

Sociology 211: The Sociological Enterprise

Spring 2021

Instructor: Adam Hayes

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Monday, Wednesday 2:30 – 3:45pm

Office Hours: By appointment

Revision note: Hi everyone. Things are remain different now, and sociology can help us understand what's happening! (seriously) This pandemic, recent political turmoil, social movements, new economic disparities, etc. underscores what we'll been learning in this course: that we are all connected. We can't go it alone. In addition to learning about sociological basics, our class will be characterized by flexibility, care, and compassion. Stay in contact and let us know what you need to get through the semester.

Here's what the journalist Naomi Klein wrote on this:

What a moment of crisis like this unveils is our porousness to one another. We're seeing in real time that we are so much more interconnected to one another than our quite brutal economic system would have us believe.

I'm going to integrate research and thinking about the pandemic and other topical issues throughout our course, but not all of the time and not everyday—it's a lot to take in. We'll need breaks. I'll make sure to keep you informed of what's coming up and what you are responsible for in multiple ways for the next semester, including through the syllabus which I assume I'll continue to update as new things develop.

***As a result, this syllabus is to be regarded as dynamic document, subject to change throughout the course. The course canvas online will always be the most up-to-date and accurate place for readings, assignments, and course content.**

Welcome to Sociology!

This is a course where students learn what sociology is, what it can do, and how to evaluate it. That is, it is an introduction to the field of sociology. Students will engage with classic ideas in sociology as well as many subfields within it. We cannot cover everything in sociology, but the course will provide a basic introduction to general sociological topics and some of the most popular and interesting areas of inquiry in the field.

Three important dynamics will guide our inquiry: the mind-expanding properties of the sociological perspective, the way in which sociology can help us to make sense of big changes in society, and the potential for sociology to be useful for efforts at social change.

This course is appropriate for anyone who wants to major in sociology, for anyone who is interested in sociology, and for anyone for whom it fulfills a requirement. We are glad to have you for whatever reason

Learning Objectives

Beyond the specific substantive and methodological content covered in the course, the course has been designed to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of Sociology:

- **Critically Evaluate Published Research:** Sociology graduates will be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
- **Communicate Skillfully:** Sociology majors write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- **Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes:** Sociology graduates can look beyond the surface of issues to discover the "why" and "how" of social order, structure, and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation. They can identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena as well as develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data.
- **See Things from a Global Perspective:** Sociologists learn about different cultures, groups, and societies across both time and place. They are aware of the diversity of backgrounds and experiences among residents of the United States. They understand the ways events and processes in one country are linked to those in other countries.

Course Format

Online Lectures: We will conduct synchronous (live) online lectures Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:30-3:45pm via Zoom (accessible via the course Canvas page). Class will start *on-time*, so please be sure to log on a few minutes early. You are expected to turn your cameras on and mute your microphones.

Mondays will generally be more of a lecture/guided learning format.

Wednesdays will generally consist of small group activities and discussion.

Grading:

1. 10x Weekly reading reflections (3% each) – 30%
2. 2x Multiple choice exams (15% each) – 30%
3. 3x Essay assignments (10% each) – 30%
4. Online attendance & participation – 10%

Weekly reading reflections: Every week there will be a research paper, article, media clip, etc. assigned that will be due for group discussion on Wednesdays. You are required to write and submit to Canvas a total of 10x weekly reading reflections, due by 11:59pm the Tuesday before discussion.

The reflections should be ~500-600 words and should include the following three components:

1. *Key Takeaways:* what was this reading about and what did you learn from it?
2. *Questions/Comments/Concerns:* upon reflection, what questions did the reading provoke for you? What did you agree with or disagree with? Was anything troubling about it? Super interesting?
3. *Why Am I Reading This?* Put yourself in my shoes for a moment and write why you think I've assigned this particular reading/media to you.

Exams: all multiple choice and taken online—A “midterm” and a “final” will help us make sure we’re all on the same page and learned what we were supposed to. The exams are non-cumulative, meaning that each one will test a separate set of material. There is no all-inclusive final at the end of the course, just exam number two.

Essay assignments: Three written papers of about 3 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-pt font, normal margins). Assignment instructions will be distributed later on. All papers will be submitted online via Canvas.

Participation: Participating in online courses allows for interesting and novel interactions, both as a class and in small groups. You are expected to log in to each live session on time, and with your cameras turned on. You have 3 excuse-free misses, anything more than that you will need to have a valid absence. You will be expected to raise your virtual “hand” if you have something to say or question to ask. If I call on you, be prepared to unmute yourself and respond. In small groups, everybody should be an equal and active discussion participant. You should contribute to online discussion forum threads and respond to your fellow classmates.

