Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to what sociologists study and how they study it. Although some people disagree with me, I tend to think of sociology not as an independent discipline (like biology or physics), but more as a framework for perceiving and understanding the world. It is bigger than a single discipline. It draws from a lot of other disciplines—economics, political science, philosophy, literature, and psychology, just to name a few—and sociology contributes to those disciplines as well.

My goal in this class is not really to introduce you to a new subject; my goal is to introduce you to a new way of seeing the subjects you already know about. You are a member of society. If you have made it this far, you are most likely competent to function within it. Thus, you already know a great deal about society and its component parts. In this class, I want to offer you a different way of knowing your society and its component parts.

And, really, you can study almost anything sociologically. Seriously.

In this course we will cover crime, racial formation and classification, waitresses who give you the side-eye for trying to order off-menu, social movements, why people like the music they do, mass incarceration, white people with dreads, the rise of single motherhood, cockfighting, American inequality and many things besides. As we move through these readings we will discuss the major theoretical approaches deployed by sociologists, appealing to Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and some lesser-known figures. But you will read only tiny excerpts of these “classics.” Instead the emphasis is on more contemporary, illustrative texts.

If you are looking for an in depth introduction to a particular topic, this is not the class for you. If you’re happy to learn a little about a whole range of things, you might enjoy this class. There is a lot of reading in this class; you must do the readings to do well in this course. I am sensitive to this and have designed a grading scheme that rewards students for doing the work (effort). If you show up for lecture, do the reading, and pay attention, you should do very well on the exams and in the course. Conversely, if you miss lecture, don’t do the reading, and are distracted, you will not do well. My hope is that course evaluation centered on steady weekly work building up to the exams will both relieve stress and actually help you learn, remember, and use the concepts introduced in this course.
Course Materials

There is one required purchase for this course:

- i>clicker, a response system that allows you to respond to questions I pose during class (if you already have either the i>clicker+ or i>clicker2, you obviously do not need to buy a new one).

- i>clickers for this course are available at A Room of One's Own, at 315 W. Gorham St.

All readings will be available online at Learn@UW.

Grading and Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on your participation in lecture, your reading journals and your performance on three in-class, non-cumulative exams. You have the opportunity to earn up to 200 points this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting to Know You Quiz</th>
<th>Due by Tuesday, Sept 15th</th>
<th>1 point</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Journals</td>
<td>2 due every week</td>
<td>49 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>Thursday, Oct 8th</td>
<td>47 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>Tuesday, Nov 10th</td>
<td>47 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final (not cumulative)</td>
<td>Thursday, December 17th 7:45AM - 9:45AM</td>
<td>47 points</td>
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<td>Participation in Lecture</td>
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<td>Bonus points for completing the midterm evaluation</td>
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<td>2 points</td>
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Total: 200 points

Final grades will be allocated as follows:

93-100% = A  
88-92.9% = AB  
82-87.9% = B  
78-81.9% = BC  
70-77.9% = C  
60-69.9% = D  
Under 60 = F

I reserve the right to modify the distribution at a later date (example: deciding 87-91.9% is an AB), but I will not do so in a way that lowers anyone’s grade.
Lecture Participation and Attendance (~5% your grade)

i>clicker participation:
While the main purpose of the i>clickers is to support your learning, they will also be used to measure your participation in the class. Most class periods, I will ask several questions that you will need to answer with your i>clicker. Your grade for participation is based on participating by responding to the question, not for correctness of your answer. Many of the questions will not even have correct answers – they are to gauge opinions, drive paired discussions, and help you engage with important concepts.

Please purchase your i>clicker before the second week of class, when we will begin using them. You do not need to register your clicker before that day, as you must first use the clicker in class before you can sync it to the course website.

Students sometimes have technological difficulties or need to miss class for various reasons. You get three “freebies” for this reason. You don’t need to let me know about absences them before hand, and, with the exception of extenuating circumstances (athletics commitments out of your control, extended illness, etc), I will not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Please note that many students end up with a day in which their clickers do not work, or they get sick, or a conflict comes up that they cannot miss. I suggest saving your "freebies" for a rainy day, as you never know when you will really need them.

Active engagement in class (up to a full letter grade):
I value a highly participatory lecture. Most human brains are not able to focus for more than 15 minutes or so at a time, and most people don’t learn well by simply listening to information. To break up the activity, and to help you internalize and apply concepts, I include activities, paired discussion with your peers, short independent reflection times, and large-group discussion.

