

SOCI 100: Introduction to Sociology

Montclair State University, Fall 2020

Instructor:

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Class Schedule:

Asynchronous Online (via Canvas)

Virtual Office Hours:

Tuesday/Friday: 9:00 to 10:30 AM (via Zoom)
[Or by appointment]



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Overview:

Four centuries ago, the poet John Donne wrote that “no man is an island.” What he meant is that human beings are not isolated individuals, but members of a society. Our lives are profoundly shaped by our connections to other people, by our membership in groups, by the social roles that we play, and by social forces that act upon us. Sociology is the scientific study of society, and sociologists develop theories and collect data to better understand social phenomena. In this course, you will learn to cultivate your “sociological imagination” and to apply sociological concepts and theories to diverse aspects of social life, including such topics as gender, race, religion, schools, crime, and work. The overall goal of this course is to help you develop a better understanding of both the way in which your social environment affects you as an individual and your capacity to change the society in which you live.

Course Format:

This is an asynchronous online class, which means that all course materials (readings, lecture videos, assignments, and tests) will be delivered via Canvas, our learning management system at MSU. We will not have designated class times; instead, you will be able to work through the material on your own schedule (just stay on track and complete all the assignments by the deadlines I’ve laid out in the syllabus below). Even though we won’t be meeting face-to-face, you will be interacting with your instructor and fellow students through discussion boards, peer reviews, and other forms of feedback. I’ll also be available for virtual office hours (via Zoom) and by email.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define sociology as an area of study and explain its relation to other disciplines.
2. Compare and contrast the major theoretical perspectives in sociology, and explain how they differ in their explanation of social phenomena.
3. Demonstrate comprehension of fundamental sociological theories and concepts around such topics as race, gender, deviance, and social inequality.
4. Apply critical thinking skills and your “sociological imagination” to better understand your personal experiences and the society in which you live.

Textbook:

Griffiths, H. et al. 2015. *Introduction to Sociology* (Second Edition).
Houston: Rice University and OpenStax.



This a *free* open-source textbook, and I will post all the readings on Canvas (where you can read and annotate them using Perusall). If you want to buy a physical copy or download the textbook as a PDF, visit <https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e>

Grading and Assessment

[1 point = 1% of your final grade]

1. Reading Annotations (Perusall): 25 pts

There will be 25 readings from the textbook posted to Canvas. You will be required to review and annotate the readings using a tool called Perusall. As you're reading, take notes, make comments, and respond to questions or comments from other classmates (and the instructor). Your annotations will be *graded* on the basis of quality, quantity, and distribution. Each reading will be worth 1 point (1% of your final grade).

2. Video Lectures and Assignments: 25 pts

I will post 25 video lectures over the course of the semester. Each of those videos will have an assignment associated with it, but those assignments will vary. For example, I may ask you to post to a discussion board, write a short reflection, or complete a short quiz embedded in the video. Each assignment will be worth 1 point (1% of your final grade).

3. Exams: 25 points

I will give three exams (multiple choice, fill in the blank, and T/F questions) over the course of the semester. All will be timed and will be completed through Canvas:

7.5 pts: Mid-Term 1

7.5 pts: Mid-Term 2

10 pts: Final Exam

4. Papers: 25 pts

There are two papers for this class. Each should be about 1000 words (4 pages) long. After you submit your paper, it will be graded by the instructor and peer-reviewed by another student. You'll be able to resubmit it for a final grade after review. For each paper, you'll receive a grade for your paper AND for your peer review of another student's paper. Paper 1: 10 points for paper, 2.5 points for peer review
Paper 2: 10 points for paper, 2.5 points for peer review

Your overall grade will be determined using the following scheme:

A: 92.5 to 100% A-: 90.0 to 92.4%
 B+: 87.5 to 89.9% B: 82.5 to 87.4% B-: 80.0 to 82.4%
 C+: 77.5 to 79.9% C: 72.5 to 77.4% C-: 70.0 to 72.4%
 D+: 67.5 to 69.9% D: 62.5 to 67.4% D-: 60.0 to 62.4%
 F: 0 to 59.9%

Course Policies

Canvas

All assignments will be posted and submitted on Canvas unless otherwise noted. You must be able to access Canvas to complete the course, and you are responsible for checking the email associated with your Canvas account.

