**Introduction to Sociology**

**Module Five Outline**

**Module Five: Culture**

(Saturday, February 27 to Monday, March 8)

**Topics**

Elements of Culture; Theoretical Perspectives on Culture

**I. Module Four Overview**

A. In Module Four, read about the various research methods sociologists use. We also read about the importance of ethics in research.

**II. Module Five**

A. In Module Five, we will focus on sociological approaches to culture. We will read about language as an aspect of culture. We will also read about the importance of remaining objective when we study other cultures.

**III. Module Five Reading Assignment**

A. OpenStax. 2017. *Introduction to Sociology 2e*. Chapter Three: “Culture.”

B. Quickly read pages 503-504 in: Miner, Horace. 1956. “Body Ritual among the Nacirema.” *American Anthropologist* 58(3):503-7. (Available on Blackboard.)

**IV. Scholarly Article Analysis**

A. Continue to work on your Scholarly Article Analysis.

**V. Group Work**

A. Continue to work on the Group Project.

**VI. Discussion Board**

A. Participate in the Module Five discussion.

**Module Five: Culture**

Your definitions may be as short as one sentence.

(1) Define “culture,” “society,” and “community.”

(2) Is a MetroCard a part of our material or nonmaterial culture? Explain.

(3) Define the following elements of culture: “values,” “beliefs,” “social control,” “norms,” “mores” (pronounced mor-ays), and “folkways.”

(4) How does the OpenStax (2017) textbook define “language?” OpenStax (2017:60) states: “The **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis** is based on the idea that people experience their world through their language, and that they therefore understand their world through the culture embedded in their language. The hypothesis, which has also been called linguistic relativity, states that language shapes thought.” The textbook also explains that: “Technically, the United States has no official language. But many believe English to be the rightful language of the United States, and over thirty states have passed laws specifying English as the official tongue” (OpenStax 2017:61). In addition, the textbook states: “Groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) oppose making English the official language and claim that it violates the rights of non-English speakers. English-only laws, they believe, deny the reality of our nation’s diversity and unfairly target Latinos and Asians. They point to the fact that much of the debate on this topic has risen since 1970, a time when the United States experienced new waves of immigration from Asia and Mexico” (OpenStax 2017:61). We have read about the three sociological paradigms this semester: functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Select one of these paradigms and use it to analyze an aspect of the debate concerning the establishment of an official language in the United States that we as social scientists should be concerned about.

(5) (You might enjoy this exercise more if you first read the two pages from Miner (1956) and then read the background handout on the article.) **Quickly** read pages 503-504 in Miner (1956) “Body Ritual among the Nacirema.” Next, read the background on Miner’s paper. Define “ethnocentrism” and “cultural relativism.” Do you believe the practice of cultural relativism might help us as social scientists as we explore other cultures?

A **substantive original post** on the Blackboard discussion board is a post of approximately two-hundred-and-fifty (250) words that responds to the prompt provided by the instructor on the discussion board.  The post must refer to the readings or other assigned media and demonstrate that the student has read, viewed, listened to, or otherwise engaged with the assigned material.

A **substantive response** on the Blackboard discussion board is a post of approximately one hundred (100) words that provides a reaction to a post made by another student.  The reaction must contain an explanation.  For example: “I agree.”  is not a substantive response.  However, “I agree with your statement because [student would provide an explanation here]” would potentially be a substantive response.

Refer to the rubric in the "My Grades" content area for information concerning the criteria your instructor will use to grade your Discussion Board participation.

**Original Post due**: Friday, March 5 by 11:59 pm.

**Response to at Least Two Classmates due:** Monday, March 8 by 11:59 pm.