

Introduction to Sociology: SOC 101

Oxford College of Emory University

Fall 2010

Dr Valerie Singer

Office: 101 Language Hall

Office Hours: By appointment only. Please email me for an appointment or for any other concern.

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Course Objectives:

This course will introduce you to the basic concepts of sociology. By the end of the course each student will be able to demonstrate familiarity with:

- The meaning of a “sociological imagination”
- The elements of social structure and how these elements interact to create society
- The four main sociological “perspectives” – functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, and the feminist perspective
- The social construction of concepts such as race and gender, and the effect of these concepts on U.S. society
- The meaning and function of social institutions, (such as family, religion, education) in society
- The sociological significance of our institution’s history and present, both Oxford College and Emory University
- The relationship of social stratification to individual life change
- The dilemmas of the working poor in current society
- The significance and dynamics of social movement activism in society

Required Texts:

- Soc by Jon Witt
- The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down by Anne Fadiman
- Soul of a Citizen by Paul Roget Loeb (second edition mandatory)
- Additional readings on electronic reserve through the library

Course Grade Breakdown:

Exam One	15%
Exam Two	20%
Exam Three	25%
Interview assignment	10%
Participation:	15%
Term paper:	15%

Total: 100%

Academic Honesty:

Both Oxford College and I take the matter of academic honesty very seriously. I would like to remind you that you are required to follow the Honor Code. Any suspected breaches to the Honor Code will be referred to the Honor Council for review and possible disciplinary action. This includes acts of plagiarism. I have found in the past that many college students do not understand what does and does not constitute plagiarism. We will be discussing proper citation methods later in the semester.

Exams:

Each exam will include definitions, short answers, and multiple choice questions. The third (final) exam will be cumulative. I will distribute a review sheet at least two days before each exam.

Please note: if you miss an exam due to unexpected circumstances, you **MUST** contact me within 24 hours of the exam period, or you will not be able to make up the exam. Missed exams can only be made up in extreme situations, i.e. hospitalization or death of a family member. If you are ill at a scheduled exam period, you are expected to take the exam anyway. If you are severely ill, you must contact me **BEFORE** the exam for permission to reschedule.

Attendance:

This semester I have no formal attendance policy. You are adults and must take the primary responsibility for your time and your education. **HOWEVER**, please realize that you **CANNOT** do well in this class without being present in the classroom. You cannot get a good participation grade, and you cannot learn all of the material necessary. Much of what you need to know is presented in class lectures and not repeated in the readings. I do not give students copies of my power point presentations, so you must be present in class, both physically and mentally, to take thorough notes to succeed in this course.

Participation:

Your active participation is a vital part of this course. You are expected to have carefully read the assigned materials before each class session, and come prepared for discussion. I believe strongly that you can each learn a great deal in the classroom from your fellow students, not just from your professor. We are all both learners and teachers. You share with me the responsibility of creating a classroom atmosphere in which all of your classmates feel comfortable expressing their individual questions, ideas, and opinions. Students with perfect attendance who remain silent in the classroom will receive a B- for their attendance and participation grade.

ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF IN CLASS.

Papers:

In this course you will write two papers....the first is an interview assignment for which you will work with one other classmate to interview Oxford students about their experiences of class and/or race. You are expected to work with your partner, but turn in individual (thus **DIFFERENT**) papers. Each paper should be approximately 3 pages

long. This first assignment includes a 5 minute class presentation of your findings and will be worth 10% of your final grade.

The term paper is a 5-6 page paper will be worth 15% of your final grade. For this paper you will discuss how the building blocks of social structure differ within Hmong and American culture... and how the clash between the social structures of these two cultures shapes the life and story of Lia Lee. For this paper you will use ONLY resources from within class, primary The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down. You MUST NOT discuss your paper with any other present or former sociology students. I will discuss requirements for the paper with you in detail later in the semester.

Late Papers are graded down one full letter grade for each 24 hours late, including Saturday and Sunday.

