NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Sociology 100: Principles of Sociology

Instructor: Tom Semm Phone: 619-286-5254

E-mail: psemm@nu.edu

Course Meets: La Mesa Center

Date and Times:

Monday Oct 27, Nov 3, 10, 17

Wednesday Oct 29, Nov 5, 12, 19

Saturday Nov 15 and 22

Required Text:

Newman, David. Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life.

Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2008. Seventh Edition.

Newman, David and Jodi O’Brien. Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life (Readings). Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2008. Seventh Edition.

Course Description:

The study of sociology is inherently an interesting and rewarding intellectual activity. The reason for this is that tudents of sociology 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 course is designed to introduce the student to the academic discipline of sociology, its basic principles of inquiry, and the sociological imagination. Sociology literally means the study of society and the object of sociological inquiry is the nature of society. A main focus of this course will be an examination of the main 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 imagination. 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. Because your professor’s area of expertise is social problems, another focus of the course will be on using the tools of sociology to identify and analyze social problems in American society and globally.

Course Goals:

* Involve students in both descriptive and analytical writing as a means of understanding themselves, others, society, culture, the world, and social problems.
* Encourage development of a sociological imagination.
* Familiarize students with the functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactionist perspectives.
* Explore the social construction of the self by using such sociological concepts as socialization, the presentation of the self, stigma, social control, and deviance.
* Analyze the social structure of social institutions such as the family, the economy, and religion; and social inequality along race, class, and gender lines to gain an understanding of social dilemmas of today.
* Discuss the interrelatedness of the social stratification categories of race, class, and gender.
* Become critically aware of the social construction of knowledge and reality, with an emphasis on the role of the mass media and pop culture in the social construction of reality.
* Analyze the interaction between society and the individual, and the ways in which one impacts upon and shapes the other.
* Gain an understanding of collective behavior, specifically groups, organizations and social movements.
* Discuss the increasing importance of technology in the shaping of notions of self, identity, values, society, community, and attitudes about social issues.
* Introduce students to contemporary approaches to the study of globalization such as multinational corporations, Americanization, McDonaldization, and demographic trends.

Learning Outcomes**:** When this course is over students will be able to:

1. Understand the kinds of questions sociologists have typically addressed and the role sociology plays in contributing to our understanding of social reality.
2. Understand the connection between the individual and society.
3. Use the methods sociologists use to answer important questions about society.
4. Use the sociological imagination to understand the individual’s role in making, maintaining, or changing society.

Evaluation Process:

There will be a total of 330 points.

Exams. There will be two exams, a midterm and final, each worth one hundred (100) points for a total of two hundred (200) points. The exams will be based on the lectures, the readings, and in-class videos. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in, and short answer questions. An exam may be missed with a legitimate excuse, a note from the doctor, a note from one’s employer, or a family emergency. But the exam must be made up at the convenience of the instructor.

Journal. The journal will consist of a variety of written and research assignments, both in class and out of class. The journal should be kept up to date at all times and brought to each class. It may be asked for at any time. Students not having the journal when it is asked for or not keeping it up to date will be given a five (5) point deduction. The journal is worth fifty (50) points.

Papers. There will be two papers, 3-4 pages in length, assigned and due at specified times (see Course Schedule). The papers are worth twenty-five (25) points each.

Class Participation: The final thirty (30) points will be based on class participation. Attendance is mandatory at National University and the necessary starting point for class participation. But being present is not class participation, class participation consists of relevant comments and questions that reflect that the student has both read the material and made an attempt to engage the material analytically. A further way of gaining class participation points is for students to bring in material (advertising, newspaper article, magazine article etc.) for discussion relevant to the lecture and the reading assignments.

Points System

Assignment # Points Total %Grade

Exams 2 100 200 60%

Portfolio 1 50 50 15%

Papers 2 25 50 15 %

Participation 30 10% 330 100%

**GRADES AND GRADING SYSTEM:**

## Grade Distribution: National University uses a plus/minus grading system. Instructors may elect not to use the plus/minus system. If they choose not to use this system, they must clearly state so in their course outline.

Grade by Per Cent

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | 96-100 | B+ | 87-89 | B- | 80-83 | C- | 70-73 |
| A- | 90-95 | B | 84-86 | C+ | 77-79 | D+ | 67-69 |
|  |  |  |  | C | 74-76 | D | 64-66 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | D- | 60-63 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | F | 00-59 |

Grade by points

A 314-330

A- 296-313

B+ 286-295

B 278-285

B- 265-277

C+ 255-264

C 245-254

C- 232-244

D+ 222-231

D 212-221

D- 197-211

F 0- 196

Class Structure:

The first part of each class will be a lecture given by the professor on the topic for that class (see class schedule). After the dinner break, there will be a video (usually a documentary) relevant to the topic. Following the documentary, the class will discuss the readings assigned for that class, and do a research and writing assignment. The two most important ways to gain class participation points are during the discussions of the readings and the documentaries.

