

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Acquire a sociological 'eye' on social life.
2. Learn the difference between personal social experiences, and effects of social institutions. And how these operate together as powerful influences and forces in the life of a society.
3. Become familiar with approaches to sociological analysis, and how these stand in contrast to those of other social science disciplines.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Familiarity with, and rudimentary use of, micro and macro sociological analysis.
2. Awareness, and basic application, of concepts and theories pertinent to socialization, stratification, inequality, political organization, social movements, and social institutions.
3. Awareness of a broad spectrum of terminology found in sociological conversation and research.

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 written 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.

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.

How your grade is calculated?

- Assignment 1: Multiple Choice Exam I Weight: 33.3%
- Assignment 2: Multiple Choice Exam II Weight: 33.3%
- Take-Home (Essay) Final Exam Weight: 33.4%

Your score on each multiple choice exam will be converted to a letter grade.

Example: *Multiple Choice Exam* - If the exam has 10 questions and you have 8 correct answers, your score is 80%. According to the grid above, 80% becomes a 'B'.

Restated: Each multiple choice exam, and the final take-home assignment, 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 multiple choice exams and the final take-home assignment. The following illustrates the determination of how a final course grade is calculated:

Task	Grade	Score	Final score & Grade	
Multiple Choice Exam 1	B	3.0	3.0	
Multiple Choice Exam 2	B-	2.7		
Final Take-Home Exam Assignment	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 exams and the take-home final exam assignment. 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.**

Multiple Choice Exam I: February 27th

Chapters 1, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Multiple Choice Exam II: March 30th

Chapters 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19

Final Take-Home Exam Essay Assignment: Date determined by the College

In the last few weeks of the term I will indicate 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. However, if you use research you must follow academic practise. This means providing all sources for any observations or conclusions, in the text itself and at the end in a 'Works Cited' section. This must conform to the Chicago Style, for which you will utilize the handout on this included with the outline.

When writing this assignment, ask yourself what would fascinate a sociologist about your selected item, 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?

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. If you were 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.

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

Are some questions about human existence best explored through some types of knowledge and activism but not others?

Week 4 *Chapters 12 & 13 - Social Stratification, Inequality, and Class; Inequality... Recent Research*

Class Discussion:

What are social stratification and its relationship to social class?

How many categories of class do sociologists use? 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 that 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?

How do structural sources of poverty and wealth affect social mobility and individuals' prospects?

What is social mobility? What do we believe wealth and poverty are?

Prepare to discuss the list on page 297.

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?

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?

Week 5 *Chapters 14 & 15 - Sex and Gender; Gender Stratification, Inequalities, and Differences*

Class Discussion:

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

After our discussions regarding stratification and inequality, are you surprised to read that these general concepts are attached to gender? What is gender stratification?

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 6 *Chapter 16 - Sex, Sexuality, and Sexual Orientation*

Class Discussion:

Does distinguishing between sex and sexuality strike you as unusual?

What is sexual orientation? Can it be used for other experiences in life in addition to sexuality?

What might explain Anderson's inclusion of Judith Butler's 'Gender Trouble' in a chapter on sex and sexuality?

Week 7 *Chapter 17 - Race and Racism*

Class Discussion:

What are race and racism? What is racialization?

For many people, race is a social institution. What would they mean if they said this 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 into your lives?

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

Week 8 *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 quantitative and qualitative research?

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?

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

Week 9 *Chapter 10 - Culture*

Class Discussion:

Is it possible to live in a human environment that has no culture? Can people 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 would you have explained culture?

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

Week 10 *Part 4 Introduction; Chapter 9 - Social Performance and Interaction Rituals*

Class Discussion:

What is socialization?

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

'Status' in sociology encompasses a large range of situations in which we live and grow. What is status, and what subsets of it do sociologists utilize in their work?
What indicators can you name that display your social status?
What rituals do you perceive in society and in your own lives?

Week 11 *Chapter 11 - Social Structure and Social Agency*

Class Discussion:

What are social structure and social agency? Are social structures and social systems references to the same thing?

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

How would a sociologist explain a Social Institution.

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?

Can you imagine social cohesion without media?

How are interactions rituals and social capital sociologically fused?