

SOC101 - Introduction to Sociology

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Course introduction and goals: Sociology is the study of human societies, particularly how we shape and give meaning to the world. The goal of this course is to give students an introduction to sociology by exploring several of the disciplines major areas of focus and attention. As a stated aim of sociology is to “*make the familiar, strange*,” we will endeavor to provide intellectual ownership of the introduced concepts, upon which a sociologically sophisticated worldview can develop.



Student expectations, policies, and grading:

- 1) **Academic honesty/integrity** is a crucial component of the scholarly process. All students will practice these tenets as outlined by RHIT in all class related activities. Notably, **plagiarism** will not be tolerated in any form and punished to the severest extent possible. This, obviously, includes any LLMs or other such tools, the use of which is prohibited.
- 2) **Attendance** - we will use the RHIT Student Handbook attendance policy which states that “more than 2 unexcused absences per credit hour will result in automatic failure of the course.” **If you are going to be absent, contact me in advance via email or during office hours and we can discuss the situation.**
- 3) **Civil, critical discussion** - I advocate for classroom discussion as a tool for fostering engaged thinking and intellectually stimulating exchange. Disagreement is a potential component of such exchanges. Such disagreements are healthy, but must also be treated appropriately. No student will be targeted or maligned, either in class or out by any member of our group, for expressing an opinion that digresses from your own. Additionally, constructive criticism is encouraged as a tool for fostering substantive intellectual exchange.

Grading:

Reading quizzes and discussions - We will have four short quizzes and additional structured reading discussions during the term. Discussions will be lead by a student moderator and everyone will take a turn in this role.

Film connection paper - we will watch *The House I Live In* and *Silver Dollar Road* in Week 8. You then need to write a 1000 word reflection on the film(s) that links it to larger ideas in sociology we have discussed.

Book club - Aziz Ansari, the comedian of Parks and Recreation fame, worked with NYU sociologist Eric Klinenberg to write a book about love and romance. We're going to read it as a "book club" selection, meaning we'll discuss it in small groups on three designated days during the quarter. Grades are based on participation and comprehension of the book.

Two papers - written on topics we generate in class are due in the fourth and seventh week. *Papers must be double-spaced, at least 1,300 words in length, have a clear thesis, incorporate outside sources, and follow the American Sociological Association's style guide for citations (see <http://www.asanet.org> for style guidelines).* Students are required to draw upon the lectures, readings, and additional independent research to support their arguments and position.

Two exams given during the fifth and tenth week. The exams are online and contain an essay question.

Breakdown of grades:

Reading quizzes and discussions:	50 points
Film connection paper:	15 points
Two papers:	60 points (30 points each paper)
Two exams:	50 points (25 points each exam)
Book club participation	25 points
Total	200 possible points

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	200-185	C	130-149
B+	184-180	D+	120-129
B	179-160	D	100-119

C+

150-159

F

below 99

Required texts:

1. Ben Austen's *Correction: Parole, Prison, and the Possibility of Change* (2023)
2. Eric Klinenberg's *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life* (2019)
3. Articles as assigned and circulated
4. Aziz Ansari and Eric Klinenberg's *Modern Romance* (2016)

Week one: Introductions (December 2, 3, 5, and 6)

M. Overview of syllabus and course introduction

T. So... what is sociology? Key sociological questions and concerns

TH. Baby names, individual names, group identity - <http://www.ssa.gov/oact/babynames/state/index.html> using the database identify at least three recent baby name trends (a couple of hints: what is special about the names Jennifer and Joshua? How do names reflect racial assimilation or segregation? How is Indiana similar/different from the rest of the country?)