On the days of the exams, the exams will be taken first. For that class, there will be a lecture, video, and class discussion after the break

Late work will be accepted until the last day of class. However, there will be a full grade deduction for each class that the assignment is late. Late work as a result of medical, work, or home emergencies will not be graded down when supported with proper documentation.

Private conversations and non-course related e- activity are not allowed in this class. Cell phones must be turned off and put away unless there is a family or work emergency. In the case of such an emergency, the professor must be notified prior to the class. Behavior that ignores these guidelines will result in significant grade reduction.

Class Schedule:

Date Topic Assignment/Authors

Mon Oct 27 Sociological Imagination Text Ch 1 and 2

Reader 1 (Mills)

Wed Oct 29 Stratification Text Ch 10

View: Savage Inequalities Reader: 10 (Sered)

**Paper 1 Assigned**

Mon Nov 3 Economic Systems Text Ch 9

View: The Corporation Reader 9 (Van Maanen)

**Paper 1 Due**

Wed Nov 5 Political Systems Text Ch 14

View: Free Speech for Sale Reader 14 (Hall)

Mon Nov 10 Mass Media **EXAM I**

View: Supersize Me Text Ch 3 (pp 53-71)

Wed Nov 12 Mass Media and Deviance Text Ch 8

View: Supersize Me Reader 10 (Mantsios)

2 (Glassner)

**Paper 2 Assigned**

Sat Nov 15 Gender and Inequality Text Ch 12

View: Killing Us Softly Reader 14 (Krauss)

Mon Nov 17 Racial and Ethnic Inequality Text Ch 11

View: True Colors Reader 11(Farley)

Wed Nov 19 Globalization Text Ch 13 View: Women’s Work Reader 13(Greider)

**Paper 2 Due**

Sat Nov 22 Social Movements **Exam II**

**General Policies of National University**

**Diversity:**

Learning to work with and value diversity is essential in every degree program. Students are required to act respectfully toward other students and instructors throughout the course. Students are also expected to exhibit an appreciation for multinational and gender diversity in the classroom and develop leadership skills and judgment appropriate to such diversity in the workplace.

**Disability:**

National University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you need accommodations due to a documented disability, please contact the Coordinator of Scholarships and Special Services at (858) 642-8185 or via e-mail at [scholarships@nu.edu](mailto:specialservices@nu.edu). Information received by this office is confidential and is only released on a 'need-to-know' basis or with your prior written consent. Accommodations can only be granted upon approval by the Committee for Students with Disabilities (CSD).

**Ethics:**

Ethical behavior in the classroom is required of every student. Students are also expected to identify ethical policies and practices relevant to course topics.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are required to cite the use of materials written by others in all written communications for courses. Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas or work as one’s own. This includes using ideas, words, or phrases without proper attribution. Students found plagiarizing are subject to the penalties outlined in the Policies and Procedures section of the University Catalog, which may include a failing grade for the work in question or for the entire course. Inadequately or improperly cited work receives no credit. In cases of plagiarism, the burden of proof rests on the student, not the instructor. In other words, the student will be required to prove that plagiarism has not occurred.

For more information on proper citation and writing research papers see the web sites listed below:

[Plagiarism](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>)

[Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_quotprsum.html) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/563/01/>)

[MLA Citation Format](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>)

**Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. An absence is assessed each time a student is not in attendance during a regularly scheduled class period, whether or not it is an excused absence. An instructor may withdraw a student from class prior to the sixth session in graduate courses if there are more than two unexcused absences. Students who have more than three absences, excused or unexcused, cannot be given a satisfactory grade.

**WRITING STANDARDS OF COLS: (Undergraduate Level):**

Students are expected to demonstrate writing skills in describing, analyzing and evaluating ideas and experiences. Written material must follow specific standards regarding citations of authors’ work within the text and references at the end of the paper. Students are encouraged to use the services of the University’s Writing Center when preparing materials (see National University Services below). Grades will be assigned for written material in accordance with the University catalog and the following general criteria adopted by the College of Letters and Sciences.

