
SOC 101: Introduction to General Sociology

Instructor:	Charity Crabtree (cecrabt@emory.edu)	Oxford College Seney Hall Room 209
Office:	711 Emory	T, TH 1:00 - 2:15
Office Hours:	T, TH 2:15-3:15 and by appt	SOC_OX 101-01J

Course Overview

Sociology is the scientific study of human behavior. Sociologists attempt to identify general behavior patterns of groups and individuals, and determine the ways that these patterns change according to contextual variation. Symbolic meanings and structural constraints change over time and place and according to different social and cultural conditions, leading to different patterns of behavior.

In this course, we will be learning about some of the major conceptual issues in the discipline of sociology, looking specifically at how we are shaped by and shape the social environment in which we live. We will begin by examining more closely what sociologists mean when they say they study "society" and "social structure," and how the sociological perspective is unique. The course will provide you with a general understanding of how sociologists choose and then attempt to answer research questions. After learning the "basics," we will look at the individual in particular social contexts, and then broaden our discussion to the level of groups and organizations. We will learn about institutions such as religion and the family and then examine power and inequality in terms of the economy, education, race and ethnicity, and gender and sexuality. Finally, we will discuss modernity, globalization, and social movements and their relationships with the social world as we know it. By the end of the course you will have a good idea of what kinds of questions drive sociological research and how sociologists attempt to answer them.

Course Requirements

Readings and Lectures: All of the readings listed below are required readings, and you must read them before the first class period for which they are listed. Attendance is required in this course. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain the information you missed. Much of the information you will learn from this course (and on which you will be tested) comes from the lectures and class discussions. If you miss class and do not get the notes, do not expect to be prepared for the exams. I strongly encourage you to develop a working relationship with at least one other student in the class.

Late Work: You must talk with me at least 2 days prior to the due date if you feel you will be unable to make the deadline. If you do not talk to me ahead of time, *even if you are absent*, I will take 5 points off for *each day after the deadline*, including the day you actually turn in the assignment.

Grading: There will be 2 in-class exams in this class: a midterm exam and a final exam, both of which will be short answer and essay format. **The final exam will focus on material covered after the midterm, but it will be cumulative.** The mid-term exam is 20%, and the final exam is 25% of your final grade.

You will also be required to complete 3 short (2-3 pages) writing assignments. These will be designed to get you to synthesize the information in certain readings and lectures (which I will designate). The average grade from these assignments will count 30% of your grade. You will also be required to complete a “non-obvious” movie analysis. This assignment, described on the last page of this syllabus, will be due the last week of class. You will be given the whole semester to work on it, and it will be worth 15% of your grade.

Participation: I expect all students to be on time, seated and with cell phones OFF when the class is scheduled to begin. I expect thoughtful and respectful (to me and your classmates) participation from all of you. If you feel that you are not able to participate in discussions for some reason, you may complete an additional short writing assignment that will supplement the 10% participation grade. *You must speak with me before the second assignment is due in order to take advantage of this option.*

Mid-term exam:	8 Mar (Th)	20%
Short writing assignments:	8 Feb (Th) 27 Feb (Tu) 19 Apr (Th)	
Average:		30%
Non-obvious movie analysis:	1 May (Th)	15%
Final exam:	9 May (W) 2:00-5:00 pm	25%
Participation:		10%

Disabilities: Students with any disabilities should immediately contact me so that we may arrange accommodations for you. I will be happy to make arrangements with you in this regard, but you must first be registered with the Office of Disabilities. Please see me if you have any questions about this process or contact the Oxford College liaison in Academic Services: Seney Hall 103, 770.784.4631, academicservices@learnlink.emory.edu.

Honor Code: All students are expected to abide by the principles set forth in the Oxford College Honor Code. All work turned in to me must reflect your own work and your own ideas or *correctly-cited* ideas of others. Please take a moment to review the honor code. If you have specific questions about citing, don't hesitate to ask me. For my class, use parenthetical documentation in the body of the text (Crabtree 2007, p. 3). See below for a citation model.