All assignments will be graded as soon as possible, but please allow at least two weeks for paper and exam grades to be returned.

Our class will use the following grading scale:

A 93-100, AB 88-92, B 83-87, BC 78-82, C 70-77, D 60-69, F 59 or below

Readings

Required Readings:

Textbook: Introduction to Sociology (11th Seagull Edition) [Black cover]

By Carr, Giddens, Duneier, and Appelbaum

<https://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Sociology-Seagull-Eleventh-Deborah/dp/0393639452/>

-Weekly required readings will be posted in downloadable format (e.g. .pdf) on Canvas.

-Optional/suggested readings will be available to download and marked as optional on Canvas.

Communication: Office Hours and Email

I hold office hours by Zoom by appointment. Office hours are a time when we can talk about the class, about sociology, your life, whatever. I am looking forward to getting to know you all, and I encourage you to schedule sessions as needed! You do not need to have a specific question or concern to schedule office hours. If you cannot make my office hours but want to discuss something, please send me an email and we can set up an appointment.

I try to respond to email within two days. That said, if you do not hear from me after two days, feel free to send another email reminding me about the last one. I get lots of email and miss the occasional message—please do not be shy about asking for a response!

Please do not raise questions and concerns about paper or exam grades with us until 48 hours after you've received your grade.

You are responsible for material and messages sent through email. Please check your own inboxes for course messages regularly, as well as the course Canvas page.

Accommodations

Please send the instructor an email by the end of the second week of the course if you are eligible for special arrangements or accommodations for testing, assignments, or other aspects of the course. This may be the case if English is your second language or you experience a physical or psychological condition that makes it difficult for you to complete assignments and/or exams without some modification of those tasks. Accommodations are provided for students who qualify for disability services through the McBurney Center. Their website has detailed instructions about how to qualify: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>. Provide a copy of your accommodations request (VISA) to the instructor by the end of the second week of class.

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, **send an email by the end of the second week of the course** stating the specific date(s) for which you request accommodation; campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated if you make a timely request early in the term. See the university's web page for details: <https://kb.wisc.edu/page.php?id=21698>

Academic Honesty

As with all courses at the University of Wisconsin, you are expected to follow the University's rules and regulations pertaining to academic honesty and integrity. The standards are outlined by the Office of the Dean of Students at:

<http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>

According to UWS 14, academic misconduct is defined as:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.

For a complete description of behaviors that violate the University's standards as well the disciplinary penalties and procedures, please see the Dean of Students website. If you have questions about the rules for any of the assignments or exams, please ask your instructor.

Departmental Notice of Grievance and Appeal Rights

The Department of Sociology regularly conducts student evaluations of all lecturers and teaching assistants near the end of the semester. Students who have more immediate concerns about this course should report them to the instructor or to the chair, 8128 Social Science (socchair@ssc.wisc.edu).

Again, This syllabus is a living document!

*I will alter it throughout the semester to better suit our needs for the course.
Please be sure to refer to the syllabus posted on Canvas for the most current version.
I reserve the right to alter this syllabus at any time.
(I promise not to do so capriciously and only with fair warning.)*

PART I: What is Sociology?

(© = .pdf available on Canvas)

Week 1: No Readings (**introductions & course overview**)

Week 2: **The Sociological Perspective**

- *Textbook* bottom of p.6 - 10
- C.R. Mills – *The Promise* in “The Sociological Imagination” ©
- Johnson – “Forest and the Trees” ©

Week 3: **Research Methods for Sociological Inquiry**

- *Textbook* bottom of p.33 – 51
- Rekdal – “Academic Urban Legends” ©
- Jasper & Young – “The Rhetoric of Sociological Facts” ©

PART II: The World We Live In

Week 4: **Culture**

- *Textbook* Chapter 3
- Milner – “The Body Ritual...” ©
- Peterson – “Roll Over Beethoven” ©

Week 5: **Socialization & Social Interaction**

- *Textbook* Chapter 4 (through p. 110 only)

Week 6: **Social Class, Inequality & Stratification**

- *Textbook* Chapters 8 & 9

Week 7: **Deviance & Crime**

- *Textbook* Chapter 7

Week 8: **Race & Ethnicity**

- *Textbook* Chapter 10

Week 9: **Gender & Sexuality**

- *Textbook* Chapter 10

Part III: Institutions of Society

Week 10: **The Family, Education, & Religion**

- *Textbook* Chapters 15, 16, & 17

Week 11: **Networks and Organizations**

- *Textbook* Chapter 6

Week 12: **The Economy**

- *Textbook* Chapter 14

Week 13: **Government, Political Power & Social Movements**

- *Textbook* Chapter 13

Week 14: **Technology and Society**

- *Textbook* Chapter 5

