

Florida International University
SYLLABUS
SYG2000 Introduction to Sociology
Spring Term 2014
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:45, GL

“It can be said that the first wisdom of sociology is this: things are not what they seem.” –Peter Berger

Instructor: Dr. Claire Oueslati-Porter

Teaching Assistant: Professor Mic

Office: GSS 302

Office Hours: 3:30-4:30, Mon. 2:30-3:30 Wed. (or by appointment with instructor.)

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Course Description and Objective:

This course provides an overview of the discipline of sociology. Sociologists study society, meaning human social groups, through a variety of research methods. Students of this course will learn about many groups, here in the USA, and in many other places in the world, and will develop the sociological skills involved in identifying the ways in which people act as part of social forces. Students will be encouraged to reconsider that which they feel they already know about society based upon “common sense.”

Course Competencies:

Competency 1. The student will demonstrate their knowledge of sociology as a social science by:

- a. describing the historical development of sociology.
- b. Comparing the contributions of major figures in the field.
- c. Describing the main theoretical approaches prevalent in the discipline.
- d. Contrasting different research methods in sociology.

Competency 2. The student will examine the importance of culture and socialization in the structuring and functioning of society by:

- a. analyzing the various characteristics of culture.
- b. Contrasting the concepts of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism as opposite ways of evaluating cultural variation.
- c. Explaining the process of socialization including the role played in this process by the family, peers, schools, the church and the media.
- d. Discussing the notion of deviance as an aspect of organized social life.

Competency 3. The student will investigate the issue of social stratification and inequality by:

- a. discussing the various bases for social inequality.
- b. Describing the conflict and structural-functional interpretations of the issue.
- c. Explaining the importance of social stratification to the individual and to society.
- d. Identifying key terms applicable to the concepts of race, ethnicity, and gender, and distinguishing the major racial and ethnic groups and how they fared in the United States.

Competency 4. The student will explore the subjects of social change and social institutions by:

- a. distinguishing the different theoretical approaches and the major factors promoting social change.
- b. Identifying the concept of a social institution and analyzing specific forms an institution may take, such as family, religion, education.

- c. Examining the impact of social change in social institutions.
- d. Distinguishing between various forms of collective behavior.

Competency 5. The student will show an understanding of other sociological dimensions of social change by:

- a. Identifying theories, concepts and trends affecting world population growth.
- b. Exploring the major demographic trends affecting the United States.
- c. Identifying the evolution of urbanization patterns on a national as well as on a global basis.
- d. Examining the unprecedented challenges of the “urban population explosion” in the United States and world-wide.

Required Textbook: James Henslin. Essentials of Sociology (10th edition)

Grading Scale: A 100-94; A- 93-90; B+ 89-87; B- 83-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-74; D+ 69-67; D 66-64; D- 63-60; F 0-59

Grading Criteria:

Assignment	Total Points
1 st Exam	25
2 nd Exam (Midterm)	25
Final Exam	25
Article Review Paper	25
Total	100

Instructional Strategies:

Class consists of lecture, team activities via Blackboard, debate, and discussion. Attendance will be taken in each class. Many exam questions will come exclusively from lectures.

Examinations:

There are a total of three in-class examinations (each contributing 25% of the final grade). The exams consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. **Total 75% of grade.**

Research Papers:

The research paper requires students to write a review of a sociological study that has been published either in book form or in article form as a peer-reviewed sociology journal. The review will include a summary of the focus of the research, the research methods employed, and the findings, as well as the student’s explanation of why this research is important. The paper is required to be 5-7 pages, typed, double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 point font. Please refer to the paper guidelines posted on blackboard.

Total 25% of grade.

Attendance:

Students are expected to be in class during class times. On exam days and on the day the research paper is due, students who enter class after the first ten minutes will not be permitted to take the exam or turn in the paper and will receive an F on the exam/ paper. Absence on an exam day will result in an automatic grade of F.

Extra Credit Assignments:

There are no extra credit assignments.

Course Policies:

Students are expected to be in class during class times. Absences are detrimental to a student's grade in several ways.

1. **Exams:** There will be three exams. Most of the questions on the exams will require that students apply knowledge rather than repeat information memorized from the textbook. **Exams will be given on the Thursday of each test week.**
2. **Attendance:** Attendance will be taken during each class. Students should note that many exam questions will come exclusively from lectures.
3. **Readings/Assignments:** Success in this course requires familiarity with the textbook. The professor will not cover all material in the text, because the student is responsible for reading the text and posing questions in class. Students are expected to read all assigned chapters **before** the class period, so that they can pose questions and engage in discussion.
4. **Conduct in the Classroom:** If students want to listen to music, surf the web, or text, they are free to do so outside of the classroom. If students disrupt the teaching/learning process or act in a disrespectful, threatening, or intimidating way toward the professor or other students, they will be asked to leave the class.

Schedule and Required Readings for SYG 2000

Week 1. (Jan 7, 9) Henslin Ch. 1. What is the Sociological Perspective?

Week 2. (Jan 14, 16): Henslin Ch. 2. What does culture do in society?

Week 3. (Jan 21, 23): Henslin Ch. 3. What is socialization? Would humans exist without it?

Week 4. (Jan 28, 30): Henslin Ch. 4. Hidden in plain sight: Social Structure and Social Interaction. Are you an agent? Are you a victim of social structures?

Week 5. (Feb. 4, 6) Henslin Ch. 5. Exploring groups beginning with university groups. Social Groups and Formal Organizations

Test 1, covering Ch. 1-4 and all lecture materials

Week 6. (Feb 11, 13): Henslin Ch. 6. Deviance and Social Control

Week 7. (Feb. 18, 20): Henslin Ch. 7. Global Stratification

Week 8. (Feb 25, 27): Henslin Ch. 8. Class in the United States

Week 9. (March 4, 6): Henslin Ch. 10. Gender and Age,

Test 2, covering Ch. 1-8, Cumulative

Week 10. (March 18, 20): Henslin Ch. 12 Why do we marry? Why do we need "the family"? Marriage & Family

Week 11. (March 25, 27): Ch. 9. Why does Race still exist and why does Ethnicity matter?

Week 12. (April 1, 3): Henslin Ch. 11. Politics, the Economy and how to understand yourself as a political actor, even if you hate politics.

Research Papers Due

Week 13. (April 8, 10) Henslin Ch. 13. What do we mean by Education? What are the impacts of Religion on all of society? Do we have a separation of church and state?

Week 14. (April 15, 17): Henslin Ch. 14, Is there really a "Population Bomb," and exploring city life through Urbanization

Week 15. (April 22, 24) Henslin Ch. 15. How we all participate in Social Transformations, The Tea Party, The Occupy Movement, and the Arab Spring.

Week 16 Final Exam: Cumulative.