As much as is possible with such a large class, I will be paying attention to your level of active engagement in class. No points are automatically assigned to this, but if I notice that you are especially actively engaged, or especially disengaged (sleeping, texting, typically late etc), I will add or subtract up to a letter grade to your final grade for the class.

Reading Journals (~25% of your grade)

During this class, you are going to read articles and book chapters to prepare for lecture and will be expected to keep an academic journal of this reading. Each entry will be in response to a few questions designed to guide you through the reading. As there are two lectures per week, you will be submitting two journal entries every week. More information about journals is provided in the handout titled “Figuring Out What’s Important and Remembering it Later: The Academic Journal.”

Exams (~70% of your grade)

There will be three exams for this course. They are non-cumulative and will consist of multiple choice and short-essay answer questions.
Office Hours and Getting Help

Many students are intimidated by the idea of going into office hours – I know I was as an undergrad. Don’t be afraid to stop by my office hours or make an appointment to meet. You do not have to be having difficulty or even have profound questions to come to office hours. I am happy to answer questions stemming from lecture, readings, or current events that relate to the course. Also, I love when students send me links to articles and other media related to the course. Don’t be surprised if it ends up in a lecture.

Do not hesitate to talk to me if you need assistance. Head off problems before they turn into emergencies. If you cannot meet with me during office hours, we can make an appointment to meet at another time.

Communication:

Other than stopping by office hours, email is the best way to contact me. You can expect a response within 24 hours, unless the message is received during or just before a weekend or holiday – in such cases, I will respond by the end of business hours on the next business day. Please note that if you need a response that is more than a few sentences, I’ll recommend that we meet in person to discuss the issue.

One Caveat: When you have questions about due dates, how to use the course website, or need to obtain notes when you have missed class, please check in with a peer first. I have many students, and while I am happy to email and meet with you when needed, you often can get the answer more quickly by checking in with a peer first. Please exchange contact information with four students sitting near you on the first day:

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Course Policies and Information

Laptops, Tablets, Phones, and Other Technology

I understand that you may prefer to take notes on your computer. However, due to rampant abuse of the internet in previous classes, all computer and tablet use is prohibited during lecture. I post all lecture slides after the lecture, so you will not need to take verbatim notes. If you feel that a computer will significantly benefit your learning, come see me during office hours to discuss the issue, and I may grant you permission to use your computer in class.

If cellphone use becomes a distraction, you will be asked to leave lecture.

Accommodations

Please let me know within the first two weeks of class if you have needs that may require special accommodations. For more information about accommodations for students with disabilities, please contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center at 263-2742. Also, if you feel there is anything I should be made aware of, please feel free to talk to me.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

I feel it is only fair to warn you in the beginning about my personal policy regarding plagiarism and cheating. It will not be tolerated. It WILL be detected (and detested). It is truly not worth it. Ignorance of the rules is NOT an excuse.

All incidences of plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be reported to the Chair of the Sociology Department as well as the Office of the Dean of Students, and you will receive a failing grade for the course. I expect you to acquaint yourself with the University's policy on academic misconduct, found here: http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html

An exam or assignment found not to be your own work will not only be reported to the Chair of the Sociology Department as well as the Office of the Dean of Students. I will recommend that you receive a failing grade for the course. A formal letter will be sent to the Dean's office and it will be kept on file during your academic career here at UW-Madison. This letter does not result in any sort of permanent file nor does it appear on your official transcript. The file will be discarded when you leave/graduate from the UW. This file is set up primarily to establish a record of behavior so that in the unfortunate situation where a student has been caught more than once, it will be much easier for the university to take and justify their action.

If you have questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, the Writing Center has numerous resources and tutorials online on their website (http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Documentation.html).

Make-Up Examinations

There are no make-up examinations. I may permit a student to take a make-up one of three exams only in the rare and exceptional case of an illness or family emergency. If a make-up examination is granted,
then the student must take it on a date after the assigned test date. No "early bird" examinations.

Oversleeping, prescheduled trips, family vacations and celebrations, employment obligations, extra-curricular commitments, extended holiday or travel weekends, non-refundable airline tickets, and early departures for breaks do not constitute "illness or family emergency." I do not grant excuses for any reason other than illness or family emergency.

There are no "do-overs:" students may not retake an examination, or other assignment.
Unit 1: Sociological Imagination: Learning to Think Like a Sociologist

Week One: Introduction

Thursday Sept 3rd - Welcome to Soc 211

No Readings Due Today

Week Two: What Do Sociologists “Do?”

