Sociology 101

Introduction to Sociology

Instructor: Professor Paul Semm Phone: 619-594-5906

Office: NH 211 Email: psemm@mail.sdsu.edu

Class Meets:

Lecture Mon and Wed 9 -9:50AM AL201

Sections Wed or Fri (see SDSU Fall 2014 Schedule)

Office Hours:

M W 10:30 AM-11:30 AM

Required Texts:

Eitzen, D. Stanley and Maxine Baca Zinn. Pearson Custom Sociology: Introduction to Sociology 101.

Assignments

Course Description:

The study of sociology is an interesting and rewarding intellectual activity, but one with risks. The reason is that students gain a different and unique way of both viewing the world and understanding their life experience. The sociologist C.Wright Mills refers to this unique perspective as the “sociological imagination.” This can be exciting, and/or liberating, but it also can be threatening because one’s personal identity is tied to one’s view of the world. Sociology is also by its nature, a study of society, a subversive discipline. It raises questions and illuminates problems about society and its institutions. And it encourages the questioning of authority. All are reasons why it is not taught in high school.

This course is designed to introduce the student to the discipline of sociology; its basic principles of inquiry, and the sociological perspective. Sociology literally means the study of society and the object of sociological inquiry is the nature of society. This course will examine the paradigms, or sets of theories, that guide sociologists in their research. These paradigms are structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. The course will also introduce the students to the vocabulary (terms and categories) of the discipline of sociology. These terms and categories are the basic explanatory tools used by sociologists in their study of society.

Topics that will be discussed are divided into three areas. The first area is the sociological perspective. The focus will be on how social structure, culture, and history impact individual lives. The second area is the social construction of reality. In this area the focus will be on the mass media, advertising, and popular culture. The third area is social inequality. The focus will be on racial inequality, gender inequality and global dynamics and global inequality.

Course Goals:

By the end of the course, the student should have a basic understanding of sociological terms and categories, including an understanding of the main sociological paradigms. Also the student ought to be able to use these theoretical tools to critically interpret social phenomena. And, finally, the student ought to be able to recognize the ways in which social forces shape individual biography; his/her own life chances and opportunities.

Evaluation Process:

There will be a total of 450 points.

Exams. The exams will make up two thirds of the grade. There will be three exams, each worth one hundred (100) points for a total of three hundred (300) points. The entire class will take them together in the lecture hall (see Class Schedule). The exams will be based on lectures, in-class videos and readings from the text. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false and matching questions. Taking the exams at the time they are scheduled is mandatory. The only excuse for missing an exam is a medical or family emergency (within the immediate family). Either excuse requires written documentation. If the excuse is accepted, the exam must be still be taken within two weeks of the original schedule.

Quizzes. The professor reserves the right to give in-classes quizzes if he determines they may be needed to evaluate student progress and/or encourage students to keep up with assigned readings.

Sections. The TAs will provide a syllabus for their sections. The sections will make up one-third of the grade, or one hundred and fifty (150) points. The teaching assistant in each section will determine how the student will be evaluated in that section. However, a component of the grade in each section will be based on student participation in the section.

Class Structure and Behavior

Monday and Wednesday will be in-class lectures given by the professor on the topic scheduled for that class (see Class Schedule) and an outline of the lecture will be put on Blackboard (TAs will explain how to use Blackboard) prior to the lecture. Print the lecture outline and bring it to class. It will help with note taking. On the days that the exams are scheduled, the entire class will take the exams together in the large class room.

The class will begin at promptly 9:02. Be there before that time and seated or do not attend. Class will end when I say it does, never any later than 9:50. Entering class late or leaving early, unless I am notified ahead of time, will be considered “intentionally disruptive behavior” which is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The penalty can be dismissal from class, failing the class, or dismissal from the university. Private conversations and non-course related electronic activity are not allowed in this class. Cell phones must be turned off and put away unless there is a family emergency. In the case of such an emergency, I must be notified prior to the class. Any students who violate the codes of conduct in class will be penalized with significant point deductions and possibly referred to Judicial Affairs.

Grade by Per Cent\*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | 93-100 | B+ | 88-89 | B- | 80-82 | C- | 70-72 |
| A- | 90-92 | B | 83-87 | C+ | 78-79 | D+ | 68-69 |
|  |  |  |  | C | 73-76 | D | 63-66 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | D- | 60-62 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | F | 00-59 |

Class Schedule

Week Topic Assignments by Chapter Title

Week 1 Aug 25-29 Introduction

Week 2 Sep 1-5 Sociological Perspective “The Sociological Perspective”

(No class Monday Sept 1 Labor Day)

Week 3 Sep 8-12 Social Structure/Culture “The Duality of Social Life”

Week 4 Sep 15-19 Stratification “Social Stratification” and “Class”

Week 5 Sep 22-26 Economy/Work “Economy

Week 6 Sep 29-Oct 3 **Exam #1 Monday Sep 29 (AL 201 9AM)**

Week 7 Oct 6-10 Political System “Power and Politics”

Week 8 Oct 13-17 Education “Education”

Week 9 Oct 20-24 Mass Media “Social Control”

Week 10 Oct 27-31 Social Change Assigned Reading

Week 11 Nov 3-7 **Exam #2 Monday Nov 3 (AL 201 (9AM)**

Week 12 Nov 10-14 Social Movements “Human Agency”

Week 13 Nov 17-21 Racism “Racial Inequality”

Week 14 Nov 24-26 Racism “Racial Inequality”

(Thanksgiving Vacation Nov 27 and 28 : Sections will not meet Nov 26 or Nov 28)

Week 15 Dec 1-5 Sexism “Gender Inequality”

Week 16 Dec 7-10 **Exam #3 Wed Dec 10 (AL201 9AM)**

(Sections will not meet this week.)

To: All SDSU Faculty

From: Pamela J. Starr, Student Disability Services Director

Subject: Syllabus Statement for Students with Disabilities

With the fall 2014 semester approaching, I would like to remind you to include the below statement in your syllabus. The University Senate now requires that all faculty include this statement as written. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.