

Fall 2018  
**Foundations of Sociology**  
SOC 203  
11:30-1:00 TuTh  
Sage 4218

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### **Course Description**

This course serves as an in-depth introduction to sociology designed for majors, minors, and anyone else with a specific sociological interest. While this course will cover many different topics, we will go into more depth than a typical introductory class. By the end of this course, you should have a good idea about what constitutes sociology as an academic discipline, the basics of sociological research, and develop critical reading and analytical skills that you will apply to courses throughout your undergraduate education.

### **Course Expectations**

- You will attend class regularly, show up on time, and participate in discussion.
- All assigned readings must be read before class begins (so, for example, I expect you to read Mills before class begins on Sept. 11, not afterwards as an assignment). See more information below regarding Reading Summaries.
- No laptops or cell phones allowed during class. Exceptions for laptops will be made on a case-by-case basis if you discuss your needs with me.
- You should regularly check your email and D2L course site for updates about the class.
- You are responsible for verifying that D2L submissions go through completely. If you encounter a technical problem, let me know immediately, otherwise assignments will be considered late.
- You will reference the Sociology Department's Writing & Citation Guide when formatting writing assignments, where applicable.

### **Required Texts**

There are no required texts to purchase for this course. All assigned readings will be made available through the D2L course website.

### **Assignments**

#### *Reading Summaries*

You will write at least five weeks' worth of reading summaries throughout the semester. Summaries do not need to exhaustively summarize readings, but instead focus on the main points. At minimum, I expect you to address the following: what was the author's argument? What evidence did they use, and how was it collected? Do you agree with the author's argument? Why or why not? Was there any particularly interesting aspect of the article? These

do not have to be lengthy summaries—only 0.5 page per reading is required (double-spaced, 12 pt font Times New Roman). Reading summaries are due as a single file in the D2L dropbox prior to class beginning on Thursdays. All assignments assigned for that week must be included in the reading summaries in order to receive full credit. You must turn in five reading summary files throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, only one will be randomly graded (but you must turn in at least five in order to receive full credit).

The purpose of the reading summaries are twofold. One, developing the habit of active reading will help you identify key points made by the author in an efficient manner, a skill that will greatly help you throughout your undergraduate career. Two, having a chance to write and reflect on the readings will give you a deeper understanding and produce a more meaningful discussion in class with your peers. As an incentive to submit more than five summaries, you are allowed to print off any summary that was posted to D2L on time and use them as open notes during exams.

### *Discussion Leader*

Each student will lead a discussion on an assigned reading. For your assigned reading, you must submit an in-depth summary and prepare a brief presentation for the class. This in-depth summary and presentation materials (PowerPoint, handouts, etc.) will be submitted to our dropbox folder on D2L at least 24 hours prior to your presentation. If you have a partner for your presentation, you must both submit unique, in-depth summaries of the reading, although only one of you needs to submit the presentation materials. You will guide a brief discussion of the reading with your classmates. The entirety of the presentation should last about 10 – 15 minutes (if discussion really takes off, we'll leave more time for it).

The presentation must do the following:

- Highlight the author's main argument (and/or, identify the key "takeaway")
- Highlight key concepts and/or findings from research
- Select and explain a key quote from the reading
- Explain why you think I assigned this article
- Come up with three to five questions for discussion

### *Interview Assignment*

You will have the opportunity to practice some research methods by conducting an interview regarding topical issues at UWO. This assignment will provide insight into the practice of qualitative research and data analysis. Due October 4 on D2L dropbox prior to the beginning of class.

### *Contexts podcast*

*Contexts* is an academic journal dedicated to presenting sociological research to general audiences. You will listen to one podcast and read the corresponding article found on their [web page](#). After summarizing the substance of the article, you will follow up with something new or interesting that you learned about the research by listening to the podcast. Due November 1 on D2L dropbox prior to the beginning of class.

### *Sociology Journal Subscription*

This assignment will introduce you to the diverse research topics contained in sociology. For this assignment, you will read the abstracts from two or three different sociology journals. You will then write a report discussing which one you would choose if given a free subscription. More details will be provided. Due December 6 on D2L dropbox prior to the beginning of class.

### *Exams*

There will be three in-class exams throughout the semester, each worth 15% of your grade. As a reward for submitting reading summaries, you may bring copies of your summaries to reference during exams **only if you submitted them on time to the dropbox** (I will allow you to do some editing based on what you learned through discussion). Given this, I would encourage you to write more than five reading summaries throughout the semester. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice questions and short essays. Make-up exams are available only if you can provide official documentation of your absence and speak with me ahead of time.

### *Attendance & Participation*

It is crucial that you maintain regular attendance and active discussion participation in this course. This course is designed to expose you to a variety of sociological traditions and trends, but also help you develop skills that will benefit you throughout your undergraduate education. We will maintain regular discussions throughout the semester, and you should use this space to challenge assigned content, voice confusion, or make connections with personal experience, local culture, and current events. Therefore, you must actively participate in order to receive full points (and being prepared on the readings will give you more confidence to participate).