Tuesday Sept 8th - Learning to Think Like a Sociologist

Readings Due:


Thursday Sept 10th - Answering Sociological Questions with Sociological Methods

Readings Due:

- Best, Joel. 2004 “Scary Numbers” 15-22

Unit 2: Human Agency (Action) and Social Order

Week Three: Sociology of Culture

Tuesday Sept 15th - What is Culture?

Readings Due:


Thursday Sept 17th - On Culture and Power

Readings Due:


**Week Four: Self and Social Interaction**

**Tuesday Sept 22nd - Seeing the Significance of the Seemingly Trivial**

Readings Due:

• Cahill et al. (1985) Excerpts from “Meanwhile Backstage: Behavior in Public Bathrooms” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*
• Duneier, M and Hasan H. Excerpts from “Talking to Women” in *Sidewalk.* P.193-201

**Thursday Sept 24th - Power and Social Interaction**

Readings Due:

• Simon and Brown (2000) “Perceived Intragroup Homogeneity in Minority-Majority Contexts” p. 326-338 in *Stereotypes and Prejudice: Key Readings*

**Week Five: Sociology of Deviance and Study of Crime**

**Tuesday Sept 29th - What is Deviance?**

Readings Due:

• Durkheim, E. “The Normality of Deviance” p. 273-275 in *Sociology: Introductory Readings*

**Thursday Oct 1st - Crime and Punishment**

Readings Due:

• Merton, Robert. “Crime as a Deviant Adaption” p. 275-280 in *Sociology: Introductory Readings*
Week Six: Sociology of Sexuality

Tuesday Oct 6th - Sociology of Sexuality

Readings Due:


Thursday Oct 8th

EXAM 1 COVERS UNITS 1 & 2

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Unit 3: Understanding Social Structure and Inequality

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Week Seven: Social Class and Inequality

Tuesday Oct 13th - Money, Labor and Inequality

Readings Due:


Thursday Oct 15th - The American Dream: Social Mobility and Transmission of Class

Readings Due:


Lareau, Annette. “Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural” (from Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life) p. 153-162

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Week Eight: Education and Inequality

Tuesday Oct 20th - Does Where You Go to School Matter?

Readings Due:

• Douglas-Gabriel, Danielle “An Alarming Number of Teenagers are Quitting School to Work.” *The Washington Post* April, 16 2015

**Thursday Oct 22nd - Schools and Social Reproduction**

Readings Due:


**Week Nine: Gender and Inequality**

**Tuesday Oct 27th- On Becoming Men and Women**

Readings Due:


**Thursday Oct 29th - Gender and Work**

Readings Due:


**Week Ten: Racial Categorization and Stratification**

**Tuesday November 3rd -What is Race?**

Readings Due:


http://www.vox.com/2015/8/19/9173457/hispanic-latino-comic


**Thursday November 5th - How Does Race Matter?**

Readings Due:


• McIntosh, Peggy. 1998 Unpacking the Invisible Backpack.
• http://thefeministbreeder.com/explaining-white-privilege-broke-white-person/ (make sure you read AFTER reading the McIntosh)

Week Eleven: Exam and Sociology of Religion

Tuesday November 10th

EXAM II – COVERS UNIT 3

Unit 4: Social Institutions and Social Change

Thursday November 12th - Sociology of Religion
Readings Due:
• To Be Determined

Week Twelve: Sociology of Work

Tuesday November 17th - Capitalism and How We Work
Readings Due:

Thursday November 19th - Working in America in the 21st Century
Readings Due:
• Hochschild, Arlie. The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work--how individuals combine their work and home lives in Mapping the Social Landscape: Readings in Sociology

Week Thirteen: Sociology of the Family

Tuesday November 24th – Going Nuclear
Readings Due:

Thursday November 26th

THANKSGIVING! ENJOY!

Week Fourteen: The Changing World Around Us

Tuesday December 1st - Globalization

Readings Due:

- Barber, Benjamin. “Jihad vs. McWorld” p. 32-40 in *The Globalization Reader*

Thursday December 3rd - Migration

Readings Due:


Week Fifteen: Political Power and Social Movements

Tuesday December 8th - Power and Politics: More than just a Vote

Readings:


Thursday December 10th – How Do Social Movements Form?

Readings:


Week Sixteen

Tuesday December 15th Last Day of Classes

*No Readings Due*

Thursday, December 17th - 7:45AM - 9:45AM

FINAL EXAM- Covers Unit 4