

Introduction to Sociology 101

Fall 2015

Instructor: Maryann Touitou, MA Human Relations

Course: Sociology 101 meets for 3 weekends:

Friday, November 19 through Saturday December 12

(We will not meet during Fall Break)

3 credit hour course

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Office hours: My working hours are Monday – Friday. I am on campus until 7:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please call or email me to set up an appointment.

Required Text: “Introduction to Sociology: A Collaborative Approach”, 4th edition. If you do not have a text, please order through the bookstore ASAP.

Important date: Last day to withdraw for a refund is Sunday, November 22, 2015. Last day to withdraw is Monday, December 7, 2015.

What is Introduction to Sociology?

*This Introduction to Sociology course provides students an opportunity to explore the working of U.S. society and other cultures. Some of the topics we will study are: poverty, stereotypes, gender inequality, racial discrimination and criminal behavior. **Sociology is the scientific study of society. Sociology provides an explanation of how we live, why we live a particular way and what difference does culture and stratification (inequality) make to people.***

How will we study Sociology? By “doing Sociology” we investigate how social issues go beyond the lives of individuals; issues that individuals cannot resolve without the combined efforts of others. For example, homelessness is an individual issue for the person that is homeless, but the homeless situation is a public or community issue when large numbers of homeless people exist. The job of Sociology is to explain how homelessness is created due to an insufficient supply of low income housing, periodic unemployment, changing job opportunities, and many other social factors. Wandering sadhus in India lead solitary lives believing that the shortest way to enlightenment is the life of a mendicant. But even the sadhu is dependent on who puts anything in their begging bowl on any given day.

Course Description: Examines the basic concepts, theories, and principles of sociology as well as human culture, social groups, and social issues of age, gender, class, and race.

Course Content and Objectives: This course is an introduction to the discipline of sociology and the insights it provides into the human condition. Like any discipline of thought, sociology includes a body of knowledge articulated in scholarly literature. Central to this literature are a number of theories that systematically inquire into the nature of social life and human behavior. Some of these theories are quite broad in scope, attempting to make statements about society in the most general sense. Others are narrower in the questions they pose, focusing on a particular facet of social life.

Equally central to sociological inquiry is social research. Critical to the sociological perspective is the conviction that the validity of ideas we hold about human behavior must be judged in light of observations we make regarding ongoing social life within historical contexts.

Ideally, the observations gleaned at a given point in time contribute to our understanding of human behavior, which transcends the particular observation. Thus, for example, observing the activities of a sports team (and its fans) may tell us something more broadly about social solidarity and/or the nature of social interaction.

Ultimately, sociology is more than the sum of its theoretical and research parts. Sociology is a perspective from which to view human behavior. Central to this perspective is the assumption that human beings are essentially social. In other words, we can only understand human behavior by examining the nature of an individual's relationship to others and the larger structural and historical contexts within which people act and think.

Though such an assertion is easy to make, investigating the complex dynamics of the social web within which we live is a difficult task. It is the task which challenges us as a sociologist. In defining sociology this way we distinguish it from other disciplines of thought.

The **sociological perspective** provides important insights into the conditions and dynamics that affect people's lives, as individuals and collectivities. The sociological perspective offers an important way to understand one's place in society and it helps to develop practical commitments to informed action in society. The excitement of sociology rests in the fact that it is not simply a body of knowledge to be absorbed (and/or regurgitated for a passing grade). Rather, sociology is a body of knowledge that has relevance for the choices individuals make in their daily lives.

The major objectives of this course, therefore, are to stimulate your sociological imaginations, acquaint you with the discipline, and help you gain insight into the nature and operation of societies.

In order to accomplish this task, we will examine many of the fundamental concepts, principles and issues of concern to sociologists.

Course Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge and/or skill in the following areas:

- Define sociology and explain the basic insight of sociology
- Explain the meaning and the importance of the sociological imagination
- Contrast the views that Comte, Spencer, and Marx held regarding sociology and the role of the sociologist
- Compare and contrast three major theoretical perspectives of sociology
- Identify the contributions of theory and research to sociological knowledge
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of laboratory and field experiments
- Distinguish between a population and a sample and explain the connection between them; specify ways to ensure that a sample is representative
- Describe the relationship between culture and society
- Discuss norms and their importance to society
- Define ethnocentrism and discuss its consequences for a culture
- Describe cultural relativism and its appropriate use
- Indicate how subcultures and countercultures relate to the dominate culture
- Define socialization
- Describe the ways in which biological predispositions and social influence are intertwined
- Discuss the concept of “self” and how it develops
- Describe Cooley’s three part theory of the looking glass self

- Describe Mead's theory of formation of the self through symbolic interaction, role-taking, and the generalized and particular other
- Identify the key agents of socialization
- List the characteristics of a group that distinguish it from an aggregate or category
- Contrast the features of primary and secondary groups
- Identify ways in which individuals conform to groups
- List the functions of in-groups and out-groups
- Explain the importance of reference groups
- Characterize formal organizations
- Define deviance as a sociological concept
- Discuss the concept of stigma
- Characterize Merton's five part typology of deviance
- Explain why mental disorder is classified as a form of deviance
- List four functions of deviance
- Define social stratification
- Explain the concept of social mobility
- Describe how sociologists use socioeconomic status (SES) as a measurement of social position
- Explain how stratification systems are maintained
- Discuss social stratification in the United States
- Identify the social class in the United States and the features of each
- Cite biological evidence in discussing differences between the sexes
- Explain the two ways poverty is defined and indicate which groups in the United States are most likely to experience poverty

Course Work:

Attendance: Regular attendance at all class meetings is required. We meet for a short time, it is very important to be at all class meetings

Reading Assignments:

Please stay on top of the reading assignments. We will be discussing the reading material in most classes and I expect you to actively participate in the class discussions and activities. Any reading outside of the book, I will provide.