Honor Code: <http://www.emory.edu/OXFORD/CampusLife/Policies/honor.html>
Plagiarism: <http://www.emory.edu/OXFORD/CampusLife/Policies/plagiarism.html>

Texts

Collins, Randall. 1992. *Sociological Insight: An Introduction to Non-Obvious Sociology*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford (S).

Macionis, John J. and Nijole V. Benokraitis, eds. 2007. *Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporary, and Cross-Cultural Readings in Sociology*, 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall (SO).

The texts are available for purchase in the Oxford College bookstore (in the Card Student Center).

Calendar of Readings

18 Jan (Th)

Introductions: What is sociology?

Horace Miner, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema." (SO)
pp. 19-22/ 3 pages (in class)

23 Jan (T)

Building Blocks: What's so unique about sociology?

C. Wright Mills, "The Promise of Sociology." (SO)
Peter L. Berger, "Invitation to Sociology." (SO)
Donna Gaines, "Teenage Wasteland." (SO)
Patricia Madoo Lengerman and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley, "Women and the Birth of Sociology" (SO)
pp. 1-18/ 18 pages

****23 January: Last Day to Change Courses.****

25 Jan (Th)

Classical Approaches to Social Issues: Theories

Randall Collins, Chapter One: The Nonrational Foundations of Rationality. (SI)
pp. 3-29/ 26 pages

30 Jan (Th, T)

Methods: How do sociologists study the things they study?

Max Weber, "The Case for Value-Free Sociology." (SO)
Earl Babbie, "The Importance of Social Research." (SO)
Soraya Altorki, "Arab Women in the Field." (SO)
pp. 23-34; 11 pages

2 Feb (Th)

Society and/or culture: What's the difference?

"Society"

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party." (SO)
Ferdinand Tönnies, "Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft." (SO)
John A. Hostetler, "The Amish: A Small Society." (SO)
pp. 55-65, 72-73/ 13 pages

In-class Film: Devil's Playground. (begin)

1st Assignment Distributed Thursday: Norms and Social Control

6 Feb (T)

"Culture"

Leslie A. White, "Symbol: The Basic Element of Culture." (SO)
Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions." (SO)
Marvin Harris, "India's Sacred Cow." (SO)
pp. 35-41, 51-54/ 11 pages

In-class Film: Devil's Playground. (end)

8 Feb (Th)

Wrap-Up Session/ Part 1: Does society or culture unite us?

No reading.

1st Assignment Due Thursday: Norms and Social Control

13 Feb (T)

What is the relationship between society and the individual?

Socialization and the Individual

George Herbert Mead, "The Self." (SO)

pp. 75-82/ 8 pages

In-class Film: Secret of the Wild Child

15 Feb (Th)

Socialization and Society

Michael A. Messner, "Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities." (SO)

Jean Kilbourne, "Socialization and the Power of Advertising." (SO)

pp. 83-100/ 18 pages

In-class Film: Bionic Beauty Salon

20 Feb (T)

Social Interaction

Erving Goffman, "The Presentation of Self." (SO)

Paula S. Rothenberg, "Invisible Privilege." (SO)

Deborah Tannen, "You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation." (SO)

pp. 108-123/ 16 pages

In-class Film Clips: Big Lebowski, About a Boy

****21 February: Last Day to Drop Courses Without Academic Penalty****

22 Feb (Th)

What's the difference between groups and organizations?

Charles Horton Cooley, "Primary Groups." (SO)

Max Weber, "The Characteristics of Bureaucracy." (SO)

George Ritzer, "McJobs: McDonaldization and the Workplace." (SO)

Brenda L. Beagan, "'Even If I Don't Know What I'm Doing, I Can Make It Look Like I Do': Becoming a Doctor in Canada." (SO)

pp. 130-153/ 24 pages

In-class Film Clip: Office Space

27 Feb (Tu)

How do we distinguish between normal and deviant?

