

SOC 1120-05: Introduction to Sociology - Diversity & Health

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Contents

Basics

Course Meetings

When: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:10pm to 3:25pm

Where: 2718 Morrissey Hall

Course Website

<https://classroom.google.com> (you will need an invitation from Chris)

Chris's Information

Office: 1918 Morrissey Hall

Email: chris.prenner@slu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00am to 12:00pm in 3600 Morrissey (GeoSRI Lab)

Hardcopy Syllabus

If you would like to keep a record of the syllabus, there is a **.pdf** download button () in the top toolbar. This document will contain a “snapshot” of the course policies and planned schedule as of the beginning of the semester but will not be subsequently updated. See the “Preface and Warning” on page 2 of the **.pdf** for additional details.

Change Log

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Part I

Syllabus

Chapter 1

Course Introduction

The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden.

Pierre Bourdieu (1996)

This course will survey the field of sociology, stressing important ideas, methods, and results. We focus on health to illustrate the application of sociological ideas. The survey is designed to develop analytic thinking skills. Weekly readings from a text will be supplemented with articles and chapters illustrating topical issues and exercises on the skills and craft of the social sciences.

1.1 Two Courses, One Goal

Students will quickly notice that this course has two numbers. SOC 1120-05 is the “regular” course section, and SOC 1120-05H is the honors section. If you are a University Honors student, you may enroll in SOC 1120-05H if you wish to take this course for honors credit. Students in the honors section complete additional readings for three of the weeks, write several additional response papers, and give a presentation on a topic of their choice to the class. Additional details are included in the honors supplement at the end of this document. Both courses have the same goal - to introduce students to the fundamentals of sociology through an emphasis on health and medicine.

1.2 Course Objectives

This course introduces the distinct sociological skills through the lens of health and illness, including:

1. The ability to recognize and examine social phenomena from multiple perspectives.
2. The recognition of what constitutes fact based arguments from appropriately designed information gathering.
3. The ability to understand the sources of attitudes and behaviors from cultures and structures and how they impact the quality of life of different groups in society.
4. The ability to reflect on the diversity around us and to act in a moral and just manner as citizens of the world.
5. Developing skills in independent thinking, aesthetic awareness, moral and/or ethical system of values, welcoming diversity, and committing to the value of life-long learning.

1.3 Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

This course fulfills the College of Arts and Sciences core requirement for Cultural Diversity in the United States. The Cultural Diversity in the United States requirement is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the cultural groups in the United States and their interactions. Students who complete a Cultural Diversity course in this category will gain a substantial subset of the following skills:

1. Analyze and evaluate how various underrepresented social groups confront inequality and claim a just place in society.
2. Examine how conflict and cooperation between social groups shapes U.S. society and culture.
3. Identify how individual and institutional forms of discrimination impact leaders, communities and community building through the examination of such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic class, age, physical and mental capability, and sexual orientation.
4. Evaluate how their personal life experiences and choices fit within the larger mosaic of U.S. society by confronting and critically analyzing their own values and assumptions about individuals and groups from different cultural contexts.
5. Understand how questions of diversity intersect with moral and political questions of justice and equality.

1.4 Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a learning management system similar to Blackboard. There are two main areas - the **Stream** and the **About** tabs. The **Stream** contains posts for announcements and assignments. Additions to the **Stream** should be emailed to your student e-mail account automatically. This will be my primary means for communicating with the class as a whole. Assignments posted to the **Stream** allow you to submit work for the course. You can use the **Topics** on the left-hand menu of the **Stream** to filter posts, isolating posts related to assignments, lecture materials, and announcements among other topics.

You will need an invitation to **Google Classroom** from Chris. Invitations will be sent to all enrolled students before the first class. If you enroll after the first day of class, please let Chris know that you will need an invitation. Invitations will be sent to your SLU associated Google account, which consists of your *computer login* (e.g. `doej` for Jane Doe) entered as an email - `doej@slu.edu`. The password will be the same as your password used to login to mySLU and SLU computers. Using another Google account for this course is not permitted.

