

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL
Fall, 2015

Introduction to Sociology

(SOCI 101)

Section 4, Syllabus Revision 2 Tuesday/Thursday 12:30–1:45 Wilson 107, Dey 204, Dey 208

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to give you a dynamic introduction to the field of sociology, with special attention paid to issues, ideas, and facets of American culture and society. It focuses in part on sociological research and writing done at UNC to highlight the new knowledge produced by UNC sociologists. If you and I do our jobs correctly, you'll walk away with an appreciation of the ideas and methods of sociological inquiry, an understanding of how sociological knowledge is developed, and a sense of where the field is today.

This course has four broad goals:

1. **To introduce sociology and its ideas**

You should have a sense of the kinds of issues with which sociology grapples, the tools it brings, and the ideas upon which it is built.

2. **To survey several fields of contemporary sociology**

Where is sociology going today? What do sociologists do?

3. **To encourage critical approaches to social claims**

Claims about the nature of society are made daily in the press, popular and business books, and elsewhere. After this class, you should be able to evaluate these claims critically and think about how they might be tested sociologically.

4. **To write well**

Social science is, fundamentally, a written art. Writing well is integral to good sociology. Your writing will be evaluated for clarity of thought, language, structure, and grammar.

READINGS AND RESOURCES

Required Books

Ricahrd Arum and Josipa Roksa. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Claude Fischer and Michael Hout. *A Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2008).

Charles Kurzman. *The Missing Martyrs* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Karolyn Tyson. *Integration Interrupted* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Supplementary Readings

All other readings are available either on the web or on the course website. These are marked with the [www](#) symbol. Those available on the web are linked from the course website. The course website is available through <http://sakai.unc.edu>.

Other Resources

You will need to sign up for PollAnywhere to participate in various class activities. Please follow the directions at http://help.unc.edu/CCM3_033949. Active polls for the class can be found at <http://pollev.com/andrewperrin>.

Have a dictionary close at hand to look up words you don't know. You can find an adequate one at <http://www.dictionary.com> if you prefer using an online version.

The UNC Writing Center (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb>) can help you with writing clearly and correctly.

There is an astonishing amount of information available on the World Wide Web. A significant proportion of that information—though by no means all—is true and relevant. By all means, use the Web to supplement your reading and knowledge, but use it critically and make sure you know the source of the information.

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of this course are as follows:

Reading You must complete all the course readings. *You are responsible for understanding the readings*—make use of your fellow students, your dictionary, the Internet, your TA, and me to make sure you understand the readings. Course time is to be used for substantive discussion and further exploration of the implications of course readings, *not* for grasping the basic contents.

Participation You must attend, and participate in, all class discussions and small group exercises. You are also responsible for the information contained in course lectures.

In-Class Assessments There will be several unscheduled in-class assessments (quizzes and similar).

Exams There will be two examinations: a midterm and a final. You must take the examinations at the date, time, and place assigned.

Topic Development Paper In this short (approximately 1,000 words) paper, you should decide what topic or question you plan to explore sociologically. The paper should explain the importance of the topic or question and why it makes for a good sociological exploration. You will address this topic or question in your final paper. **Due October 29 in class.**

Final Paper The final paper is your opportunity to synthesize what you have learned during the class with outside interests and experiences. Your final paper must develop a sociological argument using appropriate sources. It is an academic paper and, as such, must be written in an appropriate style. There is no specific, set length; however, about 1,500-2,000 words is a good guideline. The paper is due **December 1 in class.** Using your question or problem from the prior paper, do some combination of the below. You do *not* need to do all of these—any one, or any combination, is fine.

1. Compare how at least two sociological concepts apply—or fail to apply—to it.

2. Review and evaluate sociological research and writing on it. For this project you must provide a broad introduction to the field of interest and a sense of the similarities, differences, and relationships among sociological approaches. *This is not simply an annotated bibliography.*
3. Design a sociological study to investigate it. You must provide a theoretical background, literature review, methodological specification, and expected results.

Grading

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation <i>(3% for attendance, 12% for active engagement)</i>	15%
In-Class Assessments	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Topic Development Paper	15%
Final Paper	20%

COURSE POLICIES

YOU ARE AN ADULT. As a student in this class, you are provided with a set of resources for learning the class's contents, and you are expected to fulfill a series of requirements designed to evaluate the depth and breadth of your knowledge of those contents. Your grade, therefore, is a reflection of your success in utilizing the resources you have at your disposal. There will be no in-class quizzes or writing assignments, and there will be no extra credit or make-up assignments.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INFORMATION IN THE READINGS AND GIVEN DURING LECTURES. If you do not understand something I say in a lecture, ask me during the lecture, during a later class, or privately via e-mail or office hours.

