Throughout the term, films will be shown to you. The number of analyses will likely be more than two. However, your **2 best grades** will count toward this assignment requirement. You will discuss them sociologically, employing a variety of ideas, concepts, and theories mentioned in the course text.

Following the showing of a film, you may be asked to write an essay of at least 1200 words. I will select some ideas or theories that must be included in the analysis, and you will add a number I will specify, that you can choose from any part of the book, including sections we haven't yet discussed. You should not limit yourself to saying whether or not the film deserves praise, or offer your

appraisal of the plot design. Your exploration should concentrate on the sociological value of the piece. **You must completely capitalize, in bold font, the first time you use a theory or concept.** I have to be convinced that you understand these; a brief explanation of them the first time they appear in your essay, therefore, is also required. You must display a workable knowledge of the ideas you mention.

Due dates for these essays will be five days following the showing of the film. You will send them via email. Details are indicated later in the course outline.

Final Take-Home Exam Essay:

In the last few weeks of the term I will stipulate the minimum number of sociological theories and concepts to be incorporated. Theories are broad explanations that address substantive areas of human experience. Concepts are ideas that may be directed or 'ordered' by a theory. With these, you will analyze sociologically one of the following:

1. A book of fiction, a short story, or a body of work by an author of your choice.
2. A television program or series, a movie or collection of films.
3. A computer or online game.
4. A body of work by a specific creator in any of these areas.
5. A song or musical piece, or a body of work by a particular composer. This can also apply to art of various forms, architecture, etc.
6. Anything I approve after we have discussed your suggestion.
7. A website with a particular orientation that can be discussed sociologically.

The minimum length of this assignment is 1600 words. The purpose is to use ideas from the course as you imagine a sociologist would. No research is required for this assignment. But you should ask yourself what element of any of the work you write on, would fascinate a sociologist, and why.

NOTE:

1. Grammar is important to communicating precise meaning. Therefore, while it will not be valued as highly as content, it will be evaluated and therefore can affect your mark.
2. All written assignments are subject to lateness penalties of one grade level per calendar day beyond the due date.
3. A one-grade-level penalty will be applied for assignments that are less than minimum length.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SENT BY EMAIL, TO MY COLLEGE ACCOUNT:

asegal@gprc.ab.ca ALSO, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE WORD 'ASSIGNMENT' IN THE SUBJECT LINE, AND INDICATE WHICH ASSIGNMENT IT IS.

Discussion Bonus mark:

Every person in the course may (but not necessarily will), receive a bonus mark in increase his/her final grade by at least one letter grade based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation. Discussion postings to a Moodle discussion forum also will be considered class participation. You will be eligible for a bonus mark only if you display commitment to the course by reading the books and completing all written assignments. Although attendance is not relevant to the regular assignments for the course, it is important to your eligibility for a bonus mark. Eligibility for the bonus is nullified if you are absent for more than 3 classes.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

University courses provide the best intellectual and perhaps social experience, when students arrive prepared for the day's work. My classes are heavily discussion -oriented and therefore require commitment from students.

1. Read assignments.
2. Participate in class conversation about the material.
3. Complete all written work.
4. Indicate on submitted material your name; section and course number; and which assignment is being sent to me.
5. All written work must be sent via email to asegal@gprc.ab.ca You MUST use the word 'assignment' in the subject line.
6. *** Electronic Devices: People who must have contact with others during class time may leave their cell phones on 'vibrate', and leave the room if a response is required. Otherwise, texting or use of phones will result in you having to miss that particular class. Please do not put me in a position of having to do this.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

In an academic setting, presenting others' work as your own is a serious violation. However, referencing articles and books and online academic products do not prevent you from building on their ideas and speculations. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Admission Guide at

<http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/**

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

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week1 *Introduction to SO1000*

Week 2 *Chapters 1 & 5 - The Sociological Perspective; The Beginnings of Sociology*

Class Discussion:

What is sociology? What is a sociological imagination?