Class Participation and Homework:

I expect everyone to participate in class discussion. We will often do group work and group exercises. Class participation and group exercises will be worth 200 points of your final grade. **The out of class assignments are Chapters 1-10 in the text. Please note, all work must be typed. I will not accept hand written work.**

Exams: There will be two exams in this class. These exams will be take home exams and are worth 100 points of your final grade (50 points each). We will discuss these the first night.

Written Work: There will be one final project. This assignment will be worth 150 points. I will discuss this assignment in class and hand out specific directions the first night of class.

You will be expected to read, think, write and contribute to class discussions; analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions from readings and other course material; to do introductory research using sociological methods and language; to contribute ideas and effort; and to compare and contrast facts, concepts, perspectives, language and theories related to the course.

| Breakdown on Grades | |
|--|-------------------|
| Attendance | 150 points |
| Class participation/Group exercises | 200 points |
| Exams, including final project | 250 points |
| | 600 points |

| Total Point Breakdown | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| 540-600 | A |
| 480-539 | B |
| 420-479 | C |
| 360-478 | D |
| Under 360 | F |

Final Comments/Course Policies: **I will not accept late work.**

Texting, using social media, playing games and other miscellaneous use of technology that is not in accordance with class work will not be condoned. You will be given ample breaks to use social media and technology for purposes other than classroom activities.

Respect of others is expected and essential for creating a positive learning experience. We don't all have to agree on everything, but we do need to express ourselves in a positive manner.

RRCC Policies and Procedures: Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity; admission to Red Rocks Community College implies that you agree to respect the rights of others and observe moral and civil laws. Interference with the normal process of education in the classroom or elsewhere on campus will be regarded as unacceptable conduct, warranting suspension or dismissal. Complete Student Code of Conduct is at this website:

<http://www.rccc.edu/handbook/codeofconduct.pdf>

RRCC Disability Statement: ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Red Rocks Community College is committed to access for students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and need assistance or are interested in requesting accommodations, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Faculty are not obligated to provide accommodations without proper notification by the OAS and accommodations are not retroactive. Students may contact the OAS staff by telephone or email to make an intake appointment at 303-914-6733. The OAS office is located in Suite 1182 at the Lakewood campus.

Grade of Incomplete: An “I” indicates that the course objectives are not yet fulfilled. It is the responsibility of the student to request, if needed, the assignment of an incomplete grade. The instructor’s decision to authorize or not authorize an incomplete grade is FINAL. The student must have completed 75% of the classwork with a C or better and must complete the rest of the work with the same instructor. Arrangement for the completion of the course must be made with the instructor prior to the assignment of an “I” grade. This agreement must be written on a “Contract for Incomplete Grade” form. The instructor may allow up to one full semester for the student to complete missing requirements. “I” grades not changed by the end of the following

semester will automatically become failing grades (F). This instructor rarely gives incompletes due to the accelerated nature of the course.

Plagiarism is grounds for failing an assignment or course and/or disciplinary action from RRCC. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.** Plagiarism means copying passages directly from the text or any other source, without quotation marks and citations. Summarize or paraphrase the information. If you paraphrase by rearranging the order of a sentence or words, then give credit for the source. No credit will be given for plagiarized papers and may be grounds for failure of the class.

***** **IMPORTANT** *****

This syllabus is the essential road map and cornerstone for this course. Because you are responsible for the requirements of this syllabus please clarify any information, which you do not understand, with the instructor as soon as possible.

Sociology 101: Anticipated Calendar of Events

This is a broad outline of class construction and may be subject to change due to: speaker availability, class questions/comments and the need of the instructor to adapt to the social construct of the class.

Fridays: 5pm – 10pm **Saturdays: 8am – 5:00pm**

WEEK 1 Chapters 1 through 4: “An Introduction to Sociology” Our Class Norms, Society and Culture, Socialization, What is culture? What happens when norms are challenged: to individuals, groups and society? Rules among Classes, Application of Theories, Exam 1

WEEK 2 Chapters 5 through 7: “Social Structure and Social Interaction”, “Groups and Organizations”, “Deviance and Social Control”, return Exam 1, Our Class Norms revisited, Group dynamics and discrimination, Merton’s 5 Modes of Adaption, Exam 2

WEEK 3 Chapters 9 through 10: “Social Stratification in the United States and the World: Race and Ethnicity”, return Exam 2, Gender, Our Class Norms: how have they changed or evolved? Putting it all together: with the presentation of final projects.