David L. Rosenhan, "On Being Sane in Insane Places." (SO)

Elijah Anderson, "The Code of the Streets." (SO)

pp. 157-179/ 23 pages

In-class Film: Born Into Brothels. (first 30 minutes)

2nd Assignment Distributed Tuesday: Crime and Deviance

1 Mar (Th)

How do sociologists explain crime and deviance?

Collins, Randall. Chapter Four: The Normalcy of Crime. (SI)

pp. 86-118/ 32 pages

In-class Film: Born Into Brothels. (second 30 minutes)

6 Mar (T)

Wrap Up Session/ Part 2: Whom does deviance benefit?

Melissa Farley, "Prostitution: A Worldwide Business of Sexual Exploitation." (SO)

pp. 180-193/ 14 pages

In-class Film: Born Into Brothels. (end)

2nd Assignment Due Tuesday: Crime and Deviance

8 Mar (Th)

Mid-Term Examination (no reading).

13, 15 Mar

Spring Recess (no classes).

20 Mar (T)

How do organizations differ from institutions?

Religion

Collins, Randall. Chapter Two: The Sociology of God (SI)
pp. 30-59/ 30 pages

In-class Film Clip: Saved.

22 Mar (T)

Religion, continued

Max Weber, from "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." (SO)
Naomi Schaefer Riley, "How Student Life is Different at Religious
Colleges." (SO)
pp. 375-386/ 12 pages

27 Mar (T)

Family

Collins, Randall. Chapter Five: Love and Property (SI)
pp. 119-154/ 35 pages

29 Mar (Th)

What is power? Why and where does inequality exist?

Power and the Economy

Collins, Randall. Chapter Three: Paradoxes of Power (SI)
pp. 60-85/ 26 pages

3rd Assignment Distributed Thursday: Reflections on Inequality

3 Apr (T)

Stratification and Work

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification." (SO)
Andrew Hacker, "Who Has How Much and Why." (SO)
Karl Marx, "Alienated Labor." (SO)
William Julius Wilson, from "When Work Disappears." (SO)
pp. 215-228, 312-325/ 28 pages

In-class Game: Monopoly.

5 Apr (Th)

Stratification and Education

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, "Education and Inequality." (SO)
Jonathan Kozol, from "Savage Inequalities: Children in U.S. Schools." (SO)
pp. 394-406/ 13 pages

In-class Film: Escuela. (begin)

10 Apr (T)

Race and Ethnicity

W.E.B. DuBois, from "The Souls of Black Folk." (SO)
Karen B. Brodwin, "How Did Jews Become White Folks?" (SO)
pp. 261-265, 274-283/ 15 pages

In-class Film: Escuela. (end)

12 Apr (Th)

Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Patricia Hill Collins, "Controlling Images and Black Women's
Oppression." (SO)
Jennie R. Joe, "Out of Harmony: Health Problems and Young Native
American Men." (SO)
Becky W. Thompson, "Cultural Obsessions with Thinness: African American,
Latina, and White Women." (SO)

pp. 266-273, 284-292, 42-50/ 26 pages

17 Apr (T)

Gender and Family

Judith Lorber, "'Night to His Day': The Social Construction of Gender." (SO)
Nijole V. Benokraitis, "How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works." (SO)
Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels, "The Mommy Myth." (SO)
pp. 243-254, 362-367/ 18 pages

In-class Film: Tomboys.

19 Apr (Th)

Gender and Sexuality

Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, "Understanding Sexual Orientation." (SO)
Robert T. Michael, John H. Gagnon, Edward O. Laumann, and Gina Kolata, "Sex in America: How Many Partners Do We Have?" (SO)
J.M Carrier, "Homosexual Behavior in Cross-Cultural Perspective." (SO)
pp. 194-214/ 21 pages

In-class Film Clips: Kinsey.