Late assignments

Deadlines for all assignments are set in the syllabus, and you are required to submit assignments by those deadlines. I will not accept late submissions for reading annotations and assignments. Late papers will be penalized by *one* letter grade (or its equivalent) per day late. Again, if you have a medical or personal emergency, contact me as soon as possible.

Conduct:

I ask that you interact with your peers in a polite and respectful manner. Disagreement and debate are healthy, and a necessary part of the learning process. It is never acceptable, however, to threaten, insult, or demean other students. The MSU [Code of Conduct](#) specifically forbids conduct that is disruptive to the learning environment or which causes harm to others. If I observe such behavior, I may refer it to the Dean of Students.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism are forms of academic dishonesty. They are also violations of the MSU [Code of Conduct](#) that carry a minimum punishment of academic probation. While cheating is more straightforward, you may have questions about what constitutes plagiarism. The Code of Conduct defines plagiarism as “using another person's words as if they were your own.” The simple way to avoid plagiarism is to always cite your sources when you quote or paraphrase someone else's words or ideas. For more guidance, consult this resource (montclair.edu/chss/first-year-writing/first-year-writing-program-students/academic-integrity-and-plagiarism) or ask me.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability, make sure that you have registered with the Disability Resource Center (montclair.edu/disability-resource-center) and provided them with the necessary documentation. If you have a documented disability and require, or think that you *may* require, any accommodations over the course of the semester, meet with me as soon as possible to review the course requirements and discuss possible accommodations.

Mental Health

Your mental health is important. If you are struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, or problems with sleeping, eating, or focusing on your work, please ask for help. CAPS (montclair.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services) offers a range of services that are free, voluntary and confidential (including weekly “Let’s Talk” sessions). If you are in distress, or if you

3

have a mental health issue that is affecting your work, please let me know and I will do whatever I can to help.

Additional Resources:

- The Academic Success Center (montclair.edu/academic-success-center) offers tutoring, supplemental instruction, and guidance on learning and study strategies.
- The Center for Writing Excellence (montclair.edu/center-for-writing-excellence) offers consultations to help you organize, draft, and revise your writing assignments. - The Disability Resource Center (montclair.edu/disability-resource-center) provides support to students with documented disabilities.
- Sprague Library (montclair.edu/library) offers help finding research materials, books, and articles; just go to the reference desk or click the “Ask a Librarian” tab on their webpage. - For other services, please consult this list on the MSU Cares page: montclair.edu/student-services/msu-cares

[Please Note: This syllabus is subject to revision. If I make a change to the syllabus, I will let you know by email. I will also post an updated version of the syllabus to Canvas.]

Course Schedule

Week 1: 8/24-8/28
Introduction

Getting Started:

Review Syllabus (and annotate using Perusall)

Watch Course Introduction Video

Module 1.1: What is Sociology?

Complete Reading 1: Section 1.1 (Perusall) [Due 8/28]

Watch Video 1 and complete Assignment 1 [Due 8/28]

Week 2: 8/31-9/4
Societies and Social Interaction

Module 2.1: The History of Sociology and Sociological Theories

Complete Reading 2: Sections 1.2-1.4 (Perusall) [Due 9/4]

Watch Video 2 and complete Assignment 2 [Due 9/4]

Module 2.2: Competing Perspectives on Industrial Society

Complete Reading 3: Sections 4.1-4.2 (Perusall) [Due 9/4]

Watch Video 3 and complete Assignment 3 [Due 9/4]

Week 3: 9/7-9/11

Social Roles and Groups

Module 3.1: The Social Construction of Reality

Complete Reading 4: Section 4.3 (Perusall) [Due 9/11]

Watch Video 4 and complete Assignment 4 [Due 9/11]

Module 3.2: Social Groups

Complete Reading 5: Sections 6.1-6.2 (Perusall) [Due 9/11]

Watch Video 5 and complete Assignment 5 [Due 9/11]

Week 4: 9/14-9/18

Culture

Module 4.1: What is Culture?