Is it bound to any type of knowledge?

Anderson writes of the 'social constructedness of knowledge'. Sociologists often allude to the social construction of reality. Why do you think Anderson includes this phrase in the chapter? When you say to somebody, 'that's reality', is your intention of meaning similar to what Anderson is communicating? What is knowledge? Why might we think knowledge is worth analyzing sociologically?

The chapter quickly identifies a number of topics (and later on, related concepts), the author considers crucial to understanding sociology. What topics are listed? If you were writing a list of core elements in your lives, would you list these topics? Would you add to or delete from, the ones specified?

How important to the society of Grande Prairie, or of your home communities, or of Canada, is a belief in, or a commitment to, romantic love? What is romantic love?

After reading the chapter on beginnings of the field, do you perceive a genuine or an assumed link between origins and some of the sociological ideas introduced to you in chapter 1?

Could you imagine the emergence of sociology without revolutions of any kind, urbanization, etc.?

What is Sociological Method? What are Social Facts?

Echoing the question associated with the picture on page 117, would it matter if society were run by scientists and artists? What thoughts arise when we describe the 'running' of society?

Is 'running' in this meaning a substitute for 'social dynamics'?

Week 3 *Chapters 6 & 20 - Karl Marx and Max Weber; Sociologists and Social Activism*

Class Discussion:

Karl Marx is one of the most renowned thinkers of the past 170 years. His analyses, in today's parlance, crosses various intellectual disciplines. What justifies Anderson's inclusion of him in this text on sociology?

Were you trying to explain Marxist thought to someone unfamiliar with the man's work, what explanation would you present? Would you emphasize some aspects of it compared to others? If so, why?

None of us emerges into life without background and context. (Unless you are an extraterrestrial drone). Identify the individual and conceptual influences on Marx's ontological, philosophical, and political thinking.

Following the questions above, ask yourselves the same about Engels and Weber.

Why are Weber and Marx together in chapter 6?

For each of the people discussed in chapter 6, particular concepts are mentioned by Anderson.

Along with an overview of Marx, Weber, and Engels, we will discuss the concepts associated with each person. Therefore you should come to class ready to participate in our discussion, and to ask questions about the material.

When I assigned these two chapters to be read together, I did not intend to say that sociological activism can be expressed only through the lens of the men presented in chapter 6. However, as chapter 6 introduces three people significant to much contemporary activism, directly or indirectly, I consider it apt to link them in our reading. So.... What is the role of sociological inquiry today, at least according to the author your text?

Does the activism articulated by Anderson fit only within the boundaries of the 4 types of sociological knowledge she cites? What are these types?

Are some questions about human existence best explored through some types of knowledge and activism but not others? Do you have an example of this for our class?

Has Anderson persuaded you so far that sociology is relevant to the currents of human existence evident in today's world?

Week 4 *Chapters 3 & 7 - Quantitative and Qualitative Research; The Social Interactionist Perspective*

Class Discussion:

'Research' sounds all-inclusive, a project and process instilled with purpose and knowledge-expanding diligence. These assigned readings take this position and draw you into the world of research as it's used for sociological questions. What kinds of questions might be best approached through the two broad foundations of research explained?

What are epistemology and ontology?

What differentiates deductive from inductive theory?

Having read chapter 3, do you consider yourself more or less a positivist? What is data?

You might be surprised to hear that debate exists about the existence of 'facts'. That anything might be factual is challengeable. Yet Emile Durkheim believed in the existence and value of 'social facts'. What did he mean by this term? Why might people disagree with him? Are both forms of research and analysis compatible with one or the other stance on social facts?

Social Interactionism is one sociological theory that seeks understanding of interpersonal experiences and ramifications. Can it provide insight for both quantitative and qualitative analyses? What is Social Interactionism? In George Herbert Mead's theorizing, 'self', 'other' and 'symbol' are significant to his thought. Why? Be ready to explain and discuss these concepts.