ON DAYS WHEN DISCUSSIONS ARE SCHEDULED, participation is mandatory. Some discussions will be full-class; others will be in small groups. Your participation will be useless—and graded as such—if you have not done the reading.

ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE DATES LISTED. Make sure you give yourself sufficient time to finish assignments by their due dates. You will lose roughly one letter grade per day between the due date and the date the paper is received. You may make the calculation yourself as to whether your work will improve sufficiently in the extra time to make up for the grade reduction. In exceptional cases, I may grant an extension; you *must* discuss this with me in advance.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS COURSE IS COVERED BY THE UNC HONOR CODE (see <http://studentconduct.unc.edu/students>). I take academic dishonesty—including, but not limited to, plagiarism—very seriously. There will be no excuses or second chances; if you have plagiarized the *ideas* or *words* of someone else without giving credit, you will be referred to the Student Attorney General. If you have questions as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, check <http://www.unc.edu/depts/honor/plagiarism.html> or <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/plagiarism/> or consult a TA or me.

ADEQUATE COMPLETION OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CLASS WILL EARN YOU A B-. Work whose quality clearly exceeds these requirements will earn a B, B+, A-, or A. Work whose quality is in one or more ways less than adequate will earn you a grade of C+ or below.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. Introduction to the Course

August 18 Introduction to “Introduction to Sociology”

August 20 Welcome to Sociology; Sociological Introductions

August 25 Whole-Class Exercise

August 27 Thinking Causally. Peter S. Bearman and Hannah Brückner. “Promising the Future: Virginity Pledges and First Intercourse.” *American Journal of Sociology* 106:4 (2001). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/320295>

September 1 Lecture: Group, Culture, Society, Sociology

September 3 Discussion: Asking Sociological Questions

Reading:

- Conley, Chapter 2 of *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton). [www](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/320295)
- Horace Miner, “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema.” *The American Anthropologist* 58:3 (June, 1956). [www](http://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/miner.html)<http://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/miner.html>

September 8 Lecture: US Culture and Politics Since 9/11

September 10 Kurzman, Ch. 1–2

September 15 Class Cancelled: Rosh Hashanah Holiday

September 17 Kurzman, Ch. 4–5

September 22 Culture, Religion, and Inequality

September 24 Fischer and Hout, Chapters 8 and 9

September 29 Lecture: Health and Illness

October 1 Whole class in Wilson 107

Guest Lecture/Discussion: Elizabeth M. Armstrong, Princeton University

Reading: Armstrong, Elizabeth M. “Diagnosing a Moral Disorder: The Discovery and Evolution of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.” *Social Science & Medicine* 47:12 (December, 1998): 2025–2042. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953698003086> .

October 6 Lecture: Sociology of Sex and Sexuality

Reading: Jeremy E. Uedker, Lisa D. Pearce, and Brita Andercheck. “The Four U’s: Latent Classes of Hookup Motivations among College Students.” *Social Currents* 2:2 (June, 2015). <http://scu.sagepub.com/content/2/2/163>

October 8 Question and Answer Review Session

Whole Class in Wilson 107

October 13 Midterm Examination

October 15 Fall Break – no class

October 20 Class and Inequality

October 22 Discussion: Fischer and Hout, Chapter 3; Public Religion Research Institute. “Analysis: Race and Americans’ Social Networks.” <http://publicreligion.org/research/2014/08/analysis-social-network/>

October 27 Lecture: Race and Racism

October 29 Discussion: Tyson, Introduction and Chapters 1–2

November 3 Guest Lecture/Discussion: Richard N. Pitt, Vanderbilt University

Reading: Pitt, Richard N. “‘Killing the Messenger’: Religious Black Gay Men’s Neutralization of Anti-Gay Religious Messages.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49:1 (March 2010), 56–72. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2009.01492.x/full>

November 5 Discussion: Tyson, Chapter 4 and Conclusion

November 10 Lecture: Education

November 12 Arum & Roksa Chapters 2–3

November 17 Social Class, Closure, and Inequality

November 19 Arum & Roksa Chapter 4

November 24 Lecture: The Sociology of Politics

Reading: Perrin, Andrew J. "Why You Voted." *Contexts* Fall, 2008. <http://contexts.org/articles/fall-2008/why-you-voted/>

November 26 Thanksgiving – no class

December 1 Final lecture: "The Fundamental Unit of Human Behavior is..."

December 1, 5:00 pm Final paper due

December 8, 12:00 pm Final Examination