Grading:

Please note that I WILL be grading using the plus-minus system.

100-93% = A	79-77% = C+
92-90% = A-	76-73% = C
89-87% = B+	72-70% = C-
86-83% = B	69-67% = D+
82-80% = B-	66-60% = D
	59% and below = F

Many students worry about professors' subjectivity in grading. Please remember: I NEVER *give* grades, students *earn* their grades, irrespective of how I feel about them as individual people. The key to an A in this course is hard work and comprehension of sociology, not the 'correct opinion' or being buddies with Dr Singer.

Course Schedule

(I reserve the right to make additions or changes to this schedule. All changes will be posted on the class conference.

August 25	Introductions What is Sociology?
August 27	Class canceled, Dr Singer must be out of town
August 30	<i>Sociological Perspectives</i> Witt (textbook) chapter 1
September 1	<i>Invitation to Sociology (e-reserve)</i> <i>The Promise of Sociology (e-reserve)</i>
September 3	<i>Sociological Research and Early Sociologists</i> Witt chapter 2
September 6	<i>Culture</i> Witt Chapter 3

- September 8 ***Socialization***
 Film: Becoming a Woman in Okrika
 Witt chapter 4
- September 10 ***The Five Building Blocks of Social Structure***
 Witt chapter 5
- September 13 ***Deviance: When Norms are Broken or Challenged***
 Witt chapter 6
- September 15 ***Family***
 Witt chapter 7
The Nuclear Family is the Backbone of American Society (e-reserve)
- September 17 Gender
 Witt chapter 12
Changing Advice to American Women (e-reserve)
- September 20 *How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works* (on e-reserve)
 Film: Killing us softly
- September 22 ***Sociological perspectives on sexuality and homosexuality***
When Debbie Met Christina (on e-reserve)
- September 24 The American Marriage Debate: Society in Action
 Readings TBA
- September 27 **Exam One**
- September 29 ***Social Class in American and Global Stratification***
 Witt chapter 10
Getting a Job in Harlem
- October 1 Witt chapter 11
 Film: Black Gold
- October 4 ***Focus on Global Inequality: Haiti***
 (readings TBA)
- October 6 ***Race and Racism in American Society***
 Witt chapter 13
 Film: Ethnic Notions
- October 8 *The Souls of Black Folks*
America is the Land of Equal Opportunity

(on e-reserve)

- October 11 FALL BREAK
- October 13 *When Did Jews Become White Folks?*
- October 15 ***Using Our Sociological Imagination:
Emory's Early Racial History in Black and White***
Andrew Sledd *The Negro, Another View*
The Voice of a Prophet
- October 18 ***Emory's Early Racial History Beyond Black and White***
Legacy of Heart and Mind pp 48-49
Some of My Best Friends pp 169-173
Exploring Race and Class in the lives of Oxford Students
– interview assignments
- October 20 Witt chapter 14
- October 22 Class Presentations
- October 25 Class Presentations
Interview Essays due
- October 27 **Exam 2**
- October 29 The Spirit Catches You Chapters 1-4
- November 1 The Spirit Catches You Chapters 5-8
- November 3 The Spirit Catches You Chapters 9-12
- November 5 The Spirit Catches You Chapters 13-16
- November 8 The Spirit Catches You Chapters 17-19
- November 10 Witt chapter 15
- November 12 ***Social Movements and Societal Change***
On the Origins of Social Movements
- November 15 Soul of a Citizen Intro and Ch 1
Final Paper Due
- November 17 Soul of a Citizen chapters 2-4

November 19 Soul of a Citizen chapters 5 and 6

November 22 Soul of a Citizen chapters 7 and 8

November 24-26 THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29 Soul of a Citizen chapters 9 and 10

December 1 Soul of a Citizen chapters 11 through postscript

December 3 Exam Review

December 6 Last Day of Class
IN CLASS FINAL EXAM