### **Grading**

Reading Summaries	10%
Discussion Leader	10%
Interview Assignment	10%
<i>Contexts</i> Podcast	5%
Sociology Subscription	10%
Exams (3)	45%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Late work will be penalized.

Your final grade will be computed on the following percentage scale:

A	92.5-100%
A-	90.0-92.49
B+	87.5-89.99
B	82.5-87.49
B-	80.0-82.49
C+	77.5-79.99
C	72.5-77.49
C-	70.0-72.49
D+	67.5-69.99

D	62.5-67.49
D-	60.00-62.49
F	0-59.99

**Academic misconduct** will not be tolerated. You must do your own work and properly cite ideas that belong to other people. More information on plagiarism can be found here: <http://www.english.uwosh.edu/shaffer/policies/plagiarism.htm>.

### **Campus Resources**

All UWO students are eligible for one-to-one conferencing at the Writing Center. Their free, confidential tutoring is designed to help students work through assignments and gain additional writing skills. The Writing Center is located in the academic support suite of the Student Success Center and here: <https://writingcenter.uwosh.edu>.

The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Content Tutoring page on CAR's website (<https://car.uwosh.edu/>) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on a link to request one, or call 424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.

UWO is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Please contact the Accessibility Center [Dean of Students Office, 125 Dempsey Hall, 424-3100 (Voice), 424-1319 (TTY)] for the University's accommodation request form and documentation requirements or visit their website at: <http://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/Accessibility-Center>.

Please visit this page to read about all the campus services available to support your success: <http://www.uwosh.edu/resources/>.

I encourage you to read newspapers daily to keep up with current events, which Titan Readership makes easy (vending machines in Polk and Reeve giving access to newspapers with your student ID card).

## **SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1**

Sept 6 Introduction to the course

### **Week 2 The Sociological Imagination**

Sept 11 Mills – “The Sociological Imagination”  
Coontz – “How History and Sociology Can Help Today’s Families”

- Discussion Leader signup

Sept 13 Durkheim – “What Makes Sociology Different?”

- Summaries Due

### **Week 3 Sociological Inquiry**

Sept 18 Charon – “Should We Generalize about People?”

Sept 20 Wolch and Dear – “Understanding Homelessness”

- Summaries Due

### **Week 4 Research Methods**

Sept 25 Gallagher – “Miscounting Race”

Sept 27 Best – “Quantitative Literacy and Critical Thinking about Public Issues”  
Meyer – “If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably.”

- Summaries Due

### **Week 5 Socialization**

Oct 2 Goffman – “On Face-Work”  
Lareau – “Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural Growth”

Oct 4 Chambliss – “The Saints and the Roughnecks”  
Becker – “Becoming a Marijuana User”

- Interview Assignment Due
- Summaries Due

**Week 6      Review Week**

Oct 9      Catch-up & Review

Oct 11     Exam I

**Week 7      Theory I (functional theories)**

Oct 16     Durkheim – excerpts from *The Division of Labor*

Oct 18     Davis and Moore – “Some Principles of Stratification”  
    • Summaries Due

**Week 8      Theory II (conflict theories)**

Oct 23     Marx – excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*

Oct 25     Hurn – “Theories of Schooling and Society”  
    • Summaries Due

**Week 9      Theory III (symbolic theories)**

Oct 30     Weber – selection from *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*  
            (p. 140-44; 148-150)

Nov 1      Molotch – “The Rest Room and Equal Opportunity”  
            D’Emilio – “Capitalism and Gay Identity”  
    • *Contexts* podcast assignment Due  
    • Summaries Due

**Week 10     Review Week**

Nov 6      Catch-up & Review

Nov 8      Exam II

**Week 11      Stratification and Social Class**

Nov 13      Prasad *et al* – “The Undeserving Rich”

Nov 15      No Reading Assignment  
                • Summaries Due

**Week 12      Stratification and Social Class (cont’d)**

Nov 20      TBA

Nov 22      *No Class (Thanksgiving Day)*

**Week 13      Race & Ethnicity**

Nov 27      Volpp – “Blaming Culture for Bad Behavior”

Nov 29      Lee and Bean – “A Postracial Society or a Diversity Paradox?”  
                • Summaries Due

**Week 14      Gender**

Dec 4        Armstrong et al – “Good Girls: Gender, Social Class, and Slut Discourse on  
                Campus”

Dec 6        Caplow et al – “The Quality of Marriage in Middletown: 1924 - 1976”  
                • Sociology Journal Subscription Due  
                • Summaries Due

**Week 15      Review Week**

Dec 11      Catch-up & Review

Dec 13      Exam III