In order to facilitate quick access to course materials, each lecture's section of the **Reading List** will include a button that links to that lecture's post with lecture slides and notes. The button will look like this for posts that are available:

View on Google Classroom

If the button is red, it means that the post with lecture resources is not yet available on the **Stream**:

View on Google Classroom

Assignments will also be linked from the **Reading List** to the relevant post on the **Stream**. These will be noted with a hyperlink in parentheses that looks like this: (Google Classroom)

1.5 Readings

There are two books required for this course. Each book has been selected to correspond with one or more of the course objectives. The books are:

1. Abraham, Laurie K. 1993. *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead: The Failure of Health Care in Urban America*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. ISBN-13: 978-0226001395; List Price: \$20.00; e-book versions available.
2. Andersen, Margaret, Howard F. Taylor, and Kim A. Logio. 2016. *Sociology: The Essentials*. 9th edition. Independence, KY: Cengage. ISBN-13: 978-1305503083; List Price: \$202.95; e-book versions available.

I do not require students to buy physical copies of texts. You are free to select a means for accessing these texts that meets your budget and learning style. If ebook editions (e.g. Kindle, iBooks, pdf, etc) of texts are available, they are acceptable for this course. All texts should be obtained in the edition noted above.

All readings are listed on the **Reading List** and should be completed before the course meeting on the week in which they are assigned (unless otherwise noted). Full text versions of most readings not found in the books assigned for the course can be obtained using the library's Electronic Reserves system. The password for the Electronic Reserves will be posted on **Google Classroom**.

Many of the readings posted on Electronic Reserves are peer reviewed journal articles. This means that they are written with an aim to contribute to scientific debates. Their primary audiences are typically health care providers, professors, and graduate students. They are therefore sometimes *difficult* to read. Give yourself time - I don't expect each student to fully understanding the intricacies of each article (especially the statistics included in some), but I do expect you to walk away with a general sense of the argument and evidence presented.

Chapter 2

Course Policies

My priority is that class periods are productive learning experiences for all students. In order to foster this type of productive environment, I ask students to follow a few general policies and expectations:

1. Work each week to contribute to a positive, supportive, welcoming, and compassionate class environment.
2. Arrive to class on time and stay for the entire class period.
3. Silence *all* electronic devices before entering the classroom.
4. Do not engage in side conversations. This is disrespectful to the speaker (whether me or a classmate), and can affect the ability of others in the class to learn.
5. Be respectful of your fellow classmates. Do not interrupt when someone is speaking, monopolize the conversation, or belittle the ideas or opinions of others.
6. Complete the assigned readings for each class in advance, and come prepared with discussion points and questions.

The following sections contain additional details about specific course policies related to attendance, participation, electronic device use, student support, academic honesty, and Title IX.

2.1 Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are important components of this course. You are expected to attend all class sessions and to arrive before the beginning of class. If you cannot attend class or arrive on time because of a personal illness, a family issue, jury duty, an athletic match, or a religious observance, you must contact me **beforehand** to let me know. I may ask for more information, such as a note from a physician, a travel letter from Athletics, or other documentation for absences.

A penalty will not be applied to your first two unexcused absences or late arrivals. Any absences or late arrivals beyond those two will result in no credit (for an absences) or only partial credit (for a late arrival) being earned for that day's participation grade.

Making up missed classes are your responsibility, including obtaining notes from a classmate. I do post slides on Google Classroom, but my slides are intended only to serve as references. I do not design slides to serve as a stand-in for not attending class - they are designed to make sense in the context of the lecture as it is delivered. All lecture slides will be posted on Google Classroom before class begins along with relevant notes for that lecture. Please note that lectures and discussions cannot be recorded by any means (e.g. audio or video recordings, or photographs) without my permission.

2.2 Communication

Email is my preferred method of communication. I dedicate time to email responses each workday, meaning that my response time is typically within 24 hours during the workweek. If you have not received a response from me after 48 hours (or by end of business on Monday if you emailed me over the weekend), please feel free to follow-up with me.