F. Discussion of readings

Readings for the week: **1)** Conley's *Sociological Imagination: An Introduction* (pages 3-15), **2)** Belkin's "The Baby Name Game - Motherlode Blog," New York Times, here <http://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/12/03/the-name-game/>, and here <http://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/12/baby-names/>, **3)** Klinenberg *Introduction*

Week two: You're not the boss of you (December 9, 10, 12, and 13)

M. Individualism

T. Individuals and institutions

TH. Institutions - paper assignment #1 discussion

F. Discussion of readings - quiz #1

NOTE: We meet Emile Durkheim this week. The University of Chicago's Durkheim page is a dated but in-depth introduction to his work, familiarize yourself with it <http://durkheim.uchicago.edu/index.html>

Readings for the week: **1)** On Durkheim and *Suicide* <http://durkheim.uchicago.edu/Summaries/suicide.html>, **2)** Klinenberg chapter 1 and 2

Week three: Do as you're told! (December 16, 17, 19, and 20)

M. Milgram, *Obedience*, and the power of authority

T. Obedience observation assignment - no in-class meeting

TH. Milgram, *Obedience*, and the power of authority

F. **Paper #1 due** (*and that's it, enjoy the break and read Modern Romance!*)

Readings for the week: **1)** Milgram's *Behavioral Study of Obedience*, **2)** Conley pages 15-38, **3)** Klinenberg chapter 3

Holiday Break!

Week four: Socialization (January 6, 7, 9, and 10)

M. Book club #1 - *Modern Romance* - Introduction, chapter 1, and chapter 2

T. Socialization

TH. Socialization

F. Discussion of readings, exam review - quiz #2

Readings for the week: **1)** Ansari and Klinenberg *Introduction*, ch. 1, and ch. 2 **by MONDAY 12/18**, **2)** Klinenberg chapter 4 and 5

Week five: Gender and gendering (January 13, 14, 16, and 17)

M. **Exam #1**

T. Gender and gendering

TH. Gender and gendering

F. Discussion of readings - paper assignment #2 discussion

Readings for the week: **1)** Schilt *Introduction*, ch. 1. and ch. 2, **2)** Klinenberg chapter 6 and Conclusion (**NOTE - finish Klinenberg by Monday as the exam will cover the entire book!**)

Week six: Class and inequality (January 20, 21, 23 and 24)

M. MLK Day - no class, attend the event

T. Power / Social class

TH. Social class

F. Discussion of readings - quiz #3

Readings for the week: **1)** Austen - *Introduction* - Chapter 4 (pages 1-85), **2)** *You Might Be A Marxist* <http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2011/07/you-might-be-a-marxist.html> - this blog post contains links - *follow them (some are broken) and read the content*, they are fair game for the quiz!

Week seven: Class and Poverty (January 27, 28, 30, and 31)

M. Social class and poverty

T. Social class and poverty

TH. Poverty amidst wealth

F. Discussion of readings - **paper #2 due**

Readings for the week: **1)** Austen Chapters 5-9 (pages 86-161), **2)** Ansari and Klinenberg chapters 3, 4, and 5 - **BY MONDAY OF NEXT WEEK!**

Week eight: Deviance (February 3, 4, 6, and 7)

M. *Book club #2 - Modern Romance - chapter 3, 4, and 5*

T. *The House I Live In*

TH. *Silver Dollar Road*

F. What makes something deviant? - quiz #4

Readings for the week: **1)** Goffman's *Stigma* chapters 1 and 5, **2)** Austen Chapters 9-14 (pages 162-260)

Week nine: Recreation and re-creation (February 10, 11, 13, and 14)

M. The Social Life of Sports

T. Guns in America

TH. United States of Conspiracy

F. Discussion of readings

Readings for the week: **1)** Hampton and Wellman's *Lost and Saved... Again: The Moral Panic about the Lose of Community Takes Hold of Social Media*, **2)** Yamane's *The Sociology of U.S. Gun Culture*

Week ten: Love and Romance (February 17, 18, 20, and 21)

M. "I'll be single soon," love and romance - short film paper due

T. Book club #3 - *Modern Romance* - chapter 6, 7, and Conclusion

TH. Exam review

F. Exam #2

Readings for the week: **1)** Austen Chapter 15-17 (pages 261-299), **2)** Ansari and Klinenberg chapters 6, 7, and Conclusion

