

Introduction to Sociology SOC 108
Jerald Schrimsher

Course Description

SOC 108 is a University Core Curriculum Course. Following satisfactory completion of this course, you will be able to: (a) demonstrate knowledge of basic sociological concepts about social processes (e.g., socialization, deviance, social control, and stratification by class, gender, and race) and social institutions (e.g., the family, religion, and the state); (b) summarize theoretical or explanatory arguments in sociology; (c) apply these arguments to contemporary events or personal experience; and (d) display knowledge of cultural, class, religious, and other differences within and between societies.

This course is intended to give the student a general understanding of the basic theories, concepts, and principles used in the study of group life, social institutions, and social processes.

Note for History-Education Students: Your work will be assessed as part of the accreditation review for the National Council for the Social Sciences. This course will explore and analyze a number of issues you will impart to your future high school students, including: how role, status, and social class impact interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions; the form, function, and evolution of institutions, their relationships, and how they influence people, events, and culture; how groups and institutions aim to meet individual needs and promote the common good, but create tensions between social conformity and expressions of individuality; how behavioral sciences can be applied to the examination of social problems.

Text

The Practical Skeptic: Core concepts in Sociology by Lisa McIntyre 4th ed.

The Practical Skeptic: Readings in Sociology edited by Lisa McIntyre 4th ed.

Instructor information

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Course Requirements

Attendance Attendance is very important. This is designed as a lecture/discussion class, and without being here you do not have either part. It is very important that you be here as much as possible. If you miss three of our class periods (without valid excuses) I will reduce your final grade by one letter (A becomes B, C becomes D). Each additional three days of class will result in an additional reduction. It is important that you contact me if you will not be attending class for an extended period, so that we can make alternate plans for you to receive the material.

It is also important that you arrive on time to class. Coming in late is disruptive to me and to others in the class. You may also miss important information by coming in late. You have five minutes after the start of class time to get into the room, and arrange yourself appropriately to start listening, taking notes, etc. If there is a pattern of tardiness, I will consider marking frequently late students absent for the day. If there is a valid reason you will regularly be late, make sure you tell me before it becomes a problem for either of us. Make sure you have the appropriate materials available to you (pens, pencils, paper, or anything else you need) when you come to class.

Testing There will be four tests given during the semester. If you know in advance that you cannot be here on the day of the test, please let me know ahead of time, and we can arrange for you to take it early. If you miss a test, make ups should be arranged and taken within three days. Makeup exams are allowed only if you have a written, excused absence approved by me. Any test not taken will result in a grade of zero. **There is no comprehensive final.** (You are welcome.) These tests will amount to 80% of your final grade (each will count for 20%).

Participation This class is intended to provide time for students to ask questions, and discuss the topics that come up in the class. However, if students do not talk, I will. Anything I discuss is testable, anything students discuss is not. Discussion topics should be related (at least in the beginning) to ideas we are studying in class.

While discussion can involve sensitive topics, everyone should be respectful of the opinions of others in the class, even if they are the opposite of your own. While these topics can be controversial, I do not intend to offend anyone with anything I say. If I do, please tell me as soon as possible.

Assignments I will make several assignments in during the course of the semester. These will be related to the topics we are discussing at the time. These could be quizzes, in-class writing assignments, papers or essays to be turned in at a later date, or question and answer assignments. Assignments and participation will amount to the remaining 20% of your grade. Assignments must be turned in on the day scheduled day. I will not accept late assignments, if you cannot come to class, you can email the assignment to me as an attachment. Points for any missed assignments can be made up by doing a paper in the same format as the extra credit papers (see following description).

Extra Credit Papers Students will be allowed to turn in two extra credit papers. Each paper can add up to three points to the total grade for the course. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman or 11 point Calibri font, and will involve taking a current event from the news and looking at it using the sociological insight you have gained in this class. **Talk to me before starting any paper, bring in the article that you are using to write the paper, and have a good idea about what aspect of sociology you are going to relate it to, and why.** I do not care which style you use (ASA, APA, MLA, etc.) but be consistent throughout the paper. These papers must be three pages (not two pages and one line on the third page). This is your only option for extra credit; please do not ask for any others. Only one paper may be turned in before mid-terms, and only one after.