Complete Reading 6: Sections 3.1-3.2 (Perusall) [Due 9/18]

Watch Video 6 and complete Assignment 4 [Due 9/18]

Module 4.2: Theoretical Perspectives on Culture

Complete Reading 7: Sections 3.3-3.4 (Perusall) [Due 9/18]

Watch Video 7 and complete Assignment 7 [Due 9/18]

Week 5: 9/21-9/25

Religion/ Midterm 1

Module 6.1: The Sociological Approach to Religion

Complete Reading 8: Section 15.1(Perusall) [Due 9/25]

Watch Video 8 and complete Assignment 8 [Due 9/25]

MIDTERM EXAM 1 -Due 9/28

Week 6: 9/28-10/2

Socialization and Education

Module 6.1: Socialization

Complete Reading 9: Sections 5.1-5.3 (Perusall) [Due 10/2]

Module 6.2: Education

Complete Reading 10: Sections 16.1-16.2 (Perusall) [Due 10/2]

Watch Video 10 and complete Assignment 10 [Due 10/2]

Week 7: 10/5-10/9

Crime and Deviance

Module 7.1: Deviance in Sociology

Complete Reading 11: Sections 7.1-1.2 (Perusall) [Due 10/9]

Watch Video 11 and complete Assignment 11 [Due 10/9]

Module 7.2: Crime and Prisons

Complete Reading 12: Section 7.3 (Perusall) [Due 10/9]

Watch Video 12 and complete Assignment 12 [Due 10/9]

Essay 1 Due: 10/9

Week 8: 10/12-10/16

Work, the Economy, and Bureaucracy

Module 8.1: Work and the Economy

Complete Reading 13: Sections 18.1-18.2 (Perusall) [Due 10/16]

Watch Video 13 and complete Assignment 13 [Due 10/16]

Module 8.2: Formal Organizations and Bureaucracy

Complete Reading 14: Section 6.3 (Perusall) [Due 10/16]

Watch Video 14 and complete Assignment 14 [Due 10/16]

Essay 1 Peer Review Due: 10/16

Week 9: 10/19-10/23

Stratification and Inequality

Module 9.1: Social Stratification and Mobility

Complete Reading 15: Sections 9.1-9.2 (Perusall) [Due 10/23]

Watch Video 15 and complete Assignment 15 [Due 10/23]

Module 9.2: Social Inequality

Complete Reading 16: Sections 9.3 -9.4 (Perusall) [Due 10/23]

Watch Video 16 and complete Assignment 16 [Due 10/23]

Essay 1 Revisions Due: 10/23

Week 10: 10/26-10/30

Government and Politics / Midterm 2

Module 10.1: Politics and Power

Complete Reading 17: Sections 17.1, 17.3, and 17.4 (Perusall) [Due

10/30] Watch Video 17 and complete Assignment 17 [Due 10/30]

MIDTERM EXAM 2-Due 11/2

Week 11: 11/2-11/6
Race and Ethnicity

Module 11.1: Sociological Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity
Complete Reading 18: Sections 11.1-11.3 (Perusall) [Due 11/6]
Watch Video 18 and complete Assignment 18 [Due 11/6]
Module 11.2: Race and Ethnicity in the United States

6

Complete Reading 19: Sections 11.4 -11.5 (Perusall) [Due 11/6]
Watch Video 19 and complete Assignment 19 [Due 11/6]

Week 12: 11/9-11/13
Sex, Gender, and Families

Module 12.1: Sex and Gender

Complete Reading 20: Sections 12.1-12.2 (Perusall) [Due 11/13]
Watch Video 20 and complete Assignment 20 [Due 11/13]

Module 12.2: Marriage and Family

Complete Reading 21: Sections 14.1-14.3 (Perusall) [Due 11/13]
Watch Video 21 and complete Assignment 21 [Due 11/13]

ESSAY 2 Due: 11/9

Week 13: 11/16-11/20
Population and the Environment

Module 13.1: Demography and Population
Complete Reading 22: Sections 20.1-20.2 (Perusall) [Due 11/20]
Watch Video 22 and complete Assignment 22 [Due 11/20]
Module 13.2: Society and Environment
Complete Reading 23: Section 20.3 (Perusall) [Due 11/20]
Watch Video 23 and complete Assignment 23 [Due 11/20]

ESSAY 2 Peer Review Due: 11/16

Week 14: 11/23-11/27
Sociology of Health and Illness

Module 14.1: Health and Medicine

Complete Reading 24: Sections 19.1, 19.3, 19.5 (Perusall) [Due 11/27]

Watch Video 24 and complete Assignment 24 [Due 11/27]

ESSAY 2 Revision Due: 11/23

Week 15: 11/30-12/4

Collective Action and Social Change

Module 15.1: Social Movements

Complete Reading 25: Sections 21.1-21.3 (Perusall) [Due 12/4]

Watch Video 25 and complete Assignment 25 [Due 12/4]

FINAL EXAM - Due 12/7