

Introduction to Sociology: SOC 101

Oxford College of Emory University

Spring 2008

Dr Valerie Singer

Office: 101 Language Hall

Office Hours: Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays, 1-2 PM

or by appointment (any changes in office hours will be posted to the class conference)

Email: vsinger@learnlink.emory.edu

Office Phone: x 4614

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 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 within current society

Required Texts:

- Essentials of Sociology, a Down to Earth Approach by James Henslin
- American Dream, Three Women, Ten Kids, and a Nation’s Drive to End Welfare by Jason Deparle
- Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality by Robert Bullard
- Additional readings on electronic reserve through the library

Course Grade Breakdown:

Exam One	15%
Exam Two	20%
Exam Three (Final)	25%
Attendance and Participation:	15%
Pop quizzes:	10%
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 definition, short answers, and at least one essay. 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:

I will be taking attendance each day. Each student is allowed TWO absences during the semester. This is to allow for the occasional illness, personal matter, or accidental nap.

Each additional absence will result in a 1 point loss to your attendance and participation grade (out of 15 points). There are only two exceptions to this policy: 1) absences for religious holidays *if you notify me ahead of time that you will be absent*, and 2) extreme unexpected situations (extended illnesses, death in the family, etc.). If you have an extreme situation that prevents you from attending class, please notify me as soon as possible, and be prepared to show documentation of the situation.

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.

I will be setting up a class conference for us on Learn Link. **As part of your participation grade, you need to contribute to the class conference regularly.** Your contributions may include comments on the readings or in-class lectures, discussions, or films. I also encourage you to write “discussion questions” for the rest of the class to respond to or comment on. I envision this conference as being a way to create more dialogue between students on how sociological concepts apply to and are reflected in our society.

Quizzes:

You will be quizzed weekly on the readings. These reading quizzes will ask questions which are obvious and simple to answer if you have done the readings, and otherwise impossible. The day of the week of the quizzes will vary, so there is a 'pop' nature to them. Your first quiz will be on the syllabus itself! At the end of the semester, I will count your 10 highest quiz grades. If you are absent from or LATE TO class, you will not be able to make up the day's quiz.

Term Paper:

The term paper, due April 11th, will use sociological theories to address environmental racism in the United States. It will be based largely on our course text, Dumping in Dixie. This 5-6 page paper will be worth 15% of your final grade. I will discuss requirements for the paper with you in detail later in the semester.

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

(any changes made to this course schedule will be posted on the class conference)

Jan 16	Course introductions
Jan 18	Sociological Perspectives Henslin (textbook) chapter 1
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day..... no class
Jan 23	<i>Invitation to Sociology</i> and <i>The Promise of Sociology</i> (on e-reserve)
Jan 25	The Importance of Culture Henslin chapter 2
Jan 28	Socialization Film: <i>Becoming a Woman in Okrika</i> Henslin chapter 3

Jan 30	<i>The Building Blocks of Social Structure</i> Henslin chapter 4
Feb 1	Social Structure continued <i>Children are Our Most Precious Commodity</i> (e-reserve)
Feb 4	Social Groups and Formal Organizations Henslin chapter 5
Feb 6	“Deviance” Henslin chapter 6
Feb 8	Gender Henslin chapter 10
Feb 11	<i>Sociological perspectives on sexuality</i> <i>When Debbie Met Christina</i> (on e-reserve)
Feb 13	<i>How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works</i> (on e-reserve) Film: Killing us softly
Feb 15	exam review
Feb 18	<u>Exam 1</u>
Feb 20	Global Stratification Henslin chapter 7
Feb 22	<i>Race and Racism in American Society</i> Henslin chapter 11 Film: Ethnic Notions
Feb 25	<i>The Souls of Black Folks</i> <i>When Did Jews Become White Folks?</i> (both on e-reserve)
Feb 27	<i>Social Class in American Society</i> Henslin chapter 8
Feb 29	<i>Understanding America’s Working Poor</i> <i>Getting a Job in Harlem</i> <i>Who Has How Much and Why?</i> <i>America is the Land of Equal Opportunity</i> (on e-reserve)

March 3	Henslin chapter 11
March 5	<i>Family</i> Henslin chapter 12
March 7	<i>The Nuclear Family is the Backbone of American Society</i> (e-reserve) <i>Changing Advice to American Women</i> (e-reserve)
March 10-16	<u>SPRING BREAK</u>
March 17	Henslin chapter 13
March 19	Henslin chapter 14
March 21	exam review
March 24	<u>Exam 2</u>
March 26	<i>Social Movements and Societal Change</i> Henslin chapter 15
March 28	<i>On the Origins of Social Movements</i> <i>Affinity Groups and the Movement Against Corporate Globalization</i> (on e-reserve) Film: This is What Democracy Look Like
March 31	<i>Environmental Racism</i> Dumping in Dixie chapters 1 and 2
April 2	Dumping in Dixie chapter 3
April 4	Dumping in Dixie chapters 4 and 5
April 7	Dumping in Dixie chapters 6 and 7
April 9	<i>Making Our Lives Count</i> <i>You Have to Pick Your Team</i> (both on e-reserve)
April 11	<i>Welfare and Poverty in American Society</i> American Dream chapters 1,2,3
April 14	American Dream chapters 4 and 5 <u>Term Paper Due</u>
April 16	American Dream chapters 9 and 10

April 18 American Dream chapters 11 and 12
Film: Poverty Outlaw

April 21 American Dream chapters 13 and 14

April 23 American Dream chapters 15 and 16

April 25 American Dream chapters 17, 18, and epilogue

April 28 Last Class/Exam review

Final Exam: Thursday May 1st 9-12 AM

Please note: I have no power to change your final exam period, or to let individuals take their final at a different time. The only person who can authorize this is Dean Anderson, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, and such permission is only given under exceptional circumstances. The administration is quite strict on this point.