NOTE: *Letter grades may be assigned for any or all of the following reasons:*

**“A” Range:** Outstanding achievement, significantly exceeds standards

* Unique topic or unique treatment of topic, takes risks with content; fresh approach.
* Sophisticated/exceptional use of examples.
* Original and “fluid” organization; all sentences and paragraphs contribute; sophisticated transitions between paragraphs.
* Integration of quotations and citations is sophisticated and highlights the author’s argument.
* Confidence in use of Standard English; language reflects a practiced and/or refined understanding of syntax and usage.
* Sentences vary in structure, very few, if any mechanical errors (no serious mechanical errors).

**“B” Range:** Commendable achievement, meets or exceeds standards for course.

* Specific, original focus, content well handled.
* Significance of content is clearly conveyed; good use of examples; sufficient support exists in key areas.
* Has effective shape (organization), effective pacing between sentences or paragraphs.
* Quotations and citations are integrated into argument to enhance the flow of ideas.
* Has competent transitions between all sentences and paragraphs.
* Conveys a strong understanding of standard English; the writer is clear in his/her attempt to articulate main points, but may demonstrate moments of “flat” or unrefined language.
* May have a few minor mechanical errors (misplaced commas, pronoun disagreement, etc.), but no serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma splices, etc.)

**“C” Range:** Acceptable achievement, meets standards for course

* Retains overall focus, generally solid command of subject matter
* Subject matter well explored but may show signs of underachievement
* Significance is understood, competent use of examples
* Structure is solid, but an occasional sentence or paragraph may lack focus
* Quotations and citations are integrated into argument
* Transitions between paragraphs occur but may lack originality
* Competent use of language; sentences are solid but may lack development, refinement, style
* Occasional minor mechanical errors may occur, but do not impede clear understanding of material
* No serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma-splices, etc.)

**“D” Range:** Unsatisfactory achievement; does not meet acceptable standards

**Note: *The “D” grade is a passing grade; work that is not of “passing quality” should receive grade “F”.***

* Significance of content is unclear
* Ideas lack support, elaboration
* Lacks sufficient examples or relevance of examples may be unclear
* Support materials is not clearly incorporated into argument
* Expression is frequently awkward (problematic sentence structure)
* Mechanical errors may often impede clear understanding of material
* May have recurring serious mechanical errors (fragments, run-ons, comma splices, etc.)

**“F” Range:** Fails to meet minimal standards

* Ignores assignment
* Lacks significance
* Lacks coherence
* Includes plagiarized material (intentional or unintentional)
* Lacks focus
* Difficult to follow due to awkward sentence or paragraph development
* Mechanical errors impede understanding
* Problems with writing at the graduate level

**Definition of Grades (Undergraduate Level):**

**A** Outstanding Achievement: *Significantly exceeds standards*

**B** Commendable Achievement: *Exceeds standards*

**C** Acceptable Achievement: *Meets standards*

**D** Unsatisfactory Achievement: *Below standards*

**F** Failing

**I** Incomplete: *A grade given when a student has completed at least 2/3 of the course class sessions and is unable to complete the course requirements due to uncontrollable and unforeseen circumstances. The student must convey (preferably in writing) these circumstances to the instructor prior to the final day of the course. If the instructor decides that an “Incomplete” is warranted, the instructor must convey the conditions for removal of the “Incomplete” to the student in writing. A copy must also be placed on file with the Office of the Registrar until the Incomplete is removed or the time limit for removal has passed.*

## National University Services

National University provides all students with facilities to assist them in the completion of their course work. In particular the Writing Centers and NU Library provide access to materials and services in the area of academic writing, research and information literacy.

**Writing Center**

Assistance in meeting the written requirements for the course is available from the on-line Writing Center. Students may submit drafts of papers and outlines to the writing assistants and meet with them to discuss strategies for improving their papers. More information is available from the NU Writing Center Web Page: <http://www.nu.edu/Academics/StudentServices/WritingCenter.html>

**Library**

NU Library: National University Library supports academic rigor and student academic success by providing access to scholarly books and journals both electronically and in hard copy. Print materials may be accessed at the Library in San Diego or through document delivery for online and regional students. Librarians are available to provide training, reference assistance, and mentoring at the San Diego Library and virtually for online or regional students. Please take advantage of Library resources:

? URL: www.nu.edu/library <http://www.nu.edu/library>

? Contact the Library:

o RefDesk@nu.edu <mailto:RefDesk@nu.edu>

o (858) 541-7900 (direct line)

o 1-866-NU ACCESS x7900 (toll free)

? Use the Library Training Tools (on the Library Homepage) for additional help

o Recorded class presentations

o Tutorials & Guides (APA/MLA, Peer-Review, and more)