Please use your SLU email account when emailing me. All messages regarding course updates, assignments, and changes to the class schedule including cancellations will be sent to your SLU email account. It is therefore imperative that you check your SLU email account regularly.

Please also ensure that all concerns or questions about your standing in the course are directed to me immediately. Inquires from parents, SLU staff members, and others will not be honored.

2.3 Electronic Devices

During class periods, students are asked to refrain from using electronic devices (including cell phones) for activities not directly related to the course. For this class, I expect students to limit their use of electronic devices to accessing course readings, notes, and other course materials.

There is evidence that using electronic devices during lectures results in decreased retention of course content (Hembrooke and Gay 2003) and lower overall course performance (Fried 2008). Students who are not using a laptop but are in direct view of another student's laptop also have decreased performance in courses (Sana et al. 2013). Conversely, students who take notes the "old fashioned way" have better performance on tests compared to students who take notes on laptops (Mueller and Oppenheimer 2014).

I therefore ask students to be conscious of how they are using their devices, the ways such use impacts their own learning, and the effect that it may have on others around them. I reserve the right to alter this policy if electronic device use becomes problematic during the semester.

2.4 Student Support

2.4.1 Basic Needs

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, you are urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Likewise if you have concerns about your mental or physical health needs, or lack access to health care services you require, you should contact either the Dean of Students, Student Health Services, or the University Counseling Center.¹

If you feel comfortable doing so, please discuss any concerns you might have with me. Doing so is particularly important if believe your performance in this course might be affected. I will do my best to work with you to come up with a plan for successfully completing the course and, if need be, work with you to identify on-campus resources. I will treat all discussions with discretion, though please be aware that certain situations, including disclosures of sexual misconduct or self harm, must be reported by faculty to the appropriate University office.

2.4.2 Academic Accommodations

If you meet the eligibility requirements for academic accommodations through the Office of Disability Services (located within the Student Success Center) *and you wish to use them for this class*, you should arrange

¹This language is adopted from text written by Dr. Sarah Goldrick-Rab.

to discuss your needs with me after the first class. All discussions of this nature are treated confidentially, and I will make every effort to work with you to come up with a plan for successfully completing the course requirements. Please note that I will not provide accommodations to students who are not working with Disability Services, and that I cannot retroactively alter assignments or grades if they have already been completed.

2.4.3 Writing Services

I also encourage you to take advantage of the University Writing Services (UWS) program. Getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels and the quality of your writing will be reflected in assignment grades. The UWS has trained writing consultants who can help you improve the quality of your written work. UWS's consultants are available to address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources.

2.5 Academic Honesty

All students should familiarize themselves with Saint Louis University's policies concerning cheating, plagiarism, and other academically dishonest practices:

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

Any work that is taken from another student, copied from printed material, or copied the internet without proper citation is expressly prohibited.

All relevant assignments should include in-text citations and references formatted using the American Sociological Association (ASA) style guidelines. Any student who is found to have been academically dishonest in their work risks failing both the assignment and this course.

2.6 Harrassment and Title IX

While I have every expectation that each member of the Saint Louis University community is capable and willing to create a positive coursework experience, I fully recognize that there may be instances where students fall short of that expectation. Students should generally be aware that:

Saint Louis University prohibits harassment because of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, military status, veteran status, gender expression/identity, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other characteristics protected by law.

All students should also familiarize themselves with Saint Louis University's policies on bias, discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. In particular, they should be aware of policies on harassment and sexual misconduct:

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX Coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, Room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu); 314-977-3886) and share the

basic facts of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK.

Instances of abusive, harassing, or otherwise unacceptable behavior should be reported either directly to the instructor or to the University Administration. Consistent with the above policies, I will forward all reports of inappropriate conduct to the Title IX Coordinator's office or to the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action. Please be aware that University policies may require me to forward information about the identity of any students connected to the disclosure.

Please also be aware that communications over various online services, including (but not limited to) Google Apps and Google Classroom, are covered by this policy.