In a social era in which we refer frequently to individual development, are you surprised that someone like Mead thought it necessary to conceptualize the self?

On pages 176 and 177, Anderson includes a section on stripping. Based on this section we will discuss the idea of affirmation. Think about what affirmation is generally, and what meanings it possesses in our macro and micro cultures.

Be ready as well to look more deeply into the section on collective memory that opens on page 183.

Week 5 *Chapter 10 - Culture*

Class Discussion:

Is it possible to live in a human environment that has no culture? Or that we can live outside of or beyond culture?

When we state that a place has no culture, or that it is too cultured, what might we be saying?

Before reading this chapter, how did you think about culture?

Identify the components of culture that are presented in chapter 10.

Occasionally people talk about cultures that wound. Is this a step too far in a discussion of culture?

Don't all cultures wound those embroiled in them?

All survey texts in sociology include chapters on culture. If you answered 'no' to the first two questions for this reading, does a chapter on culture seem redundant to you?

Is there really a difference between pop culture and culture?

I say above that all books of the kind you are reading, include a section on culture. None of those I have used however, have addressed culture and human embodiment. Embodiment is an important concept in sociology. What is Anderson's explanation of it.

Week 6 *Part 4 Introduction; Chapters 8 & 9 - Socialization and the Young Child; Social Performance and Interaction Rituals*

Class Discussion:

Often we assume socialization is for children. This chapter focuses specifically on young children.

Does this indicate socialization is neither required nor evident for people beyond childhood?

What is socialization?

Are socialization and ritualistic performance different ways of describing the same experience(s)?

'Status' in sociology encompasses a large range of contexts within which we live and grow. What is status, and what subsets of it do sociologists utilize in their work?

Are status and social status applicable to the same aspects of human life?

What indicators can you name that display your social status?

How would you explain the relationship between social structure and social interaction? Imagine how this interaction reflects status in a society.

Are interaction rituals the backbone of social interactionism? Come to class with a list of rituals you perceive in society, and ones especially evident in your own lives, past and contemporary.

Is all social behaviour ritualistic? Is all social experience a ritual?

Erving Goffman has contributed importantly to sociological understanding of people and society.

Which of his ideas are introduced and elaborated in chapter 9?

Week 7 Chapter 11 - Social Structure and Social Agency

Class Discussion:

What are social structure and social agency? Is the latter a digression from what we mean when speaking of just of agency? Are social structures and social systems references to the same thing?

Why would Anderson link structure and agency in the same chapter?

Functionalism has had and continues to have theoretical pull and influence in sociological analysis, and in the opinions and ontology of many 'civilians'. How do sociologists define and interpret functionalism, structural functionalism, and its value to knowing our social world?

Another powerful concept in various disciplines including sociology, is that of the Social Institution.

Prepare to discuss what this is from a sociological standpoint.

This chapter looks into the work of two people renowned in sociology for their contributions:

Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu. We will discuss them and their writings on structuration, and habitus.

Is there any point to naming a process 'social network analysis'? If we are part of a culture, can we be external to social networks?

Week 8 Chapters 12 & 13 - Social Stratification, Inequality, and Class; Inequality... Recent Research

Class Discussion:

What is social stratification and its relationship to social class?

How many categories of class do sociologists utilize? Which class do you think you belong to? Is this the same as that of your family?

Do all members of your family fit into the same category? And your friends, and general associates?

Why does Anderson distinguish between social class and social group?

Chapter 13 includes a section addressing Class Identities. If you agree you have an identity, does it in some way, reflect the social class within which you are placed by 'society'? Does it reflect the one in which you perceive yourself? If you do not have an identity, does this suggest you are experiencing an evolution, or that you reject the very concept of identity, or?

What categories of inequality are mentioned in your text? Are some categories left out that you believe should be included?

Does this chapter convince you that ideas of inequality contribute meaningfully to knowing the world sociologically?