Software compatibility note I only have the capability to open MS Word (.doc or .docx), MS Works (.wps) files, RTF files (.rtf), or plain text (.txt). I prefer physical copies of assignments and extra credit papers, but I will accept emailed copies in the previous formats. Any files sent in other formats will be sent back to you. If you are sending an assignment that is due soon, please make sure you are sending a file I can open. I have not received your work until I have received a file I can open.

Classroom conduct Certain behavior is not allowed in my classroom (or any that I know of). You are not allowed to have conversations among yourselves during the lecture and discussion. This also applies to cell phone usage, including text messaging. If you need to talk to someone, leave, and take care of that outside of class. It is not only disrespectful to me but also to your fellow students. I understand that there will be times when you forget to turn a cell phone off. I might also, but do not make a habit of it. If there is a possibility that you may get a call that you would have to take immediately, let me know before class and sit near the door, so that you can leave the room in order to take your call. However, in my experience as a student and an instructor people will try to get away with things (talking, texting,

and even attempting phone calls during class) this is unacceptable to me, and against University policy. If you do this, you will be asked to leave for the day, and it will be considered an unexcused absence. If it becomes a pattern (more than twice in one week, or more than 4 times during the semester) I will take the necessary steps to have you removed from class permanently. Additionally, if there is disruptive talking or cell phone usage that I do not catch myself, please bring it to my attention, either when it occurs, or after class. It is your class, you paid for it, and you should be able to hear it. I thank you in advance for your full cooperation in this matter.

Academic Honesty. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but also to the development of ethically sensitive and responsible persons. The university seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and policies governing individual conduct that encourage independence and maturity. By accepting membership in this university, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change. All rights and responsibilities exercised within this academic environment shall be compatible with these principles. Acts of Academic Dishonesty is a breach of the student conduct code. Dishonest includes: 1. Plagiarism, representing the work of another as one's own work; 2. Preparing work for another that is to be used as that person's own work; 3. Cheating by any method or means; 4. Knowingly and willfully falsifying or manufacturing scientific or educational data and representing the same to be the result of scientific or scholarly experiment or research; 5. Knowingly furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters; 6. Soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

Emergency Procedures. Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down), and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

Final note Any and all sections of this syllabus are subject to change based on the needs of the Students or the Instructor. All changes will be announced in class as soon as they are made final.

Schedule of topics/ readings/ tests

Introduction-What is Sociology

Chapter 1-Responding to Chaos: A brief history of Sociology

Reader article 1-C. Wright Mills—*The Promise*

Chapter 2-The Sociological Eye

Chapter 3- Science and Fuzzy Objects: Specialization in Sociology

Chapter 4- Who's Afraid of Sociology?

Test 1

Chapter 5- The Vocabulary of Science.

Chapter 6- Doing Social Research

Reader article 7- Phillip Meyer—*If Hitler asked you to electrocute a stranger, would you? Probably.*

Chapter 7- Culture

Reader article 12- Elijah Anderson—*The Code of the Streets*

Test 2 (roughly Mid-terms)

Chapter 8- Social Structure

Reader article 14- Erving Goffman—*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*

Reader article 16- Phillip Zimbardo—*The Pathology of Imprisonment*

Chapter 9- Society and Social Institutions

Chapter 10 Socialization

Chapter 11- Deviance and Social Control

Reader article 26- Emile Durkheim—*The Normality of Crime*

Reader Article 28- D.L. Rosenhan—*On Being Sane in Insane Places*

Reader article 30- Emily E. LaBeff, Robert E. Clark, Valerie J. Haines, and George Diekhoff—*Situational Ethics and College Student Cheating*

Test 3

Chapter 12- Stratification and Inequality

Reader article 32- James Lowen—*The Land of Opportunity*

Reader article 33- Barbara Ehrenreich—*Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*

Chapter 13- Inequality and Achievement: Social Class

Chapter 14- Inequality and Ascription: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Reader article 37- Robin D.G. Kelley—*Confessions of a Nice Negro, or Why I Shaved My Head*

Afterword

Reader article 40- Randall Collins—*Afterword: The Sociological Eye and Its Blinders*

Test 4