3rd Assignment Due Thursday: Reflections on Inequality

24 April (T)

How does anything ever change?

Social Movements

Jo Freeman, "On the Origins of Social Movements." (SO)
Janet Hadley, "Abortion Movements in Poland, Great Britain, and the United States." (SO)
pp. 480-492, 500-509/ 23 pages

26 Apr (Th)

Meaning and Modernity

Emile Durkheim, "Anomy and Modern Life." (SO)
Max Weber, "The Disenchantment of Modern Life." (SO)
Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Modern Life." (SO)
Marlise Simons, "The Price of Modernization: The Case of Brazil's Kaiapo Indians." (SO)
pp. 510-516, 433-439, 522-528/ 21 pages

01 May (T)

Wrap-Up Session/ Part 3: What is the point of sociology?

No reading.

Non-Obvious Movie Analysis Due Tuesday!

09 May (W)

Final Exam: 2:00 – 5:00 pm

Non-Obvious Movie Analysis

“Pop sociology knows how to describe today’s society but not how to explain why these patterns exist” (Collins 1992, p. 188).

For this assignment, you will incorporate questions raised by Randall Collins in *Sociological Insight* into an analysis of one of three movies. The purpose of this assignment is to give you practice seeing sociology in daily life, while seeing and explaining beyond “obvious sociology.” First, read the Afterword of Collins’ book (pp. 185-188). Then select one of the movies listed in the guidelines section. Focus the first part of your discussion on the questions in the guidelines section and the second on those in the format section.

Guidelines:

Select one of the three following movies. Watch it carefully, taking notes and directing your attention to the questions that follow. Consider each question carefully. Look for specific incidences in the movie as well as overall themes and moods. You will need to answer the questions for your selected film in the first part of your paper.

Focus. Neil Slavin, director (hate speech and violence).

1. How is the following statement used in the film (what is the context, what are the implications, etc.): “There’s no way like the American way.”
2. How are conformity and solidarity reflected in portrayals of national and religious identity? How are difference and inequality reflected?
3. How does categorization make things easier for some people and more difficult for others? How are boundaries maintained?

Gosford Park. Robert Altman, director (murder).

1. How is the following statement used in the film (what is the context, what are the implications, etc.): “You can’t be on both teams at once, sir.”
2. How are conformity and solidarity reflected in portrayals of class differences? How are difference and inequality reflected?
3. How does categorization make things easier for some people and more difficult for others? How are boundaries maintained?

One Flew Over the Coo-Coo's Nest. Milos Forman, director (violence).

1. How is the following statement used in the film (what is the context, what are the implications, etc.): "I'm a g-d-damn miracle of modern science." (hint: consider modern science and sanity as social constructions)
2. How are conformity and solidarity reflected in portrayals of sanity and gender/sexuality (hint: consider the role of sports)? How are difference and inequality reflected? Why is McMurphy a threat?
3. How does categorization make things easier for some people and more difficult for others? How are boundaries maintained?

Format:

For this assignment, you should turn in 5-7 typewritten and double-spaced pages. First, answer the questions listed above for the film you have selected. Feel free to include more movie-specific discussion if you feel it is important *and relevant*. Second, offer answers for the following questions presented by Collins. If you do not "know" the answers, offer possible explanations and justify them. Be sure to answer (but don't feel limited to) the following questions:

1. Why does the social world presented in the film look that particular way, as opposed to some other way?
2. Are the social world presented in your film and the conclusions we can draw from it generalizable? (How) Do the patterns you see change over time or space (or would they)?
3. What are the limits on the rationality of the participants?
4. (How) Is uncertainty in the particular situation affected by the exercise of power?
5. (How) Is the social organization reflected in or maintained by ritual?

Note:

Please remember to answer both sets of questions! You must answer all of them to get full credit for this assignment.

If you are having trouble, please come and see me immediately.

Have fun!