Explain how structural sources of poverty and wealth can affect social mobility and individuals' prospects. What is social mobility? What do we believe wealth and poverty are? If you had implicit or explicit understanding of each before entering this course, what would you have said about them at that time?

Prepare to discuss the list on page 297.

Should we be more interested sociologically in poverty or wealth from a macro or a micro perspective? Does either supersede in significance, the other?

Some sociologists tie together development, debt, dependency, and modernization? They are convinced the tie creates the apparatus to which most of the world is subordinate. How would you explain this tie to others unfamiliar with the linkage? Do you have any critique of the connection, or of the logic and assumptions behind it?

Stratification and social class are intricately meshed with social reproduction. What is social reproduction and why do sociologists think of this when analyzing class and stratification?

These chapters return to the work of Marx and Bourdieu. Be ready to discuss both men again, this time from the more elaborate attention to social class and inequality that are the subject of these readings.

Week 9 *Chapters 14 & 15 - Sex and Gender; Gender Stratification, Inequalities, and Differences*

Class Discussion:

At different times in the continuing debate about how conceptually incisive and precise is our insight into sex and gender, sociologists have thought of both as interchangeable, separate, and unique from each other yet importantly related. Does Anderson contribute to this debate? How does she explain the terms?

Although many refer to gender as if it is singular, the author has sections of different dimensions of gender. What are these?

After our discussions regarding stratification and inequality, are you surprised to read that these general concepts are attached to gender? What is gender stratification? How does Anderson present the case for gender inequality?

Of the variety of stereotypes that you observe in others, or express yourselves, how many are fastened to gender?

What do sociologists mean when they say we 'do' gender?

Week 10 *Chapter 16 - Sex, Sexuality, and Sexual Orientation*

Class Discussion:

Does the distinguishing between sex and sexuality strike you as unusual?

What is orientation? Is it a concept applicable, do you think, mainly or entirely to sexuality? To some types of sexuality more than others?

Sociologists acknowledge that sexuality (and gender) is a basis for discrimination. (Anderson specifically cites homophobia.) Why would this be so compared to other categories in which humans are placed?

Identify the same-sex examples Anderson uses in this chapter. What do sociologists learn from them and others similar to them?

Develop an explanation of Judith Butler's 'gender trouble. What might explain Anderson's inclusion of this in the section of sex and sexuality rather than gender inequality?

Week 11 *Chapter 17 - Race and Racism*

Class Discussion:

Throughout the course I have indicated when a form of analysis has major value in sociological thought. In many disciplines' conceptualization and analysis, race and racism are essential contexts of social comprehension. This is evident in sociology. What are race and racism?

What does Anderson tell you is the best contemporary perspective on them?

What does racialization mean?

For many people, race is a social institution. What would they communicate to you if they stated this outlook to you?

Earlier in the readings I asked you to contemplate your own identities. I reiterate the question now, but ask you to consider if you have a racial identity. If so, what is it? If you don't, what tells you that race and identity are not meshed in your lives?

Explain why ideas of multiculturalism, minority, and ethnicity are brought to our discussion of this chapter?

Week 12 *Chapters 18 & 19 - Popular Culture and Mass Media; The Internet, Social Media, and Mobile Communications*

Class Discussion:

Are popular culture and mass media synonyms of each other? Are mass media and mass culture synonymous with each other? Are mass media and social media simply different terms for the same experience? How are they explained in this last set of readings?

In your estimation, are some aspects of life more indicative of what you call your culture, than others? If you described your culture to someone else, what would you say? If you named particular attributes, which ones would you mention?

Does a credible relationship exist between media and social behaviour? If you are persuaded it does, is all media exposure and involvement equivalently affecting? What prominence does media

have in your life? Can you edit it out when you want to? Are some elements of media more prominent in your existence, experience, and development, than others?

Do you concur with Anderson that social class and race are reflected in media and therefore in our understanding of our culture, and in how and about what we are influenced?

Can you imagine social cohesion without media?

How are interactions rituals and social capital sociologically fused?